

The Family Nurse Partnership Programme

Guide for Professionals



The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) Programme

The FNP is a preventive programme, which offers specialist support to first time mums who are 19 years old or younger from pregnancy until the baby is one year old, with the possibility of continuing until the child's 2nd birthday.

The programme is a licensed programme, originating in the USA where there has been three large scale research trials. It follows an evidence-based programme of activities delivered by specially trained family nurses.

The programme aims to improve:

- Antenatal health
- Child health and development
- Improved school readiness
- Economic self-sufficiency

These outcomes are good for mothers, children and society as they enable individuals to achieve more for themselves.

"When I didn't understand what people were telling me about my pregnancy, my family nurse took the time to explain everything to me..."



How does it work?

The Family Nurse and their client commit to an average of 64 planned home visits over possibly two and half years.

Building their relationship with the young mums over a long period of time allows the family nurse to establish a trusting and therapeutic relationship with the family.

The family nurse will help and support the young mum to learn new skills, but also to become more independent and responsible for both her own health and wellbeing and that of her child.

Weekly and fortnightly visits take place from early pregnancy until possibly the child's second birthday. The visits do not replace midwifery care but do deliver most of the Healthy Child Programme.

What difference does it make?

There is evidence that this programme is successful, with US trials finding short and long term benefits for the children and families which include:

- Reduction in child abuse and neglect
- Reductions in smoking in pregnancy
- Greater intervals between and fewer subsequent births
- Better language development
- Fewer accidents
- Increase in employment
- Greater involvement of fathers

Why is it such a specialist service?

The team works in partnership with young women, their partners and their babies to help identify strengths, build confidence and increase knowledge of good parenting, health, and positive relationships.

It is a strengths-based approach and advanced training allows the FNP team to use a range of specialist techniques to help young families to improve their outcomes.

As an integral part of the Healthy Child Programme, the close working relationship between the family nurse and other health and social care professionals is crucial.

Who is eligible for the programme?

- Young women who can benefit from the Family Nurse Partnership Programme are invited to join if they are: 19 years or younger at last menstrual period, and
- Living in Cambridgeshire
- Pregnant with their first baby (this includes any previous pregnancy ending in miscarriage or still birth) and are less than 28 weeks gestation at recruitment

If you are aware of a young woman who is eligible for the programme, please contact a member of the FNP team. Once a client is recruited onto the programme, the FNP team will work alongside the midwifery services and help them make the transition from the programme back into the universal health visiting services until the child's 1st birthday, with the possibility of continuing until the child is 2 years old.

To find out more

The family nurses are always keen to create new links with local health and social care professionals and other agencies. Performing a unique role means that the team can be a useful source of information and are always keen to contribute and share elements of their training and experience with others. If you would like further information about the programme, please contact one of the team.

Antonia's Story

"My family nurse doesn't tell me what to do but helps me make good decisions about my baby, my life and how to be a great mum"

I was 16 years old, planning to go to college and living with my mum and sisters when I found I was pregnant. When I first found out I was scared and nervous. I met Margaret, my family nurse, when I was nine weeks pregnant. I decided to enrol on the programme as I felt it would help me and my partner understand my pregnancy and how to care for our baby. Margaret visited me at home each week for four weeks, then every two weeks. During this time I learnt about communication and relationships as well as looking after myself and my unborn baby. She also helped me to apply for all the benefits I was entitled to, which I didn't know about. During pregnancy I continued to attend college. When Alicia was born, Margaret helped me with my housing and soon after her birth, I moved into a temporary house. During Alicia's first months, I continued with my college work and successfully passed my course. When Alicia was born I breastfed her for the first five weeks and then introduced formula feeds, though I continued breastfeeding too. Margaret has helped me learn a lot about caring for Alicia - how to understand her needs, speak and play with her and about her development. I have also learnt about weaning and what home cooked foods I can give. I have a good understanding of the importance of developing a good attachment with my baby and I feel that this is what we have. I did find it tiring looking after my baby in the first few months but Margaret has helped me get my baby into a good sleep routine. Alicia is a very playful baby and only cries occasionally. All my family and friends think that she is wonderful; she is surrounded by a lot of love. My partner has met Margaret and I always tell him about the things I have discussed with her. Margaret is my safety net and is always there to help me. She doesn't tell me what to do but helps me make good decisions about my baby, my life and how to be a great mum. I am excited about my future and seeing my baby grow up. My partner and I became engaged last October and next year I start university

Lauren's Story

"I am now a lot more confident in myself and want to go back into education or work"

I was 19, at college and living with my mum and sisters when I found out I was pregnant. I learned about the Family Nurse Partnership from my youth worker, who told me there was a team that could support me through my pregnancy and in the first few years of my baby's life. Throughout the pregnancy I finished my school year and sat my GCSEs. My partner thought the programme was a good idea and attended every visit. I like my nurse as she is very funny and really down to earth, which makes it easy to talk to her. She goes out of her way to help and it's great to have the same nurse each time. The programme helped me in many different ways and my nurse provided a comforting role and supported me through the hard times. I have learnt how to play with my baby, how to connect more with her and how to communicate better with my partner. Materials used during the visits helped promote our relationship with our baby and got me and my partner ready to become parents. My family nurse helped me with breastfeeding my baby and I enjoy it now. As I came nearer to my due date, we were temporarily placed out of the borough for a while, but my nurse travelled and continued to visit me. My daughter was born naturally and was a very healthy weight. Both my partner and I were overjoyed. Being on the programme has been great and I would recommend it to other young mums. The best thing is that the nurse comes to your house and does a one to one visit with you, which helps as you feel more comfortable in your own home. Other services were also provided to us, such as financial advice referrals and referral to the children's centres. I have spoken at professional stakeholder events about my experiences, and more recently at a GP event, something I never would have done in the past. I am now a lot more confident in myself and want to go back into education or work.

Emily's Story

"I loved the learning when I was pregnant and found the baby's development fascinating"

When I found out I was pregnant I was 16, living in emergency B&B accommodation and I was drinking a bottle of vodka each day. I was scared. Life was terrible for me at that time as I had been in and out of foster placements and had a bad relationship with my mum. I had only been with my partner for about a month so I didn't know if he would stick around. The biggest challenge for me was getting my housing sorted and thinking that I might have to do this by myself. My midwife told me about the Family Nurse Partnership and I thought it sounded rubbish but said I'd do it so that people would think I was doing something good for once. When the family nurse came to see me and told me more about the programme and the baby's brain I decided to give it a go. My family nurse listens to me and teaches me lots. She's honest with me and I can rely on her. My baby is on a child protection plan and my family nurse is helping me to be a good mum. Before I joined the programme I didn't even know how to change a baby's nappy. I tried breastfeeding in the early days and I wouldn't have done this without my family nurse helping me. I feel reassured that I'm doing things right with my baby. I have a good relationship with my baby. She relies on me and I am her teacher; I feel proud of my achievements as a mum. I would like to go to college and get a good job. I would also like us to be a family and hope this work with the family nurse will help us to do it.

For further information about this service contact:

Family Nurse Partnership
The Oak Tree Centre
1 Oak Drive
Huntingdon
PE29 7HN

Telephone number: 01480 418654

The national FNP website includes up to date information about FNP available at: www.fnp.nhs.uk

If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.