



Children First **Oklahoma's Nurse-Family Partnership** ***"Helping First-Time Parents Succeed"***

What is Children First?

Children First is a primary prevention program whose goals include: Improving pregnancy outcomes; Improving child health and development; Improving clients' parenting skills; Strengthening the parent-child bond; and Encouraging clients to make plans regarding subsequent pregnancies, returning to school, finding employment, and achieving other personal goals.

Children First utilizes a nurse home-visitation model developed and well researched by Dr. David Olds and colleagues, now called the Nurse-Family Partnership. The Nurse-Family Partnership is widely recognized prevention model that is currently available in 22 states.

The **mission** of Children First is to empower first-time eligible families to care for themselves and their babies by providing information and education, assessing health, safety and development, and providing linkages to community resources, thereby promoting the well being of families through public health nurse home visitation, ultimately benefiting multiple generations.

Children First's **vision** is to promote a continuum of healthy pregnancies, healthy babies, healthy families and healthy communities.

What does Children First do?

Public health nurses with specialized training provide home-visitation services to eligible pregnant women and their babies, starting before the 29th week of pregnancy and continuing until the child turns 2 years old.

Nurses support and empower families, provide information and education, assess families' needs, and provide linkages to the mother's primary physician and other community resources to meet their needs. Nurses also regularly assess the child's health, development and safety.

Who does Children First serve?



Children First nurses visit women in all 77 counties in Oklahoma. A woman is considered eligible to participate in Children First if she is fewer than 29 weeks pregnant, a first-time mother and at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.

Between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006, the Children First program enrolled 2,564 pregnant women and served a total of 5,008 families.

Among those women who enrolled, 71% were single, never married; 50% were teenagers; and at least 59% had a household income less than \$15,000. Nearly 50% said they had not intended to get pregnant for at least two more years.

Children First: An Evidence-Based Program

Oklahoma is dedicated to promoting healthy births, healthy mothers and healthy children by implementing evidence-based program models.

The Nurse-Family Partnership model has been diligently researched for over 25 years by Dr. David Olds and has been shown to have multiple benefits for the families, including: Improved prenatal health; Fewer childhood injuries; Fewer subsequent pregnancies; Increased intervals between births; Increased maternal employment; and Improved school readiness for the child.¹

Children First: Making a Difference

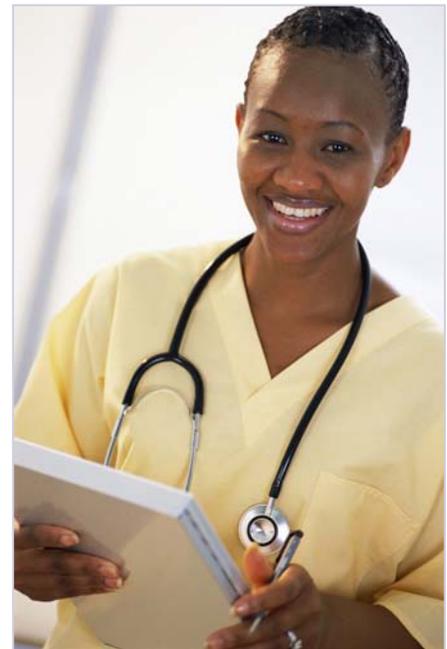
Smoking Cessation: Women who smoke at enrollment significantly decrease their smoking by 36 weeks gestation

Preterm and Low Birthweight: Research has shown Children First infants to have lower rates of very preterm and very low birthweight than a comparison group²

Breastfeeding: Approximately 75% of Children First mothers initiate breastfeeding; this is higher than the state's rate for all mothers in Oklahoma

Infant Mortality: The Infant Mortality Rate among Children First infants is approximately half that of other first-time births in the state of Oklahoma³

Childhood Immunizations: Children First children are consistently up to date on their immunization at rates higher than the state average



Demonstrated Cost Savings

The prevention of 22 very premature births and 14 very low birthweight babies over four years among *Children First* clients potentially saved Oklahoma taxpayers over \$2.7 million dollars, using national estimates of hospital costs associated with low birthweight and prematurity (\$75,000 per child).⁴

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that the Nurse-Family Partnership ranked highest in terms of cost return among pre-kindergarten, child welfare, youth development, mentoring, youth substance abuse prevention and teen pregnancy prevention programs. Net return to government was approximately \$17,180 per family served.⁵

For more information about the Children First program, please contact: Children First; Oklahoma State Department of Health; 1000 NE 10th Street; Oklahoma City, OK 73117; 405-271-7611



References: 1. Nurse-Family Partnership. www.nursefamilypartnership.org; 2. Carabin H et al. Does Participation in a Nurse Visitation Programme Reduce the Frequency of Adverse Prenatal Outcomes in First-Time Mothers? *Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology*. 2005;19(19):194-205.;3. Cox, ME. An Analysis of Deaths Among Infants Born into Children First, 1997-2004. Special study conducted by the Children First program, Oklahoma State Department of Health, April 2006. Copies available upon request. 4. Karoly LA et al. Investigating Our Children: What We Know and Don't Know About the Costs and Benefits of Early Childhood Interventions. 1998;RAND; 5. Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth. 5. Aos, R. Lieb, J. Mayfield, M. Miller and A. Pennucci. Washington State Institute for Public Policy: Olympia, WA, 2004.