

NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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Many parents wish their new babies came with an instruction manual. Those first nights with no sleep, the terrible twos and learning the word “no” all take their toll on new parents. Add other life challenges such as unemployment, lack of a support system, or unstable housing to the mix and the stress can seem insurmountable. Now there is a program in three Panhandle counties designed to help families deal with these tough situations.

If you are pregnant or the parent of an infant and faced with stress or crisis, you can receive *free in-home* child development coaching to help overcome obstacles, improve your confidence and raise healthier, brighter children. There are no income requirements to qualify. Healthy Families America (HFA) has a proven track record of more than 20 years in helping struggling parents learn to strengthen bonding, stimulate brain growth in children and help build confidence in their ability to raise healthy, successful children.

HFA is now serving residents of Scotts Bluff, Box Butte and Morrill counties and is a program of the Panhandle Public Health District. Program Manager and Clinical Supervisor Betsy Walton said HFA is currently accepting pregnant women or the parents of children three months of age or younger. Families who are in the program can stay for up to 3 years.

“Many parents are under a great deal of stress – single parenthood, the loss of income or a job, homelessness, mental illness or depression. Any significant life crisis can hurt them AND their baby.”

Walton has a staff of five parenting coaches: Linda Ainslie, Rachelle Aleman, Bernadette Sanchez, Myrna Hernandez and Melissa Galles. The six women have offices in Scottsbluff and Hemingford, but serve three counties with evidence-based programs and bilingual services.

For additional information about Healthy Families America, visit www.pphd.org/hfa.html or call Walton at 308-633-2866 or toll free at 877-218-2490. The purpose of the Panhandle Public Health District is to educate the region it serves about the prevention of epidemics, spread of contagious diseases, injury, illness and disability. The district is charged with promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors. They promote the quality and accessibility of health services and protection against environmental hazards. Through education, protection and promotion of these issues, the Panhandle Public Health District believes the quality of life of the residents they serve can be greatly improved.