

Early Childhood Home Visitation: To Prevent Child Maltreatment

Task Force Finding

Intervention Definition

Home visitation programs try to decrease the likelihood of child maltreatment by (1) providing parents with guidance for and examples of caring and constructive interaction with their young children, (2) facilitating the development of parental life skills, (3) strengthening social support for parents, and (4) linking families with social services.

Task Force Finding (February 2002)*

Early childhood home visitation programs are recommended to prevent child maltreatment on the basis of strong evidence that these programs are effective in reducing violence against visited children. Programs delivered by professional visitors (i.e., nurses or mental health workers) seem more effective than programs delivered by paraprofessionals, although programs delivered by paraprofessionals for ≥ 2 years also appear to be effective in reducing child maltreatment. Home visitation programs in our review were offered to teenage parents; single mothers; families of low socioeconomic status (SES); families with very low birthweight infants; parents previously investigated for child maltreatment; and parents with alcohol, drug, or mental health problems.

*From the following publication:

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to reduce violence through early childhood home visitation, therapeutic foster care, and firearms laws. *Am J Prev Med* 2005;28(2S1):6-10.

Publications

Bilukha O, Hahn RA, Crosby A, et al. The effectiveness of early childhood home visitation in preventing violence: a systematic review. *Am J Prev Med* 2005;28(2S1):11-39.

CDC. [First reports evaluating the effectiveness of strategies for preventing violence: early childhood home visitation: findings from the Task Force on Community Preventive Services](#)

[www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5214a1.htm]. *MMWR* 2003;52(RR-14):1-9.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to reduce violence through early childhood home visitation, therapeutic foster care, and firearms laws. *Am J Prev Med* 2005;28(2S1):6-10.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Violence. In: Zaza S, Briss PA, Harris KW, eds. *The Guide to Community Preventive Services: What Works to Promote Health?* Atlanta (GA): Oxford University Press;2005:329-84 (Out of Print).

Disclaimer

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