

# Chapter 5: Community Planning/ Site Development

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**Vision:** *The statewide system provides technical assistance for developing, sustaining, and expanding Healthy Families America/home visiting.*

## I. Introduction

### ***What is community planning and site development?***

The amount and type of community planning and site development supports provided depends on the age, needs, existing relationships, resources, urgency, and funding directives of the system. Community planning and site development do not end with a needs assessment and the establishment of initial sites. Healthy Families America sites should be consistently supported and, when feasible, strategically replicated in order to meet the needs of the entire target population in the state or region.

### ***What are the benefits of community planning and site development?***

Formalizing and sustaining community interest in Healthy Families America by creating a planning group or task force can foster mutually beneficial effects from local groups that:

- Lead the planning process for programs;
- Serve as the collective representative for Healthy Families America in the community;
- Develop a shared understanding of the needs of new parents in the community and existing resources available to address those needs;
- Foster collaboration among its members;
- Develop a shared commitment to working toward implementation of the program, and;
- Identify new strategies for program implementation.

Through site development and community planning, the statewide system has a mechanism for sharing resources, while gaining diverse community input and talents.

## II. Guidelines for Community Planning/Site Development

**1. Convene key players in the community.** A strong and stable planning group should include a diverse array of likely and unlikely partners in child abuse prevention. See the chapter on collaboration and the resources listed below for more ideas on how to identify and target key participants.

### ***2. Develop a strategic plan to develop/sustain/grow Healthy Families***

***America/home visiting.*** The planning process guides organizations in identifying programmatic goals and charting a course for accomplishing these goals—combining vision and action in a broad understanding of the state system’s past, present, and future. This vision should include identifying current and future challenges, benefits of

sustaining and expanding Healthy Families America in the state, and establishing long-term growth strategies. See the chapter on Strategic Planning for more information.

**3. Develop a presentation to educate communities about Healthy Families America and/or home visiting.** Sharing current and relevant information on Healthy Families America and community needs and strengths will maximize the ability of advocates to garner support and resources. A boilerplate presentation will easily educate the public on Healthy Families America at conferences and other forums. For a sample state presentation, go to: <http://www.healthyfamiliesfla.org/resources/sampleslide/sld001.htm>.

**4. Ensure that new Healthy Families America/home visiting program(s) build onto existing collaborations and programs and are connected with other sites in the state and the PCA America state chapter or local affiliates.** Being informed of the history of collaboration at the state and local level and linked to existing partnerships offers partners an understanding of the expectations in collaboration and enables them to trust the process.

**5. Ensure that there is adequate funding for new program(s).** Funding should be as diverse and stable as possible and include resources for evaluation, advocacy, and other activities that ensure the long-term support of the program. It is critical that the creation of a new site is done in a strategic manner, keeping the sustainability of the program at the forefront.

### III. Community Planning and Site Development Resources

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[http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org/publications/order.shtml#program\\_sites](http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org/publications/order.shtml#program_sites)

Lyn, Joan; Costello, Joan; Halpern, Robert; and Richman, Harold. **Children, Families, and Communities: A New Approach to Social Services.** (1994) The Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.

**Neighborhood Strategies to Support Families: Current Approaches and Future Directions.** (March 31, 1997) The Center for the Study of Social Policy.

Sullivan, Mercer L. **Local Knowledge and Local Participation: Lessons from Community Studies for Community.** (1996) The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives.

**Voices From the Field: Learning from Comprehensive Community Initiatives.** (1997) The Aspen Institute Roundtable on CCIs.

**We Did It Ourselves: Guidelines for Successful Community Collaboration.** (2000) Sierra Health Foundation.