

## Babies don't come with an instruction manual...

*Home Visiting programs help parents raise safe, healthy and educated children.*



- Alabama consistently ranks in the bottom of national statistics measuring the wellbeing of our children. Too many children are born at an unhealthy, low weight. Too many die a preventable death due to neglect. And, too many enter school behind and are never able to catch up.
- Ninety percent of a child's brain is developed by the age of five. The habits they develop in the first five years will influence their outcomes for the rest of their lives.
- The earlier that we can work with children and engage their healthy development, sense of creativity and inquisitiveness, the more likely we will be able to help them succeed.

## Parents are a child's first teacher



- We believe that it is a family's responsibility to raise their children to be successful, healthy adults. However, some parents simply do not know what they need to do to help their children succeed.
- No child comes with an instruction manual, and every parent will face a situation in which they will turn to others for help. Some lack an example to model their parenting after. Others simply don't know that they are exhibiting behavior that will impact the development of their child.
- While there are many classroom and center-based programs that families can enroll in during their child's early years, there are few programs available that focus exclusively on meeting families where they are – in their home. That is where Home Visiting can help.

## What is Home Visiting?



- Home Visiting in Alabama is a free, voluntary program to support parents at home and help them learn how to be more engaged in their child's life.
- From sharing best practices on how to parent to encouraging mothers and fathers to be their child's first teachers, evidence-based, high-quality Home Visiting programs **empower** parents to be more active in their child's life.
- These classes are held in a family's living room. As a result, parent educators build relationships with families that can only be formed in the home. This bond enables the parent educators to assess a family's situation, better understand what their needs are and connect them to the right resources.
- While other early childhood programs focus on the child, Home Visiting seeks to engage the parent first. They teach parents what to do with their child – whether they need advice on discipline or on how to instill a foundation for continuous learning – so that parents can reinforce these lessons with their child on their own long after the parent educators leave.



- The results speak for themselves. High-quality, voluntary Home Visiting programs have led to:
  - Improved health outcomes for mothers and newborns;
  - Reduction in the total number of preventable child injuries
  - Reduction in cases of child abuse & neglect
  - Improved school readiness

## State agencies that administer Home Visiting in Alabama

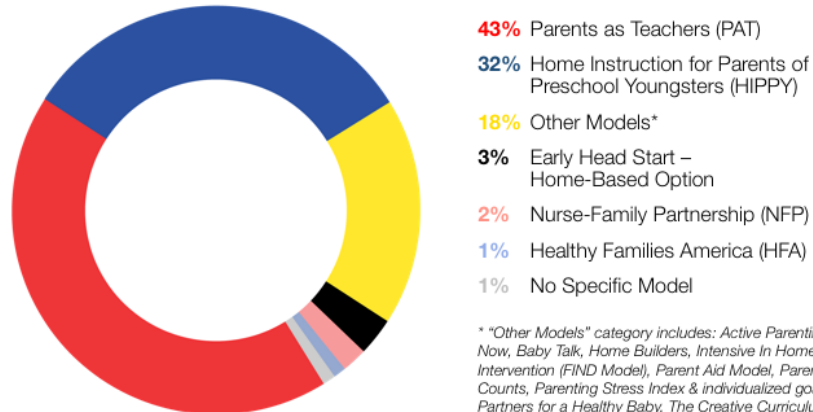


ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF  
Early Childhood  
Education



- The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education and the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention partner to provide state grants to local communities.
- Local leaders determine which Home Visiting model best addresses their unique needs.
- The state complements these efforts by working with local communities to ensure the successful implementation of these programs and adherence to quality across county lines.

## Local communities select the program model of their choice



- Every community is different, and every family has their own unique needs. The State of Alabama enables local communities to choose the specific Home Visiting program they want to operate based on their assessment of the area's needs. The state's role is to help ensure that each program adheres to that model's specific guidelines for quality and to ensure that the program is doing what it says it is striving to do -- improving the wellbeing of the children.
- This graphic shows a breakdown of Alabama Home Visiting models, according to the number of children enrolled in each program type.
- The state provides grants to local communities for 14 different models. The most popular models in Alabama are Parents as Teachers (43 percent of all children enrolled) and HIPPY (32 percent of all children enrolled).

## Home Visiting in Alabama



**5,220**  
families served

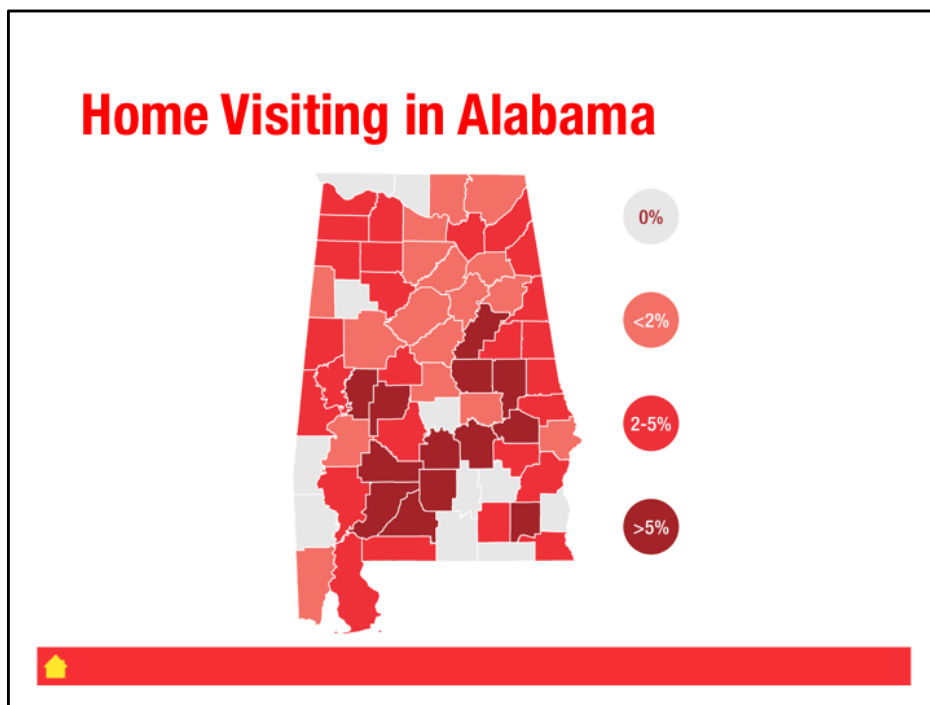


**6,280**  
children served



- 84% of Alabama's counties participate in Home Visiting programs, but the programs only reaches two percent of all children ages birth to 5 in the state of Alabama.
- Combined, the Home Visiting programs in Alabama only served 5,220 families and 6,280 children in 2015.

## Home Visiting in Alabama



This graphic represents the percent of children under the age of five that are served by a Home Visiting model in each county. Of the 55 counties that had Home Visiting in 2015:

- 18 counties serve less than the state average of 2 percent of children under the age of five.
- 25 counties serve between the state average and 5 percent of children under the age of five.
- 13 counties serve more than five percent of children under the age of five.
- No county in Alabama serves more than a quarter of children under the age of five.
- St. Clair County serves the smallest percent of children under the age of five.
- Perry County served the highest percentage of children under the age of five with 23.9 percent.



## **Home Visiting led to an increase in:**

- number of pregnant women beginning prenatal care during the first trimester
- percent of mothers screened for depression
- percent of children screened for physical, social, cognitive and educational developmental delays
- percent of mothers who are screened for and reporting domestic violence
- number of parents enrolled in a program to obtain a high school diploma or GED



### **Among program participants in Alabama, Home Visiting has led to an increase in:**

- pregnant women beginning prenatal care during the first trimester
- mothers screened for depression
- children screened for physical, social, cognitive and educational developmental delays
- mothers who are screened for and reporting domestic violence
- parents enrolled in a program to obtain a high school diploma or GED

Expanding funding for Home Visiting will enable more families in Alabama to participate and provide better opportunities for their children from birth to five years old.

Learn more at [smartstartalabama.org](http://smartstartalabama.org)



- Only a small percentage of families interested in participating are able to do so.
- The program is too small to move the needle gauging the well-being of Alabama's children.
- Will you help us.

