

# STEFI'S STORY

North Carolina resident, Stefi, had a suspicion of what to expect when she visited her local health department for a pregnancy test in August 2019. And her feeling was right – she was pregnant. Stefi was 18 and not only had she just graduated, but she was also a newlywed to her high school sweetheart.

The health department told Stefi about the benefits of the Rockingham County Partnership for Children's Nurse-Family Partnership program and by 12 weeks pregnant, she was paired with her Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) nurse, Liz. "One of the first things Liz helped me with was choosing an OB-GYN. I was clueless about where to start," Stefi remembered.

Stefi's pregnancy was healthy overall, but she did have an instance where Liz's nursing experience helped relieve her worry. She said, "At one of



Stefi's daughter, Riley, is an active 3-year-old and enjoys painting and playing outside.

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-NFP NURSE LIZ

my ultrasounds, it looked like there may be complications with my baby's heart development. Liz explained that it was typical health development and that made me feel so much better."

Stefi continued, "I was really nervous about labor as a first-time mom. Liz always went above and beyond and gave me resources." Liz also recalls this conversation, "Stefi was stressed about labor so we talked frankly about it and I provided a birthing video for her to watch so she would be more prepared."

The education Liz gave Stefi about labor served her well. Her water broke on February 11, 2020 and after four hours, Stefi delivered their healthy daughter, Riley, naturally.

It wasn't long after baby Riley was born that the COVID-19 pandemic began. Nurse Liz was only able to visit Stefi and Riley a couple times before strict distancing regulations were in place. Liz said, "Stefi was worried about having a newborn when the pandemic started. She was doing everything she could to keep Riley safe."

Stefi and Liz continued their visits via telehealth for the following year until Riley turned 1 year old. Stefi recalled, "I missed seeing Liz in person but she was still her upbeat self and helped me know if Riley was meeting her benchmarks. After a long year, it was nice to be reunited with Liz in person!"



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Nearing NFP graduation in 2022, Stefi was 20 and Riley was almost 2. She was ready for her next step – finding professional employment. “I started with a resource that Liz gave me called NCWorks where they help you build a resume and prepare for interviews.” Stefi worked in a clothing store for a while before she was presented with the perfect job opportunity.

Liz said, “We had a position open as a program assistant for home visiting programs including Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers at the Partnership. I thought long and hard before asking Stefi to apply for the position because I didn’t want to overstep. I could see her being an asset in that role with her bilingual and interpersonal skills.”

Stefi said, “I was really grateful when Liz told me about the job at the Partnership. After I interviewed and started the job, I knew this is what I wanted to do for a long time. I love helping families in my community and I could really relate to the other moms!”

Since Stefi is bilingual in Spanish and English, she goes on home visits with NFP nurses to help translate. She has also completed training as a parent educator with the Parents as Teachers program and is in the process of having her own caseload of families as a parent visitor.



Stefi now works as a program assistant at the Rockingham County Partnership along with NFP nurse Liz.

Liz said, “Stefi has increased our capacity to serve the Spanish speaking population in our community. She has thrown herself wholeheartedly into this role!” Stefi feels the same and said, “I am so grateful to have met Liz and still have her in my life as a coworker. It’s cool to see her work with other NFP families now and see how she makes a big impact on other people’s lives just as she did for me.”

Stefi and her husband plan to enroll Riley into Head Start as Stefi continues working at the Partnership. She said, “I wasn’t expecting to be a mom so young, but I wouldn’t change it. Riley has made my life so much better.”