

Family Nurse Partnership

Last reviewed
18 June 2026

What is the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP)?

The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is an intensive, targeted home-visiting programme for first-time young mothers and families. The programme has been established in 8 countries and delivered in Northern Ireland since 2010.

FNP is of benefit to both parents and their children and works primarily through the mother. Family nurses support mothers enrolled in FNP to:

- have a healthy pregnancy
- improve their child's health, development and school readiness
- reach their own goals and aspirations

Family nurses also engage with the mother's partner, whether they are the child's biological father or otherwise. This helps support improved programme delivery and outcomes for the child, as shown in the Fatherhood Institute's 2022 report [Bringing Baby Home: UK fathers in the first year after birth](#)

Family nurses work within local systems encouraging young parents to engage with other appropriate services. Family nurses are well placed to identify when extra safeguarding support is needed. They also work with children's social care to ensure children are kept safe, while continuing to provide the FNP programme through home visits.

How the FNP programme works?

Family Nurse Partnership teams recruit young, first-time mothers in line with local area eligibility criteria. The programme is structured and personalised to reflect the strengths and needs of each individual.

Each mother is partnered with a specially trained family nurse. The family nurse visits the mother regularly from early pregnancy until their child is aged between one and 2. Family nurses provide a safe, reflective space for mothers to process information and guidance on key areas relating to their pregnancy and parenthood.

Family nurses work relationally, supporting the young parent in making positive changes for themselves and their baby. By focusing on their strengths, FNP enables young parents to learn how to:

- develop a good relationship with their child and understand their child's needs
- make choices that will give their child the best possible start in life
- believe in themselves
- mirror the positive relationship they have with their family nurse with others

Impact of the FNP programme

Over 40 years of international evidence shows that the FNP programme can improve health, social and educational outcomes in the short, medium and long term.

The evidence base for FNP

The [Early Intervention Foundation Guidebook](#) summarises the evidence base for FNP.

The FNP programme can help young, first-time parents to provide sensitive and responsive care for their children. This in turn enhances the quality of their child's daily life and contributes to improved child development and school readiness. [Achievement in school can have a positive life-long impact on health and wellbeing, and economic stability.](#) This is a key factor in tackling health disparities and improving life chances.

Wider determinants of health play a complex role in influencing future health and wellbeing outcomes. [FNP has been shown to improve vulnerable children's development, school readiness and early educational attainment.](#) These improvements can in turn help [influence better long-term health, wellbeing and](#)

[economic outcomes.](#)

The impact of FNP in NI is summarised in the following document - [Family Nurse Partnership Transforming Lives in Northern Ireland.pdf](#)

Where the FNP programme is delivered in NI?

FNP is delivered under licence from the University of Colorado Denver. The FNP licence is held in the Public Health Agency. The programme is delivered locally by FNP teams across each Trust. Each local team is made up of an FNP supervisor, family nurses and quality support officers.

[Click here to find out what FNP graduates think of the FNP programme.](#)

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