

**Written Only: Testimony of Marta Santana, Home Visitor, Fair Haven Community Health Center Nurturing Families Network**

**Attention: Appropriations Committee**  
with regard to the Governor's Biennial 2012-2013 Budget Plan  
March 4, 2011

Good Evening Chairman and members of the Appropriations Committee,

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My name is Marta Santana. I am a home visitor for the Nurturing Families Network at the Fair Haven Community Center in New Haven. I am here today to urge you to vote against the Governor's proposed budget cuts that would eliminate 13 Nurturing Families Network community based sites in Hartford and New Haven, and immediately terminate child abuse and preventions services to families in tow of Connecticut's poorest cities.

Nurturing Families Network continues to provide evidence that our work *does* make a great difference for the families enrolled in our program.

As a Home Visitor, I provide parenting skills and materials that focus on child development. I teach first time parents to advocate for their rights and their children's rights. I help parents to connect with the resources that are available in their communities. I also help parents to understand that child abuse and neglect *should never* be part of a child's development.

I help teens to understand that love and guidance is the key to succeed in their child's life. I encourage them to believe that their goal in life can be possible if they work hard. I have supported my teens to stay in school and find jobs. As a result, I have witnessed how their life has been transformed when these important achievements have been accomplished.

I emphasize that parents are the primary educator in their child's life. As a home visitor, and a mother, I know that having a supportive system in place, such as NFN, is a major need in our society and even more importantly, in the life of our children.

*In my culture, we always say and believe that the seed you plant, and continue to nurture will be fruitful.* I firmly believe that as a society we are responsible for seeing that our children have a full life, one without child abuse and neglect.

With all respect and in closing, I would also ask that you believe and trust in the important work of the Children's Trust Fund, Nurturing Families Network, and vote against the Governor's proposed budget cuts to sites in Hartford and New Haven

Thank you for your continued support,

Sincerely,

Marta Santana,  
Home Visitor, Nurturing Families Network, Fair Haven Community Health Center