



July 1, 2022

RE: Early Impact Virginia 2022 Annual Report

Early Impact Virginia is pleased to submit the following Annual Report for activities completed in state fiscal year 2022 as required by:

Budget Bill - HB5002 (Chapter 2)

Bill Order » Office of Health and Human Resources » Item 346

Department of Social Services

Authority: Title 2.2, Chapter 54; Title 63.2, Code of Virginia; Title VI, Subtitle B, P.L. 97-35, as amended; P.L. 103-252, as amended; P.L. 104-193, as amended, Federal Code.

Item 346

N. Out of this appropriation, \$250,000 the first year and \$600,000 the second year from the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families block grant shall be provided to contract with Early Impact Virginia to continue its work in support of Virginia's voluntary home visiting programs. These funds may be used to hire three full-time staff, including a director and an evaluator, and to continue Early Impact Virginia's training partnerships. Early Impact Virginia shall have the authority and responsibility to determine, systematically track, and report annually on the key activities and outcomes of Virginia's home visiting programs; conduct systematic and statewide needs assessments for Virginia's home visiting programs at least once every three years; and to support continuous quality improvement, training, and coordination across Virginia's home visiting programs on an ongoing basis. Early Impact Virginia shall report on its findings to the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by July 1, 2019 and annually thereafter.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laurel", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Laurel Aparicio
Executive Director
(804) 359-6166

laparicio@earlyimpactva.org

Executive Summary

The last two pandemic years offered unique learning and growth opportunities for Virginia’s home visiting field. Not only were providers able to effectively employ new approaches to service delivery through virtual home visiting, but Early Impact Virginia was able to live into our mission in new, substantially different ways. Over the last year, EIV has realized a number of long standing projects while simultaneously adjusting strategy and timeline to address the emerging needs of the field.

In spite of the enormous pandemic impact, the last year created fertile ground for meaningful growth and stabilization among the home visiting community. Crisis events often provide the opportunity to focus on those things that are most critical to success. For Virginia’s home visiting field that meant maintaining a laser sharp focus on meeting family needs, connecting families with emergency supplies and community resources, and always being present for those families experiencing high levels of anxiety and stress that come with parenting during such turbulent times. And, for Early Impact Virginia, it meant leaning into our charge by creating the best conditions for home visitors to do their work.

While the first year of the pandemic was characterized by the development of resources to support shifting service approaches and family needs, the second was all about optimizing the use of these new supports and addressing the needs of a rapidly changing workforce. While the home visiting workforce did not immediately see high rates of turnover, this last year presented a very different picture as twenty percent of the workforce transitioned out of the field. These transitions reflect a number of issues that Virginia leaders continue to work to address, including ensuring that all staff earn a living wage, eliminating administrative requirements that do not add value to service delivery and supporting staff to navigate what can be highly stressful and emotionally draining work.

Early Impact Virginia remains committed to working together with partners to address these pressing issues

in both the short and long term. EIV and the Alliance have worked diligently to develop strategic approaches to addressing systemic issues. The next year will provide the opportunity to move from concept to implementation. Key activities to address system wide challenges include:

“My life was a mess and my home visitor was always there for me.

She made me feel like a Super Mom!”

~Parents as Teachers Mom

Workforce Recruitment and Retention:

Addressing workforce and service delivery challenges requires significant investment of time and resources across the entire system, from supporting local recruitment efforts to building lucrative pathways into the field through higher salaries and meaningful opportunities for professional growth and career advancement.

Early Impact Virginia is proud to share that in the next year we are redoubling our efforts to diversify and strengthen the home visiting workforce with a new project, *Building Equitable Career Pathways into Home Visiting* (learn more, page 15).

Throughout the course of the pandemic, one recurrent request expressed by home visiting staff has been the need for additional supports for staff well-being, self-care and reflective practice. Virginia training and supports for home visitors is quite robust, but professional support for supervisors has yet to be fully developed or implemented. As we know, a supervisor’s ability to effectively support staff during the COVID-19 pandemic has been the greatest predictor of staff satisfaction, effectiveness and retention. As the linchpin for staff retention and effective service delivery, it is imperative that supervisor well-being is prioritized, supported and nurtured. Learn more about the full range of *Supervisor Supports*, from beginner to advanced, developed by the field for the field (*page 16*).

Streamlining Administrative Requirements:

The Early Impact Virginia Alliance has very intentionally prioritized the need to streamline expectations and requirements for local providers. As a part of the [Home Visiting Strategic Plan](#), the Alliance will work together with funders and key public stakeholders to re-imagine accountability measures to fully demonstrate the impact of home visiting while effectively reflecting the work being done together with families. Learn more about the *EIV Data Warehouse* designed to eliminate duplicate data entry processes (*page 12*).

Early Childhood Home Visiting in Virginia

The foundation for lifelong health and well-being is built in pregnancy and early childhood. The evidence is conclusive and grows daily. The absolute best opportunity to build healthy, safe communities begins with families. Supporting families from the start creates multi-generational change and the pathway to true population health.

“I was pregnant and homeless. Everything I have today is because of Healthy Families. **It’s a relationship.** Healthy Families is not like a company, **it’s like FAMILY**....I wish the program could last longer. If you could only stay until he’s 18, I would love it!”

~Healthy Families Mom

For more than 25 years, Virginia Early Childhood Home Visiting programs have partnered with local communities throughout the Commonwealth to strengthen families and improve child health and well-being. Virginia has a proud history of strong support for evidence-based home visiting. Leaders consistently demonstrate an unyielding commitment to achieving the absolute best outcomes for young children. This commitment has never been more evident than over the past decade as the investment in early childhood home visiting has increased significantly.

Pandemic Impact:

Over this past year, local programs continued to navigate system-wide disruptions to traditional service strategies and referral networks that initially led to significant reductions in service enrollment and engagement. Throughout the pandemic experience, local providers were able to capitalize on the new and different ways in which families were engaging. With new virtual and telehealth strategies in place, home visitors began to see many families reaching out and engaging with greater frequency and often in very different ways. Home visitors began reporting that families were taking on a very different role in their relationship and often seemed more at ease leading activities with the home visitor providing coaching virtually. Entirely new connections were being discovered and home visitors found themselves tapping into different skills in new and

unique ways. Overwhelmingly, families reported that the support they received from home visitors was invaluable. Time and again, families shared sentiments like, “I don’t know what I would have done without her” and “My home visitor was my lifeline during the pandemic”. After a year of providing pandemic impacted services, the data began to illustrate these shifts as relationships with families deepened, but fewer families were reached.

These trends are evident in the following chart demonstrating that while the number of families served and the home visiting workforce decreased the connection to families actually increased by approximately fifteen percent (15%) as families relied more heavily on home visitors for parenting support and resources.

SFY'	2019	2020	2021	% Change*
Home Visits	79,382	81,852	73,878	-7%
Children Served	9,852	8,677	8,024	-18%
Pregnant Women	2,475	1,577	1,859	-25%
Workforce	797	756	614	-23%
Connection with Families				+14%

*2019--2021

In addition to this important data illustrating shifts in service delivery, EIV is pleased to report that in SFY 2021, local providers continued to partner with 8,000 families in 123 communities all across the Commonwealth to build parenting skills, enhance family functioning and support healthy child development.

Early Impact Virginia Summary of Activities and Achievements

Virginia’s home visiting system continues to serve as an example of the important role that public-private collaboration can play in building effective, innovative approaches to service delivery. Sustaining and expanding home visiting services to achieve the promise of prevention requires a higher level of coordination across early childhood systems. While evidence-based programming is essential to strong outcomes, so too is the need for comprehensive, integrated early childhood systems. Optimizing the Commonwealth’s investment in early childhood home visiting and building a strong foundation for the future can only be achieved through deliberate planning and strong, committed leadership.

Between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, Early Impact Virginia continued to maximize the impact of home visiting in Virginia by providing leadership at the state level, embracing collaboration with multiple partners, fostering innovation, and supporting excellence in service delivery.

LEADERSHIP

In Virginia, home visiting lives at the intersection of five child serving agencies, with each agency playing a significant role in all or some part of the administration, funding, and delivery of home visiting services. While this offers certain advantages for collaboration, it also creates inherent fragmentation and adds to the complexity of an already disparate system. Addressing this requires shared vision, clear

commitment and significant coordination to ensure all partners are fully engaged in determining the ways in which home visiting will help to achieve the Commonwealth’s priorities for and with families.

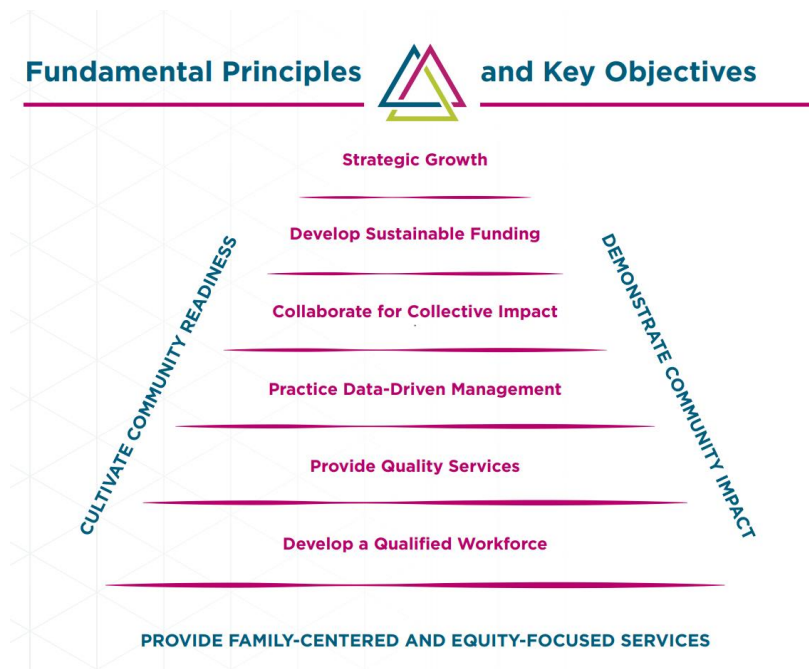


Virginia’s *Plan for Home Visiting*, adopted in 2019, addresses the Commonwealth’s key priorities for pregnant persons and families with young children and sets a bold strategic direction for growing services to achieve collective impact. Informed by the Early Impact Virginia statewide home visiting needs assessment, and with input from more than 200 stakeholders at the local and state levels, the Early Impact Virginia Strategic Plan was finalized and published in January 2022 and provides the context and direction necessary to fully operationalize the *Plan for Home Visiting*.

Collectively, stakeholders identified the fundamental principles and key objectives upon which *Virginia’s Plan for Home Visiting* is grounded:

- Provide family-centered and equity-focused services.
- Cultivate community readiness for expanding home visiting.
- Demonstrate community impact of home visiting.

These fundamental principles were informed by the very clearly articulated values and priorities shared by Virginia providers and leaders.



Across the board, home visiting stakeholders prioritize the need for all services to be family-centered and equity focused. This principle includes all of the shared values identified for home visiting services, including trauma-informed/resiliency-focused, collaborative, data driven, transparent and results oriented.

Additionally, decades of experience have led to the understanding that sustainable, effective growth is highly dependent upon community capacity to create, sustain and expand services. This strategic plan incorporates this shared understanding of the conditions necessary for success and identifies next steps for developing collaborative pathways for supporting communities in this vital work.

Finally, home visiting has a long history of using data to drive decision-making, demonstrate outcomes and quantify return on investment. However, moving from program or participant level outcomes to population level impact is essential to demonstrating the value in scaled growth. This strategic plan sets forth clear objectives necessary for assuring quality, measuring impact, and driving innovation.

Together with the EIV Alliance, Early Impact Virginia continues to lead the development of a shared work plan to achieve our vision by addressing each of the strategic objectives. As a necessary first step, the Alliance is working to define how the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion will be defined and illustrated to ensure a clear baseline from which to describe the home visiting system, track and demonstrate progress.

Our Vision

*All pregnant and parenting families in Virginia have access to high-quality, early childhood home visiting, **how** and **when** they choose.*

Our Goal

Maximize impact by reaching 50% of eligible families at the community level

Guiding Principles

- Provide Family-Centered and Equitable Service Delivery
- Cultivate Community Readiness to support effective growth
- Demonstrate value to families, funders and partners

Objectives



Qualified Workforce

Promote equity, effectiveness, retention and diversity in workforce development.



Quality Services

Provide family-centered, high-quality home visiting services for all families based on best practice and/or evidence-based standards.



Data-Driven Management

Use data to inform and drive decision-making within all parts of the home visiting system (families, staff, organization, community, and state) to build quality, enhance efficiency and demonstrate impact and ROI.



Collective Impact

Engage all partners in developing collaborative approaches that facilitate cross-system alignment and integration for seamless, family-centered services.



Sustainable Funding

Support sustained service delivery and targeted growth by diversifying public funding.

Home Visiting Medicaid Benefit

After efforts to restore funding for the Home Visiting Medicaid benefit during the 2020 Special Legislative Session were unsuccessful, home visiting advocates worked together with elected leaders during the regular session to advance a plan to resume this work in the new fiscal year. Ultimately, the final 2022 Budget included a language only amendment directing DMAS to conduct a study and make recommendations by December 1, 2021.

The report includes fundamental information for developing a benefit in Virginia, but does not include the implementation strategies prioritized by Virginia home visiting leaders. Early Impact Virginia will continue to work together with stakeholders to develop next steps for this work.

“She’s my Mother Hen. **She’s been my saving grace!** I probably would not be where I am today without her. She’s my number one support.”

~CHIP Mom

Raising Family Voices

During the 2022 Legislative Session, Early Impact Virginia partnered with Families Forward to facilitate a series of eight (8) Virtual Parent Town Halls with legislators across the Commonwealth. These regional events offered home visiting families the opportunity to specifically share their home visiting experiences while also discussing the challenges faced during the pandemic. The Town Halls were very well attended with a total of 203 participants, including home visiting families, staff and legislators. Overwhelmingly, parents were grateful for the opportunity to share their experiences.



COLLABORATION

Collaboration is fundamental to all EIV work. Home visiting is a complex system that includes multiple program models and numerous partnering organizations. Extensive coordination is necessary to support effective communication and decision making to ensure that our system is responsive to the needs of families and communities while also addressing the Commonwealth's key priorities and supporting strong outcomes.

Alliance for Early Childhood Home Visiting

Early Impact Virginia leads the Alliance for Early Childhood Home Visiting. As both a convener and partner in implementation, EIV has well established relationships at the local and state level. Member organizations represent an early childhood workforce of more than 600 providers serving 8,000 families in 123 of Virginia's 133 localities. In addition to this reach, as the Alliance for Early Childhood Home Visiting, EIV partners closely with early childhood providers across the system, including early intervention, preschool special education, infant/early childhood mental health, substance use services, early care and learning, child welfare, food/income security, health care providers, insurers and academic institutions.

Key to any EIV led project or activity is the engagement of those in the field. To be effective, EIV must represent the entire field in meaningful, relevant ways. EIV relies on the expertise of local providers and stakeholders as well as state leaders in all of its work. Action Teams provide the vehicle for including the provider voice in decision making.

Directed by the previous administration and reporting to the Children's Cabinet, EIV developed a Leadership Council in 2018 to support cross-secretariat work to advance home visiting priorities. Currently, this work has been put on hold as EIV collaborates with partners to determine the best approach to supporting this work moving forward.

MIECHV

Early Impact Virginia partners with the Virginia Department of Health to collaboratively lead Virginia's Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program. EIV and VDH continue to work closely to fully align home visiting activities to support all home visiting providers in the Commonwealth. By leveraging the legislatively directed role of EIV, Virginia is working to create a seamless approach to supporting the needs of local programs by standardizing expectations, reducing administration burden and maximizing resources for workforce development and continuous quality improvement. The collaborative MIECHV team includes the VDH MIECHV team, EIV team and funded program model leads. This team meets monthly to guide decision making, enhance coordination and streamline activities.

With the completion of the 2020 Virginia Home Visiting Needs Assessment, a new MIECHV RFA was released to allow all eligible communities to develop or expand services. Currently, MIECHV funding supports twenty-one (21) local implementing agencies to serve more than 1,000 at-risk pregnant women and families with young children in 40 communities. Additionally, 1 local agency, Smart Beginning Virginia Peninsula, receives funding to implement behavioral health risk integrated central intake services in both Hampton and Newport News and supports these services in an additional seven communities in Eastern Virginia, as needed.

Communication

Early Impact Virginia maintains a statewide and national email list of more than 2,000 subscribers, including home visitors, supervisors, and other stakeholders. Regular communication is maintained via two message-specific newsletters that include EIV sponsored events and activities, as well as relevant information and updates for the field and information specifically for home visiting Supervisors. The Supervisor newsletter shares upcoming training opportunities and information of particular importance for supervisory staff. Social media communication became even more prevalent over the course of the two years. EIV provides regular Facebook posts of current events and relevant resources. Social media posting has also offered many new opportunities to share local provider success stories and celebrations.

In November 2021, EIV launched a brand new website designed to meet the needs of three key stakeholder audiences: home visitors, policy makers and partners, and referral sources. www.EarlyImpactVirginia.Org is the main access point for all information about Virginia home visiting.

EARLYIMPACT VIRGINIA
ALLIANCE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING

Who We Are Professional Development Collaboration & Partnerships Strategic Leadership Data & Research Resources **CONTACT US**

Home Visiting Works.

Home visiting is proven to strengthen families and help children grow up healthy and ready to learn.

LEARN MORE

Find Home Visiting in your Area.

We ensure that all pregnant and parenting families have access to high-quality, early childhood home visiting through programs that best match their needs. See which home visiting programs are available in your community.

FIND A PROGRAM

INNOVATION

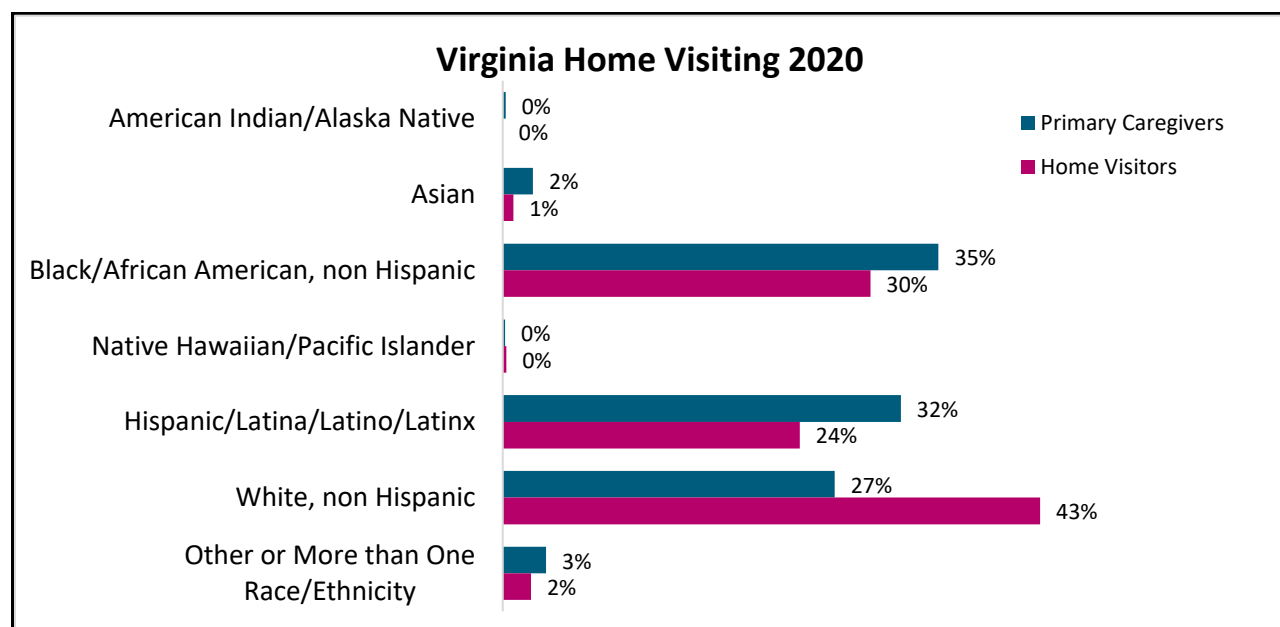
From the start, home visiting program models have been built on evidence and have used data to drive improvement. Collecting reliable data is essential to accountability, quality assurance and improvement. Early Impact Virginia recognizes the value of defining and collecting common data across all programs and worked together with service providers and funding partners to develop unified data measures and reporting structures to share the impact of our work.

Annual Data Collection and Reporting: For the past five years, EIV has partnered with local providers to collect program level data to demonstrate the scope and impact of service delivery. Annually, 56 local organizations voluntarily report data to EIV for shared reporting. Our focus has

been to conduct this work in a way that is manageable for local program providers while also informing broader goals to streamline reporting, ensure accountability, demonstrate impact and frame our story. In addition to collecting data directly from local providers, EIV partners with Early Head Start/Head Start state leaders to gather as much relevant data on the 14 local programs providing home-based services in Virginia communities. This process is hindered by the federal funding structure and reporting requirements that do not fully align with Virginia’s definitions and needs. However, the organizations are able to focus efforts to get the best data possible to describe the home visiting system and understand the overall needs of families receiving services. This allows EIV to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the families and communities receiving home visiting services. Future goals include integration of this data into the Virginia Home Visiting data set to be able to report impact across all measures.

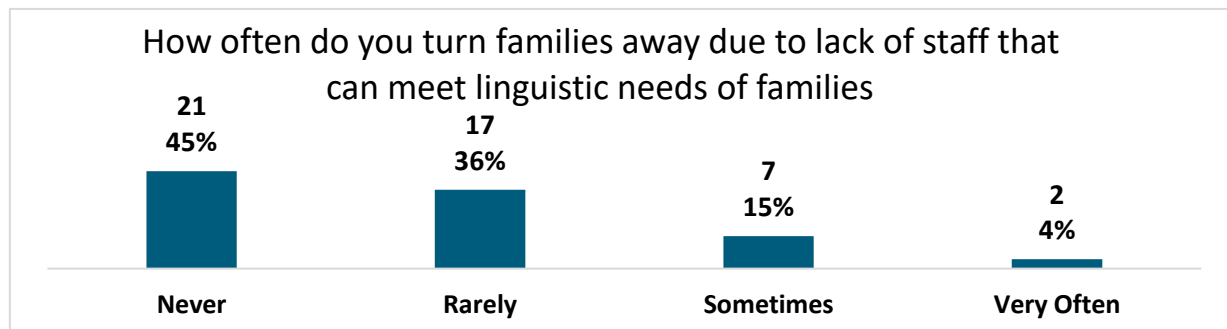
This year, Early Impact Virginia significantly streamlined the process by partnering with state offices to gather as much of the required data possible through their data systems and then developing individualized data collection instruments for each of the eight home visiting models. This process was facilitated by the completion of several new data system improvements by partner programs and EIV. EIV continues to work to complete the development of the statewide home visiting data solution for reporting via the EIV Data Warehouse.

In addition to service data, EIV and Alliance members identified a number of areas where additional data could be collected to better inform our shared understanding of emerging trends and issues. In particular, as a part of our shared commitment to supporting diversity, equity and inclusion across the home visiting network, the following data was collected to support our work to better understand the racial, ethnic and linguistic characteristics of those families receiving services and home visitors providing services. These data do not reflect a one-to-one ratio of providers to participants, rather they provide a snapshot of the statewide percentages of each.

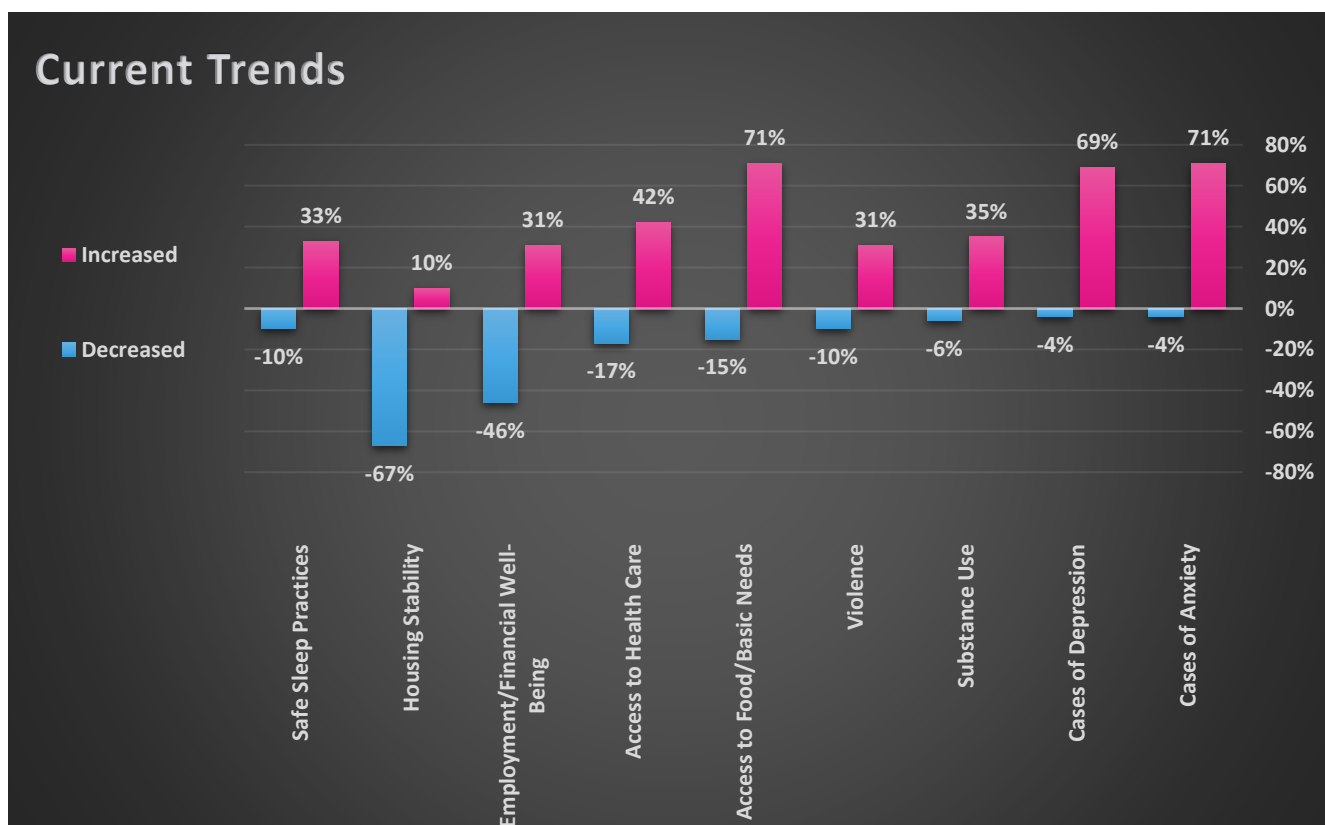


Given the significant diversity among Virginia families and the large percentage of Latinx participants and home visitors, data was also collected to better understand the linguistic needs of families for whom English is not their first language.

	Primary Caregivers Primary or Preferred Language	Home Visitors	HV to PC Ratio
Spanish Language	1,552 (26%)	113 (31%)	1 : 13.7



Finally, data was collected to better understand those areas where local programs continued to experience challenges and where they were seeing improvements. Again, this snapshot allows EIV focus work to guide resources, training and supports to meet the expressed needs of local providers either through statewide efforts or targeted approaches.



Early Impact Virginia Data Warehouse

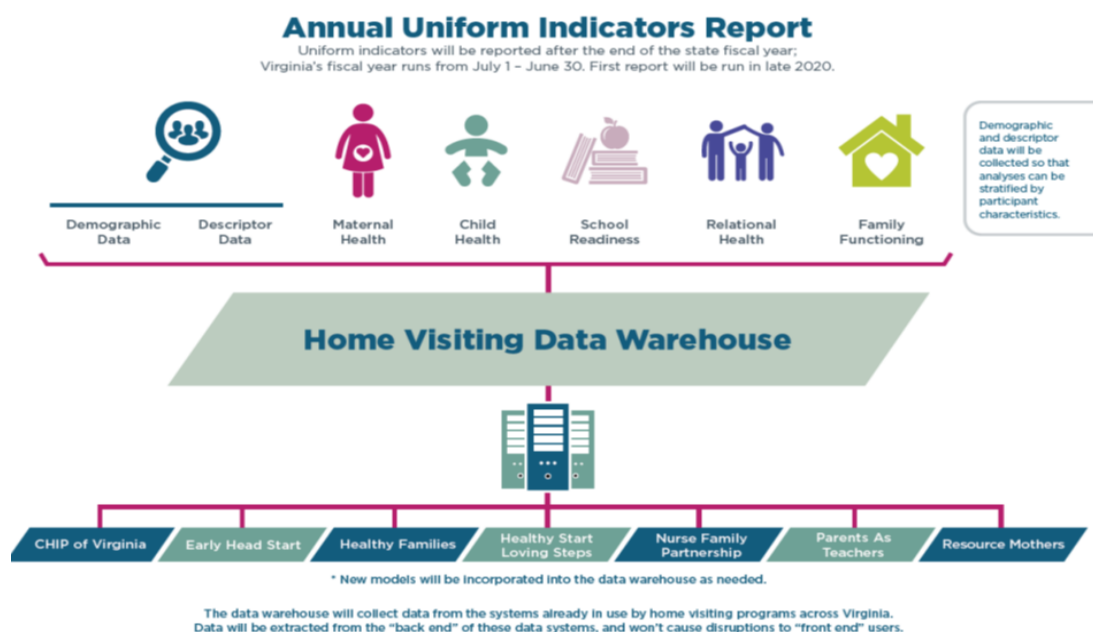
EIV completed the technology build for a statewide data warehouse and successfully integrated Healthy Families Virginia data for MIECHV and EIV Annual Reporting. As the largest home visiting provider in Virginia, this represents significant progress towards achieving the statewide goal to automate shared reporting and allow for full integration of data from each of Virginia's eight home visiting models with relevant statewide data systems. Rather than create new data collection systems that require provider input, EIV will import data into the data warehouse from each of the state model legacy data systems, analyze the data and report in aggregate across all program models. As seen in the data schema below, which is also included in [Virginia's Home Visiting Uniform Indicator document](#), this complex, but efficient strategy was designed to specifically reduce the reporting burden on local home visiting providers while building capacity to fully illustrate impact of home visiting across a number of key indicators.

With the warehouse built and fully functional, future work will focus on ingestion of remaining model data. This task remains quite extensive as success requires complex agreements and significant coding for each data system to ensure accurate reporting.

EIV's Data Action Team, with representation from each program model, continues to work to develop shared priorities. Over this past year, much of this team's work focused on preparing for Annual Data Collection and identifying workforce data to address key priorities. The team has identified the following projects for future shared work:

- Virginia Home Visiting Report Card
- A Collaborative Home Visiting Evaluation Report
- Series of Infographics
- Social Media Campaign

With the completion of the Data Warehouse, shared outcome reporting becomes possible. EIV will continue to work together with providers and partners to develop shared reporting strategies. Additionally, EIV will work to integrate home visiting data with other state early childhood data sets.



EXCELLENCE

One of the biggest challenges facing home visiting in Virginia during the COVID-19 pandemic was the suspension of in-person home visits, which necessitated an immediate shift to virtual service delivery. Home visiting programs did not close for extended lengths of time like many other early childhood and human service organizations did. While there had been some use of video chat and texting to provide support to families, the wholesale switch to virtual visits only was a drastic departure from “business as usual” for all home visiting programs in Virginia. Knowing that there would be a need for significant training and development to successfully implement virtual service delivery, Early Impact Virginia shifted its professional development activities to creating content to support providers in delivering virtual home visiting services.

Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting

Early Impact Virginia continued to work in partnership with the National Alliance of Home Visiting Models, Parents as Teachers National Center, and James Madison University to spearhead the Rapid Response-Virtual Home Visiting collaborative. Through the Rapid Response project, Early Impact Virginia helps to lead this field-driven initiative that includes a regular national home visiting webinar series, a six (6) part Virtual Home Visiting best practice e-learning training series, and numerous best practice resources. With clear guidance and tips from the field, this series was designed to support home visitors in all aspects of their work. When all six modules and quizzes are completed, the home visiting professional will earn a Virtual Home Visiting Digital Badge that will be added to their online transcript in The Institute. In addition to the modules, a Supervisor's Toolkit was developed and launched at the same time. The interactive toolkit is available in both English and Spanish and provides resources and information for supervisors on virtual home visiting. Early Impact Virginia continues to work with national partners to lead these efforts as the field continues to transition back to in-home service delivery while also adopting hybrid approaches for on-going connection.



Virtual Home Visiting



The Institute: One of the most fundamental roles that EIV plays in supporting the home visiting system is through professional development. A national leader in this work, EIV continues to partner with the Iowa Department of Public Health to offer a comprehensive, competency based professional development system for home visitors and supervisors, the [Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals](#) (The Institute).

The Institute is an innovative effort to advance workforce development nationwide and streamline the home visitor experience. With the development of new modules and the updates to outdated modules, EIV now offers 81 e-learning foundational training modules. In addition to supporting core competency development through on-line training, EIV also offers seven (7) advanced classroom training for Virginia home visiting professionals in all parts of the state. All EIV trainings are specially designed for home visitors and are developed together with early childhood partners, experts and local providers. All trainings are free and accessible regardless of provider location.

The Institute is continuing to build features to support workforce development through a robust system of support, including

- Individualized digital learning maps,
- National Certification,
- Digital Badging for Specialized Skill building,
- Undergraduate degree credit at greatly reduced cost (University of Kansas),
- CEU credits (James Madison University), and
- Reciprocal agreements with certifying organizations like the CDA for Home Visitors.

Over the last year, EIV launched two advanced training series (six new e-learning modules) to address needs identified by the field. Virginia has long recognized the important role that reflective practice and supervision plays in improving staff job satisfaction, reducing secondary traumatic stress and enhancing services. To better support all staff in building foundational understanding and skills in reflective practice, EIV launched the following 3 part series for home visitors and supervisors:

		
Reflective Supervision 1: Reflective Practice for Family Support Professionals	Reflective Supervision 2: Foundations in Reflective Supervision for Supervisors	Reflective Supervision 3: Best Practices in Reflective Supervision for Supervisors
This 45-minute module will introduce FSPs to their role in reflective supervision, including...	This 45-minute online module introduces supervisors to the basic principles of reflective su...	This 45-minute online module introduces supervisors to best practices and strategies for ref...

In response to the need for additional resources and dialogue to support home visitors in identifying causes of racial disparities in maternal and infant health and in learning how they can help prevent maternal and infant mortality, Early Impact Virginia engaged key content experts, early childhood partners, and home visiting experts/providers to provide input and advice to develop a 3 part topic based series. This series is designed to encourage home visitors to deepen understanding in three key areas, by **leaning in** to learn more about disparity and the impact of trauma on families and communities:

- Leaning In: From Racism to Racial Equity**
- Leaning In: Maternal and Infant Health**
- Leaning In: Trauma and Resilience**



prevention and/or intervention strategy to address mild to moderate perinatal depression. Mothers & Babies has been highlighted as one of the most effective interventions for the prevention of postpartum depression and EIV is working together with partnering programs to provide this training to every home visiting program in Virginia. To date, 30 local programs have received training and technical assistance to support effective implementation of the Mothers & Babies intervention. This intervention was particularly important over the past two years as families exhibited much higher levels of anxiety and mild to moderate depression due to the uncertainty and stress of the three pandemics. Early Impact Virginia has also developed a statewide, technical assistance infrastructure to support long-term sustainability of the intervention among participating home visiting programs and looks forward to training a new cohort of local providers in the upcoming year.

Supervisor Supports

Early Impact Virginia continues their partnership with the Early Childhood Mental Health Virginia state office to provide intensive Reflective Supervision training for home visiting supervisors to build reflective supervision skills, infant mental health knowledge, and opportunities for Virginia Infant Mental Health Endorsement. The 2019-2021 cohort included 28 participants, representing seven home visiting models. Through a combination of live training (in-person and virtual) and virtual reflective group sessions, supervisors became more familiar with infant mental health theory and strategies and increased their reflective supervision skill. Four “Lead Supervisors”, graduates of previous cohorts, facilitate group reflective supervision sessions as a way to continue building their own reflective supervision skill and to expand reflective supervision leadership and capacity across Virginia. This cohort has also included an increased focus on issues related to diversity and equity, with a goal of equipping supervisors to engage in and advocate for diversity-informed and inclusive practices within their own organizations.

Due to staff turnover and limited capacity, Early Impact Virginia was unable to launch a new cohort during the last year. However, Virginia’s home visiting field has clearly and consistently expressed the need for greater support for supervisors and as a result the MIECHV team prioritized the use of American Rescue Plan funding to support the development of more intensive, on-going support for supervisors. EIV led a workgroup to design the approach for future training and coaching support.

Throughout the course of the pandemic, one recurrent request expressed by home visiting staff has been the need for additional supports for staff well-being, self-care and reflective practice. In particular, in Virginia, the need for support for supervisors has been critically lacking for some time. Virginia training and supports for home visitors is quite robust, but professional support for supervisors has yet to be fully developed or implemented. As we know, a supervisor’s ability to effectively support staff during the COVID-19 pandemic has been the greatest predictor of staff satisfaction, effectiveness and retention. As the linchpin for staff retention and effective service delivery, it is imperative that supervisor well-being is prioritized, supported and nurtured.

Early Impact Virginia will use ARP funding to fully implement reflective supervision training and support for all supervisors. First, EIV will develop an introduction to Reflective Supervision Learning Lab training to support new supervisors to develop their understanding of reflective supervision and practice. Building upon the Reflective Supervision three part e-learning series, EIV will develop

a complimentary synchronous training to support newly hired supervisors prior to enrollment in the more intensive Learning Community. (RS 1.0)

EIV will simultaneously implement an eighteen month Reflective Supervision Training and Learning Community. All supervisors will be encouraged to participate in this intensive, highly supportive learning community. The EIV Learning Community approach is a 'closed community' and incorporates the expertise of both seasoned mental health trainers and peers to lead training and coaching activities. This approach is designed to not only support participating supervisors, but to also build the long-term capacity for support across organizational teams to ensure full integration of reflective practice. Participating supervisors will meet (in-person as appropriate) for a full day of reflective supervision training and coaching once each quarter. In the intervening months, each supervisor will participate in facilitated two-hour, small group training and coaching sessions. The Learning Community will be launched with a Reflective Practice training session for participating supervisors, their home visiting staff and other program administrators. This full-day event is essential for framing expectations and creating an environment of shared support and success from the outset. (RS 2.0)

Additionally, for those supervisors who are experienced reflective supervisors, EIV will develop and implement regular Mindfulness Training and Support Sessions for Home Visiting Supervisors. In true parallel process, a trained mental health clinician and trained home visiting peer professional will co-facilitate monthly virtual sessions and quarterly in-person sessions to provide on-going support for RS 2.0 graduates. These small group sessions will be open to all supervisors and administrators who have completed the Reflective Supervision Learning Community. EIV will work with LIA supervisors to identify specific needs (mental health consultation, training, self-care activities, peer sharing, and so forth) to ensure personalized/relevant approaches are implemented. (RS 3.0)

This comprehensive plan to support all supervisors, regardless of experience, model or location, will be implemented as a top training priority to support home visiting staff as they continue to navigate rapidly changing professional expectations and family (client) needs.

Continuous Quality Improvement

Virginia's home visiting system has a long history of using data to drive improvement. Local programs have embraced a culture of quality and EIV is leading statewide quality improvement efforts. Working together with state program model TA/QA staff, EIV implemented a *Family Engagement* Learning Community over the last year. This Learning Community is specifically designed to support the 21 MIECHV funded programs. To guide and support local efforts, EIV led thirteen (13) webinars including a two part *CQI 101 Introductory and Refresher Course* for newly funded programs, new staff and those staff members who wanted to brush up skills. Additionally, EIV provides one-on-one coaching with each local program on at least a quarterly basis.

Local programs continue to readily participate in CQI activities despite facing tremendous challenges over the last year due to staff turnover and burnout. Collectively seventy-two percent (72%) of participating local programs made significant progress by reaching their defined goals.

The remaining sites were unable to consistently implement CQI practices and strategies due to staff turnover and therefore did not meet their goals.

Successful strategies tested by local programs during the past CQI cycle include:

- Improved data quality by addressing root causes of data entry and collection errors, such as home visitors misunderstanding a data element
- Developed meaningful relationships with referral partners, thereby increasing referrals into program, by testing variations in presentations to and materials shared with different partners
- Improved child health screen rates by testing a new process for collaboration and scheduling with home visitors and nurses
- Improved father engagement with child by implementing a process of supporting fathers to enroll in a fatherhood peer group within the agency

Correspondingly, a number of local programs have integrated improved practice into policy and procedures leading to improved quality of services. Additionally, the Virginia MIECHV team and the staff team from one local program participated in a 2021 CQI Practicum leading to significant increases in understanding and confidence with CQI strategies including the use of run charts, fishbone diagrams, and the PDSA worksheet.

Over the next year, EIV will continue working together with state model experts to support local programs in developing and refining tests of change. Given that local programs choose changes based on identified needs and resources, programs rarely test the same changes. Examples of current tests of change adopted by local programs include:

- Creating and delivering revised presentations about their program to referral partners (school nurses, hospital staff, etc.), and following up to increase referrals into the program
- Conducting depression screening during initial assessment for families referred in the third trimester to improve screening rates
- Using PICCOLO Parent-Child Interaction results to support families in goal setting
- Engaging positive male role models from the community to participate in a playgroup with families who don't have a positive male role model

What's Next?

The upcoming year promises to be just as busy as the last as EIV continues to work in partnership to fulfill its mission and support sustainable growth to reach more Virginia families. While much of the foundation is in place, it will be particularly important for Virginia leaders to think and act strategically to build systemic approaches that support effective growth. Aligning new funding opportunities with existing structures will be critical for ensuring the most efficient and sustainable growth for local programs.

For more information, please contact:

Laurel Aparicio

Director | Early Impact Virginia

Business: 804-359-6166, ext. 201

laparicio@earlyimpactva.org