

In 2011 a workgroup of the Great Start Operations Team was convened and charged with developing Core Knowledge areas for personnel delivering Home Visiting Services in Michigan.

A group of stakeholders, including representatives from The Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, Michigan Public Health Institute, as well as Local Home Visiting Implementing Agencies and parent stakeholders, met regularly to develop the set of knowledge areas for Michigan.

The work was completed in 2015, however, due to a series of circumstances, were not submitted to the GSST for approval and adoption.

The attached Core Knowledge areas are respectfully submitted for approval by the GSST. This list represents what is considered best practice and desired knowledge at this time. It is anticipated that these knowledge areas may need to be updated on a regular basis as further research and evidence-based practices are established.

These knowledge areas will be used to assist in the development and maintenance of a strong, competent home visiting workforce in Michigan. Public Act 291 of 2012 requires programs to “employ well-trained and competent staff and provide continual professional development relevant to the specific program model being delivered”. The Federal MIECHV program, a significant funding source for evidence-based home visiting in Michigan, also encourages a competent and trained workforce. These core knowledge areas will serve as a guideline for the Evidenced Based Programs to set training and professional development priorities while maintaining and enhancing fidelity to their program model.

The work Michigan is doing to develop and support core knowledge areas is parallel to the work that is happening at the national level to bring a more professional awareness to the field of home visiting and early childhood care and education. Once these knowledge areas are adopted they can be used to determine and support professional development opportunities by both state and local entities. The core knowledge areas will provide the necessary foundation upon which Michigan will ensure that a competent home visiting work force is available to serve families.

Core Knowledge Areas for Personnel Supporting Families during Pregnancy, Infancy and Early Childhood through Home Visiting Programs

Core Knowledge Area: Parent Health and Nutrition

All home visitors have an understanding of mental, oral and physical health, and nutrition issues that affect parents including chronic mental and physical conditions; social determinants of health; the effects of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, domestic violence, trauma, and maternal depression, and knowledge of prevention treatment and recovery services; maternal health and well-being, before, during and after pregnancy;

breastfeeding; healthy diet, nutrition and physical activity; and knowledge of how to access health care and insurance; and coordinate with the Medical Home

Core Knowledge Area: Infant and Child Health and Nutrition

All home visitors have an understanding of social-emotional, oral and physical health, and nutrition issues that affect infants and children including social determinants of health; breastfeeding; healthy diet, nutrition and physical activity; immunizations and well-child care; and knowledge of how to access health care, healthy foods, and insurance; and coordinate with the Medical Home.

Core Knowledge Area: Development, Learning and Behavior

All home visitors have knowledge of theories of human growth and infant/child development; and strategies to assist families in supporting children’s learning and development, including an understanding of how developmental delays, physical and other health impairments, and the effects of trauma impact learning. *All home visitors* have an understanding of the use and benefits of (standardized, validated and reliable) screening tools and appropriate follow-through in working with families. *All home visitors* recognize the primacy of the parent-child relationship; promote positive parenting behaviors, parent-child relationships and resiliency; and understand the influence of family, culture (including Deaf culture), language, temperament, gender, a child’s special needs.

Core Knowledge Area: Safety – Individual, Family and Community

All home visitors have an understanding of behavioral and environmental health, and safe sleep and safety issues that affect infants, children and adults; know the signs and definitions of child abuse and neglect, including state statutes and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect; know the characteristics and needs of parents, children, and families at risk for abuse and neglect; and are knowledgeable about how to assist parents in accessing concrete resources and developing safety and crisis plans. *All home visitors* are Mandated Reporters and know how to appropriately discuss that role with parents and how to encourage self-report whenever possible.

Core Knowledge Area: Family Relationships

All home visitors have knowledge of theories of early relationship development, family interactions and parenting styles, and how to develop and assist with implementing effective communication strategies among family members. *All home visitors* have an understanding of how factors including incarceration, domestic violence, poverty and socio-economic status, and change in family structure affect family members; and how to assist families in creating or building upon coping strategies. *All home visitors* recognize and support the early developing attachment relationships between the infant/young child and parent/guardian; recognize the importance of nurturing, consistent, responsive and respectful parenting; and offer positive guidance and support to families at various stages of their children’s development. *All home visitors* have an understanding of how development delays and physical and other health impairments impact early relationships development and family dynamics.

Core Knowledge Area: Diversity

All home visitors recognize and respect diversity among families; understand the uniqueness of each family's culture, language, practices, traditions, beliefs and social constructs; are aware of the impact of their personal assumptions, biases, attitudes, expectations and behaviors in their work with families and in professional relationships; and are responsive and respectful in their support and engagement of families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family Engagement

All home visitors recognize the importance of developing trusting, respectful relationships with families; and understand the principles of relationship-focused practice for effective family engagement. *All home visitors* know how to engage in goal-oriented partnerships with families to promote parent-child relationships and family well-being; recognize the family's past experiences, current situation, strengths and concerns; are aware of their own biases and prejudices; and engage and involve fathers, partners, extended family members and kinship families.

Core Knowledge Area: Family Self-sufficiency

All home visitors have an understanding of the methods to help families identify, access and manage community, financial, health and human resources for themselves; the importance of economic stability and self-sufficiency; how to work in partnership with families to assess basic needs, resilience and readiness for education and job training; and how to address challenges and problem solve. *All home visitors* have an understanding and working knowledge of where to find additional information when needed and where to access formal and informal supports.

Core Knowledge Area: Community Resources and Support

All home visitors have knowledge of community resources, supports and service delivery systems and recognize the roles of families, child care and health care providers, agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, and communities in nurturing, supporting and educating children. *All home visitors* have the knowledge to assess families' readiness for services, and communicate the processes, procedures, and benefits. *All home visitors* have the knowledge to assist and coach families in assessing their needs and accessing appropriate services; make referrals; confirm linkage to services; and determine, in consultation with the family, if the services are meeting their needs.

Core Knowledge Area: Professional Practice

All home visitors have a thorough understanding of their professional role, personal safety, responsibilities and limits, and of confidentiality and other legal and ethical issues in family support and advocacy. *All home visitors* recognize the importance of reflective practice and supervision, regularly examine their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and biases, understand the impact these may have in their working relationships, and recognize the importance of being culturally sensitive, responsive and respectful. *All home visitors* have an understanding of the critical importance of continued learning and of actively pursuing training and education to further their knowledge and skills.