

Home Visiting & Parenting Education Communications Toolkit

General Messaging: Early childhood home visiting and parenting education (HVPE) programs strengthen the relationship between parents and children, increasing parenting skills and building confidence. By supporting families, these programs ensure children are ready to learn, improve child health and keep children safe. Providing access to home visiting and parenting education to all North Carolina families would extend these benefits across the state. That's why we need #HVPE4All.

- According to a [landscape analysis](#) conducted by the Jordan Institute for Families, there are 358,000 infants and toddlers in NC who could benefit from home visiting, but current programs serve less than 1% of all children in the state.
- There is an acute shortage of home visiting programs in NC. Many communities have no programs at all, and 72% of existing programs have a waiting list for services.
- [As much as \\$5.70](#) is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting. These programs would save NC money on expensive social problems such as child abuse, poor academic performance, unemployment, poverty, and crime.
- Home visiting improves prenatal health and birth outcomes and also improves child health outcomes by increasing immunization rates, decreasing ER visits, and decreasing rates of abuse and neglect.

Other Resources

Think Babies HVPE toolkit with images: <https://ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/think-babies-nc/think-babies-nc-supported-families-social-media-toolkit/>

Smart Start HVPE System Planning Site: <http://www.smartstart.org/hvpe>

Home Visiting and Parenting Education System Action Plan: <https://www.smartstart.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NC-HVPE-Action-Plan-Full.pdf>

Social Media Tips and Templates

Below are social media posts you can use to help spread the word on your social media platforms. Remember to use #HVPE4All and tag your local representative to bring awareness to the importance of supporting home visiting. Photos and images also help to attract attention. Don't forget to personalize your posts by showing an example of home visiting efforts in your community!

Twitter handles for NC HV/PE programs (follow, tag, and retweet as appropriate):

- @pcanc
- @FC_DurhamNC
- @Family_Connects
- @NFP_nursefamily
- @NatIPAT
- @NatlHeadStart
- @childfirstinc
- @book_harvest
- @HFAatPCA
- @NationalHVRC

Hashtags: Be sure to use hashtags on your social media posts to connect our efforts and boost the messaging overall.

- #HVPE4All
- #ncpol
- #ncga
- #ThinkBabiesNC
- #ECE
- #earlychildhood

Links:

[Governor Cooper's Proclamation about Parenting Education](#)

[Video of Proclamation Reading – English](#)

Video of Proclamation Reading – Spanish (coming soon!)

Twitter Posts about Home Visiting & Parenting Education

- Home visiting and parenting education programs help to build protective factors that
 - ✓ reduce the risk of abuse and neglect
 - ✓ strengthen family relationships
 - ✓ promote children’s healthy development.That’s why we need #HPVE4All! #ThinkBabiesNC
- There are 358,000 infants and toddlers in NC who could benefit from home visiting, but programs currently serve less than 1% of all children in the state. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Home visiting offers a huge return on investment. Every \$1 saves NC nearly \$6 by preventing expensive problems like child abuse, unemployment, poverty, and crime. It’s a win for babies, families, communities, and our state’s economy! #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Home visiting is proven to impact prenatal health & birth outcomes. This is critical in NC, where infant & maternal mortality rates are 2-3 X higher for Black babies/moms. Early services can help all families thrive & give all babies a healthy start. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Home visitors are providing a bridge to families for concrete and emotional supports during the COVID-19 pandemic. In NC, only 1% of families that could be served are, and in rural counties there are even fewer supports available. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
<https://bit.ly/2TNI5PS>
- BIPOC families often face systemic barriers in accessing health care, affordable housing, stable employment, and other needs. Home visiting and parenting education can help eliminate racial disparities in the health and wellbeing of children and families. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Parents play the lead role in their children’s healthy development, but all parents are stretched in those early months and years. Parenting education programs can help parents

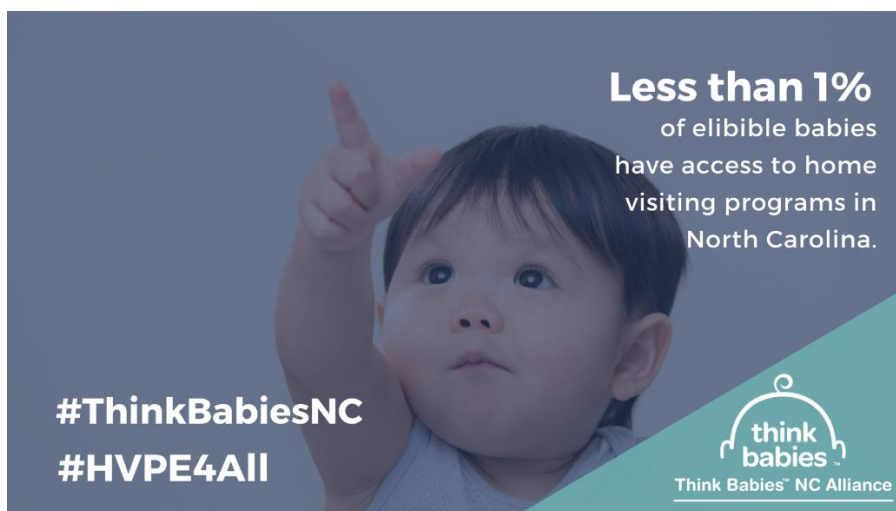
learn skills to mitigate stress and support their babies' growth & learning. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC

- NC has a plan to build a statewide home visiting and parenting education system. Learn more and help support families across the state. <http://www.smartstart.org/hvpe> #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC

Twitter Posts About February's Proclamation

- Thank you @NC_Governor Cooper for proclaiming Feb. Parenting Education Awareness Month! Expanding access to home visiting & parenting ed programs supports the health & well-being of children & families across NC. [\(link to proclamation/video\)](#) #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Feb. has been proclaimed as Parenting Education Awareness Month! Thanks @NC_Governor for recognizing the importance of supporting our state's youngest children and their families. [\(link to proclamation/video\)](#) #HVPE4ALL #ThinkBabiesNC

Twitter Images





Facebook Posts About Home Visiting and Parenting Education

- A stable, secure relationship with a nurturing, caring adult is a key factor in young children's development, and children have a better, healthier start when parents and caregivers have the support and skills needed to raise them. Home visiting and parenting education programs help to build protective factors that
 - ✓ reduce the risk of abuse and neglect
 - ✓ strengthen family relationships
 - ✓ promote children's healthy development.That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina!
#HPVE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- There are 358,000 infants and toddlers in North Carolina who could benefit from home visiting, but programs currently serve less than 1% of all children in the state. There are many communities in our state that don't have access to a single program. It's time to expand access to these critical programs that support the health and well-being of children and families. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Home visiting has a proven positive impact on prenatal health and birth outcomes. This is especially critical for families of color in North Carolina, where infant and maternal mortality rates are 2-3 times higher for Black babies and moms. Home visiting provides early services that can help all families thrive and give all babies a healthy start. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- Parents play the lead role in their children's healthy development, but all parents are stretched in the earliest months and years of their children's lives. Parenting education programs can help parents learn skills to mitigate stress, offer support and social connections, and increase knowledge of child development – all of which helps to prevent child abuse and neglect. #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC

Facebook Posts About February's Proclamation

- Thank you @NCGovernor for proclaiming February Parenting Education Awareness Month! Expanding access to home visiting and parenting education programs is a critical way to support the health and well-being of children and families across NC. "WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the burden on parents and families, with worries about health, job loss, economic security, and social isolation contributing to stress and anxiety in the home." [\(link to proclamation/video\)](#) #HVPE4All #ThinkBabiesNC
- February has been proclaimed as Parenting Education Awareness Month! Thank you @NCGovernor for recognizing the importance of supporting our state's youngest children and their families. "Resources that educate parents and caregivers are vital to positive childhood development and can help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect and strengthen family relationships." [\(link to proclamation/video\)](#) #HVPE4ALL #ThinkBabiesNC

Facebook Images

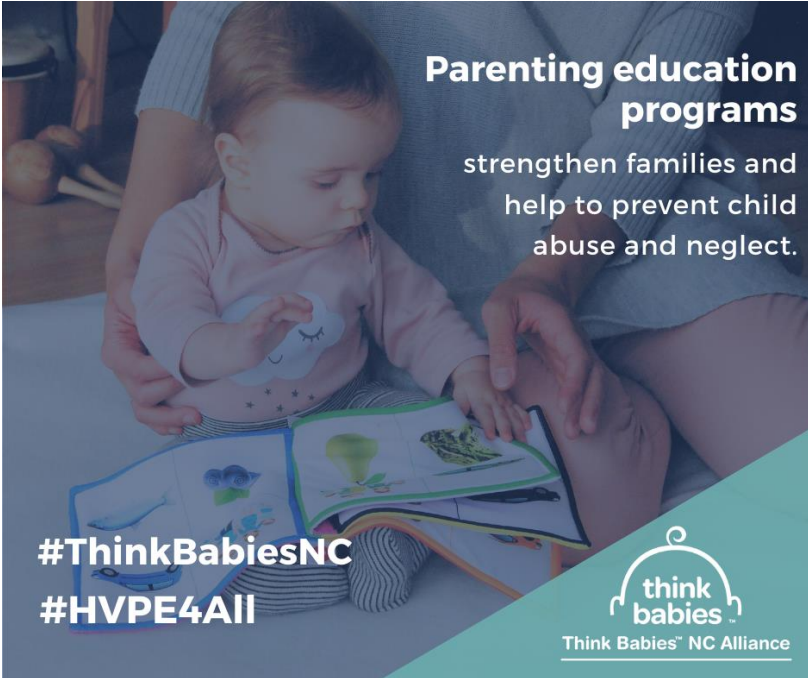




Less than 1%
of eligible babies
have access to home
visiting programs in
North Carolina.

#ThinkBabiesNC
#HVPE4All

think babies
Think Babies™ NC Alliance



**Parenting education
programs**
strengthen families and
help to prevent child
abuse and neglect.

#ThinkBabiesNC
#HVPE4All

think babies
Think Babies™ NC Alliance

Other Ideas for Social Media Posts

Parenting Education

- Parents play the lead role in their children’s healthy development, but all parents are stretched in the earliest months and years of their children’s lives. Parenting education programs can help parents learn skills and strategies to mitigate stress and enjoy their children. #HVPE4All
- Parenting education programs promote skills to foster social-emotional development and help to prevent, reduce, and manage challenging behaviors. #HVPE4All
- Parenting education programs are a key strategy for child abuse prevention. Evidenced-based programs build parents’ resilience, offer support and social connections, and increase knowledge of child development, all of which benefits both children and families. #HVPE4All

COVID-19 Impacts

- Home visitors are providing a bridge to families for concrete and emotional supports during the COVID-19 pandemic. In NC, only 1% of families that could be served are, and in rural counties there are even fewer supports available. #HVPE4All <https://bit.ly/2TNI5PS>
- “The closure of the services families rely on — as well as stress from financial hardship and social isolation — has left children and their caregivers in unstable and unsafe conditions.”. <https://bit.ly/2TNI5PS> #HVPE4All
- Home visitors have shifted to telehealth to preserve the lifeline of social connections and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. #HVPE4All <https://bit.ly/2BeXWRf>
- Families are balancing work, childcare, and school with little support. Home visitors provide concrete needs – like diapers and food – along with nurturing, supportive encouragement. #HVPE4All <https://bit.ly/2BeXWRf>

Don’t forget to personalize your posts by showing an example of home visiting efforts in your community! See below for examples:

- In the Blue Ridge mountains, home visiting providers purchased 30+ tablets and data/internet service for families to connect virtually for virtual home visits. #HVPE4All
- In Buncombe County, home visitors worked creatively to establish a short-term plan for families to access better Internet access. #HVPE4All
- Wake County Smart Start’s Nurse-Family Partnership supported a teen mother to ensure she had the academic support needed to be successful. She’s now pursuing her own nursing degree. #HVPE4All

Contacting Legislators

Email or call your local legislators or those on the key committees listed below to let them know the importance of home visiting and parenting education. A draft email is included below, but you should personalize with your own experiences. The more personal, the better! You can also find your legislators on social media and tag them in your posts.

- Find your legislators: <https://www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>
- House Appropriations – Health and Human Services: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/HouseStanding/10>
- House Health: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/HouseStanding/26>
- Senate Appropriations – Health and Human Services: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/143>
- Senate Health Care: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/139>

Draft Legislator Email:

Dear Rep./Sen. XXX,

My name is FirstName LastName, and I work at XXX/live in your district. Early childhood home visiting and parenting education programs strengthen the relationship between parents and children, increasing parenting skills and building confidence. These programs ensure children are ready to learn, improve child health and keep children safe. In fact, as much as \$5.70 is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting. That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina!

Please support funding for home visiting and parenting education programs to support families across North Carolina. For more information, visit [Think Babies NC](#) or Smart Start's site on [Home Visiting and Parenting Education System Planning](#).

Thank you for your support of children and families.

Press Tips

When the media publishes a story, five factors must be considered: timing, significance, proximity, prominence, and human interest. When pitching a story to a reporter, incorporate stories that address at least once of these factors. Successful pitching is less about having a fancy press release and more about having a good story. Find your local newspaper at <https://www.ncpress.com/directory/>.

Timing:

- Stories need to be timely. Stories have to be even more timely when posting to social media. If it happened two weeks ago, it's old news!
- When pitching a story about home visiting, connect the current COVID-19 crisis and the increased challenges brought on by the pandemic to home visiting. The current increased need for vulnerable populations, will make the story timely.

Significance:

- How many people does the topic affect? Home visiting affects thousands of families in North Carolina and with even more children and families needing resources due to COVID-19, even more families will need to be served. This makes topics associated with funding and legislative flexibility a significant topic.

Proximity:

- Stories that are close to us have more of an impact. When pitching a story in North Carolina, mention North Carolina home visiting and parent education statistics specifically. When connecting with local media, reference the local home visiting stories, challenges, and statistics. Connect the story to the location!

Prominence:

- People, places, and organizations that are already newsworthy and prominent in the media will have an impact on a story. Reference well known organizations and home visiting studies if possible. If a larger news outlet has reported on the home visiting sector or if there is a related topic that has been reported on, share the story and connect it to your message.

Human Interest:

- Share stories that appeal to emotion to spread awareness towards your organization and message. Human interest stories don't have to be as timely or affect a large number of people.

Additional tips are available at: <https://training.npr.org/2017/01/24/what-makes-a-good-pitch-npr-editors-weigh-in/>.

Letters to the Editor

Another great way to increase visibility of HVPE, especially among thought letters, is through letters to the editor. Most newspapers have online forms or email addresses where you can send letters. Please use the link above to look for your local paper. Typically, there will be a word limit, and letters must usually be signed. Be sure to follow these rules to get your letter in the paper!

Draft Letter

Dear Editor,

Young children and families are facing unprecedented stress during the pandemic. Early childhood home visiting and parenting education programs provide critical supports to help address these challenges. Research shows that these programs keep children safe, ensure children are ready to learn and improve child health. In fact, as much as \$5.70 is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting.

North Carolina has a plan to create a statewide system of home visiting and parenting education. As we work to keep kids learning and help families recover from the pandemic, this work is more important than ever. That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina!

For more information and to help support children and families in our community, please visit www.smartstart.org/hvpe.