OCDEL’s Family Support and Home Visitation Programs

ELECT Webinar
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OCDEL Organization

Tom Corbett, Governor
Carolyn Dumaresq, Acting Secretary of Education | Beverly Mackereth, Secretary of Public Welfare
Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP)

- NFP is an evidence-based home visitation program that provides vulnerable low-income, first-time mothers the supports necessary to provide an excellent start for their children.
- Each mother is partnered with a registered nurse early in her pregnancy (between 16 and 28 weeks) and receives ongoing home visits that continue through the child’s second birthday.
- Pennsylvania’s NFP was established in 2000 and operates in 44 counties. In 2012-2013, over 3,000 families were served.
- Providers receive state grant funding and may bill Medical Assistance for some NFP services.
- Nurse-Family Partnership is a disciplined program. Every nurse receives extensive training to ensure that they focus on three goals.

www.nursefamilypartnership.org
Nurse-Family Partnership

Program Goals
• Improve pregnancy outcomes
• Improve child health and development
• Improve parents' economic self-sufficiency

Key Program Components
• First-time, at-risk mothers
• Registered nurses
• Intensive services (intensity, duration)
• Focus on behavior
• Program fidelity (performance management system)

Why Nurses?
• Knowledge, judgment and skills
• High level of trust, low stigma
• Credibility and perceived authority
• Nursing theory and practice at core of original model

Home Visit Overview

Personal Health
Health Maintenance Practices
Nutrition and Exercise
Substance Use
Mental Health Functioning

Environmental Health
Home
Work, School, and Neighborhood

Life Course Development
Family Planning
Education and Livelihood

Maternal Role
Mothering Role
Physical Care
Behavioral and Emotional Care

Family and Friends
Personal network
Relationships
Assistance with Childcare

Health and Human Services
Service Utilization

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Parent-Child Home Program

- PCHP is a research-based early literacy home visitation program for families with children two and three years old.
- Many are challenged by low levels of education, poverty, literacy and language barriers, and/or are isolated and not accessing community services.
- Home Visitors meet with each family twice a week for two years starting when a child is between 18 months and two years old. In two half hour sessions each week with the parent and the child, the Home Visitor models reading and play activities, using carefully chosen toys and books, which families may keep.
- PCHP reinforces the parent’s role as their child’s first and most important teacher and provides them with the guidance and supports to promote quality early learning opportunities for their children.
- Pennsylvania’s PCHP began in 2002 and operates in 4 sites in 6 counties. In 2012-2013, approximately 200 children were served.
- Providers receive grant funding from state and federal sources.

www.parent-child.org

Education Leading to Employment and Career Training

- ELECT enables school districts, vocational-technical schools and intermediate units to help pregnant and parenting teens earn a diploma or GED certificate and make the transition to employment or higher education
- Administered by PDE, Bureau of Teaching and Learning, and funded by DPW through TANF and SNAP funding streams, with oversight from OCDEL
- The principal goal of all ELECT programs is to assist eligible expectant and parenting youth to break the cycle of welfare dependence by remaining in school, maintaining regular attendance, obtaining a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) certificate and securing post-graduation employment, education or training that will help them become successful parents and self-sufficient adults
- In addition to promoting self-sufficiency, ELECT provides participants with pregnancy prevention information, guidance and services to reduce the incidence of secondary youth pregnancies, and provides services to promote the importance of strong families, healthy parental relationships and of fathers in their children’s lives

www.center-school.org
Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program

- MIECHV is authorized under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- Administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through a grant to OCDEL
- Funds intended to assure effective coordination and delivery of critical health, development, early learning, child abuse and neglect prevention and family support services to these children and families through home visiting programs.

MIECHV Program Models Implemented in PA

- Each of these models is highly-researched and has proven effectiveness in improving outcomes in children and families.
- Each program has a family-centered focus that supports families through a strength-based approach that works with both child and parent.
MIECHV Parents as Teachers

- Evidence-based home visitation model serving families with a variety of needs prenatally until their child enters kindergarten
- PAT curriculum content is based on current research in the areas of child development, neuroscience and strengthening families protective factors
- PAT comprised of four critical components of home visitation, group interactions, developmental screenings, and resource and referral
- PAT curricula and materials are often used within other program services, i.e. Head Start/Early Head Start, Healthy Families America, ELECT, etc., or as stand-alone programs

www.parentsasteachers.org

MIECHV Parents as Teachers

The work of Parents as Teachers is grounded in these basic beliefs:

- Parents -- first and most influential teacher
- The early years
  - Critical for optimal development
  - Foundation for success in school and life
- Research base is foundation
- All deserve the same opportunities to succeed
- An understanding and appreciation of cultures is essential
**MIECHV Parents as Teachers**

**PAT Goals**

- Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve parenting practices.
- Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues.
- Prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Increase children’s school readiness and school success.

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**MIECHV Healthy Families America**

- Evidence-based home visiting program model designed to work with families who are at-risk for adverse childhood experiences, including child maltreatment.
- HFA services begin prenatally or right after the birth of a baby and are offered voluntarily, intensively and over the long-term (3 to 5 years after the birth of the baby).
- Based upon 12 Critical Elements derived from more than 30 years of research to ensure programs are effective in working with families.
- Critical Elements are centered around standards in Service Initiation, Service Content and Staff Characteristics.

[www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org)
**Scope of Services**

- Developmental screening, ongoing observation and assessment and curriculum planning
- Parent and child medical, dental and mental health
- Child development and education
- Family partnerships and goal setting
- Community collaborations to meet additional family needs

**Target Population**

- Low-income pregnant women and families with children birth to age 3 years.
- Families must be at or below the federal poverty level (currently $23,850 for a family of 4)
- At least 10 percent of enrolled children must have a disability and be eligible for Part C services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in their state
- Beyond age and income requirements, programs develop specific eligibility criteria that are aligned with Federal Performance Standards and based on needs within their individual community
MIECHV Early Head Start

Target Outcomes

- Promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women
- Enhance the development of very young children
- Promote healthy family functioning

Children’s Trust Fund

Mission: To prevent child abuse and neglect in Pennsylvania

Purpose:
- Develop new and innovative community-based programs that prevent child abuse and neglect
- Fund proactive primary and secondary prevention services

www.pactf.org
Children’s Trust Fund

- Established in December 1988 by Act 1988-151 (the Children’s Trust Fund Act)
- Operates under the administration of a 15-member CTF Board and is supported by OCDEL
- Funds for the CTF are generated from a $10 surcharge on all applications for marriage licenses and divorce complaints
- Friends of the Children’s Trust Fund, non-profit supporting organization for fundraising
- Provides grants to community-based agencies to implement primary child abuse and neglect prevention programs
- RFA for grant applications issued annually;
  - 3-year grant rounds
  - Must incorporate Strengthening Factors Protective Framework

www.pactf.org

Strengthening Families Approach

- Strengthening Families is an approach to working with families to prevent child abuse and neglect that builds upon their strengths, rather than focusing on their deficits.
- It is NOT a curriculum or a program, but instead offers a framework of five research-based Protective Factors that give parents what they need to parent effectively, even under stress.
- The Center for the Study of Social Policy identified a need to support early childhood programs’ work with families who are under stress. The Center researched and developed a set of strategies that involve early childhood programs working with families to build protective factors around children.
- Came to PA via the Children’s Trust Fund
- No dedicated funding stream; however, a group of dedicated people from across various child- and family-serving systems, both at the state and local level, participate on a statewide leadership team to advance the SF work throughout the state and throughout various service systems

www.pa-strengthening-families.org
A Strength-Based Protective Factors Approach

- Build on existing strengths to keep all families strong and all children safe
- All families have strengths
- All families have need for support
- Focus on protective factors that *all* families need

The Five Protective Factors

Parental Resilience...
“Be strong and flexible.”

Social Connections...
“Parents need friends.”

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development...
“Parenting is part natural, part learned.”

Concrete Supports in Times of Need...
“We all need help sometimes.”

Healthy Social and Emotional Development...
“Help children communicate their feelings.”
Parental Resilience

“Be strong and flexible.”

No one can eliminate stress from parenting, but a parent’s capacity for resilience can affect how a parent deals with stress. Resilience is the ability to manage and bounce back from all types of challenges that emerge in every family’s life. It means finding ways to solve problems, building and sustaining trusting relationships including relationships with your own child and knowing how to seek help when necessary.

Social Connections

“Parents need friends.”

Friends, family members, neighbors and community members provide emotional support, help solve problems, offer parenting advice and give concrete assistance to parents. Networks of support are essential to parents and also offer opportunities for people to “give back”, an important part of self-esteem as well as a benefit for the community. Isolated families may need extra help in reaching out to build positive relationships.
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

“Parenting is part natural, part learned.”
Accurate information about child development and appropriate expectations for children’s behavior at every age help parents see their children and youth in a positive light and promote their healthy development. Information can come from many sources, including family members as well as parent education classes and surfing the internet. Studies show information is most effective when it comes at the precise time parents need it to understand their own children. Parents who experienced harsh discipline or other negative childhood experiences may need extra help to change the parenting patterns they learned as children.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need

“We all need help sometimes.”
Meeting basic economic needs like food, shelter, clothing and health care is essential for families to thrive. Likewise, when families encounter a crisis such as domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse, adequate services and supports need to be in place to provide stability, treatment and help for family members to get through the crisis.
Healthy Social and Emotional Development

“Help children communicate their feelings.”
A child or youth’s ability to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior and effectively communicate their feelings has a positive impact on their relationships with their family, other adults and peers. Challenging behaviors or delayed development creates extra stress for families, so early identification and assistance for both parents and children can head off negative results and keep development on track.

THANK YOU!
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