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Ohio House of Representatives
Proponent Testimony
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Chairman Romanchuk, Ranking Member West and members of the House Health and Human Services Finance Subcommittee.

My name is Rachel Langley, and I am a Home Visiting Program Supervisor from Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Center for Family Safety and Healing. We provide services utilizing two Evidence-Based Home Visiting (EBHV) programs: Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and Healthy Families America (HFA). We are pleased to have this opportunity to provide proponent testimony in favor of expanded funding for EBHV programs in the Main Operating Budget for FY 2020-2021.

In both the Nurse-Family Partnership and Healthy Families America programs at Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Center for Family Safety and Healing, we have specially trained nurses, social workers, and home visiting professionals who provide comprehensive, preventive, and intensive home visitation services for families including pregnant women, fathers, and young children. Nationwide Children's is one of the largest providers of EBHV services in our community and state, with close to 1,000 visits in the last year. We provide care to many underserved populations throughout central Ohio, and provide support for many of the most socially overburdened and overwhelmed families in our community.

We'd like to tell you about one of the young moms in our program. When we stepped up and knocked on the door of this client's home over a year ago, this is what we knew of her:

- She was a 16-year-old African American girl.
- She lived in an area known for its crime statistics and poor health outcomes in one of Columbus' highest risk zip codes.
- She has experienced significant trauma and toxic stress in her young life, giving her the highest possible Adverse Childhood Experience score of 10, years before she turns 18.
- She has experienced neglect and abuse, has attempted suicide and is labeled "defiant."

While this may seem like a unique case, these common descriptors could apply to more than half of the women we serve. These are common descriptors and realities of our moms. We serve the highest risk clients in the areas of highest need. As home visitors, we are invited into these young mom's homes and lives and we build trusting relationships to meet each mom where they are, wherever they are.

Our job is to listen and cultivate the potential and abilities in each of these moms. We invest in and help them discover their genius.

It's been over a year since we first knocked on that client's door. Let me share with you the dynamic young woman we have come to know...

- She made prenatal visits a priority, she learned how to prepare healthy foods, and she did not experience pregnancy complications.
- She made and then advocated for her birth plan during delivery and had a full term, healthy birth weight baby through an unmedicated, uncomplicated vaginal birth.
- She exclusively breast-fed her child for 4 months, even pumping breastmilk at school as she finished her school year.
- She graduated high school and has been accepted to college.
- She has asked to include her siblings in our visits, extending what she is learning to include and support her family and community.

Because of our ability to engage with this woman, we would not categorize her as defiant...but as bold and daring, resilient and strong. We continue to invest in her, and her genius is contagious.

And this is why home visitation matters. We go to work every day in our community, believing that our moms have futures worth fighting for. We believe that each mom has her very own genius to discover. We believe our moms and babies deserve a future marked by opportunity, equity and the chance to thrive and mark the world with their genius.

Why invest in maternal infant home visitation?

- We connect the disconnected by meeting moms where they are and providing access to resources.
- We engage moms and families by building a trusting, therapeutic relationship over the course of years, focusing on strengths.
- We equip moms with knowledge to advocate for themselves and their children.
- We empower moms to discover and cultivate the extraordinary in themselves and in their little ones, building hope into the next generation.

Home visitation invests in the human potential of individuals who often lack the resources and community to support best health outcomes. Nationwide Children's Hospital and The Center for Family Safety and Healing are proud to support Governor DeWine's proposed investments in EBHV. The combination of creating a new Medicaid EBHV service and \$47.1 million in funding supports the goal of tripling the number of women and children served by EBHV over the next two years. Nationwide Children's Hospital is committed to

addressing the social determinants of health and achieving health equity for the families in our community. We look forward to working with Ohio's policymakers and our partners in the home visiting community as we increase the numbers of families served in our programs.