

THE HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK (HFNY) HOME VISITING PROGRAM

Findings from the Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)

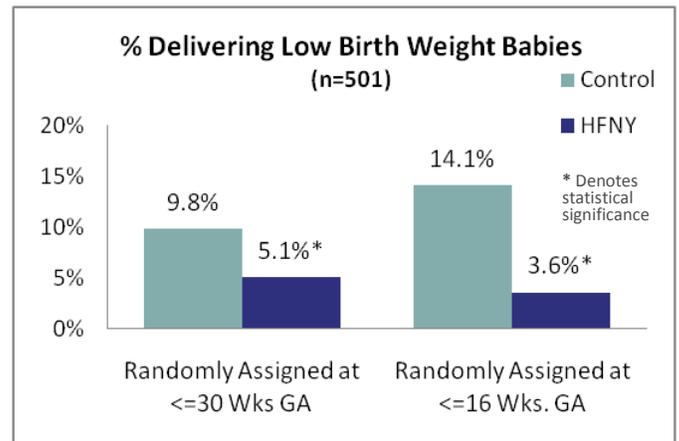
History of the RCT

In 2000, New York State (NYS) initiated an RCT to test the effectiveness of HFNY in preventing child maltreatment and promoting the child's development. All families enrolled in the study completed baseline interviews, which included questions about their benefits and jobs, parenting attitudes, and relationship with their newborn. Similar interviews were conducted with mothers around the time of their child's 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 7th birthdays. Children's school experiences, vocabulary skills and behaviors were also assessed at Age 7. At Ages 3 and 7, mother and child pairs were observed interacting in a series of structured tasks. The research team also examined Child Protective Services reports, foster care placements, federal and state-supported benefits, and program costs.

Study contact:
Susan Mitchell-Herzfeld,
Director, Bureau of
Evaluation and Research,
NYS Office of Children &
Family Services
Phone: (518) 474-9486

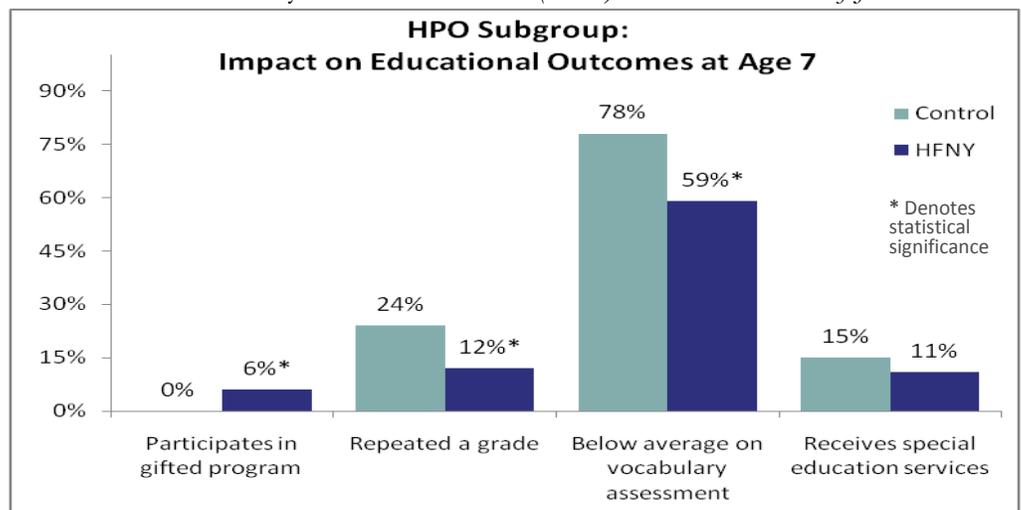
HFNY IMPROVES BIRTH OUTCOMES

Pregnant women who enrolled in HFNY at or before a gestational age of 30 weeks were about half as likely as pregnant women in the control group to deliver low birth weight (LBW) babies. The earlier in their pregnancies that women were offered HFNY, the greater the impact on LBW. HFNY was particularly effective in reducing LBW among black and Latina mothers, two groups that persistently experience high levels of poor birth outcomes. HFNY mothers achieved the Healthy People 2010 LBW goal of 5%. *Lee et al. (2009). American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 36, 154-160.*



HFNY PROMOTES SUCCESS AT SCHOOL

Children in the HFNY group were more likely to participate in a gifted program, and less likely to receive special education services or report skipping school than were children in the control group. Educational advantages were even more striking among target children born to first-time mothers under age 19 who were offered HFNY early in pregnancy (the High Prevention Opportunity, or HPO subgroup). As shown, HFNY children were significantly more likely to participate in a gifted program, less likely to repeat a grade, and less likely to score below average on a standardized vocabulary test. *DuMont et al. (2010). National Institute of Justice.*



THE HEALTHY FAMILIES NEW YORK (HFNY) HOME VISITING PROGRAM

HFNY

HFNY is a voluntary home visiting program for new and expectant parents, offering in-home services until the child starts school or Head Start—a time when families are especially vulnerable. Home visits are provided by trained paraprofessionals from the community who share the language and culture of families. Since the program began in 1995, HFNY has provided 777,000 home visits to more than 25,760 families. The program currently operates in 37 high-need communities throughout the state.

A review of program contracts showed a cost of about \$4,600 (in 2000 dollars) to serve a study family from assessment to program exit. In return, by Age 7, the state partially recovered its investment, and families benefited from a number of services and non-monetized impacts, such as those presented in this brief.

For questions about the program contact:
Bernadette Johnson,
Program Coordinator,
NYS OCFS
Phone: (518) 402-6770 or
visit:
www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org

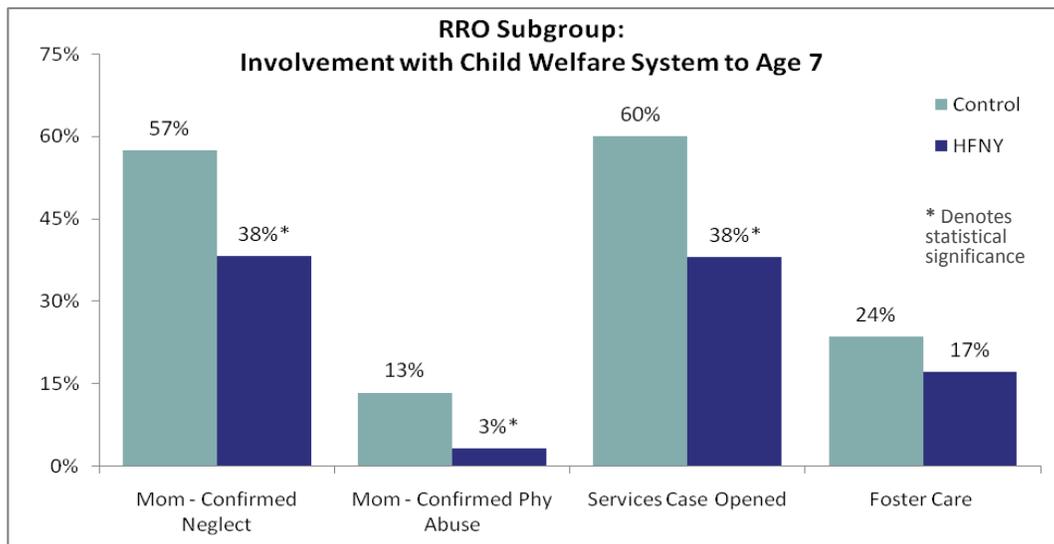
HFNY PREVENTS CHILD MALTREATMENT

HFNY produced sustained effects on harmful parenting practices. Based on mothers' reports of parenting practices, HFNY generated...

- an 88% reduction in the average # of acts of very serious physical abuse - Age 1
- a 75% reduction in the average # of acts of serious physical abuse - Age 2
- an 80% reduction in the average # of acts of serious physical abuse - Age 7.

HFNY children also reported a lower rate of minor physical abuse than children in the control group. In addition, sustained reductions in maternal-reported psychological and minor physical aggression were noted for the HPO subgroup, with differences detected at Ages 2, 3 and 7. *DuMont et al. (2008). Child Abuse and Neglect, 32, 295-315; DuMont et al. (2010). National Institute of Justice.*

As shown below, HFNY produced markedly lower rates of confirmed CPS reports and initiation of child welfare services through Age 7 for a subgroup of mothers who had confirmed CPS involvement prior to random assignment, referred to as the Recurrence Reduction Opportunity (RRO) subgroup. After considering earnings and savings associated with reduced child welfare system involvement and other government programs, HFNY generated a return of more than \$3.00 for every dollar invested in this subgroup of families. *DuMont et al. (2010). National Institute of Justice.*



HFNY SUPPORTS POSITIVE PARENTING

HFNY promotes the use of positive parenting skills that support and encourage children's cognitive and social development across developmental stages. Compared to mothers in the control group, mothers assigned to the HFNY group were more likely to endorse appropriate limit setting strategies (Age 2), be observed using parenting strategies that stimulated the child's cognitive skills (Age 3), and report using non-violent discipline strategies (Age 7). These parenting competencies may contribute to the early school successes realized by children who participated in HFNY.

Rodriguez et al. (2010). Child Abuse and Neglect, 34-711-723.