

MOM NATASHA

When Natasha found out she was pregnant at age 19, she was scared and in denial. She had never envisioned herself a parent and was “terrified.” She sought out Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) at Kent County Public Health in Michigan looking for resources on pregnancy, development and the basics on raising a child. The idea of having her own nurse to guide her was really appealing and she knew from the beginning she wanted “all the help I could get!”

Once paired with her NFP nurse Maddie, a relationship of trust began to build. Providing Natasha with resources to be “less scared” about pregnancy and parenting, Natasha and Maddie talked about everything from her baby’s growth, to what was happening with Natasha’s body throughout every stage of pregnancy, to how to put on a diaper, how to hold a baby and more.

“I had never even held a baby before I got pregnant,” says Natasha. “I had no clue what I was doing!” However, no question was off-limits and the nurse-mom team worked hand in hand to nurture the pregnancy and Natasha’s growth as a person and mom.

“My entire pregnancy was a challenge,” says Natasha. “It was really hard for me emotionally to accept that my life was going to change.”

In fact, Natasha says she really didn’t fully accept her role as a parent until her daughter Athena was nine months old. However, “Maddie has been with me every step of the way,” says Natasha. “She’s really great at reassuring me that I’m doing a good job.”

One of Natasha’s biggest challenges was with her daughter’s father, and ultimately ending the tough relationship. “I wasn’t dealing well with being a new mom, and being in an unhealthy relationship wasn’t making it any better,” says Natasha.



Natasha’s daughter, Athena, is ahead of curve with many developmental milestones.

Furthermore, she was admitted into a psychiatric care facility for a week. While there, she was diagnosed with Major Depression, Anxiety/Panic Disorder and Postpartum Depression, and she worked diligently with her physician to get medication stabilized. “Maddie was here with me to talk about everything surrounding the break-up and my hospital stay, and she really helped me through everything,” by providing support, comfort, resources and goal-setting opportunities to move forward.

“Natasha is a great mom and has adapted so well to her new role,” says nurse Maddie. “She’s overcome some really tough challenges and has come out on the other side with confidence. She sets goals for herself and her daughter and she reaches them.”



**NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP
HAS BEEN A LIFESAVER FOR ME.
I DON’T KNOW WHERE I’D BE
WITHOUT IT.**

“I now enjoy being a mom, which is a huge step,” says Natasha. “I love watching Athena learn new things every day. She’s so delighted by everything and it’s so pure and beautiful to see.”

Now 18 months old, Athena is ahead of the curve with many developmental milestones. She loves to dance, sing and tell Natasha ‘no!’ “It’s her new favorite word,” says Natasha.

While raising Athena, Natasha is working as a server and for a local nonprofit that advocates for people who suffer from physical, mental and social barriers that impact their daily life.

She’s also currently working to move out of her mom’s house into her own space. Natasha also credits her mom for being a huge helping hand in raising Athena.

“If I could tell another newly pregnant woman about NFP, I’d stress the nurses are really kind and understanding and above all, are there to help you with any question you might have,” says Natasha. “Nurse-Family Partnership has been a lifesaver for me. I don’t know where I’d be without it.”

Adds nurse Maddie, “It’s a joy working with Natasha. If you could see her with her daughter, you’d see an amazing mom leading by example.”