

# Update on Arizona's Plan for the ACA Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

July 17, 2012

The past year has seen many accomplishments on the road to building a statewide home visiting system in Arizona. We would like to provide you with a few highlights of that journey.

Funding through the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) has supported the expansion of two evidenced based models in Arizona. The Healthy Families program has expanded into target communities who have been identified as having the greatest need through an Inter-Agency Service Agreement with the Department of Economic Security. A similar process with First Things First and Maricopa County supported the expansion of the Nurse Family Partnership program into additional priority communities. Expansion efforts have reached the following communities so far:

- Camelback
- Alhambra
- Central
- Glendale Central
- Casa Grande
- Coolidge
- Tucson Central
- Tucson North Central
- Tucson Southeast
- Tucson E Central
- Tucson SW
- Tucson W
- Winslow
- Holbrook
- Graham

The Title V Home Visiting grant (MICHEV) also addresses the critical issue of at-risk communities who, as is often the case, lack the local infrastructure that would make them good candidates for home visiting programs. Funding was set aside to work with these communities to build local infrastructure to support home visiting services. The first step in this process is to map community assets and identify service gaps. This process begins for each of the 31 identified communities with the initial community meeting. We have met with local citizens, educators, service providers, faith-based organizations, law enforcement and others in 21 of the 31 communities. The agenda includes how the area was identified and an overview of the data for the area. The community is asked for critical information on:

- What the community sees as the unmet needs of families
- How a home visitation program might be sustained over time
- How this grant might fit with existing programs
- How to access/leverage the assets/strengths/expertise of the community
- Workforce issues
- Community hopes for home visiting services.

Community assets are mapped and service gaps are identified in this process. A follow-up meeting is then scheduled to develop a Capacity Building Plan for the community, based on the mapping. The Capacity Building Plan covers five key areas:

- Workforce development
- Communication
- Knowledge, skills and abilities
- Funding/Sustainability
- Cultural Competency.

Capacity Building Plans have been completed for 4 of the identified communities; Holbrook, Winslow, Globe/Hayden, and Payson. Draft

Intergovernmental Agreements with local health departments are underway to implement major components in the plans.

Apache Junction is the site of our next community meeting. We are scheduled for August 13th at [Mountain Health and Wellness](#) boardroom, 625 N. Plaza Drive, Apache Junction, AZ 85120, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Please get the word out to anyone who is interested in participating.

Concerns about stigma, especially in small rural communities, prevent some families from accepting needed home visiting services. This is a significant barrier to reaching the target populations identified in the MCH Home Visiting Grant. To address this issue, funding was identified to develop a social marketing campaign to improve the image of home visiting services. A state contractor, Riester Advertising, was enlisted to work with ADHS in developing strategies to inform the public about the benefits of home visiting and to normalize the concept of in-home support for young families. Working with the ADHS social marketing team, a campaign is in the development stage that will better position home visiting services for acceptance by young families.

One of the key pillars of a state-wide home visiting system is a knowledgeable, well trained workforce. The first state-wide home visiting conference will be held September 19 & 20 in at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel in Phoenix. Registration will be free and open to the first 400 Home Visitors who sign up. The keynote speaker will be Dr. J. Kevin Nugent, Professor of Children, Families and Schools at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He is also the Founder and Director of the Brazelton Institute in the Department of Developmental Medicine at Children's Hospital in Boston and is on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School. More information can be found at the [conference website](#).

The Arizona Home Visiting Task Force has established the following sub-committees: Professional Development, Priority Populations, Outcome Measures and CQI, and Continuum of Care. The sub-

committees will be meeting on their own before the next Task Force meeting to start on their identified tasks. The next Task Force meeting will be August 14<sup>th</sup> from 1-3pm at the Arizona Department of Health Services.