

# SAFETY LEADS TO FUTURE SUCCESS

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VAWA Stimulus Grant Project

ACTION OHIO Coalition For Battered Women and Columbus Public Health Department's Caring for 2 Program have collaborated to screen for the risk of violence in program participants' relationships and to educate them about the dynamics of intimate partner violence. Caring for 2 is a local Healthy Start program, which addresses infant mortality rates by reducing maternal behavioral and medical risk factors, to promote healthy outcomes for women and their families, beginning with prenatal care through infant's second year. The Healthy Start program currently incorporates an interdisciplinary team of care-coordinators, nurses and a social worker to actively provide supportive services to the families in the program. The domestic violence screening is designed to identify and assess participants' level of risk for violence, provide education and resource information, as well as assist with safety planning when necessary. The purpose of this project is to identify areas of concern to ensure that participants in the program obtain the knowledge to identify unhealthy and volatile environments, which hinder the growth and success of the families.

The Center for Disease Control acknowledges that incidents of violence against women during pregnancy may be more common than some illnesses for which they are tested on a routine basis. Although recommended screening for intimate partner violence exists during initial prenatal care examinations, not enough information is retrieved to make an assessment of a patient's domestic situation. ACTION OHIO is pleased to work in collaboration with Caring for 2 to provide services to improve the healthcare of children and families of Columbus's underserved populations. Our vision to eliminate violence mandates that we help create a society which promotes equal access to power and resources for all individuals, and we welcome this opportunity to provide services.

This project provides home visitation for pregnant African-American women and teens and new mothers in targeted zip codes of Columbus. This collaborative effort and the information gathered in this assessment will provide input into ways to strengthen shared efforts of agencies and develop services to address intimate partner violence in programs throughout Columbus. The expansion of home visit programs and the inclusion of domestic violence education and advocacy is an avenue by which to promote safety for mothers and their children. From home visitation models, we have learned that while 48% of women surveyed reported incidents of domestic violence, there are few prevention and education program components specifically designed to address the issue. ACTION OHIO seeks to support any initiative to continue this structure of services to the residents of Columbus, wherein there is access to information and families are empowered to live lives free of violence.



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## *Caring for 2*

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