

HOME VISITING SYSTEMS COORDINATION PROJECT

Navigating Services & Supports in the Siskiyou California Region:
Early Childhood Home-Based Services Family Voice Journey Maps

FIRST
Siskiyou 5

 **Portland State**
UNIVERSITY

 **THE Ford Family**
FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

The Home Visiting Systems Coordination (HVSC) project creates coordinated home visiting systems that strengthen and benefit all home visiting models as part of regional birth-to-5 early childhood systems in southern Oregon and northern California.

The Ford Family Foundation has made HVSC project investments in three regions: counties served by First 5 Siskiyou, California; the South Central Early Learning Hub in Douglas, Klamath and Lake Counties in Oregon; and the South Coast Regional Early Learning Hub in Coos, Curry and coastal Douglas Counties in Oregon.

The project's long-term goal is to improve outcomes for families and expand each region's capacity to serve more families through home-based early childhood supports.

As part of the project evaluation, members of the Portland State University (PSU) evaluation team at the Center for Improvement of Child & Family Services (CCF) collaborate with coordinators in each of the HVSC regions.

One of the HVSC project's main goals is to coordinate intake and referral of families to connect



them with desired services, including home-based early childhood supports.

In the Siskiyou County region of northern California, referrals among early childhood programs involves many community partners. First 5 Siskiyou serves as a convening and coordinating organization for many community partners, with the goal to “promote the health and well-being of young children during their

most critical years of development, from the prenatal stage through age 5.”

PARTICIPANTS

In order to understand strengths and opportunities for improvement in the region's system of early childhood supports, the CCF evaluation team worked with the HVSC project coordinator to connect with parents/caregivers who had used early childhood home-based programs in



the prior year. In Spring 2021, the evaluation team spoke with five participants who had been contacted by direct service providers to ask if they were interested in participating, agreed to be contacted by the CCF evaluation team, and completed an interview.

All participants were moms living in Siskiyou County. The CCF evaluation team did not ask for additional demographic information. Three interviews were conducted in English, one in a mix of English and Spanish, and one in Spanish. Interviews took place over the phone or via Zoom and typically ranged from 10 to 45 minutes. Questions focused on experiences connecting with early childhood services, the context of this connection, experiences connecting with other community resources, and what difference it made for them and their family.

MAPPING PARTICIPANTS' JOURNEYS

Journey maps are often applied for marketing or other customer service purposes to inform improvements in a product, process or outcome. They usually center on a person's experience, thoughts and feelings, but they can also reflect a composite set of experiences or multiple people.

For the purposes of the HVSC project, and understanding the process of accessing early childhood home-based services and other resources, the CCF evaluation team created two composite journey maps that draw from the experience of multiple participants to illustrate steps a family might take to seek different types of resources.

UNDERSTANDING FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

Building from the insights that five participants shared through interviews, the CCF evaluation

team identified two scenarios that reflected participant experiences and the primary reasons they sought out early childhood services. These scenarios are organized around participants seeking 1) supports for their child's development, and 2) assistance with child care.

Each of these journey maps reflects a composite set of experiences that participants shared, including both unique and common challenges and strengths. Quotes from the interviews illustrate participants' experiences at different stages of the referral process. These experiences are reflected at an emotional level (what they were feeling at different stages of the referral process); at a lived experience level (what was going on for them at different stages); and at a resources level (who and what else was involved in their support at different stages).

These maps illustrate the needs, resources and concerns that families may have when they access early childhood services in Siskiyou County. They also highlight system strengths and opportunities for improvement relating to meeting these families' needs.

For more information about First 5 Siskiyou and the Home Visiting Systems Coordination Project in Siskiyou County, contact Michelle Harris at mharris@first5siskiyou.org.

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SCENARIO: SEEKING PERINATAL & CHILD CARE RESOURCES

Composite case study context: I'm a recently separated single parent whose primary language is Spanish. I have a young child and a newborn.

What motivates me: Having sufficient resources and access to services to be able to provide for my child. Securing the means to better provide for ourselves and to be more self-sufficient.



EMOTIONS

CONNECTING WITH HOME VISITING



- Very **STRESSED**.
- **UNSURE** about how I was going to be able to provide for my children.

I filled out an application. Then, the person in charge came and introduced me to my worker. They supported me during my pregnancy. They also offered vehicles to take me to my doctor's appointments, to my ultrasounds.

- Recently single.
- I have some family in the area but was initially unsure about how to secure resources and supplies for my children.

WORKING WITH HOME VISITING



- **UNEASY** about what to expect.
- **NERVOUS** at first, but **HAPPY** I might be able to get support.
- **COMFORTABLE** with friendly staff once I had a chance to meet and get to know them.

When I was pregnant, the doctors did not speak Spanish. It was always through a computer translator. They don't really convey what you mean. I also feel that translators' assistance is very much needed here.

- In the pandemic, some resources felt less beneficial because they were virtual.
- My worker has been invaluable in connecting me to food and other supplies.

GETTING REFERRALS



- **HOPEFUL** about having the means to better support my children.
- Feeling **CAPABLE** of being intentional about how to make use of these resources.

We stretch every penny, and we try to save and to take advantage of the WIC benefits as much as possible. I prefer to give my baby fresh fruit. Instead of getting canned food or baby food, I prefer to prepare it for him. We are doing well, all things considered. We are healthy, we have a house, and we have food to eat.

- I was able to access Head Start, the food pantry and clothing drives.
- It's not easy to find someone who speaks Spanish, but I'm fortunate that my children are seen by the same pediatrician who speaks our language.

ACCESSING SUPPORTS



- **HAPPY** to have some support.
- Aware of how these resources are **LIMITED** for Spanish speaking folks, which became more pronounced during the pandemic.

We need someone to speak up for us. Our wages are stagnant. We want to have a decent life; we want to give our children decent food. I think that is becoming more and more impossible every day.

- Child care has been almost impossible to find during the pandemic, limiting my ability to work and ultimately provide for my family.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT FOR ME NOW



- **I'VE LEARNED A LOT** about how to interact with my children and teach them.
- I'm **HOPEFUL** things will start opening soon so I can start earning an income again.

- The pandemic has been difficult. I had to leave work to take care of my child and have been mostly relying on WIC and TANF and the food pantry to get by. The pandemic really brought to light how limited quality child care, particularly for Spanish-speaking parents, really is in this community.



MY LIVED EXPERIENCE

- I came to this area to be nearer to family.
- One of my family members was already receiving services through Family Resource Center and recommended I look into it for my child.

- I was connected to WIC, TANF, SNAP* and home visits.
- First 5 connected me to child care, but a lot of providers stopped serving families during the pandemic.

**WIC (Women, Infants & Children) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) are food security and nutrition programs. TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) is a financial assistance self-sufficiency program.*

- I have access to help with my electric bill, lots of diapers, and prenatal classes, and someone who calls to check how we're doing.

- WIC, TANF and SNAP have helped address some of my needs, but they aren't a substitute for earning a regular income, which I can't do at the moment because I need to stay with my child.
- The food pantry has been incredibly important.



PEOPLE & RESOURCES



SCENARIO: SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Composite case study context: My family has recently relocated to the Siskiyou area, and I am seeking services for my children to improve their social development and get them ready to start school.

What motivates me: Setting my child up for success.



EMOTIONS



MY LIVED EXPERIENCE



PEOPLE & RESOURCES

CONNECTING WITH HOME VISITING



- I'm **ANXIOUS** about moving to a new area where I know very few people.

I was very, very nervous. I remember I was thinking, "I hope she calls and cancels, because I don't want to do it." But after the first two or three visits I got more comfortable with her.

- I'm a new parent, and I noticed some developmental needs for my child. I want to learn more and get them support.

WORKING WITH HOME VISITING



- I was a little **OVERWHELMED** at first, reaching out to the program and filling out the paperwork.
- I was **NERVOUS** about how my child would do.

The teacher was so sweet and nice, and she was great with my daughter. She was immediately comfortable with her.

- COVID-19 meant I had to cancel some services, and my child had to attend Early Head Start at home.

GETTING REFERRALS



- I was **EXCITED** to get my child some help because I had noticed some delays in her developmental milestones

Staff helped with lots of activities for my kids. That was very helpful during COVID with all my kids home, since they weren't able to go to the center.

- One of my children failed a hearing test, and we were referred to an audiologist. Now they are doing much better.

ACCESSING SUPPORTS



- I'm **FRUSTRATED** by the lack of transportation in our area.

- Even with some services not being in person yet, I have much more support and am getting more of what I need.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT FOR ME NOW



- I am **CONFIDENT** and have **MORE KNOWLEDGE** to support my children.
- I have **MORE STABLE RESOURCES** to help them learn and provide for them.

I believe EHS helped my kids to learn at an earlier age. My youngest daughter is 2; she's already potty-trained and is starting to count. And she sings songs, and I'm like, "Where did you learn that?"

- The teachers at Early Head Start are like family, always checking in.
- I also was able to meet other parents dealing with similar things.

- I was referred to Early Head Start by WIC,* but my sister-in-law has her kids enrolled there too.

*WIC (Women, Infants & Children) is a food security and nutrition program.

- I was connected with speech development supports, but that had to stop due to COVID-19.

- I signed up for Imagination Library by Early Head Start.
- I got food from the farmers market, and clothing and toy drives in the winter.

- I got connected to a good pediatrician and dentist.
- We were also connected to the Family Resource Center where we could get food, clothes, and diapers if we needed.

- I have been able to access referrals to doctors, information about keeping my family healthy, and resources to support their social development.