



Home Visitation Programs

Home visitation programs are designed to support new and expecting parents with the goal of improving the overall health and well-being of both parents and children. Most home visitation programs specifically target low-income mothers. They receive in-home support from health care workers, social workers, and other professionals. Support services vary by program but can include health screening, case management, and caregiver training. Home visitors often develop a high level of trust with their clients by working with families for an extended period of time in a private, intimate setting. Home visitation programs are uniquely positioned to support clients experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV).

PREVALENCE

Over half of the counties in the United States have evidence-based home visitation programs.² In 2017, more than 300,000 families received services from home visitation program.² Domestic violence is a significant threat to women and children's safety and well-being. In the United States, one in four women have experienced violence in an intimate relationship. 17.9% of children of all ages have been exposed to physical domestic violence.⁴ With the high prevalence rate of IPV, home visiting programs are likely serving many families experiencing IPV and other forms of family violence.

EFFECTS

IPV has been shown to have long-lasting physical, mental, sexual, and emotional health effects. These consequences are not only experienced by survivors of IPV but also by the children who are exposed to it. When experienced during pregnancy, IPV is linked to poor maternal health and birth outcomes such as low birth weight, preterm birth, and neonatal death.^{1,5} IPV is shown to be a risk factor for prenatal and post-partum depression.⁸ Children who have witnessed IPV experience adverse physical, emotional, behavioral, social, and cognitive outcomes, including sleep problems, post-traumatic stress, and academic difficulties.^{1,5,6}

INTERVENTIONS

Home visitation programs and domestic violence service agencies share similar goals in supporting healthy and safe outcomes for families. Partnerships between these two fields have emerged as a promising model for the prevention and reduction of family violence. Home visitation professionals should work with their local domestic violence service professionals to develop specific goals and protocols regarding family violence. Home visitors should receive training on topics such as trauma-informed care, the dynamics of power and control, barriers faced by survivors, and safety planning. Training and on-going support can help eliminate fears, discomfort, and concerns home visitors may have about this topic. Home visitors can play a very key role in screening, providing education, safety planning, and connecting clients to resources.

This model has proven to be effective in:

- Screening for and reducing rates of IPV and child abuse^{6,7}
- Helping children more effectively cope with the negative effects of witnessing violence in the home⁶
- Connecting families to community based resources, including appropriate domestic violence services⁶
- Increasing financial stability and sufficiency⁷
- Improving maternal and child health outcomes⁷
- Enhancing children's overall emotional and social development⁶



Home Visitation Programs

REFERENCES

1. Agu, N., Parish, A., Vitucci, J., Michael-Asalu, A., Balogun, O., Birriel, P., Sanon, R., Geary, S., Ramakrishnan, R., Jean-Baptiste, E., and Marshall, J. Florida Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Evaluation: Intimate Partner Violence Screening, Support, and Referral Learning Collaborative. <https://health.usf.edu/~/media/Files/Public%20Health/Chiles%20Center/MIECHV/CQI-IPV.ashx>
2. "Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs And Health, " Health Affairs Health Policy Brief, April 25, 2019. DOI: 10.1377/hpb20190321.382895
3. Eddy, T., Kilburn, E., Chang, C., Bullock, L., Sharps, P., and the DOVE Research Team. (2008). Facilitators and barriers for implementing home visit interventions to address intimate partner violence: Town and gown partnerships. *Nursing Clinics of N. America*, 43, 419-435.
4. Futures Without Violence. (2017). The facts on children's exposure to violence. Retrieved from: <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/the-facts-on-childrens-exposure-to-violence/>
5. Hood, K. and G. Kelly. (May 2, 2019). How can domestic violence (DV) programs partner with home visiting programs to better support survivors and their children? Florida MIECHV Initiative. <https://vawnet.org/news/how-can-domestic-violence-dv-programs-partner-home-visiting-programs-better-support-survivors>
6. Prozman, G., Wong, S., van der Wouden, J., and Lagro-Janssen, A. Effectiveness of home visiting in reducing partner violence for families experiencing abuse: a systematic review. *Fam Pract* 2015; 32 (3): 247-256. doi: 10.1093/fampra/cmu091
7. "The Top 5 Benefits of Home Visiting Programs". (June 2015). Child and Family Research Partnership. University of Texas at Austin. https://childandfamilyresearch.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/201506_5Benefits_HomeVisitingPrograms.pdf
8. "Women who experience intimate partner violence and prenatal and/or postpartum depression: prevalence and intentions (Research Brief). National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health. <http://www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Research20Brief20IPV20Final.pdf>

RESOURCES

Administration of Children and Families- Home Visitation Initiative- <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb>

Domestic Violence Enhanced Visitation Intervention (DOVE) Project- Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing- https://nursing.jhu.edu/faculty_research/research/projects/completed/dove/

Domestic Violence Protocol for Home Visiting Programs- Texas Council on Family Violence: <https://www.communitysolutionsva.org/files/E.13->

[Texas Council on Family Violences Protocol for Home Visiting Programs.pdf](https://www.communitysolutionsva.org/files/E.13-Texas_Council_on_Family_Violences_Protocol_for_Home_Visiting_Programs.pdf)

Florida Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Initiative: <https://www.flmiechv.com/>

Futures Without Violence:

- Home Visitation Curriculum: <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/home-visitation-curriculum-second-edition>
- Home Visitation Supervision Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRuolTR1qr8&list=PLaS4Etq3IFrWgggcKstcBwNiP_j8ZoBYK&index=24
- Home Visitation Domestic Violence Screening & Safety Planning Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTQoysJbXuY&list=PLaS4Etq3IFrWgggcKstcBwNiP_j8ZoBYK&index=27
- Sample MOU: https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/HealthCare/HV_Guideline_MOU.pdf
- Young Moms, Strong Kids—Safety Card: <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/young-moms-strong-kids/>