



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Theresa McCutcheon
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
(732) 246-8060 x123 tmccutcheon@preventchildabusenj.org

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

New Brunswick, NJ –

Home Visiting Programs Working to Promote Healthy Childhoods and Prevent Child Abuse

Statewide Meeting Builds Collaboration among Nationally-Recognized Home Visitation Models

A statewide meeting on February 3, 2010, will convene New Jersey' providers of intensive, home-based parenting education and support services as Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey and the NJ Department of Children and Families continue work to ensure collaboration and research-based practice in promoting healthy childhoods and preventing child abuse among vulnerable parents of very young children in New Jersey. Discussion topics will explore how providers can continue to address domestic violence, mental health and substance abuse among the most significant family risk factors and correlates of child abuse.

This statewide meeting, entitled "Home Visitation in New Jersey: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" will facilitate discussion among more than 30 providers in the Healthy Families, Parents As Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Nurse Family Partnership home visitation models, and examine how evaluation and coordinated service delivery will continue to benefit families and children. The dialogue builds on long-term efforts to ensure that New Jersey' home visiting models, varied by their intensity of intervention and delivery by different provider disciplines, collaborate to provide a continuum of care for vulnerable parents of very young children. In each of these programs, home-based support is offered intensively, usually on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, and continues as the child and parent succeed through various developmental milestones and family goals.

Home visitation programs for expectant parents, families of newborns and parents of very young children have been long documented as an effective means to prevent child abuse and other forms of maltreatment in high-risk families. More than 25 years of research have documented home visiting as a well-accepted prevention strategy for improving the health and well-being of women, children and the overall family, particular those who are at-risk. In New Jersey, where only 73% of the state' children are immunized by the age of 2 and only 75% of mothers get early prenatal care, 87% of children in Healthy Families home visiting programs are immunized and 86% of women get prenatal care.

"We are always eager to improve the quality of services and evaluate our prevention work for children," explained Rush L Russell, Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey Executive Director. "New Jersey is fortunate to be a home for several nationally-recognized and researched home visiting models. We've built an infrastructure to support the delivery of home visiting programs for vulnerable families. Our goal is to fuel an interest and an investment in taking these programs to-scale."

Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey lead efforts to bring several evidence-based and nationally-recognized home visitation programs, including Healthy Families and Parents As Teachers, to the state in the early '0s and now serves as the state affiliate for both models. New Jersey has been nationally-recognized for its unique ability to facilitate collaboration among providers of various home visitation programs to work together rather than compete in meeting the needs of New Jersey' families. Ongoing information about the February 3, 2010 meeting and its outcomes can be obtained at www.preventchildabusenj.org.

- END -