



The Center for
Great Expectations



S.T.A.R.T. Program Description

The S.T.A.R.T. program provides free in-home/telehealth services for women with substance use who are pregnant or up to 12 weeks postpartum at the time of intake.* S.T.A.R.T. provides services in Essex, Hunterdon, Western Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Somerset, and Union Counties for up to 18 months.

In-Home/Telehealth Services Include:

Trauma-Attuned Substance Use Counseling: Clients receive a minimum of one one-hour session per week with a licensed therapist. Utilizing in-home visits or virtual mental health sessions, clients receive clinical assessment and individualized treatment plans focused on initiating and maintaining recovery and supporting secure attachment between mother and infant. Random and as-needed toxicology screens are provided. An on-staff APN is available for initiation and monitoring of MAT. As necessary, clinicians will provide referrals to treatment providers such as IOP, PHP or residential treatment.

Peer Recovery Support: Clients receive in-home/telehealth mentoring, coaching, and support from a certified peer recovery specialist who works in close collaboration with client's licensed therapist to assist client in setting and reaching recovery goals.

Integrated Doula Care and Case Management: START's doula/case managers provide access to social determinants of health and traditional doula pregnancy and birth support. Doulas assist clients in securing and engaging in prenatal care as well as creation of plans of safe care. Clients receive individual and group childbirth education/preparation, labor support and advocacy at the hospital, and postpartum care. Doulas support a trauma-informed childbirth experience and promote secure attachment by advocating for early and prolonged skin-to-skin contact in the hours after birth. Services include breastfeeding education, providing information on the benefits of breastfeeding for substance-exposed infants. Doulas will promote a connected feeding experience for both bottle feeding and breastfeeding clients. In-home postpartum sessions focus on physical and emotional care of the mother, education and coaching on infant soothing techniques.

Therapeutic Group Experiences: Clients are invited to attend bi-weekly therapeutic groups intended to provide opportunities for relational engagement, creation of social supports, recovery support, life skills training, job readiness, child development education, mind-body regulation, nutritional wellness, and activities that promote secure attachment and provide opportunities for connection between parent and child.

The S.T.A.R.T. acronym stands for: Supportive, Trauma-Attuned, Attachment-Based, Recovery Treatment. S.T.A.R.T. is part of a full continuum of care provided by the Center for Great Expectations and supports the organization's mission to provide a safe place, a safe presence, and a safe path to the clients we serve. *On a case-by-case basis, clients may be admitted to the program up to 16 weeks postpartum.

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