

Supporting evidence for defining home visiting in California

Recommendation #1. Define home visiting in California

Develop a shared definition of home visiting for the state that captures the range of services and program types that currently identify as home visiting.

The evidence presented here suggests a strong need to **define home visiting in California**. The variability in the types of programs that identified as home visiting programs for this study presents the state with an opportunity to create a unified definition that will set an important foundation for the future of home visiting in the state. This definition will also be a critical first step to establishing home visiting as a profession.

F5CA Home Visiting Workforce Study definition of home visiting

In collaboration with F5CA and the study's Core Advisory Group, the F5CA Home Visiting Workforce Study developed a definition of home visiting for the study's purposes. Programs that opted into this study did so using the following definition of home visiting:

- *A program that provides visits focused primarily on: assessing child and family strengths and needs; setting family goals; linking participants with prenatal and postpartum care; fostering connections with pediatric care; providing information on pregnancy and child developmental stages and progress; promoting strong parent-child attachment; coaching parents on learning activities that foster their child's development; and coordinating with needed community services to support self-sufficiency, health, and resilience.*

In addition, out-of-home pediatric programs that include prenatal care and follow-up for healthy development-related services during the first three years of a child's life were also invited to participate in this study, as they are seen by home visiting stakeholders as an important part of the home visiting system.

The study definition can be used as a resource for the state in their efforts to first define home visiting in the continuum of workforce development. Although this definition allowed the study to capture the wide range of home visiting programs and services necessary to describe the field's landscape in California, the state may want to further refine the definition to best meet its long-term workforce development goals.

Registered Home Visiting Programs

As an example of the diverse landscape of home visiting in California, over 350 home visiting programs implementing more than 60 home visiting models registered for the study in 2020 (Table 1). These programs opted into the F5CA workforce study using the study's definition of home visiting, illustrating the importance of defining the field as a first step in identifying who should be included in the state's workforce development efforts.

Table 1. Number of home visiting programs registered by model

HOME VISITING MODEL NAME (N= 364)	# OF REGISTERED PROGRAMS USING EACH MODEL
Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up (ABC) Intervention	1
Adolescent Family Life Program	2
African American Perinatal Health Program	3
Behavioral Health Home Visiting	2
Black Mothers United Pregnancy Mentoring Home Visiting Program	2
Child Parent Psychotherapy	2

HOME VISITING MODEL NAME (N= 364)	# OF REGISTERED PROGRAMS USING EACH MODEL
DULCE	3
Early Head Start – Home-Based Option	47
Early Steps to School Success	4
Family Spirit	6
Fathers Corps	3
Healthy Babies	8
Healthy Families America	43
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)	2
Learning About Parenting	4
Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting Program (MECSH)	1
MCAH Antenatal & Postnatal Nurse Visits	3
Nurse-Family Partnership	24
Nurturing Parenting Programs	28
Parent-Child+	5
Parenting Wisely	4
Parents as Teachers	64
Perinatal Outreach Education (POE)	3
Positive Youth Development	2
Public Health Nursing	20
SafeCare	17
Triple P-Positive Parenting Program® -Home Visiting (Triple P-Home Visiting)	8
Welcome Baby	12
Welcome Home Baby	3
Other model	38
TOTAL	364

Source: Home visiting registration survey, 2020, Child Trends

California’s Home Visiting Mapping Tool

The [California home visiting mapping tool](#) (mapping tool) was developed as a tool to help policymakers, community advocates and leaders, service providers, and other home visiting stakeholders understand who could benefit from home visiting. The mapping tool does this by providing county-level information about characteristics determining which families might benefit from home visiting (e.g., first-time parents), as well as available home visiting services (e.g., number of funded slots). As part of building California’s home visiting mapping tool, the study team investigated registered home visiting programs and refined the list to identify five types of home visiting models, 1) evidence-based per HHS guidelines, 2) models implemented in

multiple communities, 3) models implemented in single community, 4) home visiting-compatible with health focus, and 5) home visiting-compatible.

Analysis of the mapping tool's data provide additional information about the landscape of home visiting California. The most common home visiting models included Parents as Teachers, Early Head Start-Home-Based Option, and Healthy Families America. On average, home visiting programs had the capacity to serve 137 families (range of 0 – 2,000 families) and employed an average of seven home visitors and supervisors (range of 0 – 42 staff). More than half of home visiting programs used models that meet the criteria for evidence-based per HHS standards. Among those that are considered evidence-based per HHS guidelines, home visiting programs had the capacity to serve an average of 116 families (range of 0 – 875 families) and employed an average of eight home visitors and supervisors (0 – 42 staff).

In addition, the mapping tool can inform home visiting policy and program decisions; support alignment of available resources, including those beyond home visiting services; generate county-level reports; and track outcomes for families over time. It can also answer a variety of policy and programmatic questions, such as:

- How many families with children under age 3 in my county are experiencing a particular circumstance, such as poverty or homelessness?
- How many home visiting slots are funded to serve families with these characteristics in my county? What kind of home visiting programs are represented by these funded slots?

This tool can support home visiting workforce development by understanding where service needs are and the types of services that might best meet those needs. This can help programs make decisions about hiring or funders make decisions about program development; however, these decisions must be anchored in a state-wide definition of home visiting to ensure the state has a unified understanding of what home visiting services in California look like.

Summary

Over the past 18 months, stakeholders have shared how home visiting has rapidly expanded across California, with new funding streams bringing additional capacity to serve families and additional requirements for programs and their implementing agencies. F5CA study data collection and the mapping tool describe the diverse landscape of home visiting programs and models in the state. Stakeholders also shared that there is considerable misunderstanding and misconceptions about what home visiting is and who it serves. At the county level, there may be multiple programs with different focus areas (e.g., parenting, mental health), eligibility for enrollment (e.g., first-time parents), and types of service delivery requirements (e.g., number of expected visits). In some ways, the variability helps meet families' specific strengths and needs, while in other ways, it limits the potential of home visiting—counties, programs, other community service providers are unclear on which programs address specific strengths and needs, leading to challenges with referrals and coordination. These misconceptions can also impact the workforce and how it is defined (i.e., there are varied requirements for hiring, as well as differences in what home visitors perceive as their job). This recommendation supports the state's goal of a coordinated workforce infrastructure by taking a necessary first step in developing a shared definition of home visiting.