

Illinois Home Visiting Innovations

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Illinois has created learning laboratories for testing pilots and demonstration projects, in addition to providing valuable trainings, tools and approaches that can be applied to strengthen the state's home visiting system as a whole.

Universal Newborn Supports

Family Connects Illinois (FCI)*

Based upon the principle that all families need some degree of support, a universal newborn support system has been established in Peoria and Stephenson Counties*, using the Family Connects curriculum. The City of Chicago is also operating Family Connects in several hospitals (with non-MIECHV funds).

Guiding principles include the following:

- A universal strategy reduces stigma.
- Conducting an assessment in the home increases the likelihood that families will be appropriately referred and will accept such assistance.
- There is no one strategy for supporting parents of young children, and every agency and program has a role to play in building the system.

Through birthing hospitals, parents are offered a nurse home visit to strengthen their capacity to meet their children's needs. Based on each family's level of resources and needs, assistance can include providing information on newborn care, offering assistance with breastfeeding, finding child care, referrals to parent support groups, and referrals to high-intensity services such as home visiting.

Serving Priority Populations

Home Visiting for Homeless Families (HVHF) Demonstration Project*

Through high-quality home visiting services, the HVHF project seeks to improve the developmental trajectories of children experiencing homelessness. This includes improvements in developmental screenings, well-child visits, and economic self-sufficiency of the family. The goals of the project are to remove barriers to home visiting for families experiencing homelessness, ensure home visiting is more responsive to the needs of these families, inform practice and policy change, and increase integration and alignment across homeless services and home visiting systems.

Start Early (formerly known as the Ounce of Prevention) provides oversight of the project and has engaged several local home visiting programs and homeless service providers. The programs involved in

HVHF communicate regularly to coordinate referrals and services. In addition, there is a statewide advisory group that meets quarterly to discuss systems issues and new ideas.

Illinois Pregnant and Parenting Youth in Care Home Visiting (I-PPYC-HV)*

I-PPYC-HV provides pregnant and parenting youth in child welfare care with access to voluntary home visiting services that are provided by programs throughout the state. The project's goals are to: promote nurturing parent-child relationships and healthy child development; enhance family functioning by reducing the risk of abuse and building protective factors; break the intergenerational cycle of abuse, neglect and trauma; increase coordination between the child welfare and home visiting systems; and create a model that can be replicated throughout Illinois. Chapin Hall at The University of Chicago conducted an evaluation of the pilot, including both an implementation and an outcome study.

Intact Families and Home Visiting Initiative**

Based on lessons learned from the I-PPYC-HV project, the Erikson DCFS Early Childhood Project is connecting DCFS Intact Families with voluntary home visiting services. This project works with DCFS Intact Families who are pregnant or parenting young children ages 0-3. It was launched with funding from the state's Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5).

Cook County Jail Initiative

Start Early is partnering with the Cook County Sheriff's office to bring doula and home visiting services to pregnant women who are incarcerated at Cook County jail. The hope is that by beginning these services while the women are incarcerated and continuing to support mothers after they have been released, home visiting can improve the developmental trajectories for children while leveraging the power of parenthood to support mother's desires to make lifestyle changes.

Doula and Home Visiting Network

A doula is a trained professional who helps a mother achieve her healthiest pregnancy, labor and delivery possible by providing continuous educational, emotional and physical support at all stages of pregnancy—before, during and shortly after childbirth. In the model implemented by Start Early's Doula and Home Visiting Network, doula services are embedded in long-term, evidence-based home visiting programs. Designed as a portal into long-term home visiting programs, doula services begin prenatally and continue for up to two months postpartum. Participants who enroll prenatally receive concurrent visits from their doula and a long-term home visitor—doulas provide prenatal education and facilitate support groups with expectant parents.

Collaboration and Coordination

Coordinated Intake (CI)*

Coordinated Intake (CI) is a collaborative process that provides families with a single point of entry for home visiting programs within a community. In 12 MIECHV communities, trained Coordinated Intake workers serve as a hub for home visiting, assessing families' needs, referring them to an appropriate home visiting program, and tracking the status of the referrals.

Lurie Children's Hospital ConnecTeen Project**

Lurie Children's Hospital is partnering with Chicago Public Schools and home visiting programs to link pregnant and parenting teens to home visiting, doula services, and prenatal and parenting classes. These community linkages take place through a coordinated intake office at Lurie Children's.

Rush Home Visiting Initiative**

Rush University Medical Center on the West Side of Chicago screens pregnant and post-partum women for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and refers women with high scores to home visiting programs in the community, through a coordinated intake worker at Rush.

IRIS for Coordinated Intake for Home Visiting Collaboratives**

As a part of Illinois' PDG B-5 Renewal grant, the Integrated Referral and Intake System (IRIS) will be adopted in several home visiting collaboratives for coordinated intake work. IRIS is a web-based, bi-directional referral communication tool used to help organizations connect the individuals and families they serve to the right resources in their community. IRIS is designed to encourage warm handoffs among community partners, keeping providers updated along the way.

While direct funding is not provided through this project, each participating collaborative will receive technical assistance support from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships & Research (KU-CPPR), the developers of IRIS.

Building the Capacity of Home Visiting Programs

In response to needs identified by the home visiting field, supplemental and advanced trainings are offered on the following topics:

Intimate Partner Violence (Healthy Moms, Happy Babies--HMHB)*

MIECHV and the Illinois State Board of Education fund a continuing series of trainings for home visitors on HMHB, in partnership with Start Early and the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership. Created by Futures Without Violence, the HMHB curriculum provides training, tools, and resources to help home visitors address the complex issue of intimate partner violence and to support conversations about healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Maternal Depression (Mothers and Babies)*

Developed by researchers at Northwestern University, Mothers and Babies is a program that promotes healthy mood management by teaching pregnant women and new moms how to effectively respond to stress in their lives through increasing the frequency of thoughts and behaviors that lead to positive mood states. Designed as a perinatal depression prevention, the Mothers and Babies program targets three specific risk factors—limited social support, lack of pleasant activities, and harmful thought patterns. The Mothers and Babies curriculum can be delivered as a group intervention or as a one-on-one intervention. MIECHV funds Mothers and Babies training and implementation support, in partnership with Northwestern and the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership. To date, approximately 50 HV programs in Illinois are using Mothers and Babies.

Mental Health (Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation--I/ECMHC)*

The goal of I/ECMHC is to increase the capacity of home visiting programs to identify and address the mental health needs of young children and families, and to instill reflective practices into their organizational culture. It is a multi-level preventative intervention that teams mental health professionals with home visitors and supervisors. Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) guides the work of this reflective consultation. The Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership partners to facilitate

I/ECMHC, along with training/technical assistance, to a variety of home visiting programs throughout Illinois.

Prenatal Substance Use, Intimate Partner Violence and Depression (4Ps Plus©)*

Developed by NTI Upstream, the 4P's Plus© is a validated five-question screen specifically designed to quickly identify prenatal mothers who could benefit from additional support services. Taking less than one minute, it can be easily integrated into a home visit and used for follow up through the pregnancy. MIECHV and the Illinois State Board of Education fund a continuing series of trainings for home visitors on the 4P's Plus©, in partnership with Start Early and the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership.

Home Visiting Program Quality

Home Visiting Program Quality Rating Tool—(HVPQRT)*

This cross-model tool is being used to assess the quality of all home visiting programs funded by MIECHV. The HVPQRT assesses quality across multiple dimensions, including home visiting staff, service delivery, program characteristics, program management, and progress monitoring.

**An asterisk denotes innovations and projects that are funded in part or in full by the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV).*

***A double asterisk denotes innovations and projects that MIECHV supports with technical assistance, advisory support, and/or other ways that do not involve direct funding.*

MIECHV is a federal home visiting funding stream that has enabled Illinois to expand and improve home visiting services to families, as well as to support a variety of innovative projects through funding and/or partnerships. Established in 2010, the goal of MIECHV is to improve outcomes for pregnant women and families, particularly those in communities that are considered at-risk. The MIECHV funding provided to Illinois has been a vital catalyst in the state's home visiting and early childhood systems.