



# The Nurture Program

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **WHAT IS THE NURTURE PROGRAM AT JFS ROCHESTER?**

The Nurture Program at JFS is a free, home-based, peer support program for families with babies in the Rochester area. Parenting peer support programs, like The Nurture Program, are based on national evidence-based models. These models have shown that peer support can improve the mental health and well-being of new parents and their families. Just knowing that other parents have coped with anxiety and stress can be reassuring for new parents.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE ?**

The Nurture Program at JFS Rochester is available to all parents in Monroe County, regardless of their socioeconomic status. The program represents the continuum of support JFS Rochester provides through proactive, preventative services informed by principals of infant mental health. We believe that every parent deserves access to support and resources during this critical time in their life and The Nurture Program aims to create a caring community where parents feel supported, connected, and nurtured.

### **WHY MIGHT I NEED THIS SUPPORT?**

Did you know that more than half of parents feel like they're failing within the first year of parenthood, and moms are hit with it the most. 60% of mothers feel like they're not doing enough compared to 45% of dads. Having a baby brings many changes to a family's life, including new responsibilities, lack of sleep, and less time for self-care. During this time, parents may feel like they are navigating uncharted territory and may benefit from the support of others who have been through it before. This is where peer support can play a critical role in helping you thrive. Peer support allows you to connect with others who have experienced similar situations and feelings in the past and provide emotional support, practical assistance, and informational resources to navigate the challenges of parenthood.

### **WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT THE NURTURE PROGRAM TO PARTICIPATE?**

It is best to complete the Nurture Family Interest Form while you are still pregnant so our staff can invest the appropriate time to recommend a volunteer who can meet your needs, complement your personality, and be available once your baby arrives. However, you may contact The Nurture Program and initiate support any time in the first twelve months after the birth of your baby. If you or your baby have extenuating circumstances, the Program Coordinator will assess if we can offer you and your family support beyond the parameters described here.

### **HOW LONG IS THE SUPPORT PERIOD?**

If you are seeking in-person support, you will be matched with a volunteer who will provide 12 in-person visits over a 6 month time frame. Generally, the visits will be once a week for the first 8 visits and then bi-weekly for the following 4 visits. We recognize that families and volunteers may experience illnesses, vacations and other circumstances that may impact scheduling so there is some flexibility with regard to the weekly/bi-weekly structure. If you would prefer phone/text support, you will be matched with a volunteer who will provide 12 scheduled check-ins over a 6 month time frame. Due to illness or other scheduling conflicts, many families will do a combination of in-person support and phone/text support throughout the 6 month timeframe.

### **HOW LONG ARE VISITS AND PHONE/TEXT CHECK-INS?**

In- person visits may range from 1.5-2 hours long and phone/text check-ins may range from 5 minutes to 30 minutes long, depending on your need for support that day.

### **HOW CAN A VOLUNTEER SUPPORT ME?**

Our Nurture Program volunteers are carefully selected and undergo extensive training to provide non-judgmental emotional support, practical assistance, and guidance to new parents. Volunteers offer a range of support services, including infant care education, light housework, and companionship, all with the goal of helping parents feel more confident and less isolated during this important time.

### **HOW CAN THE NURTURE PROGRAM AT JFS ROCHESTER POSSIBLY BE FREE?**

Thanks to the generosity of our passionate volunteers, there is no charge for the support they offer. However, as you can imagine, there are expenses in managing such a program. These are covered through the grants from local foundations and donations from individuals who believe in the mental and physical wellbeing of all families.