

MARCH 2025



Welcome Baby Helps Families in Los Angeles County

INTRODUCTION

Welcome Baby is a free program that supports pregnant women and families with newborns in Los Angeles County. Welcome Baby provides one-on-one support to families until their baby is 9 months old. Welcome Baby nurses and parent coaches offer help to families to prepare for the birth of their child. In addition, the program provides health and parenting education, as well as support with breastfeeding, home safety, and child development. Welcome Baby also provides information to families about scheduling timely doctor visits and accessing public benefits and community services, as needed.

The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) conducted a study of Welcome Baby to learn how the program benefits parents and babies. The study team found some positive results.

About the Study

The research team talked to 647 families in Los Angeles County who received Welcome Baby virtual home visits (over Zoom) between July 2021 and June 2023. They asked about how their baby was doing and about their experiences caring for their baby. The team also talked to a comparison group of 263 similar families who did not receive Welcome Baby visits. The researchers talked to each family when their baby was 14 weeks, 10 months, and 18 months old. By comparing the experiences of families who participated in Welcome Baby with those who did not, the research team learned about how the program helps new families across Los Angeles County.



WELCOME BABY IS FREE,
no matter your income, insurance, or immigration status.
Visit WelcomeBabySupport.org to learn more.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



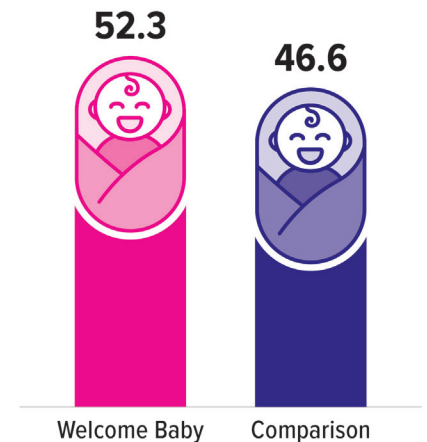
Babies of Welcome Baby families scored higher on social and emotional development.

Welcome Baby provides parenting education on how to support babies' social and emotional skills. These skills are important for babies' learning and growth in other areas, too.

The research team studied babies' social and emotional development by looking at their ability to think and act to get their needs met. The team also measured the strength and quality of babies' relationships with their caregivers. At 10 months old, babies in the Welcome Baby group had higher social and emotional development scores than babies in the comparison group. The chart on the right shows how average scores were higher for babies in Welcome Baby.

The research team found a similar difference when babies were 18 months old. This means that babies whose families participated in Welcome Baby had higher social and emotional skills than babies in the comparison group, even 9 months after the program ended.

Babies' Social and Emotional Development Scores at 10 Months Old



Note. The research team used the Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) to study babies' social and emotional development. The DECA is scored on a scale of 28 to 72 points. The difference between scores for Welcome Baby and comparison families is statistically significant.



Welcome Baby families reported more confidence in their parenting skills.

Helping people be the parents they hope to be is at the heart of the Welcome Baby Program. Families in both the Welcome Baby and comparison groups said they felt confident in their parenting. But families in Welcome Baby had *more* confidence. They said that they could help their child, be a good parent, and problem solve with their child more than families in the comparison group.



Welcome Baby helped families in other ways, too.

Overall, families were very satisfied with the support they received from Welcome Baby.



It was comforting that I could be vulnerable with this woman that barely knew me, and I'm sitting there crying to her on my couch, on Zoom, and telling her about my life. And she didn't judge me.

— Parent in Welcome Baby



Families in Welcome Baby were more likely to have a regular health care provider and a regular place to visit for medical care. They were more likely to receive breastfeeding support and to breastfeed for longer. And they were more likely to be asked questions about whether they felt safe in their home and whether they had symptoms of depression. All of these supports can help families identify and address problems early on before they become more severe.

About the Research Team | AIR is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit institution that conducts research around the world. AIR's mission is to generate and use evidence that contributes to a better, more equitable world. For more information about the study, visit <https://www.air.org/project/welcome-baby-study> or contact WBS@air.org.



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Improving Lives.

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