

# HFA IMPACTS ON PARENTS & FAMILIES



a program of Prevent Child Abuse America

[healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://healthyfamiliesamerica.org)

Healthy Families America is an effective and proven model for early childhood home visiting with positive impacts in eight areas essential for children. Currently there are 590 Healthy Families America home visitation sites in 40 states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Canada. *Learn more about home visiting at [homvee.acf.hhs.gov](http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov)*

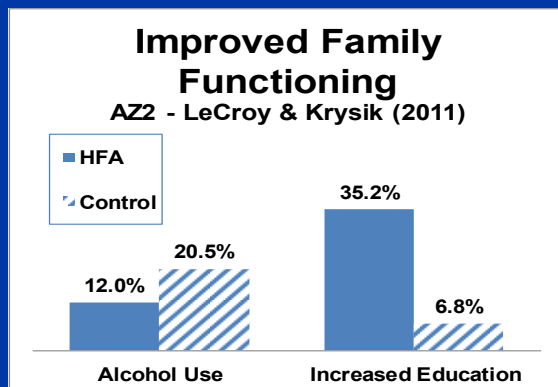
*A parent's personal resources—including knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward parenting—impact their relationship with their baby. Healthy Families America helps parents develop their personal resources to improve family functioning, strengthen the parent-child relationship, promote child well-being, and prevent adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).*

## FAMILY FUNCTIONING AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY:

HFA parents make significant gains in their education (AZ2\*, CA, NY1, DC, MA1, MD2, NJ1) and make better use of community resources (AZ2).

Delaying subsequent pregnancies impacts the health of both moms and babies, as well as helping young families achieve greater financial security. More HFA waited longer to have another child (FL4, NC, VA2b).

Substance abuse is another indicator of family functioning, as well as a risk factor for child maltreatment. Mothers in HFA reported less alcohol use compared to control families (AZ2).



## POSITIVE PARENTING ATTITUDES

HFA helps parents develop more positive beliefs about their role as parents. Compared to control families, HFA parents:

- \* showed stronger parenting efficacy (AK, HI2),
- \* had reduced parenting stress levels (MA2), and,
- \* had more positive perspectives on their parenting roles and responsibilities (GA, HI1, NY2).

Even more studies support these findings (CT, MA1, NJ1, OR).

## PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION

It takes time for parents to get acquainted with their new baby. Responsiveness and communication are the building blocks of attachment; the parent-child bond promotes child well-being and protects against child maltreatment. HFA shows significant impacts on parent-child interaction in numerous studies (GA, HI1, VA2, AZ1, FL2, IL, IN, MD1, MI, NJ1, OR, WI, VA4). In particular, researchers in a rigorous study observed significant improvements at two years on overall scores and specific areas of sensitivity, child clarity, and child responsiveness, while scores for control families declined (VA2).

## SUPPORT FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

HFA increases parents' understanding of children's developmental milestones and needs (NY2, IA, MD1); and helps parents create a more responsive and developmentally stimulating home environment (AK, GA, HI1, VA2, AZ1, DC, FL4, IL, IN, MD1, MI, NJ1, OR, VA4, WI).

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** HFA benefits parents in many ways that help them be the best parents they can be, and reach personal goals (such as furthering their education and gaining employment). These outcomes have been shown in rigorous studies in multiple states.

\* **Evaluation Studies:** State abbreviations refer to evaluation studies; those in *italics* indicate Randomized Control Trials (RCTs). For more information, see the HFA Evaluation Table at [healthyfamiliesamerica.org/research/](http://healthyfamiliesamerica.org/research/)

**More Information:** Please visit [healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://healthyfamiliesamerica.org) to read more about HFA's positive impacts for children and communities.