

What is the *Healthy Families Advantage*?



4 key principles make Healthy Families America stand out from the crowd:



Use of an In-Depth Psycho-Social Assessment: Understanding how a parent's own early experiences might impact their parenting style.



Relationship and Attachment: Recognizing that our developing relationship with a family is the conduit to service delivery.



Trauma-Informed Practice: Knowing how trauma impacts the way that adults perceive and see the world is a core element of our philosophy.



Reflective Capacity: Supporting staff to reflect upon how their feelings and experiences might impact their work.

Many families enrolled in HFA have experienced unresolved early childhood trauma including Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, which we know thanks to HFA's initial assessment process. Early childhood trauma shapes a world view that is very different from those lucky enough to be born into nurturing families and relationships.

When an infant is born, they are 100% dependent upon their parents to meet their needs. When needs are met consistently, it ultimately leads to the development of self-regulation and impulse control. But when an infant is hungry, cries, and no one comes to help, that infant learns early in life that he must manage his own needs and that he cannot count on others. If an infant's first relationship with his caregiver is unpredictable, scary or hurtful, he may come to believe that people in general are unpredictable, scary or hurtful.

Future relationships are based upon the first relationship that a child experiences; the relationship with a parent. As children grow into adults, these lessons can combine to make it more difficult to trust other adults, including home visitors.

Researchers estimate that between 60-80% of the HFA population have experienced unresolved early childhood trauma. **HFA staff implement a different approach** – one that starts with attunement and connection rather than task.

A parent cannot access critical thinking skills when feeling fear, anger or sadness. It is only when these emotions are regulated that the parent can hear and understand information that is shared.

This is why **the HFA approach puts relationships first** - we believe the best support person is one you trust. HFA staff go the extra mile to build this trusting relationship with parents so we can better support them in building a nurturing and trusting relationship with their child, often one they did not experience themselves. The parents and children HFA serves benefit most from reflective staff who build on parental competencies rather than lecturing. This builds strengths not just now but also for future generations.

That's powerful. **That's the Healthy Families Advantage.**



Healthy Families America® (HFA) is an effective and proven early childhood home visiting model with positive impacts in eight areas essential for children. Currently, nearly 100,000 families are served by over 550 Healthy Families America sites in 37 states, along with the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Canada.

HFA Impact Briefs

Read about how HFA will impact not only children and families, but ultimately your community overall. Click each icon for more information about our outcomes in these areas.



Children



Parents & Families



Community

Budgetary Resources

[Site Definitions](#)

Read the descriptions of our site definitions to understand how your site will fit into the overall structure of Healthy Families America.

[Annual Fees and Training Costs](#)

This document will walk you through the expenses you can expect to incur as you affiliate, train staff, and start serving families in your community.

[Calculate your Overall Budget](#)

This interactive worksheet will allow you to start with a sample budget (based on other HFA implementing agencies), and make it your own.



Is HFA the right fit for you? Or do you need more information?

We have many more resources that we'd be happy to share with you! We'd also love to answer any of your questions. Please let us know what we can do for you!

If you are not yet affiliated, reach out to:



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