

Volume 2 Issue 1

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Maryland Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting News

Happy 2017 from all of us here at the Maryland Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Home Visiting program! We have a few exciting bits of news to share with you as we embark on a new year full of possibilities.

In late January, we were notified that we had been awarded an Innovation Grant Award from the Human Resources and Services Administration. New Jersey and Maryland jointly applied for this grant last summer. The historic partnership between our two states will focus on strengthening and improving family engagement in home visiting, in part through improved service coordination. It will accomplish this by strengthening the implementation system for workforce development and Continuous Quality Improvement around a core part of home visiting--the family goal plan strategy--to improve its capacity to address issues that are important to families as well as program priorities. We are thrilled to embark on this adventure with New Jersey and will keep everyone apprised of our progress!

Some great news for all those invested in Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Home Visiting--despite the potential repeal of the Affordable Care Act, federal home visiting funds are likely to be reauthorized. The program has long enjoyed support from both sides of the aisle, even before funding was provided through the Affordable Care Act, and home visiting advocates are confident that this support will continue with a reauthorization in September. [Find out more here.](#)

Finally, **we need your help!** We are gathering data from across Maryland on substance-exposed newborns, and ask that all those involved in home visiting in the state respond to [a short survey](#). Specifically, we are looking for what types of training your program has had or would like to have regarding substance-exposed newborns, and how we can better support you in serving this population. Your responses will help us work to best meet the diverse and challenging needs of children and families in Maryland. [Take the survey here.](#)

Unsung Chronicles of Home Visiting

Healthy Families America Sinai in Baltimore City Gets Creative with Retention

Contributed by Kim Carter, FSW, Sinai HFA

Sinai HFA's Family Support Workers Team has created a "baby bucks" incentive program for participating mothers to help with our retention rate. Every time a mom keeps her home visit with her Family Support Worker, she receives a baby buck. We created colorful "bucks" shaped like a dollar bill with a baby on it to share with the participants. With these bucks, our moms can go shopping in the baby closet once a month to purchase pampers, wipes, baby wash/lotion, puzzles, and many more useful items. Our moms love the fact that they can shop at the baby closet to help supplement their baby items. This incentive program has increased retention among our clients.



Working with Parents in Harford County

Contributed by SheTiel Coley, Program Manager/Supervisor, Healthy Families Harford County



Healthy Families Harford County recently hosted the program's first parent group meeting. With eight families represented, it was a great event that consisted of making homemade play-doh and winter-themed crafts. Check out the pictures of the crafts, families and staff!

After being moved around to various buildings, the Harford County program is excited to finally be able to have space to host group meetings like this one.

Celebrating a Graduation in Wicomico County

Contributed by Joyce Jenkins, Supervisor, Healthy Families Wicomico County

CONGRATS to our graduate, Ca-Cea Henry and her son, Kidron Henry!

Ca-Cea joined the Healthy Families Wicomico program in July 2013, and has completed a total of 66 home visits. Kidron attends Peninsula Regional Medical Center Childcare Center. Ca-Cea is continuing her education and works full time at the childcare center. Kidron has done fashion shows and enjoys modeling. Thanks to Ca-Cea and her family for allowing me to visit with them and being their worker.
~Peggy Johnson, FSW



Provider Perspective

Serving Zero to Three in Carroll County

Contributed by Sue Mitchell, MSW, CCPS Judy Center Partnership & PAT Coordinator

In Carroll County, the Parents as Teacher (PAT) program has afforded families in the community the opportunity to enhance their understanding of how to "ready" and prepare their child(ren) for school success. Children of families that are enrolled in the home visiting program are offered comprehensive developmental and health screenings as an approach to identify children who are at-risk for developmental and/or behavioral and social/emotional challenges.

Many of the children who are served with home visiting come from high-risk families and communities and experience early adversity. It is difficult to reach children that live in chaotic and frightening environments. Parents often demonstrate high levels of stress and struggle with behavioral health issues. Parents and caregivers need to be motivated to access services that decrease stress and increase competence/skills to support socio-economical function and the socio-emotional development of their child. Parents coming from risk-indicator environments can find it difficult to seek treatment outside the home.



Home visitors seek strategies to help parents be more aware and "see change" to build resilience in their children. This past fall, Carroll County introduced an additional intervention to support home visitation and enhance our service delivery: **Attachment Bio-behavioral Catch-Up (ABC)**.

Attachment Bio-behavioral Catch-up is a newly implemented home based intervention to address parents and their children who may have social emotional and/or behavioral health needs. The model focuses on children that are six to 24 months of age (early stages of attachment) and the parent who maybe wrestling with nurturing attachment and responses to their children.

ABC focuses on offering strategies for parents to behave in ways that support optimal development of children by increasing securer rates of attachment and increased executive functioning skills. The intervention is a good option for children demonstrating disorganized attachment, for foster care children, and for reunification situations. [Read more...](#)

Program Spotlight

Integrating Nurse Family Partnership and Federally-Qualified Health Centers

[Nurse Family Partnership](#) is an evidence-based home visiting model for first-time mothers. Being staffed by trained nurses, first-time mothers receive support that impacts healthy pregnancy outcomes and increases parenting skills

Under [B'more for Healthy Babies](#) [1], the Nurse Family Partnership program in Baltimore City collaborates with federally-qualified health centers to create an integrated system of care for first-time mothers. One nurse is co-located at [Baltimore Medical System](#) and the [Baltimore City Health Department](#). The nurses have access to citywide resources through the health department and access to medical records through the federally-qualified health centers. This co-location allows for a holistic approach of care because the first-time mother receives consistent messaging around her pregnancy and birth and there is a reduction of duplication of services.

The Nurse Family Partnership and federally-qualified health centers integrated model is possible through buy-in from all stakeholders. The Nurse Family Partnership nurses are able to engage potential home visiting mothers during medical visits at the federally-qualified health centers, and they are able to connect the first-time mothers to any additional resources or support she may need to ensure a healthy pregnancy. By having access to medical records, the Nurse Family Partnership nurses and medical providers at the federally-qualified health centers are able to collaborate in prenatal and postpartum care, which streamlines resources and services. Due to the success of the model, it has been expanded and a Nurse Family Partnership nurse is now co-located at the health department and the Johns Hopkins [Harriet Lane Clinic](#).

For more information, visit [our website](#).

[1] B'more for Healthy Babies is a citywide initiative to reduce infant mortality in Baltimore City. This initiative is led by the Baltimore City Health Department and is a collaboration with more than 150 community partners.

Sustainability Success

Federal Matching Funds for Maryland Home Visiting Pilot Program Approved

Contributed by Alex Loizias, MSW, MPH, Health Policy Analyst
Planning Administration, Office of Health Care Financing
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Effective January 1, 2017, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approved [Maryland's §1115 HealthChoice Waiver](#) for a renewal period of five years. In addition to renewing HealthChoice, Maryland's statewide mandatory managed care program for Medicaid enrollees, the approved waiver allows the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to pilot several new initiatives designed to address social determinants of health. One of those new initiatives is a community health pilot to help expand evidence-based home visiting services to high-risk pregnant Medicaid beneficiaries and children up to age 2. The federal government will provide up to \$2.7 million dollars annually in matching funds for home visiting program expansion and service delivery over the four-and-a-half-year pilot period. Two evidence-based home visiting models, Healthy Families America and Nurse Family Partnership, are permitted within Maryland's pilot program.

Additional approved waiver initiatives include:

- Residential treatment for individuals with Substance Use Disorder program
- Assistance in Community Integration Services community health pilot program to provide housing-related support services for high-risk, high utilizers who are either transitioning to the community from institutionalization or at high-risk of institutional placement
- Raised the enrollment cap for the Increased Community Services program from 30 to 100
- Expanded dental benefits for former foster youth

Local governmental entities, such as health departments or management boards, are eligible to apply for participation in the home visiting community health pilot program as lead entities. Lead entities will be expected to provide local funds from non-federal sources in order to receive an equal federal match. The state will not offer any additional state funds for the community health pilots. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene expects to release community health pilot applications in late February with an anticipated pilot start date of July 1, 2017. At the time of publication, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' post-approval protocols for this pilot are pending and final conditions of the program may be subject to change.

Visit Maryland's [§1115 HealthChoice Waiver renewal website](#) or [contact us by email](#) for additional information.

Promising Practice

Zero to Three Community of Practice

Contributed by Dona Ponn, M.S., Ed, Program Coordinator, MIECHV
& Colleen Wilburn, M.P.A., Health Policy Analyst, MIECHV

Maryland was one of eight states chosen to participate in the Zero to Three Community of Practice on Enhancing Mental Health Capacity in Home Visiting. This virtual community will meet monthly through August 2017 to share information about successes and challenges with integrating mental health in home visiting, share relevant resources, and develop an action plan for enhancing mental health capacity in home visiting. Each state team is

comprised of three to five public-private early childhood representatives. Maryland's team consists of Dona Ponn, Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene, Tresa Hanna, Maryland State Dept. of Education, D'Lisa Worthly, Project LAUNCH, Kate Wasserman, University of Maryland, and Catherine Meyers, Center for Children. Other states participating in the community of practice include New York, Iowa, North Carolina, Maryland, Florida, Massachusetts, Colorado and Alabama. Find out [more about Zero to Three and home visiting here](#).

CQI Corner

Consultant's Update

Contributed by Maelondy Holman, Ed.D, Continuous Quality Improvement Consultant
Maryland Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

There's lots of exciting work going on with Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in Maryland! Our CQI Consultant, Maelondy Holman, has formed a committee of CQI experts from across the nation, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Virginia, Missouri, New York, South Carolina, Illinois, and the Virgin Islands. Over the past few months of traveling on behalf of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to attend various trainings, Maelondy was able to network with other CQI experts who agreed to be part of this newly formed committee. Maelondy serves as the chair of the committee, and held the first conference call on Friday, January 13, 2017 at 2 p.m. This was a successful initial meeting of the minds. The next steps for the committee will include determining a regular meeting schedule so that the real work can begin!

The purpose of this committee is for CQI experts to work together toward continuous development of best practices among CQI liaisons who join the group. This committee is open to anyone working on CQI in a home visiting capacity. Active recruitment is taking place both inside and outside the U.S. The committee will share information about trainings and helpful resources to strengthen the collective knowledge base within our current roles and for the purpose of ongoing development in terms of the sites we support.

The guiding principle of this team of experts is to deliver exceptional service to our internal and external clients by applying and implementing CQI practices in our daily operations.

To find out more about this committee and how to get involved, reach out to Maelondy [by email](#) or phone at (410) 767-5597.

Dynamic Data

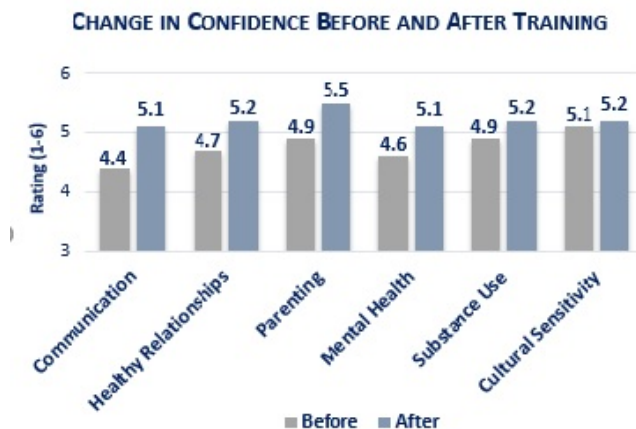
UMBC Training Certificate Program: Initial Feedback

Contributed by David Schultz, Ph.D., M.Div.
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

What is the UMBC Home Visiting Training Certificate Program?

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County's Home Visiting Training Certificate Program was established in 2014 through funding provided by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The three-month certificate program trains supervisors and home visitors over a seven day period, covering effective communication strategies, building healthy family relationships and addressing domestic violence, parenting, child development, mental health, substance use, and cultural sensitivity. To date, UMBC has trained 18 supervisors and 45 home visitors through four training groups.

How do trainees rate the training? This past fall, we trained two groups of 10 supervisors and 24 home visitors. As seen in the chart, participants reported greater confidence in each of the six topic areas after the training, all of which were "statistically" significant except for cultural sensitivity. Trainees were enthusiastic about and satisfied with the trainings, with an average satisfaction rating of 5.5 out of 6.



What do trainees say about the training? Typical trainee comments about what's most helpful are "being provided with ways to talk to families about difficult topics," "watching Family Support Workers tackle complicated issues [in training videos]," and "role play was very helpful to put the skills into practice."

We welcome questions about the certificate program. For more information, please contact us at miechv@umbc.edu or 410-455-6774. You may also [visit our website](#). We look forward to working with more sites across the state in the coming years!

Policy Tidbits

Efforts to Increase Child-Care Support for Working Maryland Families

The Maryland General Assembly's Joint Committee on Children, Youth and Families, chaired by early childhood champions Del. Ariana B Kelly (D-Montgomery) and Sen. Nancy J. King (D-Montgomery), is working on a few pieces of legislation that would assess and increase the state's financial assistance for child-care costs for struggling families. [HB 395/SB 293](#) and [HB 418/SB 294](#) were introduced by the committee chairs in response to hearings they held during the Interim. The bills are intended to require the Maryland State Department of Education to investigate the actual costs of high quality child care, determine how that compares with the market rate and the subsidy reimbursement rate, and to raise rates accordingly.

[HB 452](#) was also introduced as a result of committee hearings. This bill would give employers tax credits for funding child care centers and for paying a portion of employees' child care costs, or funding child care referral services for employees.

Maternal and child health advocates understand the importance of quality child care, particularly for families with both young children and newborns. Affordable and high quality child care, along with evidence-based home visiting programs, are essential components of the early childhood continuum that ensure children enter school ready to learn. We will be keeping track of these bills and will provide updates on their progress in future issues of the newsletter.



Resources and Updates

Retirement of Nancy Gardner

Contributed by Jean Mitchell, Program Director, Maryland Family Network



The home visiting community in Maryland has lost one of its most passionate, knowledgeable and skilled experts - Nancy Gardner! Nancy retired on January 13, 2017 from [Maryland Family Network](#) (MFN), where she had worked as the Parents as Teachers (PAT) Trainer and Program Consultant for more than nine years. In discussing her work, Nancy said with her wonderful, warm smile as her eyes lit up, "I just think home visiting is the bees' knees!" And that is so Nancy.

Home visiting is in her blood. She volunteers regularly at a shelter putting her skills to practice providing meaningful services to families and keeping herself familiar with PAT program implementation protocols as well as use of the curriculum. All this so that her training and technical assistance are effective and of the highest quality. Nancy is also an early childhood expert extraordinaire. She provides training and technical assistance to the Family Support/Early Head Start Network. She also conducted Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale assessments for the Network and knows and understands the tool and process intimately. In addition to all of that, Nancy trains and provides technical assistance on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE) and the Life Skills Progression (LSP) evaluation tool.

Nancy's career began in home economics, where she taught Family Studies and math in the Baltimore County School System. As her interest grew in home visiting, she obtained more training and credentials, becoming a National Trainer for Parents as Teachers (PAT). She was the PAT Coordinator Resource Teacher in Baltimore County Schools for nine years, managing their vibrant multi-site program. Nancy worked as PAT State Office liaison for Family Services, Inc. under the Parental Information and Referral Center grant, before she began work at MFN.

We thank Nancy for her many contributions and support to home visiting and home visitors in Maryland. We wish Nancy much happiness as she embarks on many new adventures.

Do you work with Maryland children and youth with special health care needs and their families? We need your help!

The Office for Genetics and People with Special Health Care Needs (OGPSHCN) and The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD) are [conducting a survey](#) of Maryland parents of children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN). We would really appreciate your help in reaching families and asking them to take the time to complete the survey. There are two options for completing the survey: [a web-based, online version](#) or a [paper version](#) that can be mailed back to our organizations. [Click here to find out more information](#), including instructions for completion.



Some quick facts about the survey:

- It takes about 20 minutes to complete.
- Survey respondents are not asked to give any identifying information, it is completely anonymous.
- This survey was developed by OGPSHCN and PPMD in partnership with the Maryland Community of Care Consortium for CYSHCN, the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Maryland families of CYSHCN, and other community partners.

OGPSHCN and PPMD use the survey data to better target and tailor our resources to help families and CYSHCN. We and our partners want to improve systems of health care and related services for Maryland CYSHCN. Partners can request survey data if you'd like to use it for your organization's planning or reporting.

Upcoming Events and Trainings

Save the Dates: Youth Mental Health First Aid Course

This is a **FREE** 8-hour national certification course that teaches adults who interact with youth (ages 12 through 17) the skills to recognize the signs of a mental health or substance abuse disorder crisis and identify community resources for youth in need of treatment and support to connect them to the proper resources. Registration and specific location details coming soon.

April 6, 2017: Salisbury

April 27, 2017: Cheverly (Prince George's County)

May 1-5, 2017: Baltimore City

June 20, 2017: Baltimore City

FREE Online Behavioral Health Trainings from the University of Maryland School of Medicine

All trainings [may be accessed here](#); some offer Continuing Education credits. Take advantage of this generous opportunity!

Get in Touch

The newsletter team wants to hear from you! Please contact us with questions, comments, and suggestions for content. We can be reached by [email](#) or phone: (410) 767-7066. For more information on home visiting in Maryland, [visit our website](#). Not subscribed yet? [Sign up here](#).

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