

# Indiana's Home Visiting Collaborative Framework

February 2024



# Indiana’s Home Visiting Collaborative Framework

This framework will guide the development of a comprehensive plan for the coordination of home visiting program services within the early childhood system to ensure quality service delivery and sustainable growth.



**Our Vision:**

Maximizing the impact and accessibility of home visiting in Indiana.



**Our Mission:**

Indiana administrators and leaders collaborate to strengthen home visiting in Indiana.

## Collaborating Organizations

Staff supporting home visiting from the Indiana Department of Health, Department of Child Services, and Family and Social Service Administration served as a steering committee to support the creation of this framework/plan. Input was also obtained from INECC (Indiana Early Childhood Collaborative) and the My Healthy Baby Advisory Committee (representatives from all types of home visiting programs in Indiana).



**Indiana  
Department  
of  
Health**





# What is Home Visiting?

Organizations implementing home visiting, also known as Early Childhood Family Support Programs, partner with families to provide voluntary, individualized services that take place in a natural setting for pregnant women, infants, young children and their families. Early Childhood Family Support Services are proven effective in optimizing health outcomes; supporting families in raising physically, socially, and emotionally healthy children that will be prepared to thrive throughout their lives; and building protective factors to prevent or minimize adverse experiences. Early Childhood Family Support Services promote equity through culturally responsive programming, trauma-informed approaches, and equitable access to resources. By building partnerships, communities are strengthened, and families have the resilience, skills and tools to succeed.

Early Childhood Family Support Services focus on topics including but not limited to:

- Positive parenting practices
- Parent/caregiver and child relationships
- Resources and education on child development
- Confidence as a parent/caregiver
- Maternal, prenatal, child, and family health and well-being
- Pregnancy planning
- Injury prevention through development of physically and emotionally safe home environments
- Family economic self-sufficiency
- Establishment of extended social and peer supports and networks
- Availability and accessibility of social services and other assistance
- Advocacy to support the parent/caregiver, child, and family links to resources as needed



# Home Visiting in Indiana

Indiana has a rich history of home visiting and collaboration within early childhood systems. Some highlights from this history are included below.



**1993** – Healthy Families Indiana Think Tank is first organized, and six sites are chosen to pilot Healthy Families Indiana leveraging private funds through the Foellinger Foundation.



**1994 to 1998** – Healthy Families Indiana expands statewide, leveraging funds from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA), and organizations/agencies in the fields of criminal justice, substance abuse, and mental health.



**1999** – The *Head Start, Early Head Start, Healthy Families: Collaborative Partnership Guidebook* created to “clarify, offer suggestions, and point toward possibilities” of collaborative partnership.




**2003 to 2014** – State agencies funding/implementing home visiting meet for Indiana’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) initiative titled *Sunny Start: Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds*, bringing together representatives of numerous state agencies, community organizations, and families of young children to coordinate, inform, and advocate for young children and their families.



**2010** – Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding is announced.



**2011 to 2012** – MIECHV funds begin to support home visiting through newly established Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) implementation and expanded Healthy Families Indiana (HFI) implementations.



**2012 to 2017** – State agencies funding/implementing home visiting meet for Indiana Project LAUNCH, promoting the wellness of young children ages birth to 8 by improving child- and family-serving agencies and reducing behavioral health disparities among families living in poverty, families who are uninsured, and families of Latino/Hispanic heritage, particularly those who are non-English speaking.

**2013** – Indiana Home Visiting Advisory Board (INHVAB) is established.

**2016** – Funding is allocated from the state budget and legislation is passed to establish the Safety PIN Grant fund to award programs to reduce infant mortality within Indiana.

**2017** – ECCS funding and MIECHV Innovation funding bring Help Me Grow to Indiana.

**2017 to 2023** – Safety PIN utilizes portions of funding to award programs that have started and/or expanded locally homegrown and evidence-based home visiting programs. Funded programs aim to complement the work of other home visiting funding to broaden the services to families in Indiana without duplicating services.

**2018** – State funding to support additional NFP services becomes part of Indiana legislation. Families First Prevention Services Act legislation passes. MIECHV is reauthorized for five years at level funding.

**2019** – State provides funding to establish a coordinated referral system for home visiting. This initiative is designed to connect more women, earlier in pregnancy, to perinatal home visiting. Development of the initiative, which came to be called My Healthy Baby, was a collaborative effort by the Indiana Department of Health, Family and Social Services Administration, and Department of Child Services.



**2020** – MIECHV Needs Assessment includes collaboration across multiple initiatives and various state agencies. My Healthy Baby establishes an Advisory Committee comprising representatives from every perinatal home visiting program type in Indiana to provide guidance and insight on issues related to home visiting.

**2021 to 2022** – Federal funding for COVID-19 pandemic response includes flexibility for supporting home visiting families with concrete assistance and expansion of home visiting services. Hoosier Families First funding expands state funding for HFI services. Additional state funding dedicated to NFP expansion throughout Indiana becomes part of Indiana legislation.

**2022** – INHVAB rebrands as Indiana Early Childhood Collaborative (INECC), which comprises all state agency partners working on home visiting and early childhood topics.

**2023** – MIECHV is reauthorized for five years with expanded funding and match opportunities for states to increase annual federal funding for home visiting. My Healthy Baby, which launched in its first county in 2020, becomes active statewide by May 1, 2023. Safety PIN increases the total annual budget to further support efforts to reduce infant mortality.

These milestones and more illustrate the heritage of collaboration within home visiting in Indiana, where more than 10,000 families benefit from family support services each year. The strong partnership between DCS and IDOH in implementing Indiana MIECHV has resulted in constant communication over the past decade, optimizing opportunities for relationship development and connections within the early childhood system.



# Why a Collaborative Framework?

As home visiting has expanded in Indiana, state agency teams who support home visiting have increasingly engaged in cross-agency collaboration. Early collaborative efforts focused on specific areas such as MIECHV and My Healthy Baby (Indiana's coordinated referral system for home visiting). Over time, this collaboration has grown to encompass most aspects of home visiting. In 2023, the state teams identified new opportunities on the horizon, including expanded MIECHV funding, and the possibility of Medicaid reimbursement.

Funding increases have historically created reactive planning to meet short timelines for application. Increasing funding opportunities have now created an opportunity for proactive planning that will create a framework to align priorities, create efficiencies, reduce administrative burdens, and improve experiences and services to families.

Building on the strong foundation of existing collaboration, staff from the three state agencies came together to create a strategic framework for the future. This framework will promote alignment and avoid unhelpful duplication as the team seeks to identify and address gaps in the home visiting system. Ultimately, the goal is that the framework will allow the cross-agency state staff to function cohesively as a single team and that the team will be prepared to proactively plan for and embrace emerging opportunities for home visiting in Indiana.



# Framework Goals



## Goal Area 1: Workforce

Indiana programs have a consistently well-trained and supported home visiting workforce that meets the needs of programs and the communities served.



## Goal Area 2: Quality Services

High quality and effective home visiting services support and meet the needs of families statewide.



## Goal Area 3: Data Collection and Use

Indiana home visiting collects and analyzes relevant data for cross-collaborative use.



## Goal Area 4: Systems Building & Communication

Indiana home visiting is sustained by optimal infrastructure and collaboration.



## Crosscutting Measure: Health Equity

Specific health disparities are addressed and culturally responsive programming is ensured.

