

Healthy Families America Promotes Positive Parenting¹



Healthy Families America promotes positive parenting by educating parents about ways to interact with their child, helping them understand their child's capabilities at each developmental stage, identifying and shaping their attitudes towards parenting, and teaching them positive forms of discipline. Home visitors help parents recognize the importance of building a strong parent-child relationship and help them develop skills to increase their sensitivity, responsiveness and nurturing capabilities towards their children.

© **Arizona (LeCroy):** Improved scores were noted on six out of seven scales of the Parenting Stress Index: competence, attachment, feelings of restricted role, depression, social isolation and positive mood at six and twelve months post-enrollment.

© **Florida (Nelson):** Families' average scores at a six month post-participation interview were not statistically different than their scores on the exit interview, indicating that the parental knowledge and skills developed or enhanced through participation in the program were retained six months later.

© **Georgia:** Enrolled parents have more appropriate expectations of their children and are more empathetically aware of their children's needs than comparison families.

© **Maryland (Klagholz):** At enrollment, 86% of parents had passing scores on the Knowledge of Infant Development, a widely used assessment tool. After six months of participation, that rate had increased to 94%.

© **New Jersey:** A statistically significant difference was found in the scores related to the risk characteristics that contribute to parental stress. Scores decreased from 2.22 at enrollment to 1.88 at 12 months.

© **New York:** Eighty-five percent of participants said their patience with their child had improved and they were better at dealing with their child's difficult behavior because of the home visiting program. Participants indicated an increase in knowledge about caring for their children. Seventy-eight percent learned about child growth and development, 73% about home safety, 73% about proper health care for their baby and 65% about feeding their baby.

© **Virginia (Galano I):** Compared to their scores at the initial assessment, mothers participating in the program had higher scores in the areas of parent-child interaction, bonding, communication and care-giving after two years of participation, while the scores of mothers in the control group decreased during the same time period.

¹ This report highlights findings from 18 studies conducted in 11 states over the past decade. The study designs range from pre-post analysis to statewide comparison and randomized trials.