



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Families First Program Receives Accreditation By Health Families America

The Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Families First program announces that it has been accredited by Healthy Families America as a provider of high quality home-visiting services. Families First is a home-visiting program for expectant and parenting first-time mothers. The services are provided to help them improve children's health, nutrition and developmental outcomes.

Families First home-visitation services are offered to those first-time parents who enter a prenatal care program at either the Chesterfield County or Colonial Heights health departments. All services offered through this program are free. Professionally-trained family-support workers provide regular home visits to assist mothers in nurturing and caring for their children and themselves. Family-support workers share information, videos and activities about childbirth preparation, child health and development, parenting and parent/child interaction and local resources.

The accreditation process was based upon a stringent set of 12 critical elements grounded in more than 30 years of research. The process involved a self-assessment for the 33 Healthy Families Virginia programs in Virginia. Nine of the 33 programs, including the Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Families First program, also received an on-site visit with in-depth examinations of their operations.

Regarding the accreditation process, Families First Program Manager Andelicia Neville says, "It was a very thorough process having our entire program checked out at every level. I especially

want to thank the families who participated during our site visit and the wonderful feedback that they, and our advisory board, gave. Ultimately, this process was worth the effort to ensure that our families are getting the quality of services that they deserve.”

“I also want to thank the staff, who are passionate and committed to their families,” Neville added. “This is a job that they love and they believe that what they do makes a big difference.”

Healthy Families America is a signature program of PCA America, which has been providing home-visiting services for more than 20 years. Since expectant and new parents have common questions about their children’s development, Healthy Families America connects them with community partners to find the answers, often meeting in the families’ homes. PCA America was established in 1972 with the belief that child abuse and neglect is preventable. The nonprofit, volunteer-based organization is committed to preventing child abuse in all forms through education, research, public awareness, and public policy development. Currently, PCA America has 50 statewide chapters.

For more information, call Families First at 318-8655 or email nevillea@chesterfiel.gov .