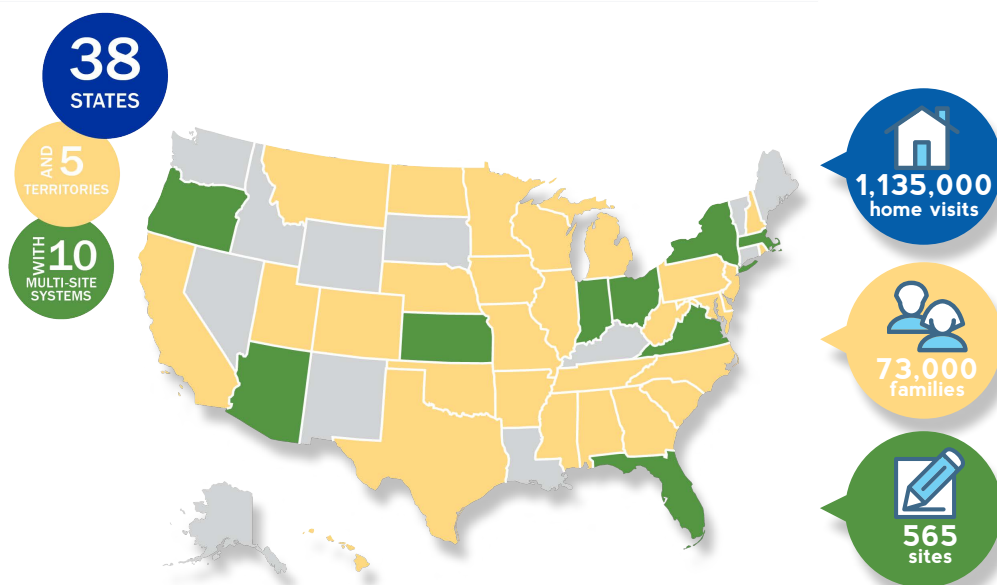


# HEALTHY FAMILIES AMERICA: OUR EVIDENCE

**Healthy Families America® (HFA)** is a leading national evidence-based home visiting model, meeting rigorous criteria for federal funding through the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.



HFA's most rigorous evidence\* comes from 12 publications of multiple randomized control trials (RCTs), with impacts in all six domains reviewed by the MIECHV program:



## School Readiness

HFA engages both parents and children to ensure kids are primed for school success. Rigorous studies report improvements in children's cognitive development at one and two years, and fewer behavior problems that can interfere with learning at two and three years<sup>4,5</sup>. These early impacts lead to success in school, with more children in gifted programs<sup>10</sup>, fewer retained in first grade<sup>11</sup>, and fewer receiving expensive special education services<sup>10</sup>.



## Maternal and Newborn Health

Rigorous studies of HFA sites report numerous health benefits for both mothers and babies. More moms in HFA reduced their alcohol use.<sup>2</sup> Children in HFA had better access to health care, evidenced by rates of health insurance at age one<sup>3</sup> and two<sup>4</sup>, connection with a primary care provider, and more completed well-baby visits.<sup>5</sup> Most notably, HFA reduced the rate of low birth weight infants among women enrolled prenatally<sup>6</sup>, a critical measure for child development.



## Child Injury and Maltreatment

Five HFA studies show significant benefits in preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including reduced child maltreatment<sup>7,8,9</sup>, physical punishment<sup>8,9</sup>, yelling<sup>2</sup>, and improved use of non-violent discipline<sup>10</sup>, based on parents' self-reports—a more comprehensive measure of child maltreatment than official cases. First-time moms who enrolled prenatally and parents with prior CPS involvement experience the greatest benefits<sup>10</sup>.



## Linkages and Referrals

HFA families typically exhibit more needs than a single program can address. HFA programs use their connection and collaboration with an array of community services to link families to needed services. Two rigorous studies provide evidence of impacts in this area, including increased referrals of families to family planning services, and increased use of community resources at 6 and 12 months<sup>2</sup>.



## Crime and Domestic Violence

Reducing domestic violence is particularly challenging, but crucial due to its close link to child maltreatment and many other negative outcomes for children and families. HFA has shown some success in this area, with reduced domestic violence perpetrated by mothers<sup>12</sup>. This outcome makes sense, as most HFA participants are moms and therefore most likely to show a change in behavior as a result of participation.



## Family Economic Self-Sufficiency

Most parents have not yet completed high school when they enroll in HFA, a critical step for future earning potential. HFA helps new moms find the motivation and resources to further their education, evidenced by three rigorous studies showing increased maternal education over one to three years.<sup>1,2,5</sup>

# 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.



**Healthy Families**  
America®

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

[f /healthyfamiliesamerica](https://www.facebook.com/healthyfamiliesamerica)

---

**M**any 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.

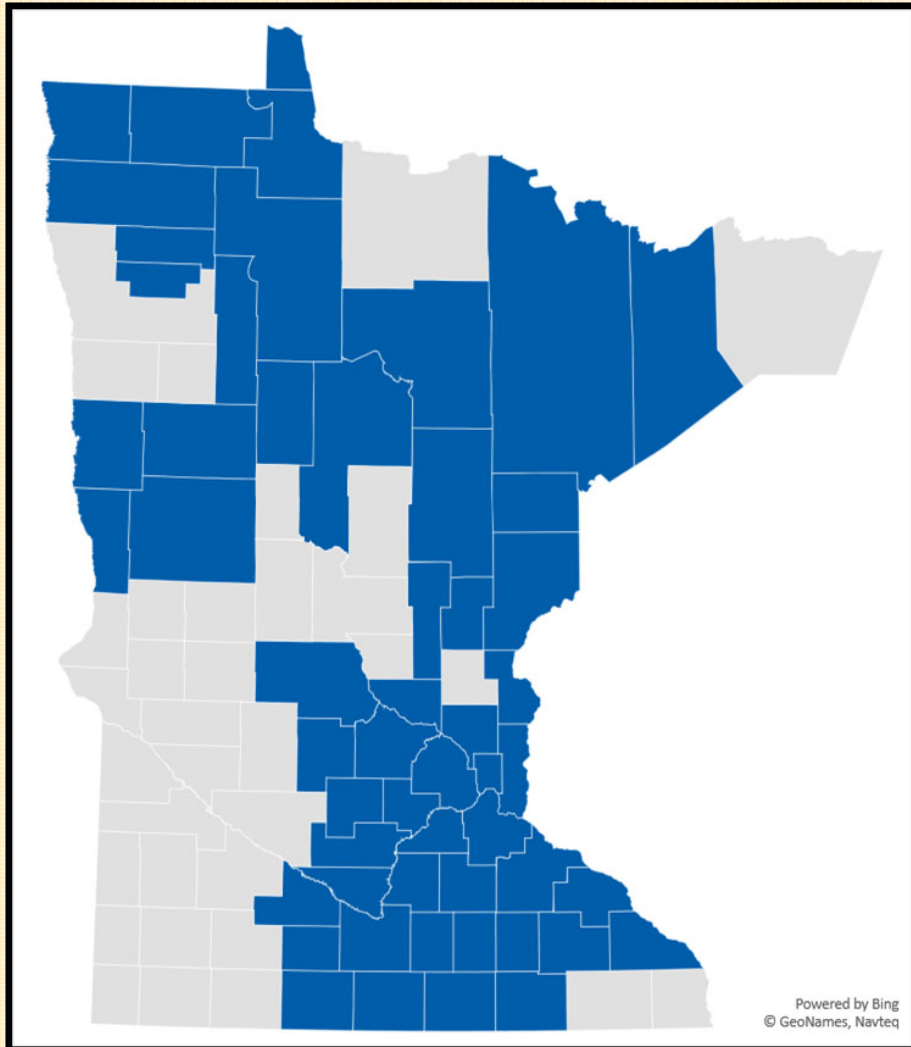
A parent cannot access critical thinking skills when feeling fear, anger or sadness. It is only when these emotions are regulated that the parent can hear and understand information that is shared.

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.**

---

# HFA in Minnesota



**19**  
affiliates

**24,474 Home visits**

**1,720 Families**



**Healthy Families**  
**Minnesota™**

HFA has 19 affiliates in the state of Minnesota. In 2017 they provided 24,474 home visits to 1,720 families. Join a network of champions for families in Minnesota by becoming a Healthy Families America affiliate today!



**See the video from the HFA site in Bloomington, MN  
that won our video contest!**

---

## Resources and Next Steps to Become an Affiliate!

### [HFA Model Requirements](#)

We've translated over two decades of research into practice, and integrated it with the realities of what we know from the field. This document outlines the basics of our model and what we expect from HFA affiliates.

### [HFA Child Welfare Adaptation](#)

With the HFA Child Welfare Adaptation you can enroll families up to 24 months of age if they are referrals from the child welfare office. Read more about this new HFA adaptation.

### [HFA Affiliation Benefits](#)

We take our responsibility to support you seriously. Read about the benefits of selecting the HFA model.

### [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. When you're ready to fill out an affiliation application, just let us know!

Contact Jen for more details about becoming a HFA affiliate!



### **Jen Baxter**

**Data and Site Development Specialist**

[jbaxter@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:jbaxter@preventchildabuse.org)

317-969-5915