



NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina NFP Expands West

When David Olds, Ph.D., developed the model for Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) more than 35 years ago, he hoped to improve outcomes for vulnerable families and their babies. In late May, Dr. Olds traveled to Cherokee for the launch of the newest NFP site in the state, which will serve the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI).

EBCI nurse home visitors will serve first-time, low-income mothers and will extend their services to help mothers with

multiple children.

Before the launch event, Dr. Olds hosted a question-and-answer session with nurse supervisors and site administrators from across the state, as well as EBCI local health care providers.

“When we hear from those who are implementing the program, we learn how we can better serve our families,” said Dr. Olds. “In the case of the EBCI, we learned that we needed to serve mothers who have had previous live births. This



The EBCI nursing team will serve 50 mothers across five counties in Western NC.

type of innovation is key to the continued success of the program.”

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NFP Teams Up with Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is an evidence-based program that empowers medical professionals to promote early literacy and school readiness. NFP is partnering with ROR to encourage nurse home visitors to promote early literacy along with their established program curriculum. Mecklenburg NFP Nurse Supervisor Ursula Douglas, RN, discusses how her team works with ROR.

Q: How did ROR become integrated with Mecklenburg NFP?

A: ROR was previously offered at Care Ring, our implementing agency. In 2011, they approached us about resuming the ROR program, and we decided it was a perfect fit with our NFP curriculum.

Q: How do NFP and ROR work together?

A: Our nurses have been trained by ROR to help children reach developmental milestones through reading. On the very first home visit, our nurses give mothers a book they can read aloud. Throughout the program, our nurses monitor child development, prescribe age-appropriate books to mothers and encourage mothers to read to their child.

Q: How has ROR impacted NFP?

A: Working with ROR encouraged us to establish partnerships with local media specialists and libraries. Because of these partnerships, many of our mothers and their children now have library cards and access to books. Our resources have expanded tremendously, and our families are more prepared for the road of learning ahead.



Ursula Douglas, RN

Q: What is the value of combining two evidence-based programs?

A: It's a no-brainer. When you combine two programs with proven results, you're making a concerted effort. ROR is the early literacy piece of the puzzle that our NFP families need. Because both programs are data-driven, we can easily identify areas to improve the services we provide.

EBCI Continued...

At the event, Dr. Ann Bullock, EBCI chief clinical consultant for family medicine, and EBCI Chief Michell Hicks noted the immense health challenges that the population faces and said NFP is a step in the right direction for vulnerable families.



EBCI Chief Michell Hicks

“This has been a long time coming for many of our families,” said Dr. Bullock. “By serving mothers who may not be having their first child, we will be able to reach so many more families and make a bigger impact on our community.”

The EBCI NFP team includes two nurse home visitors, a masters-prepared nurse supervisor and a site administrator. At full capacity, the program will serve 50 families.



Top: Dr. Olds (far left) poses with statewide NFP staff in attendance. Bottom right: NFP Regional Program Director Chris Bishop talks with Dr. Olds. Bottom left: The Beloved Women's and Children's Health and Wellness Center, where NFP will be housed.

Examining the Need for NFP in the N.C. Native American Community

- **29 percent** of households are headed by women; **38 percent** of those families live below the federal poverty line.
- **24 percent** of women reported smoking during pregnancy.
- More than **20 percent** had late or no prenatal care.
- The infant mortality rate is **13 per 1,000 births**, compared to the statewide rate of **7.2**.
- The teen pregnancy rate (ages 15-19) is **86 per 1,000 births** – nearly double the statewide rate of **44**.

Cleveland NFP Connects with the Community

Elected officials and local leaders listened intently as Porcha Lockett, a Cleveland County NFP graduate, described her experience with the program during a community event on May 3.

“When I first got pregnant, I had no clue what I was getting into,” Lockett said. “Now I feel like I’m ready for anything. My nurse taught me everything from budgeting to child protection locks. She gave me pictures and a scrapbook to look back on. Thank you for everything you have done for me.”

Cleveland NFP Nurse Supervisor Kelly Morris, RN, MSN, her Community Advisory Board and the nursing team planned the event to update the community on the program’s progress.

“We launched four years ago, and we’ve made incredible progress,” Morris said. “The goal of this event was to help the community connect with the work we’re doing. Because of the hard work of our team and our dedicated speakers, we accomplished that.”

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Cleveland Continued...

Four of the five Cleveland County Commissioners, NC Representative Kelly Hastings and members of the Board of Health, among others, attended the event. Mandy Bouttamy, RN, MSN, NFP state nurse consultant, and Chris Bishop, NFP regional program developer, spoke about the program's statewide impact and the importance of community support.

Current NFP mom Jessica Pittillo also told her story. Homeless when she started the program, she said that her dedication and NFP's support led her to finish one year of college. NFP continues to inspire her as she works toward her degree. She also works full time to support herself and her daughter.

Pittillo and Lockett represent the nearly 250 moms served by the Cleveland NFP program who have all achieved their individual successes.

As Bouttamy told the crowd, "The clients take the first step to start the program and graduate. Then they have the rest of their lives to be the best parents they can be and change the cycle of poverty."

Casey's Story: A Father's Perspective

More than two years ago, Casey and Emily Curtis sat at the local health department trying to decide what to do next. Neither one had a job or transportation. Emily was pregnant, and they were looking at different programs to help with medical care.

The first-time parents decided to enroll in NFP.

"The home visits took away the stress of trying to get back and forth to the health department, so it made it so much easier for us," Casey said. "I had no idea what to expect with a stranger coming into our home, but when I met our nurse, Kristina, and realized how much I could learn from her, I immediately felt comfortable."

Casey stays home during the day with his daughter, Reilly, while Emily works. He said he relies on the things he learned from Kristina and uses this knowledge every day.

"Reilly likes to eat, but not in an unhealthy way," he said. "And because of Kristina, we know when to feed her and how much."

Casey said Kristina helped him learn how to parent well, even in difficult situations.

"You can't just discipline your child all day," he said. "Instead, when Reilly is misbehaving, Kristina taught me to change the negative situation into something good – like a game or something fun."



From left: Former program nurse Lauren Turner, Porcha Lockett's daughter, NFP graduate Porcha Lockett, NFP client Jessica Pittillo and NFP nurse Stacy Overcash pose following the recent celebration in Cleveland County. Photo by The Shelby Star, used with permission.

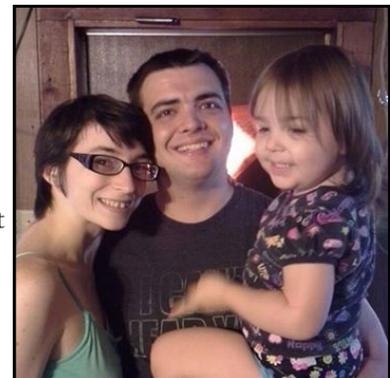
Reilly is growing up quickly and just turned two, and Emily recently graduated from the program.

Though Kristina doesn't come for regular visits anymore, Casey said he and Emily continue to follow her example.

"Any time you have a child there's going to be some financial difficulty, but I see Kristina and her kids – teenagers – and how well she takes care of them," he said. "She showed me that no matter what problems you're having, there's always a way to solve them."

In the next few months, Casey hopes to find work and get his family on a more stable financial footing.

"I'm trying to live up to everything I want for my family," he said. "This program really helped me get closer to that."



Emily and Casey Curtis with daughter Reilly

In the News...

From *The Asheville Citizen-Times*

Program helps young families in WNC

The launch of the newest NFP site serving the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians greatly expanded the program's footprint in Western North Carolina. *The Asheville Citizen-Times* interviewed a mom and a nurse from the Buncombe site and highlighted the Cherokee site, capturing the program's growing impact in the region.

From *The Rocky Mount Telegram*

Nurse-Family Partnership offers guidance

For Mother's Day, the *Rocky Mount Telegram* ran an extensive story on NFP. The reporter accompanied a program nurse on a home visit, getting a first-hand perspective on the program's impact.

People are talking...



"I've had the pleasure of attending a Nurse-Family Partnership graduation ceremony, and I've seen the tremendous impact this program makes. The relationships the nurses build with mothers really make a difference – mothers are achieving their goals and going on to lead better lives after the program. These nurses are building a stronger community, one family at a time."

– Eugene Weeks, Raleigh City Councilman

What is the North Carolina Nurse-Family Partnership?

The North Carolina Nurse-Family Partnership (NC NFP) is a public-private partnership dedicated to implementing the program and promoting its sustainability in the state. Together, the organizations that compose the NC NFP have agreed to support the program and increase the visibility of the positive accomplishments that are achieved. The program currently serves mothers in 22 counties across the state.

Members of the NC NFP:



Nurse-Family Partnership is a growing national initiative located in Denver, Colo.

The program serves clients in 42 states.

For more information please visit NFPNC.org or email NCNFP@capstrat.com.