Early childhood home visiting is a service delivery strategy that matches expectant parents and parents of young children with a designated support person—typically a trained nurse, social worker, or early childhood specialist. Services are voluntary and provided in the family’s home or another location of the family’s choice. A two-generation approach, home visiting delivers both parent- and child-oriented services to help the whole family. It views child and family development from a holistic perspective that encompasses—

- Child health and well-being
- Child development and school readiness
- Positive parent-child relationships
- Parent health and well-being
- Family economic self-sufficiency
- Family functioning
15 EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING MODELS operating in the United States met standards of evidence as determined by the Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) project.

What Do Home Visitors Do?

- Gather family information to tailor services
  - Screen parents for issues like postpartum depression, substance abuse, and domestic violence
  - Screen children for developmental delays

- Provide direct education and support
  - Provide knowledge and training to make homes safer
  - Promote safe sleep practices
  - Offer information about child development

- Make referrals and coordinate services
  - Help pregnant women access prenatal care
  - Check to make sure children attend well-child visits
  - Connect parents with job training and education programs
  - Refer parents as needed to mental health or domestic violence resources

How Can Home Visiting Help?

Home visiting has a strong evidence base, with many studies showing it works.

- Home visiting participants are more likely to access prenatal care and carry babies to term.
- Home visitors teach parents to engage with children in positive, nurturing, and responsive ways, thus reducing maltreatment.
- Home visiting improves children's early language and cognitive development, as well as academic achievement in grades 1 through 3.
- Enrolled parents have higher monthly incomes, are more likely to be enrolled in school, and are more likely to be employed.

Studies have found a return on investment of $1.80 to $5.70 for every dollar spent on home visiting.
References


National Home Visiting Resource Center

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