An Ecosystem of Communications to Support the Family Engagement Strategy

Findings from Home Visiting Qualitative Research Study
January 2018

Prepared by:

Excerpts from:

Moms from all over Los Angeles County

African American Moms: 2 2-hour focus groups
1 Enrolled in Welcome Baby
1 Opted-Out/Dropped Out Welcome Baby

Bicultural Latina Moms: 2 2-hour focus groups
1 Enrolled in Welcome Baby

Spanish-Dominant Latina Moms: 4 2-hour focus groups
1 Enrolled in Welcome Baby

Caucasian Moms: 2 2-hour focus groups
1 Enrolled in Welcome Baby

Cambodian/Lao/Thai Moms: 1 2-hour focus group
1 Enrolled in Welcome Baby

Mixed Ethnicity Moms: 2 2-hour focus groups
1 Enrolled HFA
1 Opted-Out/Dropped Out Welcome Baby

Fieldwork across 8 Service Planning Areas, representing 5 distinct cultural identities in 3 languages, exploring 3 different home visiting programs (Welcome Baby, Healthy Families America and Parents as Teachers), at least 4 different roles within the Home Visiting Network and an extensive literature review.

Moderated by Dr. Monica Torres and Mitra Martin
Home visiting is a truly potent approach

- Creates what is for many *the only meaningful and empowering interpersonal bond in their life, during a chaotic, frightening, lonely time in their lives*
- Moms come to it with little or no expectations and many fears; they are blown away by degree of *caring, embracing, nurturing support* that places them, as moms, at the focus
- Because of how the intimacy of the home visiting experience wins deep trust, home visiting is *uniquely able to function as a gateway* to other sorely needed services

Top findings related to programs

- **Transformative program**
  - Those who enroll and commit experience deep, often transformative, benefits from home visiting; many want more visits

- **Handoff gaps**
  - Too many different people involved in early stages of program can weaken its coherence and the client’s commitment

- **Basic needs**
  - By earning deep trust in a vulnerable time, home visiting functions as a gateway to other basic needs supports, especially housing support and mental health counselling

- **Leaky referrals**
  - Yet, lack of smooth referral pathways can lead to frustration and disappointment

- **Text power**
  - Text messaging between visits is an increasingly important tool for augmenting program: providing logistical help, nudges to follow up on referrals, and emotional support

- **Isolated moms**
  - Nearly all moms feel isolated postpartum and wish for facilitated contact with other moms like them

- **Dads need something**
  - Many moms believed that the father of the baby wanted to learn more and be more involved, but didn’t know how.
**Top findings related to enrollment**

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Benefits unclear</td>
<td>The benefits of home visiting are not being clearly communicated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Role in prenatal care unclear</td>
<td>Home visiting is not perceived as connected with prenatal care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Many fears</td>
<td>Fears and stigmas create major obstacles to enrolling and maximizing service; gifts, word-of-mouth, and calm body language can mediate Many fears</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Non-universal</td>
<td>Complexity around who can access what programs further constrains communications and enrollments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Moms make decisions</td>
<td>In most cases, the mom is the primary decision-maker when it comes to home visiting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Enrolling immediately after birth not optimal</td>
<td>Almost all moms are exhausted, especially those who have had difficult or traumatic birth journeys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Word of Mouth under-leveraged</td>
<td>Happy graduates and passionate staff want to spread word and need more facilitation to be effective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>