

Minnesota Coalition for Targeted Home Visiting



*Invest In Our
Future When It
Matters Most*

**Advocacy
Tool Kit
2018**

About the Coalition

The Minnesota Coalition for Targeted Home Visiting (the Coalition) is focused on advancing the availability, quality, and impact of targeted home visiting in Minnesota through practice, policy, and training. The Coalition advocates for additional resources to provide quality family home visiting services in Minnesota to families in need.

Through its advocacy efforts the Coalition works to ensure systems, supports and resources are in place so that Minnesota communities can successfully provide quality targeted home visiting services and programs to expectant families and families/caregivers with children up to age five.

The Coalition successfully advocated for additional state resources for family home visiting, and believes it is important for decision-makers and elected officials to get to know you and your home visiting programs across the state. Campaign season is one of the best times to connect with elected officials and candidates. They are interested in knowing the challenges and opportunities within their community – and rely on experts like you.

This fall the entire House of Representatives are up for election and the Governor's race is wide open. Now is the time to get involved!

Targeting Home Visiting Coalition Vision

All Minnesota families of children age prenatal to three who are at risk for poor mental health, physical health, social, and educational outcomes will have access to intensive, targeted home visiting services to help them succeed in school and in life. Services will be voluntary, high-quality, outcome-focused, and tailored to the resources in each community.

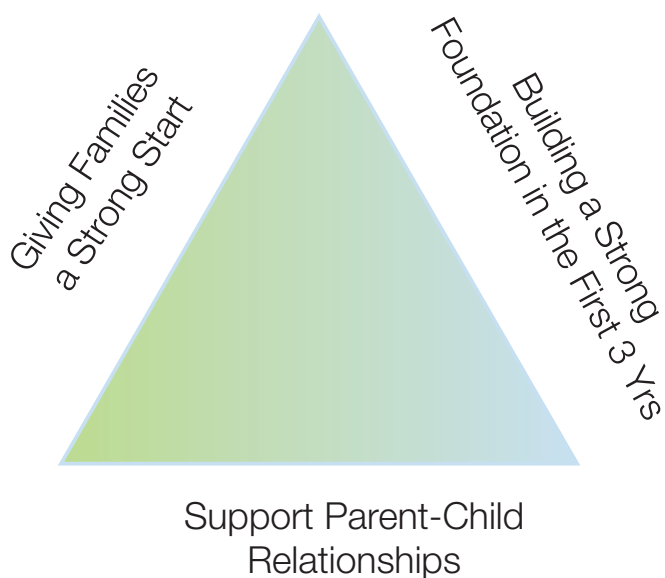
Benefits of Advocacy

Advocacy is the act of intentionally educating individuals about a topic, issue or community concern and persuading, or encouraging, someone to take action to address the issue or concern. Advocacy provides an opportunity to present information and values about a specific issue or challenge – and the chance to shape and inform responses to this issue.

Decision-makers and elected officials rely on community experts, such as you, to learn more about the issues and challenges of your community. When elected officials know the issues and potential solutions, they can draft legislation to address these concerns.

Below is an example of how to build the case for home visiting services in your community, highlighting some of the benefits. The Coalition encourages you to 1) state the challenge or issue, 2) identify the solution (home visiting helps families in need get a strong start, supports parent and child relationships and builds a strong foundation for future development and learning), and 3) make the ask (tell them how they can help, e.g. support additional resources, draft legislation, work with local elected officials).

Advocacy with decision-makers and elected officials is common and completely legal. Individuals working in nonprofit organizations can advocate for the families they serve, the community challenges they aim to address and/or resources to respond to these issues. Stay focused on the issues and solutions.



Individuals working in government agencies can advocate for families and community challenges too. It is important to let elected officials know you are speaking on behalf of yourself, and not your employer. Leaders within government agencies can engage in advocacy but need clearance from government relations before representing your agency.

Family Home Visiting

Family home visiting provides voluntary stabilizing support for families experiencing high-risk factors where they are most comfortable, at home and in their community. Home visiting is a proven strategy to giving families in need the best start and positioning them for long-term sustainability.



Families receiving targeted home visiting services from trained professionals and paraprofessionals have:

1. Access to health care services to improve pregnancy and birth outcomes of the child,
2. Opportunities and support to develop secure attachment with their children,
3. Support to improve their child's physical, social and mental health development,
4. Support to improve maternal (and paternal) health and employment needs, and/or
5. Connections to community resources.

During the first three years of life, a positive, healthy relationship with a parent or caregiver is the most important factor for successful development. These relationships not only provide a safe and healthy environment for physical growth but also positive interactions that support healthy emotional and social development, and learning.

WIRING THE BRAIN EARLY WITH THE CONNECTIONS NEEDED FOR LIFE

- 85% of brain development happens by age 3
- Early connections and experiences form life long brain architecture creating the foundation of learning
- Underdeveloped brain connections can cause lifelong issues and are harder to correct

What are the benefits of Family Home Visiting?

High quality home visiting programs are proven to be one of the best ways to support strong early development because they promote long-term self-sufficiency by strengthening or restoring the critical family and social structure for parents and children. Everyone benefits when all families stay on track, and high quality targeted home visiting programs are proven to deliver those results.

Studies of national evidence-based models show improved outcomes in child health, child development, maternal life course and child abuse prevention.

Home visiting provides benefits to children and families.

1. Improved child health and development
 - Increased parent-child attachment
 - 18% higher kindergarten readiness
2. Improved maternal outcomes
 - Significant decrease in maternal depression among high risk mothers
 - 37% increase in maternal employment
 - Reduce alcohol and drug use and/or addiction
3. Decreases in child abuse and maltreatment
 - Decrease in child maltreatment and abuse
 - Increased understanding of positive child development



Why it Matters?

The Minnesota Coalition for Targeted Home Visiting continues to recognize the importance of family home visiting as a successful strategy to reduce risks and improve outcomes for families and their young children. Currently, only 10% of eligible families receive home visiting services in Minnesota.

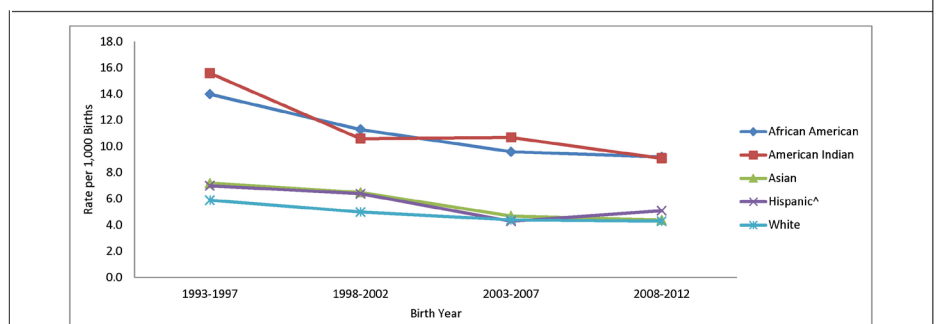
Nearly 1 in 3 infants and toddlers live in poverty in Minnesota. Based on federal poverty guidelines (185%), there are 81,000 children ages 0-3 living in poverty. Additionally, there are an estimated 10,000 births to Mom's on Medicaid each year in Minnesota. Research shows financially stressed families are more likely to have strain and instability that pressures their relationships between parents and between the parent and child.

Mental health and mental illness can impede parent- child bonding.

Too many families across Minnesota are struggling with mental health challenges alone. Home visitors can help parents access resources to address their mental and physical health needs – and better position them to support their infants and children.

Alcohol and drug abuse, particularly opioid use, interfere with parent's ability to develop a stable, trusting relationship with their child or to provide stable income or housing for the family. Families across the Minnesota struggle with addiction. Home visitors can help families find resources to address addictions and ensure children are safe while at home or while parents are managing their addictions.

Infant Mortality Rate by Race/Ethnicity of Mother, Minnesota 1992-2012



2008-2012 Minnesota Race/Ethnicity Infant Mortality Data Book. Minnesota Department of Health Center for Health Statistics

Infant mortality rates remain stubbornly high for American Indian and African-American women in Minnesota, regardless of income. Home visiting to pregnant women by trained paraprofessionals and professionals can connect women to health care and community resources that can improve birth outcomes.

What You Can Do

Legislators and candidates love to hear from their constituents so they will be very willing to make time for you! This is especially true during elections. It's easy to communicate with your elected officials and candidates. You can do this through Email, Twitter, Phone Calls, In-person Meetings or through a scheduled Site Visit.

Contacting Your Elected Officials or Candidates

It's easy to contact you elected officials and candidates. You can communicate with them via Email, Tweet, Phone Calls, In-person Meetings or through a scheduled Site Visit.

1. Find Out Who Represents You

It is easy to find out who represents you at the legislature. Visit <http://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/> and type in your address in the search box. If you do not have access to a computer call this number, 651-296-8338 give them your address and ask who your representatives are.

Once you know your Legislative District, you can find out who is running for office against your current legislator through the Secretary of State's Candidate Filing site. Visit <https://candidates.sos.state.mn.us> and search by state representative filing (or other state executive office filing). Then find your legislative district, which is the same as your current legislator's district.

2. Set up a Meeting (Meet & Greet)

Invite your legislator or candidate to meet to learn more about home visiting services in your community and the needs of the families you serve. You can offer to meet them in their office or out in the community. Considering inviting members of your Advisory Team, Leadership Team or Parents (current or past family members) to join you in the meeting.

3. Invite Legislator or Candidate to a Site Visit or Take them on a Home Visit

Bringing legislators or candidates on a site visit to your program, or a home visit with a family, is a great way for them to really understand the benefits of home visiting. A site visit or home visit requires additional preparation and time, but provides the clearest understanding of what happens during a home visit. Combining a short meet and greet with legislators (or candidates) as part of your site visit can help maximize everyone's time.

4. After The Meeting or Site Visit

Send them a quick email thanking them again for their time and providing your contact information. This way, they know who to reach out to next time they have a question about home visiting!

2018 Legislative Platform

1. Increase funding for home visiting services for families living in poverty (185% of poverty).
2. Increase flexibility and access to targeted home visiting programs, and protect investments to home visiting programs and services.

Questions for Elected Officials & Candidates

1. What will you do to ensure that quality home visiting, as well as early care and education programs, are available in your community?
2. What will you do to address families with high needs, in particularly women of color and families with young children, who face disparate maternal and child health outcomes?
3. How will you prioritize investments to families with young children to ensure they receive home visiting services and other critical family supports to stabilize them and position them for long-term independence?
4. Are you supportive of state efforts to align early care and education for families and children prenatal to age five?

For More Information Visit the Minnesota Coalition for Targeted Home Visiting <http://www.targeted-homevisiting-mn.org>.

Family Home Visiting Services

Increasing Access to Families In Need

Reduce Risks & Improve Outcomes

April 2018

The **Minnesota Coalition for Targeted Home Visiting** continues to recognize the importance of family home visiting as a successful strategy to reduce risks and improve outcomes for families and their children. Additional resources for quality family home visiting services can help provide stabilizing supports to families in need and give them a strong start. The Coalition supports a broad array of quality home visiting programs and aims to increase access to services that best meet the needs of each family.

The Coalition and its partners propose increased funding for targeted home visiting services to pregnant women and families with young children through age five living in poverty or experiencing high needs (HF 4113/SF 3635). Priority high-needs populations include, but are not limited to, pregnant and parenting teens; families experiencing violence; families experiencing isolation; families with mental health needs; families with children having special health care needs; and families experiencing homelessness.

What is the Need? (Based on 185% of poverty)

- There are over 81,000 children ages 0-3 living in poverty in Minnesota
- Annually there are an estimated 10,000 births in to Mom's on Medicaid in Minnesota
- The current demand for home visiting services is greater than available resources
 - It is estimated only 10% of eligible families receive home visiting services
 - MDH received \$60.8 million dollars in requests for the new home visiting funds but only has \$15.5 million available to distribute

How many Families will be Served?

- An estimated 1,000 new families will be served by FY 2022 based on the Legislature's recent allocation (\$12 million for FY18-FY19 and \$33 million for FY20-FY21)
- The Coalition seeks new investments to serve an additional 2,856 over the next two biennium
 - An additional \$23 million in 2020, \$41.6 million in 2021 and \$56.5 million in the base beginning 2022

Why Fund a broad array of Quality Home Visiting Programs?

- Current funding is dedicated to evidence-based home visiting programs
- There are populations and/or communities that are not served, or eligible for services, by evidence-based programs
- Allowing other quality targeted home visiting programs (up to 25% of state funds) can increase access to these populations and communities; and encourage innovation within the field
- The strategy to fund predominately evidence-based home visiting programs (at least 75%) is consistent with federal funding for home visiting

Some Additional Details

- Eligible entities include community health boards, tribal departments, and non-profit organizations that have been operating quality home visiting programs
- The average cost of home visiting services for a family is \$6,500/year, while the range of costs is \$3,500-13,000/year based on frequency of home visits and program requirement

For More Information Contact Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn at
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