

KASPER'S STORY

Whenever Kasper, a former NFP parent, hears that a friend is expecting, they immediately recommend Nurse-Family Partnership. "I always tell them, 'By knowing about NFP, I'm giving you the best gift you could have!'" Kasper shared with enthusiasm.

Kasper, along with their husband, Cameron, and their toddler, Eneko, recently graduated from the Sonoma County Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) in northern California. "Graduating was bittersweet; I was sad because I didn't want to leave," Kasper reflected on their journey with NFP, which began when they first learned they were pregnant.

"I was working as an auto mechanic in skilled trades, but Cameron and I knew we wanted to start a family, so I transitioned to a barista job to give my body a break," Kasper shared. Soon after, they were preparing to welcome their first child. "At our first prenatal appointment, someone in the medical field recommended NFP, and that one thoughtful suggestion made an incredible impact on me, my child, and my entire family!" Kasper said.

Eager to get started, Kasper enrolled in NFP and prepared to meet their nurse. "At first it felt intimidating to have a provider come to my house. I kept thinking, 'is my house clean enough?' But once nurse AManda arrived, I could see she was



Kasper and Nurse AManda's bond grew into a strong support system that helped Kasper feel prepared as a parent.

so warm and easy to talk to – she made me feel so comfortable."

AManda, the nurse supervisor at Sonoma County NFP, also serves as a nurse home visitor. She said, "I remember receiving a new referral with they/ them pronouns and immediately thinking, 'This one is mine!'" AManda said. "I'm queer and married to a woman, so I was excited to share a cultural connection with Kasper." She continued, "I called Kasper, and they answered with, 'Hello! I'm so excited to meet you!' From there, our connection grew."

When asked about Eneko's birth, Kasper shared, "My birth plan went exactly as I had written it." They added, "It was an ideal experience because my NFP nurse prepared me mentally and physically. I am very fortunate that I didn't have complications that required intervention."

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- CAMERON



Even after graduation, Kasper and Cameron credit NFP's support for shaping their parenting journey and confidence.



THE NFP PROGRAM JUST MAKES SENSE!

- KASPER

But it was shortly after Eneko's birth that Kasper needed the most support from nurse AManda. "I struggled with getting a good latch during breastfeeding – and that was emotionally harder on me than the birth experience," Kasper admitted. With 20 years of experience supporting breastfeeding, AManda said, "The key for any parent is to listen to their baby and their body, without focusing too much on outside opinions."

AManda guided Kasper through different nursing positions. "And after 500 pillows, I was finally comfortable!" Kasper recalled with a laugh. "It was incredibly helpful having AManda physically show me how to get a better latch and avoid milk duct blockages, which could have led to mastitis." Two weeks later, Kasper and Eneko were breastfeeding with ease.

Kasper's husband, Cameron, found the resources and information from nurse AManda especially helpful. "Sure, we could have found similar handouts online, but having them curated by a trusted medical professional made all the difference," Cameron explained. "There's so much information out there, and as new parents, it's hard to know who to trust. People often asked if Kasper and I were second-time parents because AManda gave us so much confidence!" he added.

Like many babies, Eneko wasn't a fan of tummy time. "AManda gave us great tips on making tummy time more tolerable, and even enjoyable," Kasper said. "She suggested activities and gave us guidance on how to engage with a baby during tummy time."

That advice became even more valuable when, at just four months old, both Kasper and Eneko contracted COVID. "Talking to AManda during that



Though they've graduated, Kasper continues to advocate for NFP, bringing awareness to its impact on new families.

time gave me peace of mind," Kasper said. "She told me what signs to watch for and when to take more serious action." AManda added, "Having worked through the pandemic, I had more reliable information about COVID than anyone else in their life."

"Thanks to NFP's guidance, I actually felt more prepared for Eneko's arrival than I do for my second child!" Kasper said. That's right—Kasper and Cameron are expecting their second child in just a couple months. Kasper is also completing their apprenticeship for a locksmith license. "By the time my second baby arrives, I'll be able to work part-time as a locksmith," they said.

Even though Kasper's family has graduated from NFP, their involvement with the program continues. They are a dedicated member of NFP's Community Advisory Board. "Kasper's dedication to community involvement is truly inspiring—they're always working to make a difference," Nurse AManda shared. Kasper recently visited Sacramento to advocate for NFP with California legislators. "I have ideas on how to connect more individuals with the program," Kasper said.

Kasper shared, "I can't say enough about NFP and AManda in particular. She was so warm, made me feel comfortable, and truly listened. The NFP program just makes sense!"

Photo credit: Natalie Henedez