

HFA Policy on Research with Affiliates

Healthy Families America (HFA) actively encourages research¹ to strengthen effectiveness, and promotes the involvement of program leadership and staff in the research process (i.e., participatory research) to maximize the utility of results and to help ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion. Recognizing that research with HFA affiliates may have broad implications, our policy seeks to ensure regular communication on study progress, and maximize the utility of research to strengthen the HFA network and model per HFA's Best Practice Standards (GA-7.D.).

- Prior to participation in research that involves a) the HFA model, or b) participants, past or present, enrolled in services, the HFA affiliate (or a research partner on their behalf) notifies the National Office.
- The HFA affiliate facilitates communication between the research partner and National Office, including a contact who can provide information on the study on the [form linked here](#).
- The HFA National Office will indicate receipt of study notification and information to the affiliate through the affiliate's account on the HFA Community.
- Annual updates on study progress, reports, and any plans to disseminate results will be requested of research partners and HFA affiliate.

HFA Research Guidelines: It is HFA's expectation that the guidelines below will be followed in all research with sites. Note that HFA specifically requires that participation in research is voluntary for all families and not a requirement for receiving services.

1. Study methodology and questions are compatible with model requirements. (Note: HFA encourages innovation. However, model adaptations must be approved by PCA America in advance of their implementation, as required in the HFA Best Practice Standards).
2. Study design and conduct is informed by and consistent with the [Diversity-Informed Infant Mental Health Tenets](#) and principles of community-based participatory research (for example, see description in [the Community Tool Box](#)) to ensure equitable and inclusive study practices.

¹ A systematic examination of information to answer a question and advance knowledge, and any activity, including program evaluation and/or quality improvement activities, (i) that would, according to Federal regulations, require review by an Institutional Review Board, or (ii) that could be expected to yield generalizable knowledge that could be shared publicly with the professional, academic and/or lay communities. Evaluation can be a type of research if the knowledge to be gained is applicable to and will be applied beyond the immediate participants and context of the study. Evaluation solely for purposes of quality assurance or quality improvement is not considered Research.

3. Sites participating in research are accredited and in good standing; exceptions will be considered if warranted by the study.
4. Research methodology supports service delivery as the top priority for site staff, and does not add significantly to existing staff data collection burden.
5. Research is conducted with quality.
6. Research questions build on existing evidence to address questions of value to the prevention field.
7. Research participation conveys benefits to site and/or the field (e.g., valuable training for staff, resources for families, fair compensation to site/families for extra time, and/or knowledge gained).

Click to go to the [Notification of Research with HFA Affiliates Form](#)