



# the Link



the children of today are tomorrow's parents ○ los niños del presente son los padres del futuro ○ les enfants d'aujourd'hui seront les parents de demain

## Supervision

The staff interviewed here are four of the many supervisors who have been observed doing outstanding work during Quality Assurance visits.

**Diana McKenzie-Mayo**  
Dutchess County Healthy Families  
Poughkeepsie & Beacon  
Interviewed by Pam Balmer

Diana has more than 10 years experience as a corporate travel agent, a degree in education, and home visiting experience as a Community Health Worker. She currently supervises 2 FSWs and one FAW.

### What makes you stand out as a supervisor? What works?

"I love the program and I believe in it; I've seen other not-for-profits and they just aren't as effective. I've seen the progress families have made. I'm so proud to say I work here."

Diana says the participants really sell the program in the community because it works for them.

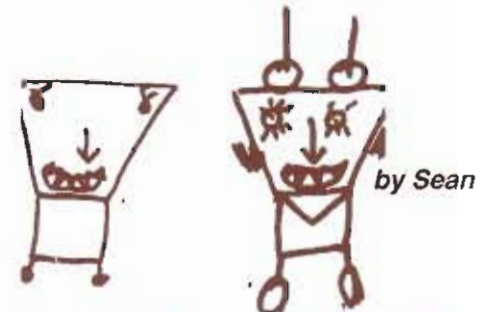
### How do you balance the roles you have as a supervisor?

Diana says that she is always trying to do more nurturing but it's challenging to balance nurturing with caretaking in a comprehensive program like Healthy Families.

She calls prioritizing her most important strategy for balancing the many roles of a Supervisor and believes her main role is to "take care of staff, and this translates directly into the work of supporting families; it's a parallel process." She is committed to creating a safe haven for workers to process their work, and has



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## Updates From OCFS

**Bernadette Johnson, Contract Manager, NYS Office of Children & Family Services**

CONGRATULATIONS! You are now part of the Credentialed Healthy Families New York Multi-site system!

Healthy Families America (HFA) has determined that HFNY is a high quality program worthy of the HFA multi-site credential. The Credential is based upon a set of best practice standards reflecting over twenty years of research.

In December 2002, the Central Administration of HFNY that includes OCFS, Prevent Child Abuse New York, and SUNY Center for Human Services Research, along with ten of the 28 sites, were required to submit a lengthy, rigorous self-assessment based upon the HFA Critical Elements. Each of these self-assessments was reviewed by the administration of HFA. Subsequent to this, HFNY's central administration and seven program sites were visited by trained peer reviewers from other states and rated on the critical

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## Summer 2004

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## HFNY Goals

•To systematically identify overburdened families in need of support

•To promote positive parent-child interaction

•To ensure optimal prenatal care and promote healthy childhood growth and development

•To enhance family functioning by building trusting relationships, problem-solving skills and support systems

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## Updates From OCFS, cont.

elements and standards. As requested over a period of several months after this, additional documentation and evidence was submitted to HFA and a credentialing panel.

HFNY's credential is a multi-site credential, meaning that all the sites and central administration partners needed to be successful in meeting the standards set forth by HFA. The majority of programs nationally do not pursue this credential; rather, they obtain individual credentials for their sites. New York is one of four states that has achieved this goal.

Thank you to all the sites that sent in a self-assessment, especially to those seven sites that received site visits and had to respond several times to the panel's questions. We do appreciate all the work that you and your staff did to make this a reality. We know that it was a very intensive and time consuming process; however we also hope that it was worthwhile to your program to see where you are strong and to see where positive changes could be made.

Each of our 28 sites will receive a plaque in the next few months commemorating this

credential from HFA. We are also hoping to plan an event to celebrate this major accomplishment.

Thank you again for all of your hard work! You provide a very valuable service for the families of New York State!

### Safe Babies Campaign

Many of you have been ordering and using materials created for our Safe Babies campaign that began last year. As you know, there are a videotape, tip sheets to keep babies safe, brochures on Back to Sleep, bookmarks with messages on them, magnets with messages on them and a mini memo board with safety tips and room for emergency numbers. There has been a great demand for these supplies, which are available both in English and Spanish. As a result we are limiting the ordering of each of the materials to 50. We have run out of some of our supplies and are in the process of re-ordering. Please be patient with us.

Remember SEPTEMBER is Safe Babies month. Knowledge and education are powerful tools. Thank you for all you do to support parents in keeping their babies safe.



*Iggy eats lunch*

### Where in the World is Ellen Butowsky??

#### Ulster County Healthy Start??

*As some of you may have heard, after nine years of outstanding service as Program Manager of Ulster County Healthy Start, Ellen Butowsky has resigned from her position as of the first week in August. Congratulations to Ellen for making Healthy Start such a strong program. Caroline Chant, formerly a Supervisor at Healthy Start, is the new—and very capable—Program Manager.*

#### Florida??

*Perhaps some of you also heard that Ellen made New York proud when she received a national award for Program Manager of Excellence at the Prevent Child Abuse America national conference.*

#### Prevent Child Abuse New York??

*Yes! She is here! She has not left Healthy Families New York but will be filling a half-time position with the Training and Staff Development Group, beginning on October 1.*

*Welcome, Ellen!*





# Healthy Families New York Website



## Have you seen the HFNY website?

Go to [www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesnewyork.org) and check it out! This is YOUR site!

Our webmistress, Heather Linton, worked with us over a period of months to design and build the site. We hope you like it and we hope you will send us more information and feedback on how the site is working for you.

On the site you will find 3 areas: one for **staff**, one for **community leaders and funders**, and one for **families**.

In the **staff** section you will find:

- ⊙ The HFNY photo gallery! Find your friends...yourself! **Send in more photos please!!** We can post them anytime.
- ⊙ Articles and news releases about HFNY and HFNY sites
- ⊙ Links to other sites you might find helpful in your work. **Please send us the links related to families and children YOU have discovered that you think others might like to know about.**
- ⊙ Home visit records and narratives from nine different programs...**and we are looking for more. If your program's record forms are not there, please send them in.**
- ⊙ Contact information for HFNY programs, staff, and contract managers
- ⊙ Descriptions of trainings offered by Prevent Child Abuse New York for HFNY
- ⊙ The complete list of holdings in the HFNY Resource Library. (This is a library of curricula, books, teaching materials, journals, and videotapes available to HFNY programs on one-month loans. There is a loan request form available on the site.)

In the **Families** section of the website you will find a variety of materials of interest to parents. These materials include:

TIPS FOR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT, developed by Dr. Kevin Karpowicz, Healthy Families Advocate and Schenectady area Pediatrician.

Lots of information about child development and parenting!

If you are looking for materials to take along on a visit, check out the **Families** section—or tell parents who are connected to the Internet about the site and ask them what they think of it! We'd like to know. To contribute photos, links, or other materials to the site, contact Ann Pitkin at [apitkin@preventchildabuseny.org](mailto:apitkin@preventchildabuseny.org).

## New in the Resource Library

*14 Steps to Better Breastfeeding, IN SPANISH.* Injoy Videos. 2004. 16 minutes. A very family-friendly and specific video that covers 14 key areas of breastfeeding parents often wonder about. Shows a broad diversity of families, including Moms and Dads of various races, ethnicities and ages. This would be an excellent tool to use to open a conversation prenatally about breastfeeding.

*Seeing is Believing: Videotaping Families and Using Guided Self-Observations to Build on Parenting Strengths.* Irving B. Harris Training Center for Infant and Toddler Development. University of Minnesota. 1999. A two-part video with accompanying manual. An excellent guide to using videotaping with families. This could be used as an introduction to taping, or as a supplement to work your site might already be doing as the result of "Nature of Nurturing Workshops" with Victor Bernstein. Covers strategies for introducing taping to families, what activities to tape, what to observe, how to use and set up review with the family.





## About Harlem



Harlem, one of the most famous neighborhoods in the world, is known as the center of Black American culture and commerce.

Harlem was founded as a farming village in 1658 by Dutch settlers on the site of an old Indian village. Soon it was populated by Irish immigrants. Later, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, after a road from lower Manhattan was built by slave labor, gentlemen farmers and merchants built country estates there. It was during this period that the Morris Jumel Mansion was built. It stands today at 160<sup>th</sup> Street and Edgecombe Avenue, and was George Washington's headquarters during the American Revolution.

After the completion of a rail line along Park Avenue, Harlem became part of New York City in 1873. It became the city's "first suburb" and was considered a very fashionable address. By that time, African-Americans had long been a part of the community. There was a Black farm settlement and AME Zion Church at East 130<sup>th</sup> between Fifth and Park Avenues dating back to at least 1830.

From 1904 on, Harlem started to become home to large numbers of African-Americans. They came from lower and midtown Manhattan and from the South. As this migration grew, landlords took advantage of the situation and raised rents and subdivided apartments to begin the over-crowding and poor maintenance that formed slum conditions that have persisted in some areas to this day.

By 1918, the African-American population of Harlem was around 60,000, by 1920 it was 83,000 and in 1930 had risen to 204,000. Around that time, changes were underway in East Harlem, as Puerto Rican families began moving there in significant numbers.

### The Harlem Renaissance

In the 1920's and 30's Harlem became a center for African-American artists, writers, and intellectuals, including writers Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and Claude McKay, painters Aaron Douglas, Jacob Lawrence and William H. Johnson, and sculptor Augusta Savage.

The community also became the center of the city's nightlife. Legendary musicians such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller, Eubie Blake, and Bessie Smith lived and worked in Harlem and performed at nightspots such as the Cotton Club, the Savoy Ballroom, and the Apollo Theater.

By 1930, numerous religious, civic, and cultural institutions such as churches, libraries, the YMCA, theaters, and fraternal organizations already formed the backbone of a strong community.

Today, Harlem is still in flux. With the arrival of national "big box" stores on 125<sup>th</sup> St. beginning in the 1990's, real estate values on and around 125<sup>th</sup> Street have soared. This development is a source of much controversy and represents a significant change.

Today Harlem is truly a multi-ethnic community. Along with the African-American population, Harlem is also home to many immigrants from Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.



*Joe Louis, Heavyweight Champion of the World, at the Apollo Theater, sometime around 1940.*

## Spotlight on Baby Steps

**Jennifer Tuck**  
Program Manager  
Baby Steps

BABY STEPS, a program of Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership, Inc., started in July 2001 and provides home visiting services to families residing in two Central Harlem zip codes (10026 and 10037). These were chosen because they had the highest rate of infant death in New York City. Mothers in these two zip codes also ranked the highest for low birth weight, out-of-wedlock births, and late or no prenatal care (NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene [NYC DOHMH]). BABY STEPS runs out of a storefront office on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard. Central Harlem, located in uptown Manhattan, is a diverse community, as is the BABY STEPS staff and the families that we visit. 61% of BABY STEPS families are African American, 20% are Hispanic, 18% are West African, and 1% are White. 59% of mothers were first time parents and 28% were over 30 years of age. A growing number of new mothers in Central Harlem are born outside of the USA. In 2002, 40% of all Central Harlem new mothers were foreign born. In 2002, the top three regions of origin were Dominican Republic, West Africa, and Jamaica (*The Health of Central Harlem, NYC DOHMH*).

### The Baby Steps Advisory Board

One unique aspect of BABY STEPS is our Advisory Board, which has representatives from all Harlem-based organizations that submitted letters of support for our grant application in 2000. The board has met regularly since 2001. Its members and officers include a parent representative and a staff representative. Their mission is "to improve the quality of life for new and expectant parents and their families in Harlem."

### Harlem Hospital Pediatricians Making Home Visits

One initiative that grew out of our board is a strong collaboration between BABY STEPS and Harlem Hospital's pediatric residency program. Every month, one or two pediatric residents rotate through BABY STEPS as part of their Community Pediatrics rotation (otherwise known as the Dyson program). Our collaboration involves linking pediatric residents with first time pregnant families dually enrolled in BABY STEPS and Harlem Hospital's prenatal clinic. The goal is continuity of care; residents are assigned to families during the prenatal period, with the hope that the residents remain connected to families as their pediatricians once babies are born.



Making this collaboration work effectively takes a lot of coordination and teamwork! First, the BABY STEPS team must identify a family that meets the criteria. The FSW then explains the collaboration to the family and requests their written consent.

Meanwhile, the resident attends an orientation to BABY STEPS to learn about Healthy Families America, our program services and goals, and what to expect during the month at BABY STEPS. In week two, the resident participates in a case conference to learn about the family. During this conference, the FAW, FSW, and other team members share information about the family's pregnancy, psychosocial history, strengths, and current situation. The resident is encouraged to meet the family as a way of developing rapport, as opposed to meeting the family "to figure out what's wrong." Before the case conference the FSW asks the family if there is anything they want to learn about from the resident. Some of the hot topics that families ask about are breastfeeding, pregnancy complications, and labor. During the case conference, the content of the visit is planned based on the family's identified needs, and one or two joint home visits are scheduled. The resident meets the FSW at BABY STEPS and they travel together to the home. Sometimes, if it is a first-year resident, this is the resident's first home visit in the community!

In addition to visits, pediatric residents provide BABY STEPS staff with training. Some topics they have covered include: failure to thrive, fetal alcohol syndrome, infant development, shaken baby syndrome, and car seat safety. The staff, families and residents alike have benefited greatly from this collaboration. Families have increased knowledge about various family health issues and have felt honored to have doctors who do house calls! This year we began collecting information to evaluate the experience of families, residents, family support workers and how successful we have been at ensuring continuity of care for families.



*off to the circus!*



*Kandana & Fadilatou*

### **A West African Connection**

Khady Konte, a Family Support Worker with BABY STEPS since January 2002, originally from Senegal, West Africa, and a resident of Harlem since 1997, met Kandana in the winter of 2002, when she was five months pregnant. Kandana had recently arrived from the Ivory Coast, West Africa, alone and speaking no English. Kandana was struggling financially and lonely without Baba, her husband of two years, who remained in Africa. Khady provided Kandana with support, praise, referrals to outside resources, escorts and translation services. Khady referred Kandana to Room To Grow, a popular BABY STEPS partner that provides low-income families with baby supplies and one-on-one parenting sessions starting in pregnancy. Kandana's husband joined her before the arrival of their baby and began to participate in weekly home visits. The baby, Fadilatou, was born in May of 2003. She was breastfed for nine months, has done well developmentally, and has been on time for all of her well-baby visits. Dr. Eva Desrosiers, the Director of Community Pediatrics at Harlem Hospital, who is French-speaking and a strong BABY STEPS partner, is Fadilatou's pediatrician.

Since being enrolled in the program, Baba has secured full time employment with the NYC Board of Education as a mathematics teacher. In 2002, he received an award from BABY STEPS during our first Fatherhood Recognition ceremony. Kandana is currently enrolled in ESL classes and is practicing English on a daily basis. Kandana, her husband, and their baby girl have moved into their own apartment and are working with INS to become permanent residents of the United States. Kandana shared on her satisfaction survey that BABY STEPS "has helped me to take care of my baby, educate my baby and make sure my baby grows up in good shape." When asked to describe Khady, Kandana chose the words understanding, well-informed, and respectful.

### **Meeting a new Mom on the street**

BABY STEPS met Janell and her 6-day old son Alex at Marcus Garvey Park in August of 2002, at the NYC Breastfeeding Alliance's Annual Breastfeeding Awareness Day. At the time, Janell was twenty-two years old and living in unstable and poor quality housing with the baby's father, Alex Sr., Alex Jr., and her six-year old daughter. Janell had recently come out of an abusive relationship and was afraid for her safety because her ex-boyfriend was in jail and she didn't know when he would be released. BABY STEPS conducted weekly visits, providing the family with education, support and referrals, including information and arrangements for food pantries, domestic violence and victim notification resources, GED preparation, childcare, medical insurance, and employment. Janell breastfed Alex for ten months. He is developing well and has been on time for all well-baby visits and vaccinations. He is now two years old, playful, responsive to activities, and plays often with his sister. His mom likes to read to him and is teaching him his alphabet and colors.

Since enrollment, Janell registered for GED classes and graduated from a Home Health Aide course. The baby's Dad took care of Alex so Janell could complete her coursework. She got a full-time job as a certified Home Health Aide in March 2004 and aspires to become a Registered Nurse. The family moved into their own apartment in July 2004.

Doris Cruz, BABY STEPS Family Support Worker since November 2003, conducts visits with the family twice a month on Sundays because they are unavailable during traditional work hours. Though Doris has been with the program for less than a year, 80% of her families who responded to our annual participant satisfaction surveys rated the quality of services received from her as excellent.



*Janell, Alex Jr., & Doris Cruz*





# Supervision,

*continued from p. 1*

## Diana McKenzie-Mayo, cont.

found that when her priorities are straight all of her roles fall into place. "Sometimes it's hard, but I prioritize so that everything gets done." When she first began supervising she thought that two hours was a lot of time for protected supervision each week. Now, she observes, "Two hours often isn't enough!"

## How do the workers you supervise know that they are special?

"Anytime they are reaching out toward something I encourage it." She is always looking for opportunities to empower workers by encouraging them to share expertise. One FSW recently traveled to Albany for curriculum training, then came back and did a fabulous job presenting it to the rest of the staff. And Diana recognizes that the workers are the true experts on their work, so she commonly asks questions like, "You know the family; what do you think?"

## Words of wisdom

"I learned from my Program Manager to process things. I came into this work thinking, 'Hey, I know how to do this, I'll do it this way,' but that didn't work very well. And I used to think I needed to have all the answers to seem competent." Now she knows that she can relax because she doesn't have to have all the answers. "I say, I may not have the answer but I'll work with you to find it."

Diana also acknowledged that Victor Bernstein's workshops (The Nature of Nurturing) have transformed the work throughout the program by refocusing on strengths and developing workers' ability to step back and explore whether something is unacceptable or disagreeable.

## Sandy Peryer Early Advantages Clinton County Interviewed by Wendy Bender

*A supervisor for seven years, since the program began. Sandy supervises 3 FSWs and 1 FAW. Before coming to Early Advantages, she was the coordinator of a program for teen parents, where she was a supervisor and provided home visits to families.*

## What really works for you? What helps to make you good at what you do?

"A lot of times in this role we do field observations. As a supervisor I can't be forgetting what it is like to be out there in the field and what it's like for them. That's what works, and being as flexible as we expect the workers to be in the field."

## Remember the four roles of supervisor that were discussed in supervisor training (manager, teacher, advocate, support person), and the importance of balancing all of the roles. How do you manage to do this?

"It's difficult; there is no doubt about it. It's being able to assess each worker and where they are, and adjusting myself to each of them at that time and just going with that. I allow them to dictate how supervision will go."

## How do you help the workers that you supervise know that they are special?

"Acknowledging each person's strengths is really important—what they did with a family—and letting the worker know what I learned from them. Sometimes I learn as much from them as they do from me; I keep learning! Once in a while, I give them a flower, a treat, a card—just to acknowledge all they do. Also, acknowledging strengths by assigning them tasks that I know they can do."

## Carol Swick Starting Together Madison County Interviewed by Wendy Bender

*Supervising since March of 1996—8 years—Carol currently supervises 4 FSWs and 1 FSW/FAW. Before coming to Starting Together, Carol stayed home with her own children, did some home daycare, then did home visiting with teens and their babies for 10 years in Syracuse. She also has 20 years experience as a childbirth educator.*

"What's been really helpful to me in this job is having clinical supervision from my Program Manager and from an independent therapist in our agency."

## What do you think makes you stand out as a supervisor?

"You'd have to ask those I supervise; probably my knowledge of pre- and perinatal psychology and new baby stuff."

## What works?

"Working really hard on the parallel process. It's a basic process, but it's so crystal-clear to watch it in practice. And all of the little things from psychology 101—like reflective listening—trying to do those things in supervision. Also, being singular in focus—no phones, closed door and leaving my own stuff outside that door. When I helped a staff member who really struggled, it was a two year process and I grew too—we're all better off for the process."

## When you have felt challenged in your role as supervisor and needed support, what has been helpful?

"The same techniques that I use, knowing that I have a supervisor two doors away with an open door policy. We recently had a demise of a baby, a shaken baby, and my supervisor called me over the weekend. It's a feeling of trust, that you're not out there alone, that someone is always backing you up."

## How do you help the workers that you supervise know that they are special?

"Any supervisor has to make a physical commitment to be there on time. Also, being consistent with responses and finding something small to celebrate in each supervision, maybe something small that they did with a family. And things like giving out awards and certificates. It's the little stuff that means so much."

## The Link interviews Four Supervisors



**Xiomara Martinez**  
**Special Beginnings**  
**Morris Heights**  
**Interviewed by Pam Balmer**

*Hired as a supervisor 2½ years ago, Xiomara has a Bachelor's degree in Psych/Sociology, experience as intake coordinator in a mental health clinic, and experience in foster care for 6 years, including a period of working with children with special needs. As part of her role there she did home visits, made appearances in court, and advocated for children and families with the school system and other community services.*

**What makes you stand out as a supervisor? What works?**

"The attitude I have that the FSWs are the real experts on their families—they are the ones who are out there meeting with them weekly. I rely on the FSWs to know their families." She doesn't want FSWs to think that the ideas she has to offer are necessarily the best ones, and wants them to decide what they use and what they don't for each particular family. She remarked that, "This is especially important in a crisis; the FSWs know what will work."

She also takes time to remember the "little details and observations" that a worker has made about a family, which are especially important when families visit the office. Families visit the program office quite a lot—partly because of its central location and partly because the program is committed to working for the family as a team, right from the start. Xiomara attends initial home visits to introduce herself and help introduce the program and other key staff members. "They are told from the beginning that they have all these people to support them." The program works to create a community of support for all program participants.

**What about balancing your roles? How do you work that?**

"In the beginning it was difficult; I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing. You are in the middle of so many things and being pulled in different directions. You have to find some balance." Back when she started her job, the 9 HFNY programs in the New York City region were having monthly networking meetings just for Supervisors. It went to every other month, and now is on break for the summer, but Xiomara found the meetings extremely helpful to help her get her bearings and learn strategies for approaching various roles and tasks. "I wasn't sure of my role, but speaking to seasoned supervisors was so helpful. When I started, I made up a

supervision form, but it turned out that I wasn't getting all the things I needed to. The other supervisors really helped fill the gap until I went to training."

**How do you let the workers know how much you value them?**

"Through supervision—speaking about the work they're doing, offering praise. Reminding them of their progress." Xiomara told the story of one worker who was afraid of working with fathers. They sat down together and created a plan and strategies for engaging fathers, and now the FSW is enthusiastic about involving all of the fathers. Xiomara enjoyed pointing out the FSW's professional growth to her. And supervision is often playful; it's important to have fun. Xiomara acknowledges that, "we as a program are successful because of the good work the FSWs are doing." The program also observes staff birthdays with a cake and warm words from fellow staff. "Little things—nothing big. We keep it simple."

**Words of wisdom:**

"Workers need to know that they are respected. Reprimands sometimes need to happen, but then they can happen on the basis of good communication and mutual respect." Also, "Know your workers' cases!" She adds, "I've been blessed with great supervisors and have learned what works from them." She is committed to building relationships with the workers she supervises so they have similar confidence in her. "I want my workers to learn so much from me; like I did from my supervisors. So if they move on from this place they'll always have that to take along with them."



**Sandy Peryer**



**Carol Swick**



**Xiomara Martinez**

*"As a supervisor I can't be forgetting what it is like to be out there in the field..."*

**Sandy Peryer**





**Save the Dates!**



*Prevent Child Abuse New York's 10th  
Annual New York State Conference*

**CHILDREN NEED  
EVERYDAY HEROES**

*April 11-13, 2005  
Albany Marriott Hotel*

*Presented by Prevent Child Abuse New York  
and the William B. Hoyt Memorial*

*Prevent Child Abuse New York's 18th  
Annual Legislative Advocacy Day*

**A time to educate legislators about the  
successes (and needs) of Healthy  
Families New York Home Visiting.  
Watch for more information in the fall.**

*Tuesday, February 1, 2005  
in Albany.*



**Summer  
2004**

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