

# MOM CAMILLE

When Camille was young, she helped her family take care of her ill grandmother. “My grandma told me I was the best little nurse she ever had,” Camille remembers. That meant a lot to her since her grandmother was a registered nurse herself. “I knew I was making a difference and I wanted to be the best nurse anyone ever had,” she said.

Imagine Camille’s surprise as she was in her third year of nursing school when she found out she was pregnant. She was 19 and living in a student housing apartment with roommates. Camille felt unsure about what her next move in life should be, but one thing was certain – she wanted to stay on track to become a nurse.

Camille visited her local health department for a prenatal visit when she noticed a flyer for Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP). “The flyer said NFP helps first-time moms prepare for their new arrival, and I thought to myself, ‘yep – I am going to need some help!’” she said.



NFP mom Camille (left) is proud of her 12-year-old daughter, Keziah (right), who is now a skilled basketball player.

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After the initial call with Spartanburg Regional Hospital Nurse-Family Partnership, Camille was partnered with NFP nurse Lisa. Camille recalls, “Lisa was so warm and had the biggest smile – it was like I had known her forever.”

Likewise, NFP nurse Lisa describes Camille as always having a smile. “Camille is a soft spot in my heart. Her gratefulness is so energetic and she always had a ‘ray of sunshine’ smile.”

Lisa visited Camille during her pregnancy to build the confidence she needed to assure a healthy start for the arrival of her daughter. “She gave me a thick binder with topical information that we went over each week,” said Camille. She ensured Camille was eating healthy foods to nourish her and her baby. “Finding nutritious foods was hard to do as a broke college student! So, Lisa helped me sign up for healthy food programs,” said Camille.

Lisa assisted Camille in overcoming the challenge of finding new housing – not only for her and her expectant daughter, but also for Camille’s mother and sister. Lisa said, “Her mom and sister moved from Rock Hill to Spartanburg to support Camille.” Camille’s sister has cerebral palsy so finding affordable housing that accommodated her sister’s needs was a challenge. “Lisa came to me with a long list of housing options. When I was nine months pregnant, we finally found the perfect fit,” said Camille.



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While preparing for the arrival of her daughter, Camille's key question still loomed – can she continue in nursing school? Camille said Lisa helped her. “She was realistic with me and told me I might consider transitioning from a registered nurse (RN) program to a licensed practical nurse (LPN) program. Lisa helped me find an accelerated nursing program nearby so I could still get my nursing license.”

On April 3, Camille's daughter, Keziah, was born at a healthy 8 pounds and 8 ounces. Less than 2 months later, Camille started the LPN program. For the first year of Keziah's life, Camille balanced going to school full time with being a new mom. “Some nights, I would be trying to study and Keziah would be crying and then I would start crying,” Camille said. Lisa encouraged her to get on a steady routine for a better balance.

By the time Camille graduated from NFP in April 2012, she had completed her education as an LPN and had been working in the nursing field for a year. “Lisa did not leave me where she found me – I wasn't just surviving anymore, I was thriving,” said Camille.

Today, Camille is a registered nurse – just like her grandmother. She works as a staff nurse in a medical/surgical unit and plans to begin a Bachelor of Science of Nursing (BSN) program this year.



Camille represents NFP as a Parent Ambassador and is a registered nurse. Pictured from left to right are Camille with her two daughters, Keziah and Nema.

Camille also represents Nurse-Family Partnership as a Parent Ambassador and shares her story to advocate for the program.

“NFP has made a difference in my daughter's life by equipping me to be the best mother that I can be to her,” said Camille. Keziah is now 12-years-old and is a skilled basketball player – which is a good fit considering she is already taller than her mom!