

Background

Staff turnover is often cited as a concern for home visiting programs as it relates to the quality of a home visitor/parent relationship and program efficacy. The Georgia (GA) Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program has reported experiencing turnover and extensive time between hiring of replacement staff, and recognized the need to implement retention strategies that include providing home visitors with training and certifications on relevant topics and competencies. Using a multi-tiered model for professional development, GA conducted a workforce needs assessment to identify training needs, and built partnerships with academic institutions to promote development and sustainability of the workforce.

This project aimed to demonstrate improvement in the following priority area(s):

- Priority #2: Development and retention of a trained, highly skilled MIECHV-funded home visiting workforce.

Resources

[GA MIECHV Program](#)
[MIECHV Innovation Awards](#)

Project Activities and Highlights

The GA MIECHV Workforce project provided an understanding of influences on home visitor recruitment and retention, the challenges home visitors face on the job, and the personal and professional supports that are needed to enhance home visitors' work and job satisfaction. Using a multi-tiered model, GA chose to develop existing staff through a Home Visiting Leadership Academy, and cultivate the pipeline from educational institutions to home visiting careers.

Project Activities

- During the project period, 62 colleges and technical schools received presentations on home visiting models, employment requirements, salary ranges, and an overall summary of the impact of home visiting on families.
- The HVLA was created based on the needs assessment and consisted of two in-person sessions and seven online sessions. Topics covered were: Having Difficult Conversations, Communicating Effectively, Managing Conflict, Managing Work, Practicing Inclusive Leadership, Empowering Team Members and Leading Change.

Lessons Learned

- Consider hosting on-site, face-to-face interactions when possible rather than webinars.
- Establish partnerships with academic institutions to introduce students to the field of home visiting and to link students to program managers at local MIECHV sites for internship opportunities.

Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Findings

- The top three competencies indicated in the Leadership Needs Assessment were managing conflict (40.9%), having difficult conversations (40.9%), and empowering team members (31.8%).
- 100% of the college coordinators and students who participated in the pilot internship program focus group had little or no knowledge of home visiting prior to the partnership with GA Department of Public Health.

Sustainability

- As of 2019, GA's annual Home Visiting Institute has been expanded from one to two days to dedicate time to workforce development sessions for home visiting leaders.

Recommendations for the Home Visiting Field

- Utilize a cohort model for leadership and professional development activities to promote the building of strong connections across participants.