Home Visiting Helps Children and Families Thrive

Childhood Begins at Home

September 2025

About Voluntary Home Visiting

Welcoming a baby into the family can be both wonderful and stressful, even for those with support. But parenting can be even more difficult for some families who face extra challenges such as living below the poverty threshold or lacking stability in housing.

Home visiting can help.

Backed by decades of research, evidence-based home visiting is a powerful and proven strategy to support pregnant women and families with young children.

During these voluntary sessions, home visitors such as nurses, social workers, early childhood specialists, mental health clinicians and care coordinators, and paraprofessionals mentor pregnant women, parents, and other caregivers to support the parent-child relationship. Home visitors are supportive partners who build a trusting relationship with families and help guide them through the early stages of raising a child.

Pennsylvania

806,975
CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE

298,540
(**37%** of all under 6)
LOW-INCOME CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE

20,640
CHILDREN SERVED BY PUBLICLY-FUNDED, EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

3% OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 6

7% OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN UNDER 6

About Us

Childhood Begins at Home is a statewide campaign launched in 2017 to help policymakers and the public understand the value of evidence-based home visiting and support public investments in the programs.

The campaign includes child advocacy organizations alongside the eight evidence-based home visiting models operating in Pennsylvania that receive public (state and/or federal) funds to support their programs. These models include ***Child First, Early Head Start, Family Check-Up®, Family Connects, Healthy Families America, Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, and SafeCare Augmented®.***

Each model has strengths in at least one or more of these eight outcomes to meet families' unique experiences: child development and school readiness; child health; family economic self-sufficiency; linkages and referrals; maternal health; positive parenting practices; reductions in child maltreatment; and reductions in juvenile delinquency, family violence and crime.

To date, the campaign has secured funding increases more than tripling the state investments. This has helped serve many more Pennsylvania families, yet it represents only a fraction of those most in need of services.

Home Visiting Can Help

- CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS
- CHILD HEALTH
- FAMILY ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY
- LINKAGES AND REFERRALS
- MATERNAL HEALTH
- POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES
- REDUCTIONS IN CHILD MALTREATMENT
- REDUCTIONS IN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, FAMILY VIOLENCE AND CRIME

Westmoreland County

Early Head Start, Parents as Teachers

(publicly funded, evidence-based home visiting models operating in the county)

18,996
CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE

6,070
(32% of all under 6)
LOW-INCOME CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OF AGE

347
CHILDREN SERVED BY PUBLICLY-FUNDED, EVIDENCE-BASED HOME VISITING PROGRAMS*

2% OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER 6

6% OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN UNDER 6

In 2025, a family of four falls in the "low-income" category if its annual income is below $64,300 (200% Federal Poverty Level).

Source: Enrollment is based on 2024-25 Quarter 3 children served snapshot and data from Early Head Start grantees. Poverty is based on 2019-23 American Community Survey.

*County population totals will not equal the statewide total. County population is based on 2020 Decennial Census. State population is based on 2023 Vintage population estimates.

**Represents the estimated total number of children served throughout the fiscal year.

STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG KIDS

The Childhood Begins at Home campaign is concerned that the latest state budget proposal (2025-26) contained flat funding for the third straight year. Without any assurance that the state will account for rising costs or opportunity for growth of providing these life-changing services, this ultimately means fewer available services for Pennsylvania families impacted by economic and social disparities.

The campaign will continue to work with policymakers in the legislature and the administration to ensure Pennsylvania does not unnecessarily see a reduction in families receiving and benefitting from evidence-based home visiting services. Additionally, they will seek a pathway for growing services to reach more families in the coming year. Together, the Community-Based Family Center line and the Nurse-Family Partnership line represent $48.6 million to support the well-being of pregnant women and families with young children.

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www.childhoodbeginsathome.org