

# Community Perception of Home Visitation

*"You never get a **second chance**  
to make a **first impression.**"*

The origin of this quote has been attributed to multiple people, including playwright and novelist Oscar Wilde, Mark Twain, and fellow Oklahoman Will Rogers. Regardless of its origin, its simple wisdom has great value. First impressions are important in many aspects of life...including home visitation programs. In order for home-visit programs to be successful in engaging families, they need to make a good first impression.

*Home Visitation programs provide services and support for families with young children in the convenience of their home.  
Engaging families is key to success.*

Improving and Testing of Marketing Home Visitation Programs is one of the goals of the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home-Visitation (MIECHV) external evaluation. In this evaluation, 1371 caregivers of young children who would qualify for at least one home visitation programs in Oklahoma have completed the community survey. During these surveys the caregiver was asked about their initial reactions to three terms:

1. "parentPro Program"
2. "Home Visitation Program"
3. "Home-Based Parenting Program"

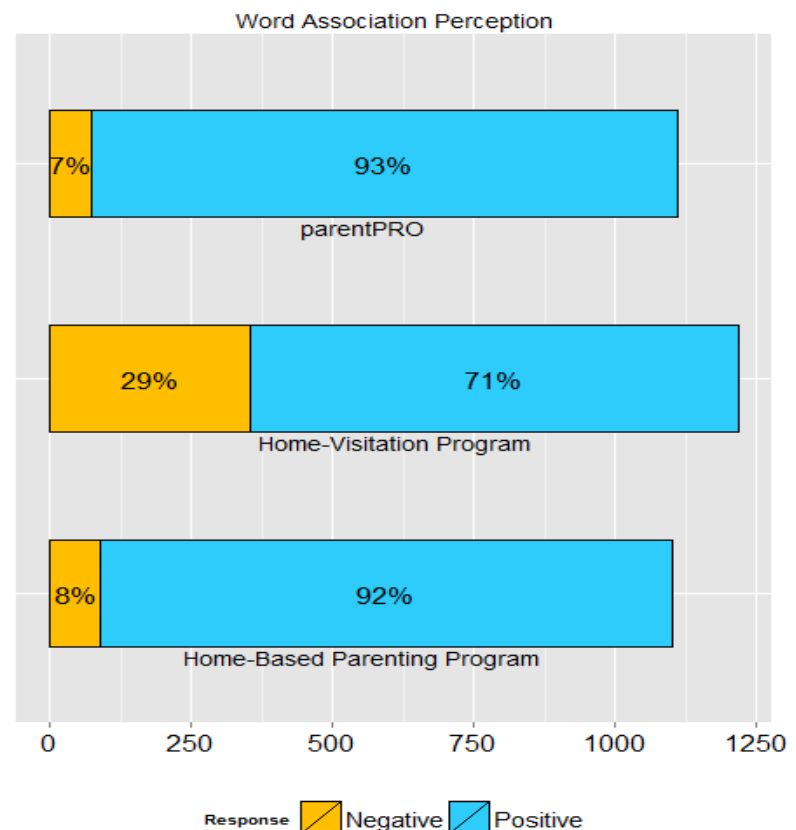
Many potential clients reacted to "Home-Visitation Program" negatively.

29% of participants had a **NEGATIVE** perception of "Home-Visitation Program".

93% and 92%, respectively, had **POSITIVE** perceptions of "parentPRO Program" and "Home-Based Parenting Program".

Caregivers were also asked to write down the first word that came to their mind, a first impression, and then rate if that thought was a negative or positive.

Word clouds are graphical representations of the frequency of word usage. The word cloud pictured represents the negative thoughts that came to the caregiver's mind when reading the phrase "Home-Visitation Program".



Of the few respondents already enrolled in home visitation programs, most heard learned about it from family/friends (97%), health providers (60%), and/or advertisements (59%).

### **Other Research Echos Findings in Oklahoma**

Public Opinion Strategies and The Mellman Group conducted an internet survey of 802 adults in January 2014. The quote below is a result of four focus groups held in suburban Dallas, TX and suburban Detroit, MI.

- Family Support: 62
- Family Coaching: 55
- Parent Education: 53
- Parent Mentoring: 53
- Parent Coaching: 50
- Home Visiting: 34

*The phrase “Home-Visiting” conjures up associations that are more negative and does not convey the benefits of the program”<sub>1</sub>*

- Consider other language to describe your program to potential consumers and other agencies.
- When describing your program, focus on the benefits to the potential consumers, such as the convenience of being in the home rather than having to travel to a clinic with young children.
- **Using terms such as Home-Based Parenting, parentPRO, or Family Support may improve engagement from family members and stakeholders.**

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