

Virginia Home Visiting Consortium

In December 2006, Virginia initiated a collaborative network of home visiting programs which includes 10 home visiting programs in 5 state agencies and 2 private agencies receiving public funding... The Consortium's tasks include reviewing the current system of home visiting program, identifying gaps, making recommendations for strengthening the infrastructure and service delivery, implementing promising strategies and providing technical assistance to local communities. In 2008, the programs provided home visiting services to 27,245 children and their families in 128 of 137 Virginia cities and counties.

Based on the research regarding effective home visiting services Virginia has sought to increase staff skills and build better linkages among local communities' existing home visiting programs and between home visiting programs and health care or early education providers, so that the diverse needs of families can be more appropriately addressed and in a timely manner. The work plan for the HVC highlighted the following objectives:

- Provide core training to all state home visitors (live sessions and web courses);
- Develop and provide training for all supervisors on "reflective supervision";
- Build local collaborative referral centers and develop joint publicity;
- Distribute a guidance document of local collaborative programs and creativity;
- Identify a system for collecting core data elements;
- Implement evaluation across programs and a quality improvement process

The Consortium inventoried training offered by each program, identified core training topics to be offered to all home visitors, and created an introductory training module for all staff. Through web-based registration housed at James Madison University, each home visitor has a personal professional development file, useful if they change positions or go on to community college. The core Consortium trainings are to be completed by December 2011. Announcements, registration, pre-tests, evaluations and certificates can all be handled on the website. Virginia's logic model, a map of program locations and contacts, surveys, and national research are available on the website www.homevisitingva.com. In an effort to develop a common language and maximize efficiency, training resources are shared with the early childhood educators and the infant mental health specialists.

Through analysis of the data collected by each home visiting program, research outcomes, and state goals for early childhood, the HVC is working on shared indicators for evaluation. The HVC is committed to improving early identification of CSHCN through use of the standardized screening tools for parents and children as recommended by the ABCD project. Risk screens for substance abuse, perinatal depression and intimate partner violence are integrated into the screening process.

Funding sources include Title V, MCHB Healthy Start, Early Head Start/Head Start, ACF Child Abuse Prevention Funds, State General Funds, TANF, local, foundation, United Way, SAMSHA, Oral health workforce grant, Lead Prevention/Environmental Toxins, Medicaid reimbursement, Medicaid Administrative, Federal grants, Local government and foundation funds. The Home Visiting Consortium has developed a MOA between 5 state agencies to fund the training and data/evaluation tasks.