



Agency Name: Catholic Social Services

Program Name: Pregnancy, Parenting and Adoption

Program Success Story:

A young couple (“Steve and Patty”) who are parents of a baby boy, born 4 weeks premature, contacted the Pregnancy, Parenting and Adoption program for assistance in parenting following an incident involving alleged child abuse. A Department of Social Services caseworker working with them encouraged their enrolling in both parenting and anger management classes.

The couple enrolled in the STEP Early-Childhood (age 0 – 6 yrs) parenting classes. To do so, Patty had to drop a training program that she was taking, and their daily schedules were dramatically rearranged.

They enrolled in the class which is held at Mothers and Babies Perinatal Network’s PAL Resource Center, and took advantage of the collaboration PPA has with the PAL Center for child care. The couple attended all of the class sessions and often came early or stayed late, in order to obtain advice and feedback on their son’s development both from the course instructors and the PAL Center staff. When ideas were suggested they immediately incorporated them into their parenting routines. For instance, Steve mastered techniques of swaddling and soothing his upset son, and was proud to demonstrate them to the other fathers in the class.

Following the class Steve and Patty asked to meet with a PPA social worker for relationship counseling. They acknowledged that they get frustrated with one another especially under the stress they currently face. However, their commitment to one another and to their child was unwavering. Through short-term counseling they identified that their communication preferences and decision making processes are quite opposite and that this may be a source of strength and potential conflict for them as parents.

At last contact, Steve and Patty had developed strategies for coping with their stress and appeared to be well on their way to re-establishing an effective family. Dad admitted he has had to swallow his pride somewhat being a young and tough guy during this process. Moreover, he also generously shared his appreciation for what he has learned in the parenting class, the one-to-one support/feedback from others and the counseling.