

# EXPAND HOME VISITING PROGRAMS



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Home visiting services support family resiliency and improve child and family outcomes.

## ***Support Funding to Expand Home Visiting Programs***

***First 5 urges State Leaders to increase funding for home visiting programs, including supporting \$50 million in ongoing General Fund proposed in the Governor's January budget for the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) California Home Visiting Program (CHVP) and the Black Infant Health (BIH) program.***

## **What is Home Visiting?**

Home visiting links expectant mothers and new parents with trained professionals including nurses, social workers, and community health workers who seek to understand the early needs of a family and baby. Home visits are voluntary, scheduled at a time and place that is convenient for families and offer essential guidance, coaching and connections for families and caregivers, including prenatal care and other health and human services during this critical development period in a child's life. Family-resiliency services, like home visiting, improve birth outcomes, reduce parental stress, teach positive parenting techniques, and nurture stable, healthy, loving attachments for infants and their caregivers

## **Why is Home Visiting Important for Children 0-5?**

For decades, home visiting has been found to be among the most effective services in improving child and family outcomes. Because of its robust evidence base, the California Surgeon General has identified home visiting as a key strategy to prevent and mitigate Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress. The benefits of home visiting include:

- » Decreased incidence and intergenerational transmission of ACEs, including the prevention of child abuse—particularly when programs enroll mothers at or before gestational age of 24 weeks.
  - » Among caregivers, enhanced mental health, reduced stress, improved social support, and increased parenting readiness. The multi-generational approach embedded in home visiting has been shown to strengthen parent-child bonding and attachment, which is crucial for children's optimal development.
  - » Among children, improved cognition and development, reduced externalizing and internalizing behaviors, decreased rates of low birth weights, increased immunization rates, and reduced illnesses, injuries, and feeding challenges.
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## RESILIENCY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The pandemic brought concerns regarding family stress, isolation, and mental health challenges to the forefront for families with young children and highlighted the need for family resiliency services. The pandemic forced home visiting services to shift their delivery model to virtual services. Home visitors and home visiting programs moved quickly to serve families in new ways, demonstrating the resilience and dedication of the home visiting workforce.



### California Can Do Better

The unmet need for home visiting programs in California vastly exceeds current services and funding provided. One of the major sources of funding for home visiting in California is the [California Home Visiting Program \(CHVP\)](#). CVHP operates in 34 of 58 counties, and is funded by the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program as well as state general funds. The proposed increased funding for CHVP would strengthen the system of home visiting services and ensure more families receive services.

The Governor's Budget proposal would continue services for 3,700 currently served by CHVP and 1,650 served by the Black Infant Health Program, and allow for expansion to approximately 6,000 additional families over five years. In addition, the Governor's budget proposes greater flexibility for current home visiting models to meet the diverse needs of families across the state, expand home visiting services to additional counties, and ensure the services are accessible to families with the highest needs.

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The First 5 Association of California supports the 58 First 5 county commissions in building the early childhood systems and supports needed to ensure California's young children are safe, healthy, and ready to succeed in school and life. The First 5 vision is that, one day, California's success will be measured by the well-being of its youngest children.

**#HomeVisiting #CABlueprint**