



NYC Nurse-Family Partnership E-News

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Two Years On, Harlem NFP Partnership With Countee Cullen Library Still Going Strong

NYC NFP is pleased to report that its Harlem Hospital Center site's collaboration with the New York Public Library's Countee Cullen branch is still going strong. The two joined forces in March 2014 to bring Read, Baby, Read!, a story-time group for parents with very young children, to NYC NFP clients and the Harlem community at large. Since then, the Friday morning 90-minute sessions have been offering reading, play, movement and song to two groups of children: the infants and crawlers first, followed by the toddlers. In preparation for the weekly gatherings, the librarians and nurses meet and read some of the books that will be used, contributing their varied expertise to develop sessions that are interactive, effective and fun for all involved.

Every session of Read, Baby, Read! starts out with a welcome song in which each child is introduced and, singing in unison, the group welcomes each child by name. Harlem NFP's nurses report that the welcome song gets the children excited and ready for the transition into the reading to come. The children are encouraged to touch the books and interact with them during the readings, each one of which is followed by a song. Some favorites include "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" and "The Wheels on the Bus," and caregivers are encouraged to continue the singing with their children at home. One NFP mother told the nurses, "The singing of a song helps my child to transition from one activity to another and decrease his tantrums. When I start a song at home, my child knows it's time for a new activity."



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NYC NFP CLIENTS SHARE THEIR STORIES WITH STATE OFFICIALS

In addition to the heat, this August brought NYC NFP several exciting opportunities to meet with New York State legislators in their districts and share with them the life-changing effects the program has on its clients. Two Assembly Members and the Chief of Staff of another learned about the impact of the program from those best equipped to talk about it: NYC NFP clients and graduates.

For the meetings—which were arranged by NFP National Service Office Business Development Manager Renée Nogales and attended by NYC Health Department staff—NYC NFP Targeted Citywide Initiative

NYC NFP TCI nurse Joanne Schmidt (left) and client Keisha Sampson (middle) and daughters Julia (left) and Jurene were honored to meet Brooklyn Assembly Member Latrice Walker, who hosted them at her Brownsville District Office in August.

In addition to reading and songs, the nurses offer parenting and wellness tips—such as home safety, seasonal flu avoidance and parent-child bonding—that have led other Read, Baby, Read! parents to sing the group’s praises as well. Said one father, “I have been to several libraries in the community, but the setup here is unique; I get tips for my relationship with my son.” With the new school year beginning, the new parenting tips will include mommy/baby concerns, toilet training, temper tantrums, patterns and routines, and sibling rivalry. Each month brings a new Read, Baby, Read! theme—be it ABCs, colors, numbers, shape recognition, the seasons or cultural differences—and each session closes with an affirmation the regulars know by heart: “I am beautiful, I am intelligent, I give love and I receive love.”



Read, baby, read: TCI nurse Joanne Schmidt looks on as sisters Julia (left) and Jurene Sampson show her how it’s done.

Diane Evans, one of Harlem NFP’s nurse readers, said she has seen the growth of this collaboration, “starting with about five participants at our first meeting; now we see up to 30 infants and toddlers at each session. I am excited to see the children meeting their milestones. The reading sessions have grown into an ‘It takes a village to rear a child.’ movement, where each parent looks out for the wellbeing of each other’s children, providing care and guidance during the session.” “I must say,” she added, “consistency pays off.”

Harlem Hospital’s NYC NFP site looks forward to another successful year of building and strengthening its relationship with parents in the Harlem community.



nurse extraordinaire Joanne Schmidt recruited clients both past and present to take up this mission.

At the first visit, Joanne’s current client Keisha Sampson shared some of the challenges she has been facing as a homeless mother of twins with Brownsville Assembly Member Latrice Walker, and explained how NYC NFP is supporting her and other Brooklyn moms to work toward achieving their goals.

It was Keisha’s adorable daughters, Julia and Jurene, however, who stole the show, completely capturing Assembly Member Walker’s heart and those of her staff—not to mention livening up their office on a sweltering Friday afternoon!

For the other two meetings, Joanne invited 2015 graduate Cindy DelVillar. We introduced NYC NFP E-News readers to Cindy in past issues, and shared the beautiful thank-you video she made for her graduation, which you can view [here](#).

Both Downtown Brooklyn Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon and Rachel Fuentes, Chief of Staff for Assembly Member Maritza Davila, who represents Williamsburg and Bushwick, were touched by Cindy’s story of how she went from homelessness and postpartum depression to starting her own day care business and writing a book—all thanks to the support and mentoring of Joanne and the NFP program.

We are very grateful to the Assembly Members and their

TCI nurse Joanne Schmidt (left) and proud graduate Cindy DeVillar (right) had a great visit with Brooklyn Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon.

TCI Celebrates Tenth Year With Sixth Graduation Ceremony

This year, NYC NFP's Targeted Citywide Initiative (TCI) site celebrated its tenth anniversary, and on August 17, TCI nurses, clients, staff and guests gathered for its sixth annual graduation, which is held for clients whose babies have turned two years old. TCI is a very special site, the only one of its kind in the country, created by the NYC Health Department to specifically serve three of the city's most at-risk populations of pregnant women: girls in foster care, women and girls in homeless shelters, and women and girls involved in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. TCI has served approximately 1,050 first-time mothers since its 2006 inception and currently serves approximately 130 clients.



Graduate Remi Hinkson (right) and her daughter, Azalah, had tons of fun with their nurse, Grace Arnauld, and at this year's TCI graduation celebration.

The 2016 graduating "class" had 42 clients, approximately half of whom were able to participate in the ceremony. With the room full of happy, healthy, playful toddlers, it was hard for the joy not to be contagious. Everyone in the room seemed to be smiling from ear to ear throughout the afternoon's festivities.



Proud TCI grad Natalie Desir and daughter Giselle are accompanied by their nurse, Sandra Steiner, as they show off their graduation certificate.

Two graduates spoke movingly of their transformation from homeless and pregnant to thriving, successful first-time mother. One was Evadnie Lewis, a 23-year-old from Brooklyn. When she enrolled in NYC NFP,

staff for their time and responsiveness, as well as to Keisha and Cindy, who helped give our state elected officials a firsthand sense of the transformative work that NYC NFP nurses do with the mothers they support to set families up for success!

CAREERS AT NYC NFP

Do you know any nurses looking for one of the most rewarding jobs of their careers? Please share the below links for NYC NFP's job openings by program site.

For **Jamaica** and **TCI**, visit the [NYC Jobs website](#), click on "Modify Advanced Search Criteria" and search using these job IDs:

Nurse Home Visitor, Jamaica: Job ID 230536
Nurse Home Visitor, TCI: Job ID 229849

Staten Island NFP has several open positions, including for bilingual English/Spanish nurses. For more information or to apply, [email Program Director Jo-Ellen Brannigan](#). For **Northern Queens** and **Brooklyn**, search for "Nurse Home Visitor" on the [Public Health Solutions](#) and [SCO Family of Services](#) websites, respectively.

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Evadnie was homeless. Over the last two and a half years, her nurse, Tonya Pearson, helped her gain the self-confidence she needed in the face of all of her challenges, which included lack of support from her family and her baby's father. Evadnie is currently saving money to be able to afford a home of her own for herself and her two-year-old son. While participating in NYC NFP, she found a job doing IT work and also passed her food service handling test. Her goal is to open her own restaurant one day.

We have every faith that Evadnie will achieve her goals, as will all of TCI's 2016 graduates. Congratulations, everyone!



TCI graduate Evadnie Lewis accepts her graduation certificate and parting gifts from her nurse, Tonya Pearson, at the August 2016 ceremony, where Evadnie was one of the client speakers.

This Fall at NYC NFP

Please note that *NYC NFP E-News* will be on hiatus for the month of September.

But with NYC NFP's six other sites holding graduation ceremonies in the coming months, we look forward to sharing photos and success stories of our latest grads with you from October through December!

To join our mailing list, send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line to nycnfp@health.nyc.gov.

For news and updates on NYC NFP, please follow Dr. George Askew, the Division of Family and Child Health's Deputy Commissioner, at [@DrGeorgeLAskew](https://www.facebook.com/DrGeorgeLAskew). And keep up on all the NYC Health Department's news and program updates at [@nycHealthy](https://www.facebook.com/nycHealthy).

FACEBOOK PAGE: OUR LITTLEST NEW YORKERS



Keep up with NYC NFP and all of the Division of Family and Child Health on the "[Our Littlest New Yorkers](https://www.facebook.com/OurLittlestNewYorkers)" [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/OurLittlestNewYorkers), where NYC parents and families are talking about the joys and challenges of raising young children. Visit it daily for tips, events, photos and more: www.facebook.com/OurLittlestNewYorkers!

ABOUT US

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is an evidence-based nationwide nurse home visiting program committed to improving the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of low-income first-time mothers and their children ([national NFP website](http://www.nfp.org)). The program is voluntary and there is no cost to the client. NYC NFP is the largest urban program in the country, having served more than 13,500 clients since its inception in 2003 and

currently serving more than 1,700 clients across all five boroughs.



*The New York City Nurse-Family Partnership is administered by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, which contracts with the following agencies to provide services: **Harlem Hospital Center, Public Health Solutions, Richmond Home Need Services, SCO Family of Services** and **Visiting Nurse Service of New York**. The program is funded by New York City and State as well as with federal Medicaid, MIECHV (Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program) and TANF dollars. In addition, since 2003 it has received generous support from dedicated individual donors and private foundations, including the **Altman Foundation, The Arthur Foundation, The Dunn Foundation, the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence, the New York State Health Foundation, Newman's Own Foundation, The Pinkerton Foundation, Robin Hood, the Samberg Family Foundation, Schwartz Cousins Fund, The Edith Glick Shoolman Children's Foundation** and **Starr International Foundation**. All private grants for NYC NFP are managed by the Fund for Public Health in New York, a nonprofit organization that works with the NYC Health Department to develop innovative, valuable and lasting public-private partnerships that increase the agency's capacity and reach.*

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