



# Utah: Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

By the Center for Law and Social Policy  
and the Center for American Progress February 9, 2015

The funding provided to Utah through the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, or MIECHV, program helped establish the state's Office of Home Visiting. With no state-level investment, the MIECHV funds provide the primary support for evidence-based home visiting services in Utah. This funding is instrumental in erecting the infrastructure needed to connect home visiting programs to other early childhood and family services. The MIECHV program gives Utah a unique opportunity to collaborate with federal, state, and local stakeholders to improve outcomes for children and families.

---

## Success and innovation

### Reaching refugee populations

Because Utah is a refugee resettlement program state, administrators considered how to best serve Asian Pacific Islander refugees, a high-risk population, when planning for the implementation of MIECHV funding. Utilizing an adaptation of the PAT model curriculum, the state targeted needs unique to this population and utilized different outreach techniques to enroll them in home visiting programs.

### Statewide web-based data collection system

The statewide data system was developed in order to collect and report on data from home visiting programs across the state, regardless of model or funding source. Coordinated data collection will more accurately depict the breadth of home visiting activities in Utah, provide measures of trends across the state, and quantify the impact of the programs on families and the state as a whole. Data collection will also allow for analysis at the programmatic, community, and model levels.



## Utah MIECHV at a glance

**Total federal MIECHV funding:**  
\$9 million in formula grant funding

**Lead agency:**  
Utah Department of Health, or DOH

**Number of communities served:**  
3 counties currently;  
12 counties will be served once the state receives expansion grant funds

**MIECHV-funded home visiting models:**  
Nurse Family Partnership, or NFP, and Parents as Teachers, or PAT

**Families served:**  
Cumulatively, Utah has served 717 families since 2012

## Home Visitor Conference

In 2013, MIECHV funding was used to hold the state's first Home Visitor Conference, which provided hundreds of home visitors with professional development opportunities and training that would otherwise not have been offered. Due to the success of the 2013 conference, state administrators replicated the conference in 2014 and reported a dramatic increase in the number of registrants.

---

## Challenges

While MIECHV was instrumental in formalizing evidence-based home visiting's place within Utah's early childhood system, state administrators are still struggling to implement their complete vision for home visiting. A significant amount of need remains unmet, and the state maintains a waiting list for eligible, interested families. Administrators also plan to work towards a more sustainable system of home visiting, as well as increase public awareness of the program(s) and gain a better understanding of the complementary services available at the state level.

---

## Looking ahead

### Increased funding levels

Utah received a large increase in MIECHV funding in fiscal year 2013, from just over \$2 million to \$9 million. This money will offer an opportunity for DOH to expand services to children and families, as well as to build the infrastructure needed to support evidence-based home visiting programs throughout the state. The Office of Home Visiting also recently submitted a request for funding in the amount of \$10.4 million dollars—\$1 million in formula grant funding and \$9.4 million in competitive grant funding. With the MIECHV expansion grant funding, DOH anticipates that an additional 1,000 families will be served annually.

### Reaching out to tribal communities

Administrators are considering how best to provide home visiting services to the large Native American population in the state. Building off the success in serving the high-risk refugee population, the state may adopt similar approaches in targeting the unique needs of the tribal communities.

### Inclusion of stakeholders at the local level

State administrators are taking the next steps towards assessing community readiness and building infrastructure locally to support home visiting services. With local stakeholder buy-in and participation in the decision-making process, the programs will become more embedded within communities and considered an integral service to families.

## Utah MIECHV at a glance

### **Additional funding for home visiting:**

County-level funding in specific counties, and federal child abuse prevention funding administered through the Utah Department of Children and Families, or DCF

### **Identified risks targeted by MIECHV:**

Prenatal and child health; families in poverty; juvenile crime reduction; teen pregnancy; and the prevention of child maltreatment and neglect

## Professional development

To better support home visitors, Utah is working to build a professional development system, which will include a home visiting credential. Administrators believe that creating a credentialing system for the workforce will bring more credibility, standardization, and support to the evidence-based home visiting system as a whole.

---

## Additional information

Utah's MIECHV program on Department of Health's website: <http://health.utah.gov/officeofhomevisiting/>

Utah's MIECHV Needs Assessment: <http://health.utah.gov/officeofhomevisiting/>

Utah's MIECHV State Plan: <http://health.utah.gov/officeofhomevisiting/PDFs/State%20plan%20with%20Revised%20Final%20Benchmarks%2011-12.pdf>

Source: Interview with Suzanne Leonelli, program coordinator, Office of Home Visiting, Utah Department of Health, September 2014.

"[MIECHV] is changing the way kids are growing up... and building healthy and successful families."  
– Program coordinator

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](http://clasp.org) or [americanprogress.org](http://americanprogress.org).