



Why Home Visiting is Important

- Annual data indicates that there are over three million reports of abuse and neglect, with over 900,000,000 of the cases being substantiated. In 2007, 75 percent of children who died from abuse or neglect in 2007 were younger than four years old. Roughly 40% of the 800,000 children who are substantiated as abused and neglected never receive follow-up services. Child abuse and neglect is preventable but not enough is being done to prevent these children from coming into care or being brought to the attention of child protective services (CPS). More widely available and implemented home visitation could help address this drastic shortcoming.
- Home visiting legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate for years and each time has had strong bipartisan support from Members of Congress including Representatives Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Jim McDermott (D-WA), Todd Platts (R-PA), Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), and Senators Christopher Bond (R-MO), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), as well as then Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and Hillary Clinton (D-NY).
- It is important to note that these programs are completely voluntary for families and a number of states already have such programs. Various models of evidence-based home visiting programs now exist in all fifty states. Some of these programs include Healthy Families America, Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters, Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, and Parent-Child Home Program. These programs have improved health outcomes for children, improved educational success, increased school readiness, and reduced incidence of child maltreatment.
- One of the chief supporters and the original author of the Senate legislation, Christopher Bond has supported home visiting for over 20 years. While governor of Missouri, he was instrumental in the creation of the Missouri-based Parents as Teachers program.
- The home visiting bill proposed by President Obama and included in the America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009 (HR 3200) allows states to expand their evidence-based, voluntary home visiting programs and requires the programs to demonstrate their effectiveness and adhere to a model that has demonstrated positive effects on important program-determined child and parenting outcomes, such as reducing abuse and neglect and improving child health and development.
- Home visitation is an effective, research-based and cost-efficient way to bridge the gap between vulnerable families and the resources that will ensure that children grow up healthy and ready to learn. It has been estimated that for every dollar spent on nurse home visitation, society can save as much as \$5.70. In fact, studies show that nurse home visitation reduces child maltreatment and enrollment in the Medicaid and Food Stamps programs.