

MIFAMILY STRONGER TOGETHER NEWS

MICHIGAN'S EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING SYSTEM: A Resource For Children's Services

Written By: Kate Rood and Annie Heit, MDHHS-Home Visiting Unit

Child welfare and evidence-based home visiting services share many of the same goals. They both work with families experiencing multiple risk factors, focus on safety and well-being for children, encourage parents in reaching their goals, and strengthen parents with knowledge and resources to be successful. In Michigan, new state and federal funding is supporting the child welfare system and evidence-based home visiting to intentionally partner in new ways.

What is evidence-based home visiting?

- Free, voluntary, in-home (virtual/neutral location available), family support services.
- For pregnant people and families with children ages 0-6.
- Connects families with caring professionals for support, coaching, encouragement, and referrals to services.
- Services are voluntary; families are able to leave the program at any time.
- Some programs may offer diapers, formula, help with transportation.
- With signed consent from the family, information about participation and progress will be shared with MDHHS caseworkers monthly.

Home Visiting Focuses On:



Family-centered goals (returning to school, job training, housing, etc.)



Coaching to support a healthy pregnancy



Family connection and parent-child relationships



Promoting healthy childhood development (screening for milestones, autism, etc.)



Connect with community resources and services

Evidence-Based Home Visiting in Michigan Visit: <https://www.michigan.gov/homevisiting/>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

MI Home Visiting System
What is Kinship Care?
SafeCare

CONTACT US

Mailbox
MDHHS-
FFPSAPrevention@michigan.gov
Mailbox
MDHHS-
InHomeBureauCommunications
@michigan.gov

**March MiFamily, Stronger
Together Live Event**
March 16, 2023 at 10 a.m.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - January 16th

Remembering the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr | National Association of Social Workers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Litm9yQSh7w>

WHAT IS KINSHIP CARE?

Written By: Jessica Bodell, Out of Home Services Bureau

Kinship care is when relatives or close family friends with a family-like bond step up to raise children when their parents can't care for them for the time being.

Children in kinship care are most often described as living with kin through a **formal** or **informal** arrangement.

- **Formal** kinship care is when children are in the care of a kinship caregiver and in the custody of a child welfare agency. Formal kinship care is the foster care system.
- **Informal** kinship care is when children live with grandparents or other relatives and are not in the custody of a child welfare system.

According to Grandfamilies.org there are approximately 50,000 kinship caregivers in Michigan caring for children informally, which means that most children who live in kinship care are not children in foster care and are living with kin through an informal arrangement. Most recent MDHHS data indicates there are approximately 4,100 children placed with relatives through a formal arrangement.

Keeping children safe with their families is one of the Children's Services Agency (CSA) priority areas and research supports that children living with kin will experience improved placement stability, higher levels of permanency, and decreased behavioral problems. Additionally, we know that having children and youth living with kin promotes sibling ties and preserves identity. It's important to have services in place that provide Michigan's kinship caregivers with resources and support that will maximize their ability to provide safety, stability, and if needed, permanency for the children in their home. For those reasons CSA has many kinship initiatives currently being implemented in pilot counties, and for some services statewide, that include the following: family finding software, kinship supportive programming with mentors and shared parenting concepts, enhancements to the MSU Kinship Support Program that include in person case management, creation of a Kinship Advisory Council to study the prevalence and needs of kinship caregivers, county office kinship support workers doing family finding, licensing and support services, and Kinship Connections based on a kinship program out of Allegany County that provides family finding, licensing, and support services.

If you are working with kinship caregivers in any capacity, please connect them with the MSU Kinship Care Resource Center (KCRC) which runs our Kinship Support Program. The KCRC provides services to all kinship caregivers in Michigan. When these caregivers take on the responsibility of caring for family (particularly if they are caring for a family outside of child welfare), they often receive little to no financial support or advice regarding how to navigate the many systems and the support the KCRC provides is crucial. The Kinship Care Resource Center can be contacted by phone at 800-535-1218 or at kinship@msu.edu.

CSA Priorities





HOME VISITING IMPLEMENTATION

Written By: Kate Rood and Annie Heit, MDHHS-Home Visiting Unit

Michigan's federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) plan includes expanding effective home visitation services as a support for families encountering the child welfare system. The goal of this initiative is to decrease the number of families whose children are placed into care and to connect families with preventive services that have evidence they reduce instances of child abuse and neglect.

Eight home visiting programs in Kalamazoo, Wayne, Calhoun, Lake, Ingham, Alpena/Alcona, and Luce/Chippewa/Mackinac counties have completed the first year of FFPSA implementation. Michigan plans to continue to build this partnership in FY23. Home visiting programs are in the process of hiring and training 24 home visitors to specifically support families impacted by substance misuse in Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Bay/Arenac, Calhoun, Genesee, Grand Traverse, and Kent counties. A portion of these families will also be IV-E or FFPSA eligible. Peer navigators, compassionate staff with lived experience with substance use, will be placed in prenatal health care settings in these communities to connect families to early intervention services, such as home visiting.

Michigan's robust home visiting system is a resource that is available for all child welfare staff to utilize for their families. Home visiting provides long-term support for families and can be a wonderful steppingstone from involvement in the child welfare system to stability and thriving families.

[Go to https://www.michigan.gov/homevisiting/ to find home visiting programs in your community.](https://www.michigan.gov/homevisiting/)

SAFECARE SERVICES

Written By: Laura Mitchell, Executive Director, Foster Care, Samaritas

SafeCare is an evidence-based, in-home behavioral parenting program that promotes positive parent-child interactions, informed caregiver response to childhood illness and injury, and a safe home environment. It is an evidence-based, supported practice within the Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. Services are designed for parents and caregivers with at least one child from birth through 5 years of age who are either at-risk for or have a history of child neglect and/or physical abuse. Services are provided individually in the parent or caregivers' home including weekly home visits for at least one hour. Services are provided to families for 18 weeks.

SafeCare is a new program in Michigan, currently provided in the following counties:

Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Kalkaska, Benzie, Manistee (Wellspring Lutheran Services), Huron, Lapeer, Tuscola, St. Clair, Sanilac (Bethany Christian Services), Van Buren, Berrien (Bethany Christian Services), Ottawa (Samaritas), Monroe, Lenawee (Bethany Christian Services), Macomb, Oakland (Samaritas).

The SafeCare curriculum includes three modules, each including six sessions:

Parent-Child/Parent-Infant Interaction Module: targets risk factors associated with neglect and physical abuse and teaches parents/caregivers how to positively interact with their infant/child.

Home Safety Module: targets risk factors for environmental neglect and unintentional injury by helping parents/caregivers identify and eliminate common household hazards and teaching them about age-appropriate supervision.

Health Module: targets risk factors for medical neglect by teaching parents/caregivers how to identify and address illness, injury, and health.

SafeCare services are available to:

- A child who is a candidate for foster care but can remain safely at home or in a kinship placement, with services, including:
 - A child who is a victim of confirmed child abuse or neglect, a child who resides in a household where CA/N has not been confirmed but the Risk Assessment score is moderate, high or intensive.
 - A child previously in foster care but has been returned to their parent or relative.
 - A child who is at imminent risk of entering foster care as otherwise determined by a tribe.
 - An infant born exposed to substances.
 - A child's adoption or guardianship is at risk of disruption or dissolution.
 - A child whose parent is under the age of 26 and has been in foster care as a child themselves.
- A child in foster care who is pregnant or parenting.
- A parent or kin caregiver of the above populations.

MDHHS, Bethany, Samaritas, and Wellspring are happy to offer this new service to families as we focus more on prevention and supporting families to remain together.