

Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting

The Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program facilitates collaboration and partnership at the federal, state and community levels to improve health and development outcomes for at-risk children through evidence-based home visiting programs. The State of Oregon's MIECHV team is tasked with both the implementation/expansion of three evidence-based Early Childhood Home Visiting models, and the development of a comprehensive Regional Home Visiting Network. The three models for Jackson County are Early Head Start, Nurse Family Partnerships and Healthy Families.

Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS) and the Southern Oregon Home Visiting Network promotes high quality and evidenced-based home visiting services to all home visiting programs in both Jackson and Josephine Counties not exclusive to the MIECHV models. The Home Visiting Network facilitates activities among its members to promote program collaboration and to raise awareness about home visiting, to expand and sustain home visiting services to provide supplemental home visitor professional development, and to share relevant policy and research information.

The Southern Oregon Home Visiting Network includes representatives from home visiting programs throughout the Jackson and Josephine Counties, some of which, but not all, are funded through the federal (MIECHV) grant. Membership in the network is open to any program representatives offering home visiting services to families from the time a mother is pregnant until children enter kindergarten, or representatives from stakeholder organizations that provide support to home visiting services.

Quality, voluntary home visiting reduces costly problems, including low-weight births; emergency room visiting; and children in the social welfare, mental health and juvenile justice corrections systems, creating considerable cost savings for states. Home visiting yields powerful short and long-term effects for the families who participate.

Less than 40% of preschool children in Jackson and Josephine counties are currently enrolled in early education programs. This alarming statistic is changing, with an exciting statewide program called Preschool Promise which began in September 2016.

In 2015 Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed HB 3380, allocating \$27 million to increase the number of quality preschool programs throughout the state. Southern Oregon Early Learning Services (SOELS) is one of six Early Learning Hubs chosen to receive funds for this exciting project. One hundred and seventy children in Jackson and Josephine counties who are three and four years of age will be offered quality preschool, free of charge. Children selected will be from families whose incomes are below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Those families will be able to choose from an array of preschools in which to enroll their children. Preschool Promise will permit families to choose the type of model they prefer, whether it is in an elementary school, a children's Relief Nursery, family child care home, community preschool or another model. SOELS Preschool Promise programs are planned for communities stretching from Wolf Creek to Phoenix.