



# FAMILY FOUNDATIONS HOME VISITING PROGRAM 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

**Wisconsin’s Family Foundations Home Visiting Program (FFHV)** provides expectant and new parents with voluntary, in-home supports and mentoring through their children’s first years. Home visitors are highly trained professionals who partner with mothers and fathers to support healthy pregnancy and positive birth outcomes, reduce the risks of child injury, abuse, and neglect, and promote child growth, development, and school readiness. Wisconsin is using federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funds, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, and General Purpose Revenue (GPR) to increase the number of families receiving evidence-based home visiting services and to improve the quality of those services through training and support.

Home visiting programs offer a number of benefits to families, including:

- Improved parenting skills
- Stronger parent-child relationships
- Support for early brain development
- Connections to other resources and support

Communities also benefit from home visiting through reduced health care costs, less need for specialized education services, and increased family self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The PEW Charitable Trust. (2015). *Home Visiting Family Support Programs: Benefits of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program*. Washington, DC: The PEW Charitable Trust.

## Family Foundations Home Visiting in Wisconsin



**25** Local Implementing Agencies



**24** Counties and **5** Tribes



**1,477** Families served in 2017



**18,303** Home Visits Provided



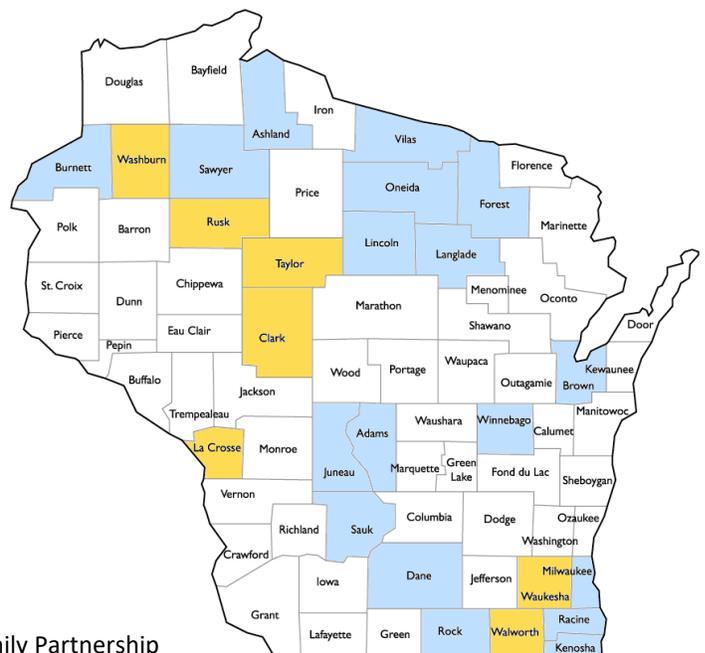
**4** Evidence-based Models

Early Head Start

Nurse-Family Partnership

Healthy Families America

Parents as Teachers



Counties in gold were new to FFHV in 2017

## Who We Serve

All families need support, but for families facing limited resources due to poverty, poor mental health, community violence, and other challenges, the support that home visiting programs provide is especially critical. For this reason, the Family Foundations Home Visiting Program prioritizes services to some of Wisconsin's most vulnerable families. In 2017, 60% of families reported experiencing 3 or more significant risk factors at the time they entered services, including substance abuse, history of child abuse or maltreatment, and low education levels. Home visiting programs work with both mothers and fathers, as well as other important caregivers in the child's life. These programs aim to engage families as early as possible, often starting services during pregnancy to assist with access to prenatal care, planning for baby, and building confidence for parenting.



**70%**

of families enroll in home visiting during pregnancy



**93%**

of families live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level



**67%**

of parents have earned a high school diploma



**41%**

of families have a child at risk of a learning delay



**84%**

of parents have health insurance coverage

## What Families are Saying

Home visitors and families build strong, supportive relationships. Mothers and fathers welcome visitors into their homes and share a great deal of information about themselves, their children, and their hopes for their family. Home visitors, in turn, serve as coach, resource guide, and trusted source of information and support. Through regular, planned visits this relationship serves as the foundation for a family's engagement in services and a jumping off point for successful outcomes.

"Last year I was shocked and terrified to learn that I was pregnant. I had miscarried twice before... I began working with the Nurse-Family Partnership program right away. I remember that first week I learned I was pregnant thinking I don't want to live through the loss of another child. Three months later and I felt like I was truly living for the first time in years. My son is a little over a week old. This program could easily be the reason I and my son are alive today."

*-Adams County home visiting participant*

"I enjoy the weekly visits, and I don't feel as alone. My home visitor has helped me with a lot of the concerns I have had. I value all the support I get."

*-Indianhead Community Action Agency home visiting participant*

"I made it a point to stick with this program because I really do enjoy my home visitor...I have gained emotional support for parenting as well as learning new parenting skills during my home visits. I have gained educational support for myself."

*-Mino Maajisewin home visiting participant*

## Why Home Visiting Matters

Home visitors use a variety of evidence-based tools to assess physical and mental health risks, engage parents in looking together at their child's developmental progress, and identify strengths and areas of potential growth within the parent-child relationship and overall family well-being. This information assists the home visitor and parent with setting realistic goals and developing and carrying out a service plan that responds to the unique needs of each family. Home visits also offer an opportunity to coach and model healthy behavior and parenting techniques. Engaging in this work while in the family's home environment facilitates parents' ability to use their skills in the future.

### In 2017...



**<10%**

of infants were born premature



**78%**

of women were screened for maternal depression



**86%**

of infants were ever breastfed



**84%**

of children received last recommended well-child visit



**<2%**

of children visited the ER for injury



**62%**

of parents read, sang, or told stories with their child daily



**71%**

of children with a developmental delay received services in a timely manner



**96%**

of home visits included discussion of child's' development

### Jenna's Story

*Jenna was referred to Parent Connection in Winnebago County in the third trimester of her pregnancy. She was 16 years old at the time and uncertain about inviting a visitor into her family's home. Jenna was initially hesitant to keep appointments or engage in activities during the visits, but as the home visitor continued to partner with her, Jenna gained more confidence in her parenting abilities and started to open up about her hopes for the future. This year Jenna graduated from high school and with the support of her home visitor applied for and received a Working Families grant that covers tuition, living expenses, and transportation costs at a nearby university. Jenna continues to meet with her home visitor every other week, lives in her own apartment with her son, Sam, and has started to attend a monthly group for teen parents offered by the home visiting program. Sam is on track developmentally and often exceeds his milestones.*

## Working Together to Support Wisconsin's Families

The Family Foundations Home Visiting Program advances the delivery of high-quality, evidence-based services that put families on the path to good health, educational success, and economic self-sufficiency. We employ four key strategies to support a comprehensive system for home visiting in Wisconsin.



### Expanding Capacity to Reach More Families

In 2017, Family Foundations expanded services through the funding of five additional home visiting programs. These programs cover nine counties, seven of which did not previously have DCF-funded services. Additional funding for home visiting services in the 2017-2019 biennial budget bill allows Family Foundations to expand once again in 2018, growing capacity in a number of currently served communities and adding six new local programs.

### Coaching, Professional Development & Technical Assistance

The Family Foundations Home Visiting Program provides professional development and model-based implementation assistance to local home visiting programs through the Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This support is available to home visiting professionals across the state with the aim of raising the quality of services to all families, regardless of the local agency's funding source.

### Promoting a Culture of Quality

We are committed to building a culture of quality that promotes best practices and supports positive outcomes for families. Local programs report on a set of shared performance and system outcome measures, and Family Foundations dedicates resources to continuous quality improvement and evaluation of program services. In 2018, DCF is launching a long-term improvement collaborative for home visiting programs that will generate measurable progress in the areas of infant safe sleep and child developmental promotion, early detection and intervention.

### Facilitating Coordinated Systems of Care

Home visiting services are an important part of the systems of care supporting families in Wisconsin. We are working at the state and local level to make those systems accessible, trauma-informed, and easier to navigate.

***Learn more at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cwportal/homevisiting>.***

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