

MOM ARIANNA

When she was 17-years old and eight weeks pregnant, high school senior Arianna enrolled in Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) at United Way of the Coastal Bend in Corpus Christi, Texas. She knew that she had the emotional support of her mother and her fiancé, Oscar, but still liked the idea of having a personal nurse. In fact, the whole family was excited about Nurse-Family Partnership, and the first visit with their NFP nurse, Stephanie included Arianna, the mother-to-be, and her mom, fiancé and sister.

"The entire family is close and supportive. If it takes a village, then this is the village you would want," says Stephanie.

At that time, Arianna didn't know how much she would appreciate the relationship and support throughout her pregnancy and birth of her daughter.

"I like having a nurse for advice," Arianna says. "It is really helpful, especially being a first-time mom. There's a lot of things you don't know about



Arianna's smiling daughter is such a happy baby.

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Arianna with her one-year old daughter.

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A new challenge was handed to Arianna at her 28-week appointment: managing gestational diabetes. "She wasn't sure why it happened to her because she was young and healthy, but gestational diabetes can affect anyone," Stephanie says. "That's exactly the kind of thing we're here for as nurses: To walk our mothers through these unexpected events." With guidance and support Arianna was able to meet her goal by monitoring her blood sugars and keep them under control during her pregnancy.

Arianna wanted a healthy baby, and she had a lot of questions about labor and delivery.

She was under the care of a high-risk obstetrician, and her relationship with her nurse, Stephanie, gave her extra support and helped her understand what lay ahead. Stephanie helped her prepare for possibilities before and after delivery, meeting with them weekly and making sure Arianna knew what to expect for her baby and for herself.

“The idea of a C-section made me nervous, but I knew that I may have to have it. I was high risk because of my gestational diabetes and my blood counts were really low,” Arianna recalls. Her doctor recommended a cesarean section at 37 weeks.

When her daughter was born, Arianna felt like she'd reached another goal. “The first time that I held her, I was really happy that she came out healthy. She didn't have any health problems; heart was perfectly fine,” she remembers.

But then, a complication arose from the gestational diabetes: her baby's blood sugar was low. Her daughter was in neonatal intensive care for nine days. “I was shocked, but I knew they would get her better,” Arianna remembers. “It didn't hit me until I went home.”



Arianna and NFP nurse Stephanie watching over during playtime.



NFP nurse Stephanie doing a normal checkup at the visit.

Throughout it all, Stephanie provided emotional support during her baby's NICU stay and information for Arianna to care for herself post-partum. “It was a rough few months with her and her baby's medical needs and the uncertainties that came with them, but together we were able to ensure they had the education and support they needed,” says Stephanie.

Now that her baby is one-year old, Arianna still relies on her nurse. “My family is very supportive of Stephanie helping us, but they know that the advice is different than it was back in their day. Stephanie gives me current advice on my baby's growth and development and helps me set goals to be the best mom I can be.”

Arianna is enrolled in community college with her eyes on an advanced nursing degree. She has new goals that she talks about with Stephanie. “In two years, I want a winter wedding. In three years, I want to still be in school, living in our own apartment, and I want longer hours and a better job. Having my daughter has motivated me to do better and to go faster,” she says.