

## Center for Health Literacy Promotion Research Summary

### Maternal Health Literacy and Child Development

*Maternal Health Literacy: cognitive and social skills that determine the motivation and ability of mothers to gain access to understand and use information in ways that promote and maintain their health and that of their children. (Renkert and Nutbeam 2001)*

### Project Description

This project assesses how maternal health literacy impacts children's early development including communication, gross and fine motor, personal social, problem solving, social emotional, and regulation. It is the third in our series of studies on promoting maternal health literacy through home visitation. We analyze an AHRQ/NIH database of 2,572 parent/child dyads compiled in a 2006–2008 quasi-experimental six-site nationwide study using multiple waves of measurement and a matched comparison group. Cohort families participated in home visitation programs augmented to develop parents' reflective skills. Home visitors monitored health- and healthcare related practices and behaviors, surrounding family conditions and child development at baseline and 6-month intervals for up to 36 months using the [Life Skills Progression instrument](#). Child development scores were taken from ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) ratings.

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**Funder:** National Library of Medicine

**Study Period :** 2010-2011

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### Key Findings

At each of three assessments, parents of children with no observed delays were rated significantly higher than those with persistent delays on two measures of maternal health literacy derived from the LSP ( $p < .001$ ). Health literacy scores also predicted participation in Early Intervention ( $p < .001$ ). Among children with observed delays ( $N=566$ ), 80% participated regularly in Early Intervention

compared to national rates of 2 to 5%.

## **Presentations**

### **Promoting Maternal Health Literacy**

Global Public Health Conference,  
May 2012, Southampton, England

Updated 6.4.14