

HealthySteps Works!

The evaluation of HealthySteps by Johns Hopkins University compares HealthySteps families with those receiving traditional care. Results, published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (December 17, 2003), show that HealthySteps mothers are more likely to:

- Use positive health practices, such as ensuring that infants sleep on their backs (infants who sleep on their stomachs are at greater risk of SIDS)
- Discuss feelings of depression or anxiety with someone in the child's medical practice
- Interact with their toddlers in a more positive manner and pay more attention to their child's behavioral cues
- Use more positive and less harsh discipline strategies (i.e., avoid yelling, threatening, slapping, or spanking their children)

The evaluation also found that HealthySteps children are more likely to:

- Receive regular developmental screenings
- Be up to date on vaccinations by age two
- Continue to receive care at the practice through the first two years of life



As the evaluation documents, HealthySteps practices are: effective, patient and family-centered, timely in providing care, efficient, and equitable. These qualities allow HealthySteps to meet the key tests of medical care quality set out by the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine (IOM) in its widely noted CHASM report.



HealthySteps

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Cayuga Centers is funded by The Children's Trust. The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of the children and families in Miami-Dade County.



HealthySteps Program

HealthySteps is an evidence-based, interdisciplinary pediatric primary care program that promotes nurturing parenting and healthy development for babies and toddlers. The HealthySteps approach means the entire practice works as a team to strengthen the relationship between families and the practice and support strong parent/child attachment.



HealthySteps for Families

New parents often say that they wish their baby came with an instruction manual. Mothers and fathers with young children want more information and support for their own child on the everyday issues they face - sleeping, crying, toilet training, and discipline, and how to encourage their child to learn.

Designed for all families, HealthySteps allows physicians to expand services beyond those concerned solely with the physical health of young children. It provides a new and comprehensive approach to health care that supports mothers and fathers in their role as nurturers of the emotional, behavioral, intellectual, and physical growth of their children. Focusing on children from birth to age three, HealthySteps takes advantage of the teachable moments that emerge from addressing parents' concerns about development and behavior to guide them in their role as parents.

HealthySteps uses a team approach to primary health care for young children. The team includes a professional staff member, called a HealthySteps Specialist, whose background in child development, nursing, or social work is complemented by HealthySteps training. The HealthySteps Specialist is the member of the health care team who provides the effective link between the family and the pediatric and family practice.

Services

- ✓ Home visits offered at birth and at key developmental stages
- ✓ Well-child visits with a clinician and HealthySteps Specialist
- ✓ A dedicated parent telephone information line
- ✓ Child development and family health check-ups
- ✓ English and Spanish language written materials
- ✓ Age-appropriate reading books for parents and children
- ✓ Speech and hearing specialist for children
- ✓ Maternal depression counseling

HealthySteps for the Medical Community

With medical practices under pressure to see more patients, many physicians feel frustrated that they cannot offer the time required to help parents better understand and care for their young children. The HealthySteps team approach provides the resources physicians need to give high-quality care and the information parents want and need. Parents say the care they receive from a HealthySteps practice is the care they want.

In a study designed to assess the impact of HealthySteps on a medical practice, physicians report that the HealthySteps approach increases their own job satisfaction and makes their practice more effective. They also report that HealthySteps helps retain families in the practice because it promotes consistent well-child checkups.



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Parents don't normally hear praise or reassurance and it helped make me an even better parent with increased confidence.... Later, when my son was slow to speak, my specialist problem solved with me. By utilizing speech therapy early on, we are successfully preventing future problems and expense.

HealthySteps Mother