



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

By the Center for Law and Social Policy
and the Center for American Progress

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In Oregon, funding from the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, or MIECHV, program supports the state's expansion of evidence-based home visiting models in order to reach more families and children. The Oregon Health Authority, or OHA, also uses MIECHV funds to provide training and workforce development opportunities to parents and professionals, to integrate home visiting into existing systems of services that support early childhood development, and to begin developing a centralized data collection system.

Success and innovation

Created and implemented workforce development trainings

Oregon invested MIECHV funds to hire a workforce development specialist to coordinate regional workforce development sessions, which are multiday orientation trainings to support ongoing skill development for home visitors. Sessions were open to any home visitors in the region, even if their home visiting program was not funded by MIECHV. The workforce development specialist conducted eight regional sessions across the state, each attracting between 50 and 70 participants. Home visitors who completed the training received certification for their participation.

Parent engagement

Oregon used MIECHV funds to engage parents directly and develop their capacity to be leaders in the child development space. The state hired a parent leadership development specialist to coordinate and develop parent leadership initiatives. Oregon created Parent Cafés, which are designed as train-the-trainer workshops to encourage more participation among parents and engage them as leaders. The Cafés also serve to catalyze networks of peer-to-peer support.



Oregon MIECHV at a glance

Total federal MIECHV funding:
\$3.3 million in formula grants,
\$7.2 in competitive grants

Lead agency:
Oregon Health Authority,
or OHA

Number of communities served:
13 counties

MIECHV-funded home visiting models:
Early Head Start-Home Visiting, or EHS-HV; Nurse Family Partnership, or NFP; and Healthy Families America, or HFA

Families served:
848 children

Integrating home visiting into state early childhood system

Oregon Health Authority, or OHA, directed MIECHV funds toward integrating evidence-based home visiting initiatives into the state's cohesive system of programs and services that support early childhood development. Before MIECHV funds were available, programs competed for limited state resources. Using MIECHV funding, the state worked closely with partners across agencies to develop a more collaborative community. MIECHV expanded home visiting resources in the state and allowed for siloed organizations to work more cohesively to support families' needs. Administrators also worked to coordinate their systems-building efforts with the state education system's Early Learning Hubs in Oregon and the state health care system's coordinated care organizations.

Expand data collection process

Oregon is developing an innovative data system to efficiently collect, share, and analyze data. The funds also helped bring together stakeholders from across the state to develop a universal questionnaire for collecting information that would be used for early childhood services more broadly. The data system, which is in the development process, is an innovative system designed to collect unique data points that can be used in a variety of analyses, allowing for easier collection and evaluation of the federally required benchmark data. Oregon is confident that its interoperable systems will allow other agencies to share data more effectively, which will reduce duplicative efforts and improve services throughout the state.

Challenges

Oregon administrators identified the process of developing benchmark metrics as a particular challenge and noted that the collection of data has inhibited some partners in the state from participating in the program. During the roll out of MIECHV, hiring freezes in the implementing state agencies, as well as leadership changes slowed down the process. The program is now fully staffed and implementing the vision for a state home visiting system.

Looking ahead

Continue to develop and expand the data system

After expanding the state's staff and capacity, implementation of the data system is now underway. This new data system will enable more efficient collection of benchmark data and information sharing across programs and agencies.

Oregon MIECHV at a glance

Additional funding for home visiting:

state appropriations;
foundation support;
Medicaid reimbursement;
and additional federal funds
such as Title V and Head Start

Identified risks targeted by MIECHV:

maternal and infant health;
child abuse and neglect;
improved school readiness
and achievement; domestic
violence; family economic
security; and mental health

Continue to integrate home visiting into system of services

Oregon will continue to integrate home visiting into a cohesive system of services and support for early childhood development. MIECHV has provided resources so Oregon administrators could form relationships with Oregon's Early Learning Hubs and coordinated care organizations. Administrators plan to bolster these relationships and develop new ones with other partners such as universities and neighboring states.

Invest in bringing an Infant Mental Health Endorsement to Oregon

A cross-agency workgroup facilitated by MIECHV staff is exploring options with the intention to bring to Oregon an Infant Mental Health Endorsement program for home visitors, as well as all early childhood service providers.

Additional information

Oregon's MIECHV program on the Oregon Health Authority website: <https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Babies/HomeVisiting/MIECHV/Pages/index.aspx>

Oregon's MIECHV Needs Assessment: <https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Babies/HomeVisiting/Documents/OregonStatewide.pdf>

Oregon's MIECHV State Plan: <https://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyPeopleFamilies/Babies/HomeVisiting/Documents/OregonMIECHVBenchmarkPlanNarrative.pdf>

Source: Interview with Cate Wilcox, maternal and child health section manager, Oregon Health Authority, September 2014; Lari Peterson, public health home visiting manager, Oregon Health Authority, September 2014.

“MIECHV provided resources that would cross programs and agencies reducing barriers to care.”
– Oregon 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.