

## Home Visiting Alliance

Antenatal to five is the most critical period in a child's life and vital for development over the life course. Increasingly research indicates that chronic stress and trauma have a significant negative impact on the developing brain. It reduces parents' capacity to support child development.

### Key figures about children in Ireland

60,000 babies are born in Ireland each year

20,000 born to first time parents.

12,000 (20%) parents experience mental health challenges during or after pregnancy.

14,400 (24%) new-born babies at risk of poverty or social exclusion each year.

3,137 children accessed homeless accommodation in July 2022

### Who we are?

Established in November 2020, the Home Visiting Alliance is a collaboration of 5 Irish evidence-based early childhood home visiting programmes: Community Mothers, Infant Mental Health, Lifestart, ParentChild+ and Preparing for Life, which represents the collective national voice of early childhood home visiting from pre-birth or during pregnancy. Our home visiting programmes, essential local peer-led community lifelines, particularly during Covid-19, address developmental delays, educational disadvantage, parental isolation and poor mental health.

### What is early childhood home visiting?

Early childhood home visiting is an evidenced based proven service delivery strategy that helps children and families thrive and paves the way to a healthier, safer, and more successful future for families. It connects parents-to-be and parents of young children with a Home Visitor who guides them through the early stages of raising a family. For many, it is a bridge to becoming the kind of parents they want to be so they can unlock their child's potential.

### Some home visiting figures:

4,500 children home visited across Ireland each year

65,000 home visits each year

170 home visitors employed

### Some quotes from parents

*Meeting families where they are at*

*Giving us what we never had as children*

*Critical lifeline during challenging times*

*Good for me; great for my baby*

### Who is it for?

Home visiting benefits all families. A continuum of support is provided based on resources and referrals. Progressive universalism is used to recruit families. First-time parents and families who are socially isolated and experiencing challenging circumstances prioritized.

### Three main pathways families join a home visiting programme

60% join through statutory agencies e.g., PHNs, Tusla, GP, maternity services

20% join through community and voluntary organisations e.g., childcare services, schools, family resource centres

20% join through word of mouth from families, friends, and neighbours

### Long-term Benefit

Research, including multiple RCTs and other evaluations, has found significant improvements in child health, well-being, and school readiness and parent self-sufficiency.

### What we do?

The Home Visiting Alliance

- Promotes home visiting as an essential early years vital service
- Contributes to policy and practice in relation to early childhood home visiting locally, nationally and internationally.
- Shares our common learning at programme, approach, implementation and policy levels.