



Washington: Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

By the Center for Law and Social Policy
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The federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, or MIECHV, program provides Washington state with the financial resources to expand its evidence-based home visiting services to meet the needs of its most at-risk children and families. Additionally, the federal funding allows the state to direct significant resources toward improving the quality of home visiting programs, with a focus on implementing the models with fidelity; supporting the workforce through training, professional development, and technical assistance; and creating a robust evaluation framework. Home visiting has also been integrated into the comprehensive statewide early learning system.

Success and innovation

Creation of an Implementation Hub

Washington state adopted a research-driven strategy to effectively implement and scale up home visiting programs throughout the state. Thrive by Five Washington, the state's private-public partnership, worked with the National Implementation Science Network, or NISN, to create what is termed an "Implementation Hub" with dedicated staff working to support best practices for implementation of the state's home visiting programs. Thrive's Hub team supports implementation of the home visiting models with fidelity, provides ongoing program monitoring and technical assistance, and provides training and support to the home visiting workforce. This centralized, data-driven support system has helped advance the field and provide more coordination to strengthen services and decrease duplication of efforts.



Washington MIECHV at a glance

Total federal MIECHV funding:

\$1.8 million per year in formula grant funds and \$25 million total in competitive grant funds over three years

Lead agency:

Washington Department of Early Learning, or DEL, in partnership with Thrive by Five Washington, or Thrive

Number of communities served:

14 communities

MIECHV-funded home visiting models:

Nurse Family Partnership, or NFP, and Parents as Teachers, or PAT

Families served:

funding provides services for 1,296 families

Innovative approaches to reach vulnerable families

Washington state adopted a three-tiered plan to target and reach its most at-risk children and families.

1. The place-based approach targets families living in rural counties. MIECHV administrators focused on expanding services to more rural communities identified in the state's needs assessment as high-risk due to their limited capacity to implement evidence-based home visiting programs in these isolated areas. The state recently expanded services to three rural communities after engaging leaders in a locally driven process to assess the interest level, need, and readiness to implement evidence-based home visiting programs in the community.
2. The population-based approach allocates resources toward tribal communities. The state assessed the availability and effectiveness of home visiting for tribes, as well as this population's needs and barriers in accessing these services. The state is piloting a tribal home visiting program utilizing state general funds.
3. The model-based approach allows state administrators to use other home visiting models in addition to the Nurse Family Partnership, or NFP, and Parents as Teachers, or PAT, to best serve its populations. The MIECHV grant allows states to direct as much as 25 percent of funds toward promising practices—home visiting programs that are not yet evidence-based but have had encouraging results. Therefore, Washington state is supporting infrastructure development for the Parent Child Home Program, or PCHP. The MIECHV grant has provided resources for a PCHP state lead at the implementation hub, the development of a data benchmarks plan for PCHP, and the integration of PCHP into cross-model trainings and professional development activities.

Challenges

Throughout the implementation of MIECHV, Washington state found it difficult to ramp up services while also keeping pace with the tight timelines for enrollment, reporting, and evaluation. In particular, state administrators learned it was demanding to choose and establish the quantitative data benchmarks and the best way to track and evaluate them given the parameters of the MIECHV improvement criteria, as mandated by the terms of the grant. However, administrators found that the Thrive Implementation Hub allowed the state to address these challenges thoughtfully and strategically, particularly in deciding where and how to allocate training and technical assistance resources.

Washington MIECHV at a glance

Additional funding for home visiting:

Washington State General Funds; private investment; county-level investment; and Early Head Start grantees implementing home-based services throughout the state

**Identified risks
targeted by MIECHV:**
maternal and child health;
child abuse and neglect;
positive parenting practices
and parent-child bonds;
school readiness; domestic
violence; and parental
economic self-sufficiency

Looking ahead

Using data to demonstrate outcomes

Now that Washington state has an established system of home visiting, state administrators are looking forward to using the qualitative and quantitative data to show how these programs have helped the most vulnerable children and families. The goal is to integrate the data—at the state, program, and model levels—to show the full picture and create a plan for how to use the data to assess, ensure, and improve the quality of the services provided to children and families.

Sustainability within the state's early learning system

To meet its goal of building sustainability and more linkages among the state's early childhood programs, Washington state is focused on improving collaboration and increasing partnerships across the state's agencies and within communities.

Additional information

Washington's MIECHV Program on the Department of Early Learning's website:
<http://www.del.wa.gov/development/visiting/grant.aspx>

Washington Home Visiting Needs Assessment: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/950-165-FinalNarrative.pdf>

Washington's MIECHV State Plan: <http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/development/docs/HVUpdatedStatePlan.pdf>

Washington's Home Visiting Services Account Map: <http://thrivebyfivewa.org/wp-content/uploads/Washington-State-Map-with-Programs.pdf>

Source: Interview with Laura Alfani, home visiting project manager, Washington Department of Early Learning, September 2014; and Judy King, Strengthening Families WA administrator, Washington Department of Early Learning, September 2014.

“MIECHV took a strategy that has been in place for a long time and gave it the power to go to the next level with accountability and quality.”
– Washington state administrator

This profile was written as part of a larger study to identify how states are using Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, or MIECHV, funds to advance state home visiting systems. For a summary report and additional profiles about home visiting, visit clasp.org or americanprogress.org.