



## **Support the Education Begins At Home Act (EBAH)**

**S. 244**

**Senators Bond (R-MO), Murray (D-WA) and Clinton (D-NY)\***

Home visiting delivers early education and support to families where they are—in their homes and on their terms. Through stand-alone programs or in partnership with center-based services, voluntary home visiting educates families, brings them up-to-date information about health, child development and school readiness, works with them to develop their child’s literacy and language skills, and connects them to critical services. Home visiting is a bridge that links the resources of the community with the comfort of the home environment, empowering even hard-to-reach parents to build a better future for themselves and their children.

### **Home Visiting Is Based on Prevention**

Home visitation is designed as part of a model of prevention. Home visitation aims to keep families safe, healthy, self-sufficient, and connected to support resources. This approach serves not only families directly, but broader communities as well; over time, the initial investment in home visitation serves to reduce future costs associated with health care, social services, criminal justice, special education, high school drop-outs and the child welfare system.

All home visiting programs focus on either pregnant women and/or parents with young children, age 0-5. While some home visiting programs target families deemed “at risk,” all programs focus on parents, because of the parents’ profound effect on their children’s earliest years of life, and the crucial role they play on their children’s future.

### **The Cost Effectiveness of Investing in Parents**

In many ways, parenting is more difficult than ever before. Yet despite the overwhelming importance of parenting in the early years of a child’s life, as a nation we invest few public resources on improving parenting practices through parent education and parent support.

In response, EBAH establishes the first dedicated federal funding stream to support the parents of young children through quality home visitation. In so doing, EBAH makes an early investment in parenting to help ensure healthy child development, school readiness and school success and stem the tide of a whole host of health care, social service, criminal justice, special education and child welfare costs in the future. Understanding that families with English language learners or with a parent in the military may face additional challenges, EBAH specifically targets a portion of funds to these families.

### **EBAH’s Quality Controls**

EBAH strives to ensure that only the highest-quality programs are funded. To be eligible for grant funds, the Governor must designate a lead state agency such as the State education agency or State health and human services agency to carry out grant activities. Expert panels review and evaluate the quality of applications and make recommendations to the Secretary based on this review. Federal grants may only be used to fund home visitation programs that are grounded in empirically-based knowledge on home visiting and linked to determined outcomes. States are required to monitor program implementation to assure fidelity to the specified model. Programs must employ well-trained and competent staff and show strong organizational capacity to implement the program involved. In addition, participating home visitation programs must employ a solid referral network to other community resources and supports. Finally, EBAH requires independent evaluations at the state and federal levels, at the end of the grant’s second year, which will assess outcomes consistent with program goals.

\* Prior to her confirmation as Secretary of State, Senator Clinton was an original co-sponsor of EBAH (S.244)

For more information about the collaborative work of these home visiting programs please contact:

**Healthy Families America** (312) 663-3520 [www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org)

**Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI) USA** (501) 537-7726 [www.hippyusa.org](http://www.hippyusa.org)

**Parents as Teachers** (314) 432-4330 [www.parentsasteachers.org](http://www.parentsasteachers.org)

**The Parent-Child Home Program** (516) 883-7480 [www.parent-child.org](http://www.parent-child.org)