

- FNP is a voluntary preventive programme for teenage mothers.
- FNP offers intensive and structured home visiting, delivered by specially trained 'family nurses', from early pregnancy until the child is two.
- The aim of FNP is to improve the health and wellbeing of our most disadvantaged families and children, and to prevent social exclusion.
- FNP is being tested across England, Scotland and now on one test site in Northern Ireland.
- Around 2,600 children are born each year to first-time mothers in more vulnerable circumstances.



What happens during pregnancy and in the first years of a baby's life has a major influence on his or her subsequent behaviour, education, employment, health and other life chances. From international research on child development, the PHA identified and subsequently introduced the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme in Northern Ireland.

## **Actions**

FNP is an intensive preventive programme for vulnerable, first time young parents. It runs from early pregnancy until the child is two. This licensed programme, developed at the University of Colorado, is thoroughly evaluated and has tangible outcomes evidenced through 30 years of research.

The programme taps into every parent's instinctive desire to protect and do the best for their child, which is particularly strong in pregnancy and around the birth of their baby.

Parents receive regular home visits from a specially trained nurse. These visits are structured, and cover areas such as personal health, environmental health, life course development, maternal role, family and friends, and health and human

services. The approach and materials used are rooted in theories of attachment, self-efficacy and human ecology.

The first phase of FNP is being introduced across the Western Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) area. The family nurses have been recruited and initial training completed. The programme was made available to eligible mothers from 24 November 2010, and several young women now receive this new service.

## **Outcomes**

This innovative programme achieves remarkable outcomes for both parents and children. These include:

- better educational attainment;
- less antisocial behaviour;
- less child abuse;
- fewer young people entering the criminal justice system.

The FNP programme also supports other priorities, including breastfeeding, smoking in pregnancy, obesity prevention, reducing inequalities, and supporting relationships. FNP has proven to be not only cost-effective, but cost-saving, with every £1 spent on the programme producing savings of £2.88 in the longer term.

## **Next steps**

The DHSSPS, PHA and Western HSCT are in the early stages of implementing this programme, supported by colleagues at the Department of Health (DH), London.

To view the Public Health Agency's response to the revaluation of Family Nurse Partnership in Northern Ireland Report click [here](#).

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