

Home Visiting in Maryland

News from the Old Line State

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Maryland Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting News

The Maryland MIECHV team, like all of you, has been hard at work adjusting to our new -- or what we'd prefer to call our "temporary" -- normal. Much has happened since our last newsletter was issued in January 2020 (which feels like a lifetime ago). We will start with some of the highlights and conclude with some of our plans for moving forward.

- In late January, our team had a federal site visit with our project officers from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Our HRSA colleagues came to Baltimore for four days, and we hosted several presentations with the many partners who helped make the MIECHV program in Maryland possible. The review was a great success, and our funders were impressed that we are excelling in each measure. We are grateful to all our programs and partners for continuing such incredible work.
- In other happy news, our data and fiscal administrator, Jarvis Askew, and his wife Tyia welcomed a beautiful baby boy -- Atreus -- in March. He couldn't be cuter, and gives us hope for the next generation.



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- We have also been hard at work on our 2020 updated needs assessment for home visiting, which is a critical and foundational resource that will assist in recognizing and understanding how to best meet the diverse needs of families with young children living in Maryland. Our last needs assessment was conducted in 2010 when the state first received the federal MIECHV grant. Much has changed in the landscape of the state since then, and we are eager to learn how to best adapt and focus our energies and resources to support our families. We have contracted with the

[Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium](#) to help conduct the needs assessment and will share our findings upon its completion in October 2020.

- Finally, the MIECHV team has been both saddened by the recent deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and inspired by the wave of anti-racist movements and thoughtful and necessary conversations that have emerged as a result. We have been working to put together a comprehensive toolkit of resources for our programs, families, and networks focused on anti-racism, equity, and inclusion, and will be sharing it in the coming months. In the meantime, we wanted to leave you with the words of Dr. Shelly Choo, who recently joined the Maryland Department of Health as the Director of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau:

We have to recognize that Black lives matter. If we want to move the needle on decreasing health disparities, we have to strive for equity and be anti-racist. This is our role as public health officials serving Maryland families, moms, dads, infants, and children. This is our role as colleagues and friends.

Stories from the Field

Helping Families through the Pandemic

Contributed by Kim Carter, Family Support Specialist, Healthy Families Sinai

Once the Governor ordered the stay-at-home mandate and the media released data revealing the high number of positive COVID-19 cases in the community I serve, I thought about how I could help. I called a church member who's a seamstress and asked if she could donate masks for our families. I then spoke with my supervisor about purchasing cleaning supplies, gloves, and ingredients to make DIY hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes. Now, the families we serve have access to needed cleaning supplies and cloth masks for everyone in their homes. Once the resources were delivered, we received an outpouring of appreciation and thanks for the items. Just one less thing our families have to worry about.

Virtual Family Engagement Keeps Participants Connected to Program and Peers

Contributed by Alyson Jacobson, Program Manager, Healthy Families Prince George's

According to the Holiday Insights online calendar, among the many holidays in June are National Gardening Exercise Day and National Fresh Veggies Day. Healthy Families Prince George's (HFPG) sponsored a family engagement activity through an invitation to a photo contest by inviting our participants to send in pictures of their children playing in their yard/garden or encountering fresh fruit and vegetables. Participants were also encouraged to share an impact statement on how these activities encourage their child's development. Participants that send in photos and impact statements will be entered into a raffle and there will be prizes for the winning photos. There are so many cute photos to pick from, but some of them are shown here.



Photos shared with permission from HFPG

Healthy Families Prince George's has also added Virtual *Connections* Peer Groups to our calendars. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, HFPG sponsored monthly in-center participant peer group meetings. We adeptly switched to Zoom meetings and have not looked back. Rebecca Wheaton, Advanced Trainer for Brain Power Wellness, has been our guest *Connections* facilitator. Brain Power Wellness teaches physical and mental brain breaks, mindfulness practices, and social-emotional wellness strategies within our 2-generation model. Parents learn these strategies and why they work according to brain science while following along with Rebecca during our virtual sessions. Parents liked the first Brain Power Wellness session so much that we will be offering monthly sessions throughout the summer. Because of COVID-19, we have learned that virtual Peer Connection meetings will work well for families in the future for those families that cannot join us at the center.

Continuous Quality Improvement Corner

The Maryland MIECHV Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Consultant, Dr. Maelondy Holman, has been hard at work planning the first annual MIECHV Continuous Quality Retreat that was originally scheduled to take place in person on August 27. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we've had to alter plans and the event was held virtually over three sessions on August 27, 28, and 31. Retreat sessions covered topics such as the importance of CQI in home visiting, Lean Six Sigma strategies, data collection, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) and Value Stream analyses, and change management. Nearly 100 participants joined for each session, and we're excited to see how our MIECHV programs apply these new tools to their work.

Dynamic Data

A New Data Quality Report for Maxwell Users

The Maxwell Team at Advanced Metrics is happy to announce the launch of Report 42: The Capacity and Compliance Report. Report 42 provides you with specific information needed to monitor missing assessments and data points. This report can also be used to check on data quality at the agency or state level.

It is recommended that this new Capacity and Compliance Report is used along with other data quality reports to maintain data integrity and locate missing data quickly. Other data quality reports that coincide with Report 42 are:

- Reports 1-19: Specific HRSA Construct Reports
 - All Results and Referrals Reports are displayed at the family level
 - All Completion Reports are displayed according to home visitor
- Report 34: MIECHV Data Quality Report

- Displayed at the family level
- Report 40:
 - Displayed at the home visitor level

Thank you to all the Maxwell Champions at each site and to those who participate in workgroup meetings -- your input has continued to build an intuitive and user-friendly Maxwell system.

Please contact [Nate Lubold](#) to sign up for a training on this report. You can also download the [Capacity and Compliance Report Training Manual](#).

Policy Tidbits

Despite having a shortened session this year due to Coronavirus, the Maryland General Assembly was able to pass several bills that will help improve the lives of mothers, children, and families in the state. Of particular interest is [House Bill 837: Maternal Mortality and Morbidity - Implicit Bias Training and Study](#). This bill requires that staff of birthing centers and labor and delivery units in hospitals complete an implicit bias training by January 1, 2022, and every two years thereafter. This required training is intended to help address both maternal mortality rates (MMR) and the disparity in those rates between White and Black women. The national MMR for Black women in the U.S. is 2.4 times greater than that of White women; in Maryland, the rate is 3.7 times higher for Black women (Dept. of Legislative Services, HB837, Fiscal and Policy Note, 2020, p.3).

You can read the full bill [here](#) and the fiscal and policy note [here](#).

Resources and Updates

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) Home Visiting Training Center: Statement on Racial Justice

UMBC's Home Visiting Training Center has published a statement in solidarity against anti-Black violence and will take further steps to commit itself to work toward racial justice. The statement can be found [on their website](#).

Oral Health Survey

The University of Maryland is interested in learning how families care for their teeth including what they use to do that and what kind of water they drink and why. The university is seeking participants that are pregnant or have very young children to participate in an interview. [This informational flyer](#) is to be shared with your families offering them an opportunity to participate in an interview. The interview won't take more than 30 minutes and the participant will be compensated by an electronic gift card. Please contact ahorowitz@umd.edu with any questions.

MIECHV COVID-19 Resource Page

The Maryland MIECHV team is maintaining and updating a [collection of useful resources](#) for supporting families and their children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please share with your networks as appropriate, and contact [Maggie Geraghty](#) with additional suggestions.

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](#). For more information on home visiting in Maryland, [visit our website](#). Not subscribed yet? [Sign up here](#).

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