



The Family Connects model is an evidence-based, universal approach to supporting newborns and their families that is based on the highly-successful Durham Connects program.

Family Connects International is part of Duke University's [Center for Child and Family Policy](#) and works in partnership with the [Center for Child and Family Health](#).

We believe that every family has needs around the birth of a child. The needs are different in different families, but nobody is fully prepared for a baby. In communities where the program is available, Family Connects bridges the gap between parents and community resources, and has been shown to improve family well-being, including reducing emergency medical care for infants and improving parent behavior and child care selection.

The program provides between one and three nurse home visits to every family with a newborn beginning at about three weeks of age, regardless of income or demographic risk. Using a tested screening tool, the nurse measures newborn and maternal health and assesses strengths and needs to link the family to community resources.

In some cases, Family Connects recommends eligible families enroll in long-term programs, such as [Healthy Families America](#), [Early Head Start](#), [Nurse Family Partnership](#) and others. This makes Family Connects an excellent gateway to more intensive family support services.

The goals of Family Connects are to:

- Connect with every mother - along with the father and other family members - in their home after the birth of a newborn. The nurse home visits are designed to share in the joy of a new baby, assess unique family risks, and respond to immediate needs for support and guidance.
- Offer supportive guidance to families in several factors, responding specifically to questions about newborn care.
- Link families to community services based on their individual needs and preferences.
- Help new parents connect with their infant, providing them with the confidence and support needed to sustain infant and parent health, child development and overall family well-being.



Family Connects parents say:

“We loved our nurse, she was very friendly. She provided support, listened and gave suggestions. She was very knowledgeable and came with resources ... and she was a phone call away. Family Connects is a wonderful program for anyone.”

“You are more comfortable [in your own home] and you feel like you can ask any sort of question, which is different than when you’re in a clinical setting.”

“Family Connects is such an important service to our community. Reaching out to new parents, especially first-time moms and their babies, is like providing a lifeline in some cases ... to feel supported and “not alone” in the community.”



Family Connects

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