

The University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX) Family Living Program has been active in the development of home visitation programs in Wisconsin for over 10 years. Currently, UWEX holds two training and technical assistance contracts with the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS).

Family Foundations:

The 1997 Wisconsin Act 293 authorized DHFS to establish FAMILY FOUNDATIONS/POCAN home visitation programs. Nine counties and one tribe received grants. The intended outcomes targeted first time Medicaid-eligible mothers and included the reduction of child maltreatment and out-of home placements. Additional outcomes include improved child health, parenting, and family functioning.

A Family Foundations supervisor said, "Our program would not be what it is today without the training offered to our staff by UWEX. Our home visitors have exhibited new skills and mastered skills in so many areas!"

Wisconsin Act 293 also authorized \$160,000 for training and technical assistance for the ten programs. The current source of these funds is the Department of Health and Family Services. UW-Extension (UWEX) Family Living Programs has held the training and technical assistance contract since Family Foundations services began in 1999. These programs were originally called Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect or POCAN.

Milwaukee County: Prior to EFOM, the Milwaukee Family Project (1997-2004)

In 2005, the Department of Health and Family Services authorized \$180,000 (Medicaid, tobacco and TANF funds) to UW-Extension to provide training to home visiting programs in Milwaukee County through 2010. In addition, the funding supports training and technical assistance to Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM) programs.

EFM is a comprehensive, community-based Home Visitation program operated by the City of Milwaukee Health Department. Built on the same essential best practices as Family Foundations, the program targets six Milwaukee zip codes that have a high occurrence of teenage pregnancy, infant mortality, low birth weight infants and low prenatal care. The goal is to serve approximately 700 families before the end of the grant period.

What UWEX brings to Training and Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current research on best practice from the field of home visitation in the development of curriculum and workshops• Structured skill-building for program leadership based on best practice• Structured skill-building for home visitors so that they can work effectively with the diverse families they serve
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<p>Family Living Program Expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ann Keim, PhD, Assistant to the Vice Chancellor • Kimberly Porter, Professional Development Coordinator • Lakeisha Knighten, Milwaukee Prenatal Care Coordinator • Pence Revington, MEd, Home Visitation Specialist • Bonnie Geyer, Senior Outreach Specialist
<p>Essential Activities Accomplished</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 222 training events with 5,332 participant contacts • Conducted annual introductory workshops on home visiting skills, parent-child interaction and developmental screening • Provided professional development and training for program supervisors • Held advanced training for working with families affected by substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence • Managed: communication with presenters, brochure creation, registration, contracting with training facilities, facilitation of workshops, handouts and resources, and evaluations • Provided quarterly and annual reports and evaluations of training and technical assistance to DHFS
<p>Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveyed home visitors and supervisors on their training needs • Used the results of the Family Foundations/EFM evaluations to inform training decisions • Cooperated with the DHFS grant administrator and DHFS consultants to determine content of workshops • Used UW-Madison, UWEX faculty and other experts as presenters in areas such as child development, nutrition, parenting, and poverty • Infused training with motivational interviewing skills to support families as they contemplate change • Used web casts, teleconferencing and on-line learning to reduce training costs for participants and extending training to a state-wide audience • Managed all aspects of event administrations such as; communication with presenters, brochure development, registration, contracting with training facilities, on site facilitation of workshops, providing handouts and resources, and conducting evaluations. • Built the Home Visitation web site: www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/homevisit • Served as observers for comprehensive program review

<p>Strategies, ctd</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed programs of state resources such as the Children’s Trust Fund Core Competency portfolio • Participated in the state collaborative The Early Years Home Visitation Outcomes Project of WI
<p>Results of Training and Technical Assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors report improved skill and confidence in staff when supporting families facing critical issues such as substance abuse and domestic violence • More families are screened for depression • More families are observed to be using alternative parenting strategies based on increased knowledge of child development • Workshop evaluations indicate an average rating of 4.4 (where a score of 5 is the highest) <p>For Families:</p> <p>The 2003 evaluation of the Family Foundations program, conducted by the Division of Health, found 4% substantiated child abuse/neglect reports among program families. In a similar population, it would be expected that 16% of families would experience substantiated reports.</p> <p>The 2006 report on Empowering Families of Milwaukee indicated increases in breastfeeding, and smoking cessation attempts. No fetal deaths were reported. The “no show” rate for the first quarter of 2008 was only 5.5%, surprisingly low for families struggling with critical issues.</p>

In summary, as training and technical assistance contractor for the **Family Foundations** and **Empowering Families of Milwaukee** home visiting programs, University of Wisconsin-Extension has reached both direct and indirect audiences. Improvements in data collection help us to tell an increasingly powerful story about the benefits to families and possibilities for program quality improvement. This group of programs serves as a model for Wisconsin’s growing home visitation sites.