



2023 Maine Home Visiting Summary Report

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Ensuring a Strong Start for Infants and Toddlers in Maine

Twenty-four years ago, Maine was one of the first states in the nation to invest in the health and well-being of its youngest citizens by establishing a statewide home visiting program for new parents.

The *Maine Families Home Visiting Program* remains one of the state's most critical cost-saving investments to improve childhood health and learning outcomes, prevent child abuse and neglect, enhance future productivity, and reduce future demand on tax supported services.

Maine Families Home Visiting is a **voluntary** program available for pregnant people, expectant couples, and parents or primary caregivers of children from birth to age three. It is offered in every county of the state, through a well-established and rigorously accountable system of performance-based contracts with **local agencies**. In 2023, *Maine Families Home Visiting* Programs expanded eligibility as a component of Maine's Family First Prevention Services Plan (FFPS) with funding from Maine's Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS). Through this expansion, eligible children referred by the OCFS can enroll via FFPS and receive support from *Maine Families Home Visiting* until the child turns five years of age.

Services are delivered by **highly trained specialists** to ensure safe home environments, promote healthy growth and development for babies and toddlers, and provide key connections to needed services. Family visitors use a non-judgmental and compassionate approach that empowers parents with skills, tools, and confidence to nurture the healthy growth of their child.

The intensity and length of service is matched to each family's needs in response to an individualized needs assessment. This allows for **careful optimization of resources**, in which highest-need families receive more frequent visits over a longer period of time. Priority is given to adolescent parents, families living in poverty, and families struggling with substance use, mental health or family violence issues. As a result of the **high quality, accountability, and demonstrated results** of the *Maine Families Home Visiting* Program, Maine receives continued funding from the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grant. This federal grant, together with critical funding from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, allows *Maine Families Home Visiting* to continue strengthening the wellbeing of families across Maine.

With a baseline budget of about \$10.4 million for direct service, the statewide network of 11 local *Maine Families Home Visiting* contracted agencies employed over 110 extensively trained and certified professionals **servicing nearly 1,900 caregivers of young children annually**. The program's performance-based contracting structure, together with its commitment to evaluation and quality assurance, demonstrates an exceptionally high level of accountability, as well as consistently **positive outcomes** for participating children and their families.



In 2022, all eleven Maine Families Home Visiting Programs underwent a year-long rigorous self-study and review process with the Parents as Teachers (PAT) National Center to demonstrate fidelity to the PAT model. As a result of this review, every Maine Families Program earned a prestigious endorsement from PAT as "Blue-Ribbon Affiliates" and continues to maintain this status in the 2023 performance year. This quality endorsement is an exclusive recognition offered only to top-performing home-visiting affiliates within PAT's international network.



2023 Quick Facts



Ensuring a Strong Start for Infants and Toddlers in Maine

All *Maine Families Home Visiting* contracted agencies share a single web-based Electronic Records and Information Network that allows for statewide evaluation and continuous quality improvement. All available data points listed were generated by this system for the reporting period October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023, unless noted otherwise. Comparative data indicated by * is from the *Kids Count Data Center* and *National Child Health Survey 2022*.

SERVICE DELIVERY

- 1,602 families with 1,696 children were served
- 398 caregivers were pregnant
- 1,887 total caregivers participated
- 18,098 home visits were conducted
- 21.7 months was the average length of participation per family

ADULT PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Age, Marital Status, and Language

- 11% of caregivers were 21 or younger
- 32 caregivers were 17 or younger
- 48% of caregivers were married
- 12% of families primarily spoke a language other than English; over 19 different languages were represented

Education level

- 11% of primary caregivers had not completed high school (24% without a diploma continued their education while participating)
- 42% of primary caregivers had not completed any education or training beyond high school

Household income

- 40% of families had an annual income of less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Level
- 63% of families had an annual income of less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Protecting Children from Violence, Abuse, and Neglect

In FY2023, Maine Families continued to serve many families involved with Child Protective Services (CPS). Of the 113 families involved with CPS at enrollment, 102 had no further reports for child abuse or neglect during their participation with Maine Families per parent report. Family visitors prevent child abuse and neglect by helping families to build skills and confidence for managing the stresses of parenting. Family visitors provide tools to help understand child behavior and address behavior challenges.

Postpartum Care

- 87% of mothers received a postpartum care visit with a health care provider within eight weeks of birth, increasing the opportunity to take measures to plan their next pregnancy
- 97% of participating primary caregivers had health insurance

Caregiver Screening

- 89% were screened for depression
- 75% participated in a parent-child interaction assessment
- 95% whose intimate partner violence screening indicated the presence of violence in the relationship accepted a resources referral

Child Health

- 87% of children 19-35 months had up to date immunizations (*72% 24-35 months statewide)
- 95% of children had an identified Primary Care Provider (*59% statewide)
- 99% of children had health insurance (*96% statewide)
- 61% of children were covered by MaineCare (*50% statewide)
- 76% of children were up to date with the most recent well-child check-up
- 68% of mothers who enrolled prenatally continued breastfeeding for at least three months

Secondhand Smoke

Family visitors provide ongoing support for tobacco cessation and eliminating child exposure to second-hand smoke. In FY2023, 80% of participating children were not exposed to secondhand smoke. 91% of parents that smoke received a referral for smoking cessation.

Developmental Support, Screening, and Intervention

Families complete developmental screenings with trained visitors, and 86% of children had timely developmental screenings. As a result of screenings, 182 children were identified with possible developmental delays and 95% of those were provided supports to help address those delays early—before more costly remediation is needed in school. Maine Families encourages early literacy activities, and 99% of participants reported reading, singing, or telling stories with their child daily.

Home Safety

Family visitors help families to prevent child injuries and trips to the emergency department by providing regular home safety education/assessments and assisting with safety improvements.

- 3% of enrolled children had injury-related visits to the ER
- 82% of families reported they always placed their babies on their backs, without bed-sharing or soft bedding

Increasing Family Self-Sufficiency

- 1,344 families were linked to at least one community resource