

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES HAWAII: STATE PROFILE

Infrastructure

As a member of the Strengthening Families™ National Network since 2007, Hawaii continues to promote the Protective Factors in both early childhood and child abuse prevention efforts. Reducing the rate of child abuse and neglect is one of seven priorities of the Maternal and Child Health Services Title V block grant. The Family Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Branch serves as the state lead for primary and secondary Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) prevention. Three federal grants support this initiative: Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS), Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP). Hawaii Children's Trust Fund (HCTF) a public-private partnership between the Department of Health (DOH), Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF), public and private organizations and individual community members also funds the use of protective factors to strengthen families.

CBCAP commissioned a study on child indicators that served as a foundation for the development of the current EOEL Action Strategy.

MIECHV developed a Home Visiting Network with a total of nine agencies with 16 programs through an application process and tiered membership system. Program assessment, support and technical assistance are provided through model specific workgroup meetings.

All direct prevention service and public awareness grants funded by HCTF received technical assistance and were required to address the protective factors in delivery of program services and outcome measures.

Deepening Knowledge and Understanding

Within the MIECHV Network, service providers whose work is based on the Healthy Families America model received training on the protective factors. Service providers who use the Parents as Teachers model have integrated the protective factors as a part of their toolkit/curriculum. Other providers follow the Early Head Start and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) model that address similar protective factors.

Strengthening Families

Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

Using the Strengthening Families framework, more than 30 states are shifting policy and practice to help programs working with children and families focus on protective factors. States apply the Strengthening Families approach in early childhood, child welfare, child abuse prevention and other child and family serving systems.

Nationally, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) coordinates Strengthening Families and works with more than a dozen national partner organizations to create a new vision in which communities, families, institutions, service systems and organizations:

- Focus on protective and promotive factors
- Recognize and support parents as decision-makers and leaders
- Value the culture and unique assets of each family
- Are mutually responsible for better outcomes for children, youth and families

For more information, visit
www.strengtheningfamilies.net.

Implementation Checklist

Protective Factors used in Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems or other early childhood systems planning	✓
Protective Factors used in Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention RFP Process	✓
Protective Factors integrated into state Quality Rating and Improvement System	
Child Care Resource & Referral Network in state supporting program implementation	
Strengthening Families included in State Home Visiting Plan	
Strengthening Families is being implemented into child welfare system	

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Shifting Practice, Policies and Systems

The HCTF public awareness campaign, “One Strong Ohana,” designed to promote protective factors, increase awareness that child abuse and neglect is preventable, and that individuals can make a difference continues to expand its reach to the Neighbor Islands. The Neighborhood Place of Puna as part of the East Hawaii Coalition to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) along with public and private providers developed the CAN Prevention Resource Binder to engage local businesses and the faith based community. Training around the differential response, signs of CAN, and how to connect at-risk families with resources in the community were provided to these groups. This resulted in 25 businesses engaged in the community’s efforts to prevent CAN.

On Maui, the Ho’oikaika Partnership, Maui County Domestic Violence Task Forces, and other harm reduction community based coalitions collaborated and produced culturally relevant brochures to support One Strong Ohana for teens and parents on the protective factors, and promoted protective factors through worksite wellness trainings to Rotary Clubs, private businesses, schools and other workplace settings.

The 2012 Legislature created the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) and the Hawaii Early Learning Advisory Board which is advisory to the EOEL. The EOEL developed its Action Strategy Plan to guide its work. One of the outcomes for the goal to ensure that children’s health and development is on track is to provide a continuum of supports for families with young children to prevent child abuse and neglect. A strategy of this goal is to strengthen collaborative planning and design efforts across State departments in order to integrate community-based resources including family support, home visiting, health and mental health, domestic violence intervention and substance abuse treatment. The EOEL is in the process of developing Family Engagement Standards for early childhood programs.

The annual Children and Youth Day at the State Capitol embraced the HCTF campaign theme of One Strong Ohana as a movement to support the strengthening of families for all programs that serve children and families. Held in October 2012, this event drew over 52,000 participants, over 4,300 volunteers, and over 400

vendors/booths. Each booth promoted a protective factor as part of its activity. Posters and banners with the protective factors and tips were displayed throughout the grounds of the Capitol.

Ensuring Accountability

HCTF/CBCAP worked with the University of Hawaii - John A. Burns School of Medicine to develop evaluation tools/methods to measure the outcomes and impact of the HCTF One Strong Ohana campaign. Results from the statewide pre and post telephone survey of adults indicate small but statistically significant changes in awareness of risk and protective factors that contribute to CAN.

MIECHB Home Visiting Network developed a supervisory tool, home visiting rating scale (HOVRS) and a tool kit, which is a compilation of all of the tools and questionnaires home visitors will be using to collect benchmark data.

Evolving Work

The HCTF will engage community partners, stakeholders, service providers, and parents to develop a five-year long-range plan. CBCAP will engage MIECHV and Child Welfare in Strengthening Families initiatives.

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