

## Fact Sheet: Evidence-based Home Visiting

### Why Evidence-based Home Visiting Matters

Supporting parents to be their children's first and best teachers will result in a safe, stable, and nurturing home environment that promotes children's early learning and development. Evidence-based home visiting programs pair low-income and other challenged families during pregnancy or shortly thereafter with a trained professional who provides parents with the support they need to ensure their babies are healthy, that their homes are safe, and that parents have tools to promote their children's early learning and development. In a state where the infant mortality rate for African American babies is nearly three times that of white babies, giving babies a healthy start through evidence-based home visiting programs is particularly effective. Studies show that these voluntary programs improve positive birth outcomes, increase the amount parents read to their children, increase children's literacy and high school graduation rates, increase the likelihood that families have a primary care provider, cut child abuse in at-risk families by as much as a half, all while saving taxpayer dollars.

### Evidence-based Home Visiting in Michigan

While the quality and efficacy of home visiting programs can vary greatly, Michigan has made a concerted effort to focus on programs that research has shown provide the greatest outcomes for Michigan's most challenged families with young children. Subsequently, in 2012 Michigan passed [Public Act 291](#) which requires all home visiting programs supported by state dollars to be evidence-based programs or promising programs. Currently, Michigan recognizes six evidence-based home visiting models and two promising programs [across our state](#).

Since 2010, Michigan has been awarded federal grants through the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program to build a [home visiting system in Michigan](#) and to integrate the home visiting system within the comprehensive Great Start early childhood system. The anticipated outcomes for children and families include: (1) reductions in child injuries, child abuse and neglect and emergency room visits; (2) improvements in school readiness and achievement; (3) reductions in domestic violence; (4) improved maternal and child health, and (5) greater family economic self-sufficiency. While these federal dollars play a critical role in addressing the needs of infant and toddlers in targeted urban communities, they aren't sufficient for a statewide home visiting system, and will need to be augmented by a stable or reliable source of state funding.

While home visiting services are well represented across our state, funding is limited meaning only a fraction of eligible families with young children receive services. Though the true number of eligible but unserved families is currently unknown and research is underway to gain a better understanding of the unmet need, anecdotally it is believed that about one out of five eligible families receive home visiting services. Michigan must increase state support for voluntary home visiting services.

### What Can We Do to Expand Access to Evidence-based Home Visiting

- Visit your legislator's local coffee hours and have a conversation about your experiences as a parent, home visitor, human service provider, community member, and how evidence-based home visiting programs support Michigan's struggling families with young children.
- Connect your legislator with the home visiting program in your county so they can gain a better understanding of how these programs benefit their communities.
- Learn how you can [Become a More Effective Advocate](#) and strengthen your advocacy voice on behalf of Michigan children.
- [Sign-up for our Early Childhood Action Network](#) to receive timely updates on how you can influence public policies on behalf of Michigan's youngest residents.