COMMENTS FROM MOTHERS ABOUT MINDING THE BABY®

“They changed my framework of thinking about my daughter. They helped me to think things out…and to think about her personality when I talk to her.”

“When you are aware about yourself, it’s easier to be aware of your child.”

“They help you to help you.”

“They give you pieces of their hearts.”

“They always asked for your input and they were accessible.”

“They have concern for you, the parent, as well as your baby.”

“Minding the Baby helps you develop a plan for raising your child and for your own goals in life.”

MTB Funding Support
The Irving B. Harris Foundation
The FAR Fund
Pritzker Early Childhood Foundation
Seedlings Foundation
Child Welfare Fund
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
The Patrick & Catherine Weldon Donaghue Foundation
The Edlow Family
The Schneider Family
NIH/NINR (P30NR08999)
NIH/NICHID (R21HD048591)
NIH/NICHID (RO1HD057947)
NIH/NCRR (UL1 RR024139)

MINDING THE BABY®
AN INTENSIVE HOME VISITATION PROGRAM FOR FIRST-TIME MOTHERS AND BABIES

A COLLABORATION
Yale Child Study Center
Yale School of Nursing
Fair Haven Community Health Center
Cornell Scott Hill Health Center

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MINDING THE BABY®

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Minding the Baby® (MTB) is an intensive home visiting program working with first-time young mothers and their families in New Haven, Connecticut. First developed in 2002, the program is interdisciplinary and brings together a home visiting team including a pediatric nurse practitioner and a licensed clinical social worker to promote positive health, mental health, life course, and attachment outcomes in babies, mothers, and their families.

Grounded in attachment theory and reflective parenting, MTB provides an integrated model of care that bridges primary care and mental health approaches to enhancing the mother-infant relationship.

Clinicians receive intensive training in the unique incorporation of the physical and mental health components of the intervention as well as ongoing joint supervision.

MTB provides direct clinical service for young families while simultaneously integrating ongoing research using a randomized clinical trial design.

PROGRAM GOALS

The mission of Minding the Baby® is to support reflective parenting, secure attachment, health, mental health, and self-efficacy using an interdisciplinary approach to intensive home visitation with first-time young mothers and their families.

The goal is to help mothers “mind” their babies in both physical and emotional ways by promoting and enhancing the following:

- protective factors, skills, and strategies
- competent and flexible parenting
- psychological health in mother, child, and between mother and child
- the physical health and development of the child
- positive maternal life course outcomes

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Minding the Baby® program begins in the third trimester of pregnancy and extends through the child’s second year of life. Mothers receive weekly home visits by a nurse practitioner and a licensed clinical social worker with infant mental health training.

Both clinicians maintain close contact with prenatal and pediatric clinicians based in a community health center, for consistency and integration of care for the mother and baby.

Together, the social worker and nurse practitioner promote a secure attachment and facilitate reflective functioning by providing strategies to:

- give voice to the baby’s experience (both physical and emotional)
- give voice to the mother’s experience of herself as a parent
- bring alive the mother’s positive feelings for the child
- develop the mother’s capacities to reflect and contemplate, especially in the face of difficult emotions

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

- Women between 14 and 25
- First live birth
- No active serious drug use
- No serious physical or psychological illness