

Anisia loves watching 18-month-old Israel try new things. “He’s a happy baby. He’s very active and always trying to climb everything,” said Anisia. “I like seeing him grow up. He looks and acts different every day.” At 19, Anisia juggles school, a full-time job and motherhood. It’s not a life she expected, but it’s a life she’s finding joy in.

When Anisia found out she was pregnant, she was 17, had dropped out of high school and worked at a Tuscon mall. The pregnancy was a wake-up call. “I had mixed emotions when I found out I was pregnant. I had always wanted a baby, but it was scary,” Anisia said. “I went back to school and found a new job. I would work in the morning, then go to school and then go to parenting classes in the evening.”

It was through the tutors and coaches at school that Anisia connected with Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP). Dawn, an NFP nurse at Casa de los Ninos in Tuscon, Arizona, immediately saw something special in Anisia. “She’s such an optimistic person, and her son has inherited that. Her maturity is



Anisia juggles work, school and spending quality time with 18-month-old Israel. Her NFP nurse, Dawn, has encouraged her as she’s adjusted to life as a mom.

“““

“BEING ON MY OWN WAS REALLY HARD, BUT DAWN HELPED ME KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT THROUGH MY PREGNANCY AND HOW OTHER MOMS COPE. AND, SHE LISTENED TO ME AND WHAT MY CONCERNS WERE.”

phenomenal,” said Dawn. “She really wants to know the developmental milestones Israel is reaching and how he is doing. She’s very engaged.”

Anisia views Dawn as a valuable resource and a key part of her parenting journey. They meet regularly (virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic), and Dawn does health checks on Anisia and Israel, provides Anisia with parenting and goal-setting resources, and helps her build a support system.

“Being on my own was really hard, but Dawn helped me know what to expect through my pregnancy and how other moms coped. And, she listened to me and what my concerns were,” Anisia said.

Nurse-Family Partnership nurses work to connect moms with other community resources, which is how Anisia got access to diapers and formula when money was especially tight. “My kid didn’t go without because of nurse Dawn,” Anisia said. “And the baby loves her, too. He gets so happy when he sees her.”

Dawn also provided Anisia with another valuable resource – an iPhone to stay connected during the pandemic.

After social distancing restrictions were put in place nationwide, Nurse-Family Partnership nurses rapidly shifted from providing in-home visits

to communicating with their clients by phone or video conference. Nurses were already skilled at using telehealth technology, and these visits have continued to be a lifeline for new moms needing support from their nurse throughout the pandemic.

NFP partnered with Verizon and Action Technologies Group (ATG) to provide iPhones at no cost to moms in need. After stay-at-home restrictions were put in place, local Nurse-Family Partnership nurses like Dawn identified that a significant number of clients – first-time moms, like Anisia – did not have access to a smartphone and would have trouble communicating with their nurses during the pandemic.

Access to a reliable, consistent phone had been an ongoing challenge for Anisia – one that affected her ability to stay in touch with her employers and access her work schedule, limited her contact with tutors and online school resources, and hindered her ability to regularly connect with Dawn. When the iPhones became available, Dawn saw an opportunity to help Anisia with one challenge she faced.

“She is not relying on her parents for money. She’s working,” Dawn said. “She was living month-to-month and paying the phone bill when she had the money. Sometimes her phone would be turned off, and I couldn’t reach her. She did her best to stay in contact when she didn’t have a phone, but it was hard.”

The presence of the iPhone changed that, but reliable, consistent visits with Dawn were not the only benefit for Anisia and Israel.

Thanks to the iPhone, Anisia is able to reach her tutors, and her tutors and coaches are able to reach her with encouragement about moving toward school milestones and information about events and resources.

The phone has also helped her succeed at work.

“I have a full-time job now. With the phone, I’m able to be more reliable,” she said. “My work uses group texts and sends the schedules in texts. After four months, they just made me lead at work. My manager



Anisia received an iPhone through Nurse-Family Partnership's Phones for Families program, supported by Verizon and ATG. Thanks to a reliable phone, she is able to stay on top of work, school and doctor's appointments – and she's been able to stay in touch with her NFP nurse, Dawn.

says she sees something in me.”

Anisia is focused on the future and on giving Israel every opportunity to find and do what he will love to do.

“I’m proud of my growth, of where I came from,” Anisia said. “When I found out I was pregnant, I was just being a kid, just having fun. I had dropped out of school. I was working, so I had my own money. I didn’t really have my parents in my life, so I didn’t have accountability. Now I have responsibility. I’m going to finish school. I’m looking for a place of my own, and I want to move up at work.”

Dawn knew any investment in Anisia would be a wise one.

“She wants to show her son the world,” Dawn said. “I feel like they are a team conquering the world.”