

Infant Stimulation Program

ASAPROSAR

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Her dark brown eyes can melt the largest man into a puddle of mush instantly, her pudgy arms and legs move with purpose as she stacks blocks and picks out stuffed animals, her smile and giggle contagious.



The day we spent with the staff of ASAPROSAR's infant stimulation program was memorable to say the least. ASAPROSAR is following in the steps of many successful home visiting programs, taking strides to reach out to pregnant women and young families as they watch and nurture their newest addition.

Research has shown that having home visitors do outreach in the homes of high risk infants and toddlers can improve infant development, have positive behavioral outcomes and increase parents knowledge of child development, parenting attitudes and quality of the home environment. (Calderal, Burrell et Al. 2007)

ASAPROSAR is teaching those in the community to become leaders and "Health Promoters." Health promoters go into the homes of identified families and work to empower the family to have a healthy, successful family.

In our time with the health promoters the team was incredibly impressed with their professionalism and organization. During our infant stimulation visit the health promoters used charts to track the child's development as well as guided exercises to work on gross and fine motor skills, word comprehension and verbal skills. The health promoter also discussed nutrition and eating habits with the child's mother and grandmother. As well as weighing and tracking the child's growth. Our favorite part of the visit was at the end when the mother of this beautiful little girl encouraged her to go around and give each of the visitors a hug and kiss on the



cheek. What an honor to be able to witness such good work being done in such a loving manner.



The second home we went to was the house of a seventeen year old woman who was expecting her first baby. Once again a well prepared, professional and extremely personable health promoter lead the conversation and home visit. Using pictures and guided curriculum she explained what was going on with the young mother's body and the infant growing inside of her. She discussed common discomforts and gave the young mother ideas for coping and emphasized the nutritional needs she has and healthy choices to make in preparation for the arrival of her baby. The health promoter also discussed a common



concern for many pregnant women in El Salvador and that is how to get to the hospital in a timely, safe manner. Many women have to arrange a neighbor who has a car to drive them to the hospital

which can be up to an hour away from their home. Having home visitors, prenatal care and available medical care all play a piece in continuing the health of these new babies.

The infant stimulation project through ASAPROSAR is an impressive way to reach out to young and flourishing families in El Salvador. These services bring knowledge, safety, education and increase healthy, strong family development. As a group of visiting Americans we were more than blessed and extremely encouraged to see such dedicated, quality work being done by ASAPROSAR.

Caldera, D., Burrell, L., Rodriguez, K., Crowne, S., Rohde, C., & Duggan, A. (2007). Impact of a statewide home visiting program on parenting and on child health and development. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 31(8), 829-852. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2007.02.008