Home Visiting

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Home Visiting 101: What Is It and Why Does It Matter?

Parenting is not easy, and it can be especially overwhelming to families struggling to make ends meet. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 10 million low-income U.S. families with young children face daily obstacles that threaten their family’s stability and can lead to lifelong difficulties for kids.

Home visiting programs have been effective in supporting expectant and new families. These health and parenting services have lasting impacts on families and child health.
Early childhood home visiting programs consist of trained professionals providing regular, voluntary home visits to expectant and new parents over time to assess child and family risks, provide health and developmental screenings and guidance and provide referrals to other supports and services offered in the community. Evidence-based home visiting programs have resulted in improved maternal and child health in the early years; long-lasting, positive impacts on parental skills; and enhanced children’s cognitive, language, and social-emotional development; all necessary for children to thrive during the early school years and throughout life.

Home visiting is a critical component of a two-generation approach that puts the whole family on a path to economic security as it is one of the only programs that focuses both on children and adults simultaneously. Because physical and mental health have a major impact on a family’s ability to thrive and succeed, home visitors are uniquely positioned to address parents’ immediate health and well-being needs while fostering positive growth and development of their children. Home visiting has been shown to positively influence a parent’s economic situation by focusing on not only job attainment, but also planning for a career and supporting further educational attainment. By helping parents create a better future for their children, home visiting programs are supporting parents to become greater contributors to society, build their own strong and stable families, and bolster communities and the economy.


NOTE: Kaila Gilbert contributed this article.

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**Funding Extended for the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program**

In February, Congress approved funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program in a bipartisan agreement. The legislation provides $400 million in funds per year for states to support programs that help guide low-income, at-risk mothers in parenting and getting community supports. The programs served about 160,000 families nationally in FY 2016. If implemented correctly, this investment may yield up to $5.70 in returns for every $1 invested in the highest risk families. States will be held accountable for achieving benchmarks for areas such as maternal health, child injuries, emergency department visits and school readiness. You can read more about it in this report from Nurse-Family Partnership.


NOTE: Kaila Gilbert contributed this article.

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**Virginia’s Comprehensive Health Investment Project Breaks New Ground and Integrates Workforce Solutions**

The Comprehensive Health Investment Project, or Chip, prides itself on “changing lives, two generations at a time.”

Partnering with families caught in the cycle of poverty, the program delivers consistent health care to families until children reach the age of six. What makes the Comprehensive Health Investment
Project different from so many other home visiting programs is that it offers workforce and education solutions as well. For instance, the program also educates families on these non-health-related practices:

1. Creating routines;
2. Managing families;
3. Bolstering self-sufficiency through coaching and support.

While it provides health services, the program has workers who also assist families with tasks such as obtaining a driver’s license or completing a GED. After one year, the program achieved staggering results:

1. 40 percent increase in the number of families with one or both parents working;
2. 60 percent reduction in babies born with low birth weight.

You can read more information and some success stories.

Source: Chip of Virginia

Comprehensive Health Investment Project of Virginia: http://bit.ly/2oxtCCY.

Tennessee Home Visiting Research Makes International Waves

At the International Family Nurses Association in Spain in January 2018, Vanderbilt presented research about the impact home visiting had on isolated populations. This celebrated report demonstrated that mothers who participated in the home visiting program revealed:

1. Greater social and emotional support;
2. Fewer depressive symptoms and less parenting stress;
3. Safer sleep practices and better bonding with child.

These findings were also presented at the National Home Visiting Summit and will soon be published in a leading journal of children’s research.
Vanderbilt’s program, the Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker (MIHOW), targets families that may not have normal access to home visit services. By partnering with local organizations and the medical center, Vanderbilt University’s MIHOW program hopes to extend its reach.

“In our next study, we will build on this research,” said Tonya Elkins, a representative of the MIHOW program. “We will be looking at even more outcomes in addition to the ones before. The next study will take place in Clarksville, where we are engaging a similar population for replicability.”

Vanderbilt Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker Program Video: https://youtu.be/pCj3O0d6mhE.

NOTE: Kaila Gilbert contributed this article.

Building Strong Brains TN Video Series
The Building Strong Brains TN initiative partnered with WCTE-22, Cookeville public television, to create a series of video explaining the impact of adverse childhood experiences and how the community can mitigate them. Public service announcements are also available.

The series has been presented by WCTE, which is sharing them with other stations. The videos are on the statewide public television channel. Check with your local public station for information on local showings.

Building Strong Brains; ACEs Episode 1, http://bit.ly/2oxTCCY.


TCCY is Excited About Children's Advocacy Days Line Up
Mark your calendars for March 13-14 for Children's Advocacy Days at War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville. Thanks to help from the Memphis ACE Awareness Foundation, Dr. Vince Felitti, the principal researcher of the original Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, will be speaking on Tuesday afternoon, and Dr. Roy Wade of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, who is working on addressing an expanded list of adverse experiences in his city, is on Wednesday morning’s agenda. Wednesday will also include a gubernatorial forum.

TCCY is busy preparing for everything you need for a successful event, including a packet of helpful information. Please be sure to register at http://bit.ly/2ETCCYcad by 12 midnight Thursday, March 8.

2018 Legislative Guidance Available
TCCY's governing Commission approved a statement with information regarding issues being addressed by bills in the Tennessee General Assembly this session. The 2018 Legislative Guidance is available on the TCCY website.

NOTE: Most state website links were changed in December to improve maintenance of the site. New links are listed below:


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Update

TCCY Executive Director Linda O'Neal was honored with the United Ways of Tennessee and Tennessee Afterschool Network Lifetime Children's Champion Award. The award was presented by Ben Landers, president and CEO of the United Way of Greater Knoxville, at the annual United Ways/Afterschool Day on the Hill.

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Mark Your Calendar


March 5, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Music City Tackles Mental Health, A One-Day Summit Addressing Decriminalization of Mental Illness, CST, Vanderbilt Student Life Center, Ballrooms A & B, 310 25th Avenue South, Nashville. Registration fee: $99. Register at http://bit.ly/2E7tCCY.

March 7, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., **Healthy Tennessee East Tennessee Symposium**, Discussion of Shared Goals on Community Health Across Tennessee, Millennium Centre. 2001 Millennium Place, Johnson City, Speakers include health professionals; former Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey; and gubernatorial candidates Randy Boyd, Karl Dean and Bill Lee. RSVP to [thomas@myhealthytennessee.com](mailto:thomas@myhealthytennessee.com).


**In the News**


**Research Information**


No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability or ability to pay, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity operated, funded or overseen by the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY). It is the intent of TCCY to bind all agencies, organizations or governmental units operating under its jurisdiction and control to fully comply with and abide by the spirit and intent of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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