



“...If I need any help I know I can ask her.”

When Hurricane Harvey hit the Gulf Coast and greater Houston area, 28-year-old Mirna was among thousands of people forced to leave their homes for safer grounds. Though she graduated from Nurse-Family Partnership more than a year ago, she says her nurse Savannah reached out during the ordeal to offer support for her situation. “She is someone I can trust with things I don’t tell others, even if I don’t talk to her every day,” she says. “If I need any help I know I can ask her.”

Now parenting an active preschool aged daughter, Mirna was 19 weeks pregnant when she agreed to try the Nurse-Family Partnership program provided by Texas Children’s Health Plans in Houston, Texas. What convinced her to make that first appointment was the assurance that she could leave if she didn’t like it. The idea that a nurse would come to their “humble” home made her feel self-conscious. The first time her nurse, Savannah, came to see her, she realized her expressions were welcoming and not judgmental. After their first meeting, Mirna says, “some worries were put to rest.” Her partner Angel also brought questions to some of their meetings.

In fact, Mirna felt her nurse was a perfect match for their family. “I am reserved and quiet, she never pushed to where I would feel uncomfortable.” Savannah provided her with “so much information to assure a healthy pregnancy and a healthy child,” she says. After her daughter was born, Mirna says she had even more questions, which Savannah answered honestly and kindly. “Any questions I had, regardless of how naive it sounded, she would answer with patience.”

Her curious, active preschool aged daughter has thrived since they graduated from NFP. Mirna recalls that her nurse would bring her books and toys, always helping her learn to connect with her daughter. NFP nurses also help new mothers set personal goals to build a foundation for their new family. Mirna is a part-time student taking prerequisite courses for nursing school. She perseveres at both being a student and a mother. Every day they play, go to the park, and Mirna answers a lot of questions.

Every answer, she says, “constantly are followed by three ‘why’s?’”

“She asks a lot of questions, some are easy to answer, and some are harder,” Mirna says. “For example, how do babies come out from their mom?” Mirna delights in her daughter’s confidence, and the way she likes to introduce herself to new people.

Mirna felt like her nurse was more than a source of information. “She has been my rock,” she says. “Thanks to her guidance I was able to feel some hold on the entirely new, scary experience.”

Mirna and Angel are participants in the Nurse-Family Partnership program through the Texas Children’s Health Plans in Houston, Texas.



Mirna with her partner Angel and their daughter