



Parents as Teachers™

Parents as Teachers and the Federal Healthy Start Program

Are you a community, county or state-level health department or social service agency considering applying for a Healthy Start Grant? Are you looking for an appropriate parenting education component? Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an excellent fit.

What is Healthy Start?

The Healthy Start program is an initiative mandated to reduce the rate of infant mortality and improve perinatal outcomes through grants to project areas with high annual rates of infant mortality, premature births or low-birth weight babies. The program began in 1991 with grants to 15 communities with infant mortality rates 1.5 to 2.5 times the national average. In 2010, 104 Healthy Start projects were providing services in 38 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Healthy Start projects address the significant disparities in the health of mothers and babies through age 2 experienced by racial and ethnic minorities in communities that face many challenges, including inadequate access to care and limited funding. The infant mortality rate in African-American women, for example, was twice the national average in 2005. All Healthy Start projects provide the following core services: direct outreach and client recruitment, health education, case management, depression screening and referral, and interconception care services for all participants.

How Parents as Teachers is a good fit

Because of the focus on perinatal health and health disparities, community, county or state level health organizations are appropriate Healthy Start Grantees. Regardless of the implementing agency, all Healthy Start grantees are required to provide parenting education. Parents as Teachers is named in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) as an evidence-based model and an effective parenting education approach.

The Parents as Teachers approach and curriculum already incorporates many of the health education topics that Healthy Start programs need to address, and the approach lends itself to incorporating additional topics as needed.

The table on the next page outlines how PAT supports the components of Healthy Start.

Typically other support services (health education, interconception care, prenatal care, smoking cessation, breastfeeding classes) are provided in addition to PAT parenting education/home visiting services in order to address all five of the approaches of Healthy Start. However, Parents as Teachers can be at the heart of Healthy Start services. Current Healthy Start

grantees that use the Parents as Teachers curriculum and approach tell us it is helpful in providing content and structure for the parenting education component.

Where to go from here

Find out more about Parents as Teachers on our website www.parentsasteachers.org.

Contact the PAT national office for assistance with incorporating Parents as Teachers into your Healthy Start application. For more information, contact Kerry Caverly at Kerry.caverly@parentsasteachers.org.

Our vision is that all children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential

FACT SHEET

(continued)

Healthy Start Approach:	How PAT Supports the Approach:
Improve women's health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Encourages access to health care services and establishment of medical home; offers general health promotion activities; provides referrals to needed medical, social, developmental, behavioral, education, and informal support services; promotes prenatal care; conducts family well-being and depression screening
Promote quality services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Coordinates with other services in the community; is a broker of needed services for families; develops linkages to community resources
Strengthen family resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Offers parenting education using a research-based curriculum; promotes healthy attachment; builds protective factors; builds parenting competence and skills; promotes health and development; provides health and developmental screening of children; prevents child abuse and neglect; promotes knowledge of child development; builds concrete supports for parents; offers father involvement strategies
Achieve collective impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > PAT Advisory Council (if implementing the PAT model) can be part of a community's Healthy Start consortium; PAT staff can be represented on the Healthy Start consortium; PAT is being implemented in many MIECHV sites and integrated into the early childhood systems in these communities and states
Increase accountability through quality improvement, performance monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Offers structured QI and performance monitoring through Quality Assurance Guidelines and quality endorsement process (if implementing the Parents as Teachers model)