



## Parents as Teachers™

### HOW DOES PARENTS AS TEACHERS SUPPORT FAMILY, FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR CARE?

Parents as Teachers uses a relationship-based approach and home visitation model that helps children grow up healthy, safe and ready to learn in all environments.

#### What is FFN care?

Child care provided by a family, friend or neighbor in an informal home setting is the most popular type of child care across all socioeconomic groups. Many working parents prefer this method of care because of its flexibility, consistent environment, and the special bonds that already exist between the caregiver and child.

#### What are the challenges with FFN care?

Although FFN care can be a safe and comfortable choice for families, these informal settings do not always address health and safety concerns or provide the educational enrichment found in high-quality care settings. For example:

- > Lower quality language and literacy experiences for children;
- > Extensive exposure to television;

- > Limited effort to “baby-proof” a home or provide a safe environment; and
- > Limited awareness of the impact of neurotoxins (e.g., cigarette smoke) on children’s health.

Children from low-income families or those with less educated mothers are more likely to rely on FFN care are most impacted by these situations.<sup>1</sup>

#### How does Parents as Teachers support FFN care?

Parents as Teachers is a leader in using a relationship-based approach to provide support and child development information not only for parents but also for FFN providers. Its relationship-based approach, tailored to meet specific needs of each family, helps children grow up healthy, safe and ready to learn.

#### Did You Know...

- > Research supports the effectiveness of home visits as a method of supporting family, friend and neighbor care providers.<sup>2</sup> Through its *Supporting Care Providers through Personal Visits* curriculum, Parents as Teachers provides caregivers with critical tools and support to improve both the quality of care and the environment by providing:
  - Information about child development, health and safety;
  - Age-appropriate activities to impact learning and development; and
  - Support on handling parent-caregiver relationships and child-caregiver relationships.

A study by Cornell University researchers found that care provider visits using the Parents as Teachers curriculum significantly increased the quality of care they offered.

- > Overall quality of the care setting increased;
- > Children’s language and reasoning skills improved; and
- > Children’s social development increased.<sup>3</sup>

**Today, *Supporting Care Providers through Personal Visits* is cited as the most widely used by programs providing home visits to informal care providers.<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Early Head Start National Resource Center (2006). *Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care in Early Head Start: Strengthening Relationships and Enhancing Quality*. Technical Assistance Paper No. 11, Washington, D.C.

<sup>2</sup> Pausell, D., Mekos, D., Del Grosso, P., Banghart, P., & Nogales, R. (January, 2006). *The Enhanced Home Visiting Pilot Project: How Early Head Start Programs are Reaching Out to Kin and Kin Caregivers: Final Interim Report*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/>

<sup>3</sup> Cochran, M. & McCabe, L.A. (2008). *Can Home Visiting Increase the Quality of Family Child Care? Findings from the Caring For Quality Project*. Paper presented at the Head Start’s Ninth National Research Conference, Washington D.C.

<sup>4</sup> Porter, T. (March, 2007). *Assessing Initiatives for Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care: An Overview of Models and Evaluations*. Research-to-Policy Connections No. 5, [www.researchconnections.org](http://www.researchconnections.org).

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