

## “You only have one chance to be a good parent”

### *Nurturing a New Life Parent Education Project*

Care Net will expand its parent education program beginning in January 2010. For many young women, choosing life presents challenges because they have no idea how to care for their child after he or she is born. Furthermore, many of these moms are trapped in cycles of unhealthy relationships and / or chronic homelessness, creating an unsafe environment for their children. Our new initiative will allow Care Net to follow moms through the critical first three years of their child’s life.

“You only have one chance to be a good parent,” Melissa\*, a resident of The Elizabeth House explained. She went on to say that many of the young women that our ministry works with have no experience with child care and no mentoring outside the Care Net ministry.

Care Net has chosen to engage these issues by launching the Nurturing a New Life Parent Education Project.

#### **“Mom - a child’s first and best teacher.”**

The research based program will empower single moms with parenting skills and with healthy relationships, increasing self sufficiency and self esteem. “Apart from intervention and education, we all parent from how we were parented,” explains Paula Reif, who will direct this program. “We can’t change unless we see alternatives.”

#### **One mom’s experience**

Melissa came to live at The Elizabeth House in June. Her son, Jonathon, was born in July. “Having a child really makes you grow up fast,” she said. “You can’t do it twice; you only have one chance to be a good parent.” Meeting with Paula and Care Net staff has helped. “The people who really take advantage of this program are going to change their lives – their own lives and their baby’s life. It’s really a beautiful, beautiful thing.”



Jonathon holding Mom’s hand

\* Fictitious names to protect privacy.