

# **Implementing Nurturing Parenting Programs (Birth to Age 5)**

## **Program Model Overview**

### **Implementation Support**

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are trauma informed, family-based programs designed for the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect. As a family, parents and their children learn positive and caring nurturing skills. Family Development Resources, Inc. provides programmatic materials, training, and ongoing technical assistance to support program implementation. Training and support are also provided by Family Nurturing Centers, International which are organizations licensed by the Family Nurturing Center's national office to provide training, technical assistance, and services by nationally and internationally recognized trainers and consultants.

### **Theoretical Model**

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are family-based prevention and intervention programs designed to develop nurturing parenting practices. The program is competency-based. Each group- and home-based session has stated competencies designed to measure when parents have acquired a new understanding and demonstrate new skills that represent nurturing parenting strategies and practices. The underlying theoretical assumptions of the Nurturing Parenting Programs are the following:

1. Human behavior is multidimensional. The positive and negative impacts of life's past events shape our cognitive, emotional, and neurological responses to current events.
2. Positive and negative life events carry both cognitive and affective cellular memories. Over time, repeated events create neural pathways. These neural pathways strongly influence behavior.
3. Nurturing Parenting instruction is based on proven psycho-educational and cognitive-behavioral approaches to learning. In these approaches, awareness, understanding, and acceptance are emphasized and old patterns of thought and behavior are replaced with newer, healthier ones.

4. Nurturing Parenting embraces the theory of re-parenting. In the practice of re-parenting, new patterns of behavior replace older, destructive ones over time. Long-term dysfunctional patterns of behavior require long-term interventions that allow new patterns of thought and behavior to incubate and take hold.
5. Nurturing oneself as a man or a woman is paramount to becoming a nurturing father or mother. Parents who take care of themselves are better suited to take care of another person.
6. Parenting is a role with defined responsibilities that promote the growth and development of their sons and daughters into healthy and caring children. When parenting is perceived as a 24/7 obligation, parents lose sight of their own needs as men and women and begin to resent the basic needs of their children. Men and women who make the commitment to regularly get their own needs met are better able to meet the needs of their children.
7. Parenting beliefs are learned early in life from the experiences a child has during the process of growing up. Beliefs are formulated from four factors: perceptions of events occurring throughout childhood; knowledge and understanding of these events; the emotional impact the events have in developing a perception of reality; and the perceived value the events have generated from the social consensus and support given by family members and close friends.
8. For parents to change longstanding maladaptive beliefs regarding parenting, and consequently their parenting behaviors, long-term, family-based education provided in competency based lessons offered in a sequential manner is required.

## **Target Population**

The Nurturing Parenting Programs target families at risk for abuse and neglect with children from prenatal to age 18. There are three general Nurturing Parenting Programs that specifically target children birth to age 5 that can be delivered primarily in the home (several adaptations and enhancements have been developed; see Adaptations and Enhancements for more information):

- Nurturing Program for Parents and Their Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers

- Nurturing Program for Young Parents and their Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers
- Nurturing Skills for Families Program

## **Targeted Outcomes**

The long-term goal of the Nurturing Parenting Programs is to stop the intergenerational cycle of child maltreatment. This is accomplished through empowering family self-sufficiency; increasing parental knowledge and skills in child development; and increasing parent-child attachments and positive family experiences.

## **Program Model Components**

Nurturing Programs for adult parents or young (teen) parents and their infants, toddlers and preschoolers can be delivered in three models: 1. Home-based only; 2. Group-based only; 3. Combination group and home-based.

## **Program Model Intensity and Length**

Depending upon the model selected, the home-based only model for adult and young parents and their infants, toddlers and preschoolers contains up to 55 home sessions each lasting 1.5 hours. The group-based only model program contains 27 sessions each lasting 2.5 hours. And the combination group-based and home-based model program contains 16 group sessions and a minimum 7 home sessions.

## **Location**

Nurturing Parenting Programs (including home-based programs) are currently implemented in all 50 states plus Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Chile, England, France, Greenland, Guam, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, Scotland, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, the Virgin Islands, and the West Indies.

## **Adaptations and Enhancements**

The Nurturing Parenting Programs have been adapted or enhanced to serve families with specific cultural backgrounds or life circumstances. The following adaptations and enhancements serve families with children birth to age 5 and are designed to be delivered in the home:

Crianza con Cariño para Padres y Niños is designed to meet the needs of Spanish-speaking families with children from birth to age 5. Program materials and assessment tools have been developed and normed for Hispanic families.

Nurturing America's Military Families is designed to improve the nurturing parenting skills of parents in the military with children from birth to age 11.

The Nurturing Program for Young Parents and Their Children is designed to teach young parents infant and child massage, developmental milestones of growth, how to have fun with their children, nurturing parenting routines, and ways to help children build their self-esteem and self-concept.

Nurturing Skills for Teen Parents enables home visitors to assemble a curriculum based on the assessed needs of teenage parents using 59 individual lessons presented in 16 different skill areas from the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

The Nurturing Program for Parents and their Children with Special Needs & Health Challenges is designed to help parents and their children with chronic or life threatening medical conditions, developmental delays, life-altering disorders and disabilities. Program can be offered in a group or home-based setting.

## **Prerequisites for Implementation**

### **Type of Implementing Agency**

Nurturing Parenting Programs have been delivered in many settings, including community agencies, departments of mental health and social service, parent education programs, prisons, residential care facilities, and schools.

### **Staffing Requirements**

In group-based programs, two professionals or paraprofessionals facilitate the parent group and, if there is a children's component, at least two staff facilitate the children's program. Home-based programs require a single home visitor to facilitate sessions.

A program Coordinator is strongly recommended for multiple site locations.

## **Staff Education and Experience**

The Nurturing Parenting Programs can be implemented by professionals or paraprofessionals with training in fields such as social work, education, and psychology and related experience.

It is strongly recommended that families involved in the child welfare system are served by bachelor level staff with at least two years of experience in working with high risk families. It is further recommended that supervisors have a strong clinical background to provide reflective supervision, assist staff in monitoring the progress of families, help staff overcome barriers, and monitor legal documentation. Paraprofessionals may be used with regular and consistent supervision.

Facilitators and home visitors need to be empathic, emotionally stable, accepting of their own personal background, and dependable. They must also have good self-esteem and self-concept; knowledge and acceptance of alternatives to corporal punishment; skills in behavior management; appropriate expectations of preschoolers, children, and adolescents; the ability to act as a professional; the ability to conduct group process; the ability to act as part of a team; and self-assurance to run activities with music, play, and art.

## **Supervision Requirements**

Weekly supervision for home visiting staff is strongly encouraged. This supervision may be conducted through phone or face to face contact. Supervision needs to be strength based, reflective in nature and address success and struggles with current case load and/or staff.

## **Staff Ratio Requirements**

The ratio of home visitors to families is determined by the agency supervisor. Because many of the families experience multiple challenges, each agency should ensure that the ratio is suitable for the competency level of the home visitor and demands of families. Agency accreditation requirements should follow their accrediting body requirements.

## **Data Systems/Technology Requirements**

One DVD player is preferred so home visitors and families can view instructional DVDs.

Assessment tools are administered as paper copies and entered into a HIPPA compliant, encrypted and secure data storage system.

## **Training to Support Implementation**

### **Requirements for Certification**

Two to three day Facilitator Training is recommended. Sites implementing the Nurturing Parenting Programs are not required to receive certification. Optional program implementation workshops are offered by Family Development Resources, Inc.

### **Pre-Service Staff Training**

The Program Implementation and Facilitation Workshop is a three-day workshop that focuses on the philosophy of nurturing parenting, the different Nurturing Parenting Programs available, research supporting the programs, the different delivery models of the programs, levels of prevention as they relate to the number of sessions (dosage), the use of assessment and evaluation in ensuring the program's success, and how to implement and facilitate the parents' and the children's programs. Four- and five-day workshops are also available to meet the training needs of less experienced professionals. The additional time enables trainers to offer participants more hands-on practice in implementing program activities.

Training that focuses on specific Nurturing Parenting Programs adaptations and enhancements is also available.

### **In-Service Staff Training**

No in-service training is mandated. Ongoing technical assistance is available (see below).

### **Training Materials**

Staff who are participating in Implementation and Facilitators training workshops are provided needed materials. Staff may consider ordering program materials they tend to implement. The staff at Family Development Resources will help in selecting the most appropriate materials for your agency.

## **Qualified Trainers**

Family Development Resources, Inc., grants recognition to trainers/consultants with a history of facilitating Nurturing Parenting Programs who have been trained as a trainer/consultant by Family Development Resources, Inc. Trainers/consultants have had at least two years of experience facilitating the Nurturing Programs; attended a facilitator workshop and training-of-trainers workshop conducted by a recognized trainer/consultant; displayed expertise in the programs; and provided two letters of reference in support of their knowledge and skills. Trainers/consultants must also fulfill ongoing activity requirements. Names and addresses of trainers/consultants are published in the Nurturing Parenting Programs' website and provided to people requesting implementation assistance, product information, and training.

## **Technical Assistance**

Technical assistance is provided by the network of Family Nurturing Centers and certified trainers/consultants.

## **Materials and Forms to Support Implementation**

### **Operations Manuals**

The Nurturing Parenting Program typically requires an implementation manual, an instructional guide, and an activities manual for home visitors and group facilitators. Additional resource materials, guides, certificates, DVDs, games, and instructional aids may also be required or recommended depending upon the specific program.

### **Service Delivery Forms**

Parents usually receive a parent handbook and may also receive additional handbooks, pamphlets, and resources depending upon the specific program. Each parent receives a Family Nurturing Journal that helps it track its learning lesson by lesson. Each home visitor monitors learning successes through the Family Nurturing Plan. Together the parents and home visitor form a partnership in ensuring new parenting competencies have been attained. In a competency-based program, lessons state the skills and knowledge to be learned. Sessions are the meetings between parents and

the home visitors. It may take several sessions for the parents to learn the lesson competencies.

## **Assessment Tools**

The Nurturing Parenting Program uses several assessment tools:

- The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2) is an inventory designed to assess parenting and childrearing attitudes and provide an index of risk for practicing behaviors related to child abuse and neglect. The tool is normed for English- and Spanish-speaking families.
- The Family Nurturing Plan and the Family Nurturing Journal are two process evaluation documents that ensure the parents and their home visitor are working together in learning new skills.
- The Nurturing Skills Competency Scale (NSCS) is an inventory designed to assess the knowledge and use of nurturing parenting concepts, practices, and strategies. When used in conjunction with the AAPI-2, the NSCS provides an index of low, moderate, or high risk for child maltreatment.
- At the end of each home visit or group session, parents complete a Program Evaluation Form rating how well they learned the lesson competencies. Home visitors also complete an evaluation form stating how well the parents have learned the competencies. The next home visit might have a repeat of the lesson competencies if learning has not occurred.

## **Curriculum**

A typical 1.5-hour home-based session follows a consistent format: icebreaker and home practice check-in (10 minutes); parenting skills and self-nurturing activities (45 minutes); home practice exercise (5 minutes); family nurturing time (25 minutes); and infant, toddler, and preschooler activities (5 minutes), and it concludes with a family hug. Although each program covers topics in a different way, parent education is generally designed to build self-awareness, positive concept/self-esteem, and levels of empathy; teach alternatives to hitting and yelling; enhance family communication and awareness of needs; replace abusive behaviors with nurturing behaviors; and promote healthy physical and emotional development.



## **Available Languages**

Nurturing Parenting Programs materials have been translated into Arabic, Hmong, Kreyol (Haitian), and Spanish. A number of cultural adaptations have also been developed (see Adaptations and Enhancements).

## **Fidelity Measurement**

The Family Nurturing Plan, the Family Nurturing Journal, the session Evaluation Forms, attendance, completion of the Home Practice Assignments and participation in session activities are all documented to ensure parents are successful in learning skills. The program staff review data to ensure parents are acquiring new skills.

## **Fidelity Standards**

Fidelity standards are not monitored by Family Development Resources, Inc. staff, but rather are the responsibility of the individual agencies. Checklists are available for consideration and adaptation to agency needs.

## **Estimated Costs of Implementation**

### **Average Cost per Family**

The average cost per family varies depending upon the length of the program (number of home visits), the salary of the home visitor, transportation costs, and other factors.

### **Labor Costs**

Labor costs vary by agency and depend upon the type of staff employed by sites.

### **Purchase of Program Model or Operating License**

No charges are incurred for an operating license to implement the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

### **Materials and Forms**

The costs of the full program materials for home-based Nurturing Parenting Programs models follow:

1. Nurturing Program for Parents and Their Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers: \$1,639.85 - \$1,864.85
2. Nurturing Program for Teen Parents and Families Program: \$1,550.85 - \$1,775.85
3. Nurturing Skills for Families Program: \$1,924.95 - \$2,149.95
4. Nurturing Skills for Teen Parents Program: \$1,109.80 - \$1,334.80
5. Nurturing America's Military Families Program: \$1,334.95 - \$1,559.95
6. Spanish Speaking Parents & Their Children Birth to 12 years Program: \$1,574.95 - \$1,799.95

## **Training and Technical Assistance**

Three-day Nurturing Parenting Program facilitator training costs \$250 to \$400 per person depending upon location and trainer.

Email and telephone consultation is free. A toll free number is available to assist customers in program implementation. Over 100 trainers and consultants are available to assist staff on all issues related to program implementation, facilitating sessions, and gathering and interpreting program assessment data.

## **Infrastructure**

No information is available about the costs of data systems used to support implementation.

## **Recruitment and Retention**

No information is available about the costs of recruiting and retaining families.

## **Notes**

The information contained on this page was last updated in April 2015. [Recommended Further Reading](#) lists the sources for this information. In

addition, the information contained in this profile was reviewed for accuracy by Family Development Resources on April 9, 2015. HomVEE reserves the right to edit the profile for clarity and consistency.

## More Information About the Model

### Where to Find Out More

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<http://nurturingparenting.com>

<http://nurturingparenting.com/training-workshops.html>

### Recommended Further Reading

The following references were sources for the implementation profile or were recommended by the program developer for further reading.

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*Fourteen Step Reference Guide for Implementing Home Visits, Assessments and Evaluation for the 55 Session Home Visitation Program.*

12. Family Development Resources, Inc. (2013). *Nurturing Program for Parents and Their Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers® Family Nurturing Plan for Home Visitors of the 55 Session Home-Based Program*.
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16. Family Development Resources, Inc. (2015). *Training of trainers workshops*. Retrieved April 9, 2015, from <http://nurturingparenting.com/training-workshops2.html>
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