I am a member of the Community Advisory Board for Help Me Grow Better Futures in Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio and am writing in support of further investment in evidence-based home visiting.  Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a significant element in our nonprofit’s program and is of great importance in our community.

         NFP is a proven program with more than 40 years of prenatal home visiting for low-income, first-time mothers and their families with the emphasis on the mother and baby.  In Dayton, Nurse-Family Partnership is considered the gold standard of home visits.  Nurses begin visiting their clients as early in pregnancy as possible through the child’s second birthday (a total of 2.5 years), helping the mother-to-be make informed choices for herself and her baby.  NFP has more than 40 years of research with positive outcomes in pregnancy, child abuse and neglect prevention, school readiness, self-sufficiency and more.

         Across the state (Butler, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Mahoning, and Summit Counties, in addition to Montgomery County), NFP currently serves 894 families.  With current funding, NFP serves only about 3% of the total moms that are eligible ffor the program .  With increased funding from Medicaid last year, NFP partners were able to expand their services, but still many families are not being served.  With continued support of increased funding, NFP nurses in Ohio will be able to reach even more families and help the state meet its most difficult challenges – breaking the cycle of poverty, improving education that begins the first 1,000 days after conception, and substance use.

         NFP is known for its research.  Among its outcomes: 18% decrease in pre-term birth; 82% increase in maternal employment; 68% increase in father involvement; 39% fewer injuries among children; 48% reduction in child abuse and neglect; and 59% reduction in child arrests at age 15.  Research shows that investing in families and communities helps families thrive.  Economist Ted Miller says state and federal cost savings in Ohio over the course of a child’s life and up to their 18th birthday can yield up to 6 to 1 cost-to-benefit ratio for every dollar invested in NFP.  A Rand Corporation study noted that a $5.70 return on investment can be achieved when NFP serves high-risk first-time moms.

         In summary, the NFP model implemented by exceptional home visiting agencies and partners with dedicated nurses serving high need families is one of the best investments the State of Ohio can make to make a difference in the lives of children and their families.

         Thank you for the opportunity to tell the story of Help Me Grow Better Futures in our community.

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