

**Parents as Teachers (PAT) promotes the optimal early development, learning, and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers.**

## PAT in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania PAT State Office, based at Center for Schools and Communities, provides implementation support to programs through site visits, phone and email communications, monthly webinars, newsletters, and professional development. The state office provides PAT certification courses for new staff. During 2022-2023, the state office facilitated 17 PAT model courses with 297 total participants.

Parents as Teachers programs, operating in Pennsylvania since 1992, are funded through a variety of sources, including Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), utilizing federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) and state investments, and through local county children and youth agencies, school districts, foundations, and gifts.

OCDEL-funded Pennsylvania Family Centers use evidence-based PAT as the core service in achieving positive outcomes for healthy child development and parent education. Other PAT providers in Pennsylvania include community action agencies, schools, Early Head Start programs, and private nonprofits.

Pennsylvania PAT is part of Pennsylvania Family Support group, the Family Centers Network, and collaborates with other evidence-based home visiting models as advocates in the Childhood Begins at Home Campaign.

Despite challenges related to areas such as staff recruitment and retention and securing resources for families, Pennsylvania PAT programs managed to establish and maintain significant relationships and connections with families. Three organizations became Parents as Teachers affiliates in the 2022-2023 year. Thirty-eight are recognized by Parents as Teachers model developers as Blue Ribbon Affiliates.

## Evidence-Based Model

Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers (PAT) evidence-based home visiting model promotes the optimal early development, learning, and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. PAT serves expectant families and those with newborns through the child's first year in school.

PAT's model approach and research-informed curriculum focuses on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being. The program is culturally adaptable. Through four interconnected components, certified parent educators create settings where families can build protective factors. In personal visits they conduct health and developmental child screenings; host Group Connections; and develop a resource network to connect parents to services and supports.

## Research

Parents as Teachers has over 40 years of independent research. Evaluation of the model has been integral to the success of Parents as Teachers. Studies published in peer-reviewed journals show statistically significant effects of PAT. PAT meets the [Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness \(HomVEE\)](#) criteria, as demonstrated in a review conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse \(CEBC\) for Child Welfare](#), [Community-based Child Abuse Prevention's \(CBCAP\) Matrix of Evidence-Based Programs](#), [Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse](#), among others and internationally with favorable, replicable, and sustainable outcomes. The PAT model goals are supported by research.

- Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve positive parenting practices.
- Provide detection of developmental delays and connection to services.
- Improve parent, child, and family health and well-being.
- Prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Increase children's school readiness and success.
- Improve family economic well-being.
- Strengthen community capacity and connectedness.

[View a comprehensive review of Parents as Teachers evidence.](#)

[View research bibliography pdf on National PAT website.](#)





## Connection to Care

One of the four core components of the PAT model is developing a resource network and connecting families with supports.

“The parent educator empowered a mom and connected her to the Chaffe Grant. Mom applied for and received this grant for her to attend culinary school! She graduated in July 2023. This mom is not only doing well, but her older child is now saying words, counting, and naming colors.”

— DMHC Children’s Prevention Services/Dickinson Ctr, Inc.

## Growing the Whole Family

Family well-being is a vital part of the PAT model.

“A mother involved in our program successfully executed a safety plan that her parent educator helped her put into place. This mother left an abusive partner and secured safe and stable housing for her and her children.”

— Erie Family Center

## According to the 2022-2023 PAT Affiliate Performance Report:

- 56 PAT affiliates supported families in nearly every county.
- 4,938 families with 6,594 children were served by 316 parent educators.
- 323 families were on waiting lists.
- 61% of families have limited incomes with 16% with low educational attainment.
- 80% of families experience one or more stressors – low income, substance use disorder, child with special needs, English language learners.

## In 2022-2023, Pennsylvania Parents as Teachers engaged families in the model’s four major components providing:

- **63,636** personal visits.
- **1,311** group connections.
- **10,081** full or partial health and developmental screenings of children.
- **4,366** links to community resources.

## Family Leadership

PAT recognizes that parents and family members know their children best and promotes their leadership development.

A single mom was in Berks Community Action Program Family Center (BCAP FC) for 4 years until her child aged out and will transition to kindergarten this school year. The family started in a shelter and became involved with Children and Youth Services (CYS.) Within the first year of being involved with the Family Center, Mom’s CYS case was closed, and the family moved into public housing. Mom has maintained her housing, and with each change in jobs, she increased her income. The child scored 98% on the school readiness test. Mom has requested weekly visits even though she only needed bi-weekly. Mom wishes she could continue with BCAP FC and is in the process of obtaining her driver’s license. Mom has also reported that she will share her success through the Family Center with people that she meets. We are proud that Mom has been resilient through this process.

— Berks Community Action Program/  
BCAP Family Center-Parents as Teachers

## Being engaged with the PAT program was positive for families.

Parents as Teachers builds parent awareness and understanding of child development and parenting responses.

Family B was struggling with their child speaking and acting out. After an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening, we referred a family to Early Intervention services. The family followed through, and the child had a speech delay which was also causing behavior issues. The child is doing much better currently, and the family is feeling better with things!

— ARIN Intermediate Unit 28

