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Blending & Braiding to Support Early Childhood Home Visiting in New York

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A "How To" Guide

Prepared by Spark Policy Institute on behalf of the
New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council Finance Work Group

NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council

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INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE

Blending and/or braiding funds can allow early childhood home visiting programs to cover a broader population in need, provide a broader array of needed services, support necessary program infrastructure costs, and sustain home visiting programs if a funding stream they have been dependent on is no longer available or has been reduced.

This guide's purpose is to help home visiting programs:

- Review relevant funding streams to support early childhood home visiting programs,
- Explore the analysis of the funding streams against typical home visiting program activities, and
- Incorporate the analysis of the funding streams into their own braided or blended funding process.

This Blending and Braiding Guide to Support Early Childhood Home Visiting in New York is an accompaniment to the Early Childhood Guide to Blending and Braiding in New York (Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide), which provides a step-by-step planning process for organizations to develop a blended or braided funding model. The focus of this guide is to help home visiting organizations explore financing options that can be part of that blended or braided funding model under Phase Three of the planning process.

This guide is best used to understand:

- Key funding streams that can be braided to support early childhood home visiting programs.
- How to access these key funding streams.
- Appropriate uses and limitations of the funding streams.

This guide is designed for the following audiences:

- Early childhood home visiting managers and administrators, including staff with fiscal expertise.
- State and local government agencies interested in funding early childhood home visiting programs.

This guide is best used by:

- Reading the detailed analysis of the funding streams.
- Incorporating the analysis into Phases Three and Four of the Phase-by-Phase instructions for the planning process articulated in the Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide, including accessing Templates online at http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalguides.htm.

This guide is NOT:

- A guide to planning and engaging partners – to learn more about how to engage families and youth in complex funding issues, please visit the Spark Policy Institute's Family and Youth Involvement Workbook. http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalfam_youth.htm
- A guide to sustainability – to learn more about sustainability, please visit the Finance Project's Sustainability Workbook. http://www.financeproject.org/special/engage/workbook.cfm
- Legal or regulatory advice on funding streams – to learn specifics about funding streams, or other fiscal regulation, please contact your funders.

Request for Feedback: This guide is intended as a practical, hands-on resource for blending and braiding to support early child home visiting programs. As you use the guide, please take a moment to provide feedback,

including requests for additional guidance or information, at http://sparkpolicy.com/contact.htm or ecac@ccf.ny.gov.

INTRODUCTION TO BLENDING AND BRAIDING

The terms blending and braiding are used frequently, often together, and generally with little definition. However, they refer to two very different approaches to fiscal coordination. Definitions of each term are included below. For a more detailed definition, concrete examples, and steps to developing a blended and braided model, please see the Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide at: http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalguides.htm or at http://www.nysecac.org/

DEFINING BLENDING

Blending funding involves co-mingling the funds into one "pot" where case managers can draw down service dollars, personnel expenses can be paid, or other program needs can be met. When funding is blended, it goes into the "pot" and when it is pulled back out to pay for an expense, there is no means for the fiscal manager to report which funding stream paid for exactly which expense.

Blending funding is politically challenging. Some funding streams cannot be blended. Other funding streams will require the funder to allow an exception in how the reporting normally functions. Instead of usual reporting, funders can opt to accept reports on services and outcomes across the population being served, rather than exactly which children and families received services with their dollars. To blend your funding, you will need to work closely with your funders and ensure you can meet their reporting requirements.

Though it is challenging politically, once your funders are on board, blended funding is less challenging to implement than braided funding. There is significantly less workload, as the tracking and accountability happens across all of the funding streams. Rather than reporting to funders on their funding stream alone, reporting is done on how the collective funds are used. Blended funding can allow you to pay for services that may not be allowable with more categorical funding approaches. However, for many funders, the flexibility associated with blending makes it seem too "risky" as it often looks like supplanting,[1] and they end up with less detailed information about how each of their dollars have been spent. For this reason, many funders are only willing to contribute small amounts, if any, to a blended model.

DEFINING BRAIDING

Braided funding involves multiple funding streams utilized to pay for all of the services needed by a given population, with careful accounting of how every dollar from each funding stream is spent.

The term braiding is used because multiple funding streams are initially separate, brought together to pay for more than

[1] Supplanting is defined as reducing the funding used from an existing funding stream and replacing it with a new funding stream. For example, if you have $10,000 in local dollars and you receive $5,000 from the state for the same program, you need to provide $15,000 in services. If you reduced the local funding that otherwise would have been spent on the program to $5,000 and continue to provide $10,000 in services, you will be supplanting local funding with state funding.

any one funding stream can support, and then carefully pulled back apart to report to funders on how the money was spent.

Braided funding is often the only option. Federal funding streams require careful tracking of staff time and expenses, to ensure that a federal funding stream only pays for those things directly associated with the intent of the funding. Consequently, when multiple funding streams are paying for a single program or system, the system will need to be carefully designed to allow for sufficient reporting to ensure each funding stream is only paying for activities eligible under that funding stream.

Braided funding requires significant effort to create the systems for tracking how funding is utilized. The design of a *braided funding system* that can respond to the individualized needs of many types of clients will require staff with the authority to decide which services will be paid for by which funding streams. Ideally, this decision happens after the needs of the individual or family being served is identified, so that the funding does not drive the services being provided. This type of braided model requires a clear understanding of the eligible populations and the eligible services, so that decisions on how to fund the services can be made post-hoc, rather than prior to discussing service needs with the families.

The design of a *blended funding program* is simpler than the design of a braided funding system. Programs typically have clearly defined services that are provided and sometimes have very defined populations who are eligible for services.

HOW TO DEVELOP A BLENDING OR BRAIDING MODEL

Planning for a blended or braided model is not just a fiscal process. Rather, it's a process of identifying what your community or clients need, what your funding can support, and what outcomes you want to achieve. Research on successful funding coordination suggests that you must begin with a clear vision of what you are trying to finance, engage in collaborative planning, understand your resources, create a strategy that maximizes those resources, focus on outcomes, engage families and consumers as leaders, and collect data to provide feedback on the strategies. In order to help you go through these steps, the Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide includes a detailed, step-by-step process for blending and braiding. Accompanying the process are templates that can be accessed online at: http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalguides.htm or at http://www.nysecac.org.

The process includes five phases:

1. Identifying your vision and your partners;
2. Defining your program for fiscal purposes;
3. Exploring your financing options;
4. Developing your coordinated financing plan; and
5. Implementing, tracking and improving.

This guide will assist with Phase Three. The sections to follow include detailed information about specific funding streams, all of which were identified by leaders in New York as critical for home visitation. For more information about the other phases please see New York's Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide.

COLLABORATING WITH YOUR FUNDERS

Before beginning the exploration of specific funding streams, it is important to take a minute to talk about who needs to be part of your process for developing a braided or blended approach. In addition to the stakeholders

often identified (staff, executive leadership, board members, partner organizations, families, etc.), you can also partner directly with your funders, including their programmatic and fiscal staff, and auditors. To implement a successful blended or braided funding model, working closely with your funder is critical for three reasons:

- *Avoid Pitfalls:* The last thing you want to do is design an amazing program utilizing multiple funding streams and meeting important community needs… and then have one of your funders tell you that you broke some requirement they have for accountability or expending their funds.
- *Build Commitment:* Working closely with a funder also increases their investment in your program and builds their understanding of what your program needs to be successful. If you are transparent with your funder about the design of your program, you may be surprised at how transparent and flexible they will be to make sure their policies don't unnecessarily prevent your program from being a success.
- *Preempt their "Supplanting" Fears:* Most public funding streams require that the funds are not used to supplant another funding source. Many funders look at blended and braided models and instead of seeing how you are leveraging funds, they will see a risk that you are replacing other funds with their funding. Bringing your funder into the conversation early is an important part of changing that perception. If the funder understands the scope of what you can accomplish utilizing multiple funding streams, and how that differs from what you can accomplish using their funding stream alone, some of the fears about supplanting can be diminished. However, you will also need to employ strategies like defining a case rate, keeping careful tracking of eligibility, and ensuring that accounting and budgeting are aligned, to alleviate your funders' fears of supplanting. By working with your funder early on, you will know what they need to feel confident in your model.

Working closely with your funder throughout your planning process not only ensures you won't accidently plan something that is not appropriate, but also increases the likelihood the funder will want to work with you to ensure your program is a success.

For more information about how to engage new community level funders, see the Partnering with Your Funder's Guide, available at: http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalguides.htm.

BLENDING & BRAIDING IN NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION TO PHASE THREE OF BLENDING AND BRAIDING

Phase Three in developing a blended or braided model involves identifying the funding streams that you believe might help support your home visiting program. Once identified, you analyze these funding streams against typical home visiting activities and costs to determine their applicability and then you look across your funding streams to determine the gaps in covered services and activities. This sets you up for success in developing a comprehensive fiscal coordination plan. This guide is designed to make Phase Three easier by providing a full analysis of key funding streams often used by home visiting programs in New York State.

THE FUNDING STREAMS

Working with a core team of New York State early childhood leaders, a set of funding streams were identified for exploration to support home visiting services: Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP), or Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Foundation Funds, State General Funds (example Healthy Families New York (HFNY)), Maternal Child Health Block Grant, Medicaid Managed Care and Targeted Case Management (TCM), Article 6 General Public Health Work Program, and Social Services Block Grant (SSBG).

These funding streams were then analyzed against typical home visiting program activities and costs to arrive at a priority list of funding streams. These funding streams were selected based on a set of criteria including ease of access, ability to support a broad array of home visiting activities, and geographic availability. They are: CBCAP, General Funds (example HFNY), Medicaid (Medicaid Managed Care and TCM), Public Health Law Article 6, and SSBG. Some of these may be used by your organization already, while others will be external funding streams that organizations in your community or at the state level already access and that might be willing to contribute to your early childhood home visiting program.

Table 1. Funding streams critical for home visitation

Name	Intent of the Funding Stream
Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) Program	Prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect. Evidence based programs are strongly encouraged.
General Fund	Healthy Families New York supports "credentialed or affiliated" programs to provide a wide range of wrap around services to better equip new parent with the resources needed to ensure their child thrives. HFNY is an evidence based program.
Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Title XX	Strengthen families so that they can live together in stable living arrangements and provide specialized care in residential settings when necessary and appropriate.

Article 6 General Public Health Work Program	Support the state's 58 local health departments to provide core public health services in their communities. Use of evidenced based practices is strongly encouraged.
Medicaid Managed Care	Make covered health and medical services available to eligible individuals. An important Medicaid service is Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) which provides a comprehensive array of preventive health and treatment for Medicaid recipients from birth until 21 years of age.
Medicaid Targeted Case Management (TCM)	Provide case management services to help first time mothers and their newborns access needed medical, social, psycho-social, educational, financial and other services. Certification by a nationally recognized organization with an evidence-based program is preferred.

THE FUNDING STREAM ANALYSES

When conducting a funding stream analysis on your own, you'll start by filling in ***Template A: Analyzing Your Funding Streams***, which requires reviewing fiscal guidance from the funders. For the funding streams included in this guide, the analysis is completed (up to date as of October 2013) and documented below in charts that match Template A.

Funding Stream 1: Community Based Child Abuse Prevention

Under Title II of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program (CBCAP) is a federal funding stream administered by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS). Its purpose is to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect. CBCAP can fund a broad range of services that early childhood home visiting programs provide. Approximately every four years OCFS releases a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) through its Children and Family Trust Fund, which is supported by both state general funds and federal CBCAP funds. Evidence based programs are strongly encouraged and applicants to the RFP process must talk about their capacity to implement them.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)	
Funding Stream Overview	
Entity Overseeing Funds	New York State Office of Children and Family Services' (OCFS) Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS)
Intent of Funding Stream	Prevention of and response to child abuse and neglect.
Fiscal Year	On the federal fiscal year (October 1st to September 30th). CBCAP is administered through New York State OCFS's Children and Family Trust Fund and grantee funding periods are contingent upon the release of request for proposals (RFP) and federal spending deadlines.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)	
Eligible Entities	Local government and non-profit providers. Public and private partnerships are encouraged.
Process to Access Funding	Approximately every four years OCFS releases a competitive RFP through its New York State Children and Family Trust Fund, which is supported by both state general funds and federal CBCAP funds. Projects that are funded receive four years of funding. If New York receives an increase in federal CBCAP funding or state general funds they will release a competitive RFP at that time and expand the number of projects they support.
Funding Source	Federal funding stream under Public Law 108-36, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act managed by New York State.
Reimbursement Type	Funded projects generally receive four years of funding. Grantees submit a budget prior to receiving funding for their expected costs that year with a breakout of budget line items. Unless the funded project has completed its' 4th year of funding, the grantee's 4th quarter report serves to generate the annual renewal of funding and is accompanied by a budget that details the next year's expected programmatic expenses.
Timeline of Reporting	Grantees have to submit four quarterly reports to OCFS. The 4th quarter report serves as the final report and includes a fiscal summary. Each quarter, grantees are asked to review their expenditures, to date, and assess the need for budget adjustments.
Reporting Requirements	Grantees' quarterly reports generate the demographic service data that assists the state with its federal CBCAP reporting requirements. Grantees are also asked to report on their work as it aligns with local departments of social services priorities, including coordinating services and accepting referrals, etc.[1] In addition, grantees report on improvements in family protective factors linked to risk for abuse. Although some Trust Fund grantees receive CBCAP funding and some grantees receive state general funds, all have to meet the same reporting requirements.
Other Notes	New York State Children and Family Trust Fund grantees are strongly encouraged to blend and braid Trust Fund funding with other funding streams and are asked, in their quarterly reports, to document what other sources of funding they have leveraged to better support their programs.
Eligible Populations	
Required Eligibility	Families at greater risk of child abuse, maltreatment or foster care placement.
Priority Populations	Parents with children 0-5; single/teen parents; parents with substance abuse, mental health or disabilities; non-custodial or incarcerated parents; relatives raising young children; military families; and families with children with disabilities.
Income Status	No income restrictions.
Geographic Location	Statewide

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)	
Staff Qualifications	
Required Staff Qualifications	No required certifications or licensing for staff. OCFS does strongly encourage that program staff receive professional development and relevant training (e.g., family development credential).
Services	
Encouraged Services	Culturally competent and reflective of the special needs of the community served; geographically accessible to population being served; strength-based; aligned with the local social service district child welfare strategies/priorities; focused on improving family protective factors linked to risk of abuse.
Allowable Services	Very broad range of services allowable including such things as screening and assessment, parenting programs, home based services, referral to services, training and education for parents, school readiness, health promotion, mental health, case/care management, transportation reimbursement for families, and supplies for families. Grantees are also required to use the Protective Factor Survey (PFS) - "a pre-post evaluation tool for use with caregivers receiving child maltreatment prevention services that measures protective factors in five areas: family functioning/resiliency, social support, concrete support, nurturing and attachment, and knowledge of parenting/child development. The survey is a validated tool developed by the National Resource Center for Community-based Child Abuse Prevention."[2]
Disallowed Services	Primary healthcare services
Evidence Based Programs	Evidence based programs are strongly encouraged and applicants to the RFP process must talk about their capacity to implement them.
Infrastructure Expenses	
Encouraged Inrastructure	Encouraged to use staff time to more effectively coordinate resources across systems. Required to report on improvements in family protective factors linked to risk for abuse, suggesting a need for some level of quality assurance/evaluation.
Allowable Infrastructure	Very broad range of infrastructure expenses are allowable including staff training and professional development, support staff, data and information systems, quality assurance, food and meals, stipends for families, indirect rate subject to certain requirements, and cell phones for staff. Also allows for public information campaigns if focused on the healthy and positive development of parents and children and the promotion of child abuse and neglect prevention activities. In addition, can be used to support employee staff mileage/travel, licensing, security/safety, insurance, and membership dues.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)	
Disallowed Infrastructure	Lobbying

Tips on How to Use CBCAP: Every four years OFCS issues a competitive RFP. To prepare, early home visiting programs should monitor when the next RFP will be issued and review past RFPs to review the requirements. Being able to demonstrate how early childhood home visiting is an effective strategy to prevent child abuse and neglect will be key.

Funding Stream 2: Healthy Families New York supported by State General Funds

Healthy Families New York (HFNY) is supported by two funding streams – state general funds, which provide the majority of the funding, and a smaller percentage of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Visiting (MIECHV) Program. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services' (OFCFS) Division of Child Welfare and Community Services funds and manages the grantee sites. HFNY's purpose is to serve as a primary prevention program for high need and highly stressed parents by providing a wide range of wrap-around services to better equip new parents with resources to ensure their child thrives.

Healthy Families is an evidenced based program (EBP). Healthy Families contractors use EBPs and applicants to the Request for Proposal (RFP) process discussed below must demonstrate their capacity to implement EBPs.

General Fund	
Funding Stream Overview	
Entity Overseeing Funds	New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)' Division of Child Welfare and Community Services (CWCS) to support Healthy Families New York (HFNY).
Intent of Funding Stream	Supports programs that provide a wide range of wrap around services to better equip new parents - who are isolated, high need and highly stressed with the resources to ensure their child thrives.
Fiscal Year	The funding period is based on when contractors have been awarded HFNY funding from OCFS.
Eligible Entities	Local government and non-profits. Public/private partnerships encouraged.
Process to Access Funding	HFNY funding is allocated to an existing set of grantees and this rarely changes.
Funding Source	State general funds (majority of funding) and federal MIECHV funding.
Reimbursement Type	HFNY contractors receive an annual grant and submit a renewal contract with a new budget and work plan at the end of the contract year to generate another year of funding

General Fund	
Timeline of Reporting	Quarterly submission of a financial, narrative and data report.
Reporting Requirements	Reporting requirements include not only reporting on client demographics, but also documenting programmatic performance outcomes and family outcomes. In addition, HFNY contractors utilize a Management Information System database to gather data. "Each HFNY program manages their own data in computer software designed to help staff plan home visits, manage the quality of data, display data for analysis, monitoring and reporting to funders, credential and agency management."[3] *Please Note*: State general funds and MIECVH are administered by OCFS as two separate contracts. Programs that receive MIECVH have a few additional reporting requirements (e.g., assessments). While the two contracts are administered separately, HFNY looks at the numbers of families served by their programs holistically. HRSA may, however, want to gather data on those families that were specifically served by MIECHV funds.
Other Notes	Braiding with other funding streams strongly encouraged.
Eligible Populations	
Required Eligibility	1) Family needs to be pregnant or have a child three months of age or younger. 2) Each of the families served have to reside in the targeted service area of the HFNY contractor. 3) Families must be administered the Parenting Stress Index and have a specific score on the checklist to be eligible for services.
Priority Populations	Parents (both mothers and fathers) with children 0-5 (to be eligible the parent must be pregnant or have a child under the age of 3 months, but the parent and child can then receive services for up to five years); single/teen parents; parents with behavioral health needs or disabilities; non-custodial or incarcerated parents (who have a permanency goal of return to parent within 6 months plan in place); relatives raising young children; military families; and families with children with disabilities; incarcerated parents; legal guardians of a child.
Income Status	No income restrictions.
Geographic Location	HFNY's 36 funded programs are located throughout New York, but families must reside within the targeted service area of a particular program.
Staff Qualifications	
Required Staff Qualifications	Staff qualification requirements exist at different levels. While frontline staff do not have to be licensed, it is required that they have their high school diploma or GED and personal qualities that assist in developing relationships. Supervisor level staff should have a bachelor's degree and clinical experience. Project managers, at an administrative level, should have a bachelor's degree or higher and management experience.

General Fund	
Services	
Encouraged Services	Culturally competent and reflective of the special needs of the families served; geographically accessible to population being served; and strength-based. HFNY is currently working on aligning programs with the local social service district child welfare strategies/priorities where feasible. The program is focused on improving family protective factors linked to risk of abuse with the goal of promoting a child's optimal health and development.
Allowable Services	Broad range of services allowable including such things as screening and assessment, referral to services (e.g., connecting families to primary health care), care/case management, training and education for parents (with an emphasis on educational attainment of young parents by going back to school), services intended to help families obtain self-sufficiency, school readiness, health promotion, mental health, transportation, reimbursement for families for program activities, emergency supplies for families and incentive gifts for families to engage in the program.
Required screening tools	The Parenting Stress Index must be administered to parents participating in the program.
Evidence Based Programs	Healthy Families received designation as an evidence based program (EBP) from Department of Health and Human Services among others. Healthy Families contractors use EBPs and applicants to the RFP process must demonstrate their capacity to implement EBPs.
Infrastructure Expenses	
Encouraged Infrastructure	Encouraged to use staff time to engage in collaborative efforts and be informed of services and resources offered by other providers. Required to report on improvements in family protective factors linked to risk for abuse.
Allowable Infrastructure	Broad range of infrastructure expenses are allowable including support staff, data and information systems, quality assurance, staff professional development training specific to working with families, transportation and mileage, food, meals, computer equipment and cell phones for staff. Funding can support outreach efforts and materials that promote parents and guardians ability to foster healthy family environments and their child's optimal wellbeing. In addition, funding will support Healthy Families America affiliation fees. HFNY has a professional indirect administrative rate allowed in its' contracts with a cap of 15% for state general fund recipients and a cap of 10% for MIECHV fund recipients.
Disallowed Infrastructure	Licensing for staff

Tips on How to Use HFNY Funds: If your agency is a HFNY grantee and you are exploring other funding streams, braiding with CBCAP and SSBG might be helpful given their similar purposes and populations. Like CBCAP, HFNY programs are strongly encouraged to braid with other funding streams.

Funding Stream 3: Social Services Block Grant

The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) administers the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). Its purpose is to strengthen families so that they can live together in stable living arrangements and provide specialized care in residential settings when necessary and appropriate. These funds are used in conjunction with other funds to support a broad range of services. Information is pending about this funding stream.

Social Services Block Grant (Title XX)	
Funding Stream Overview	
Entity Overseeing Funds	New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)
Intent of Funding Stream	Provide services for families and individuals that strengthen the ability of related persons to live together, encourage stability in living arrangements, and provide for specialized care in residential settings when necessary and appropriate.
Fiscal Year	Federal fiscal year: October 1st to September 30th
Eligible Entities	Local social service departments and, through the department, non-profit, private, or other public agencies.
Process to Access Funding	OCFS allocates Title XX funding directly to local departments of social services. Local departments can choose to contract out services to private and public providers or keep Title XX funded services in house. Each county local department of social services will have a different process for issuing a bid for services and home visitation providers who are interested in securing Title XX funding will have to approach their local department to learn if the department contracts out services to providers and how that bidding process works.
Funding Source	Title XX federal funding
Reimbursement Type	As local departments of social services have monthly reporting requirements using a standard form, it is likely that contracts with local departments to provide home visiting services will require a similar monthly reporting format.
Timeline of Reporting	Local departments of social services have to electronically submit monthly claim reimbursement forms to the state even if there are no expenditures to report. To meet state reporting timelines it should be expected that local departments will set up a schedule for their contracted providers.

Social Services Block Grant (Title XX)	
Reporting Requirements	Local departments of social services have to utilize State Schedule G forms – Title XX Services for Recipients - to submit claims for child preventive and protective services and other Title XX eligible services. Local departments must complete highly specific expenditure reports to claim reimbursements from the state. It is likely that providers who contract with local departments of social services will also have to provide monthly expenditure claims that capture the information needed by the local department for their reimbursement claims to the state. Reporting requirements and timeline of reporting will be spelled out in the provider's contract with the local department.
Other Notes	"Title XX is not a program similar to TANF or the Child Care Development Block Grant where there are goals, dedicated program staff, caseworkers, and clients that all are connected to these specific funding sources. Title XX funding covers activities and services within other programs and is used in conjunction with other funds (matched dollars state and local funds, and other federal funds)."[4]
Eligible Populations	
Required eligibility	Title XX in New York State funds services that fall under 22 general service categories (in addition to any other services the state chooses to fund that meet federal SSBG eligibility standards). Eligibility guidelines for services depend on how a service is categorized (e.g., services mandated without regard to client income, services mandated to all clients whose income falls within state-specified limits, services mandated under certain conditions, or services not mandated). Families served by Flexible Funding for Family Services (FFFS) funds that have been transferred into Title XX must be at or under 200% Federal Poverty Limit. For more detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/reports/FFY%202014%20NYS%20SSBG%20IUR.pdf
Priority Populations	Low income, high need families and individuals, but income does not exclude families from services.
Income Status	No income restrictions for families receiving services funded with federal Title XX funding. However, local departments of social services have the option of allocating FFFS funds to Title XX and may use FFFS funds for Title XX services that are contracted out. Families receiving services funded by FFFS must be at or under 200% of the poverty level.
Geographic location	Each local department of social services has its own program. All local departments of social services in the state have Title XX funding.
Staff Qualifications	
Required Staff Qualifications	There are no required staff qualifications. Title XX pays for specific activities and services, usually offered in conjunction with other programs and thus does not operate with dedicated program staff. Each local department of social services may choose to provide specific services in house or contract out to a public or private provider in the community.

Social Services Block Grant (Title XX)	
Services	
Encouraged Services	The type of services provided either at the local department of social services or through a provider the local department contracts with depends on the department's prioritization of community needs.
Allowable Services	Very broad range of services allowable including: adoption services, adult preventive services, aftercare services, screening and assessment, care/case management, clinical services, day care, day services, emergency cash, emergency goods/ shelter, family planning services, homemaker, home management services, housing improvement services, information and referral services, parent services, parent education, school readiness, post adoption services, preventive services for children and families, protective services for children and adults, services to victims of domestic violence, and transportation services, among others. Eligibility varies for health services. Direct provision of medical services is not eligible for funding. Identification, referral & monitoring follow-up services are eligible. See for more information: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/reports/FFY%202014%20NYS%20SSBG%20IUR.pdf
Non allowable services	Purchase of land, construction, cash payments as a service or for costs of subsistence of room and board; temporary emergency shelter provided as a protective service, or in the case of vouchers for certain families as allowed under welfare reform; educational services generally provided by public schools; child care that does not meet applicable state or local standards; services provided by anyone excluded from participation in Medicare or certain other Social Security Act programs; and items or services related to assisted suicide, among others."[5]
Evidence Based Programs	Evidence based programs are not required.
Infrastructure Expenses	
Allowable Infrastructure	Information pending - Allowable infrastructure includes staff training, support staff, data and Management Information Systems, food/meals, stipends travel reimbursement.
Disallowed Infrastructure	Lobbying

Tips on How to Use SSBG Funds: OFCS allocates Title XX funding directly to local departments of social services who can choose to contract out services to private and public providers. When approaching you're your local department, it is important for home visitation providers to demonstrate how home visiting can strengthen families with young children and prevent child abuse and neglect. For more information about how to engage new community level funders, see the Partnering with Your Funder's Guide, available at: http://sparkpolicy.com/fiscalguides.htm.

Funding Stream 4: Article 6 General Public Health Work Program

The New York State Department of Health oversees and administers the Article 6 General Public Health Work Program. This funding stream is used to support the State's fifty-eight local health departments' core public health services in their communities. Home visiting is a reimbursable service, but it is optional. Local health departments can contract with home visiting programs to provide the service, but the local health department must manage the contract and is ultimately responsible for the subcontractor's performance. Use of evidence based practices is strongly encouraged.

Article 6 General Public Health Work Program[6]	
Funding Stream Overview	
Entity Overseeing Funds	New York State Department of Health (DOH) oversees and administers Article 6 General Public Health Work Program.
Intent of Funding Stream	Support the state's 58 local health departments to provide core public health services in their communities.
Fiscal Year	Annual appropriation (State Fiscal Year is April 1st through March 31st). Local health departments with the exception of New York City receive funding based on a calendar year. New York City receives funding from July 1 through June 30th.
Eligible Entities	Local health departments who can then can choose to subcontract out activities. Local health departments, however, are ultimately responsible for the subcontractor's performance and compliance with Article 6 requirements.
Process to Access Funding	Providers will need to approach their local health department to learn more about the process for accessing funding.
Funding Source	Local Assistance funding allocated to local public health departments.
Reimbursement Type	Cost reimbursement only.
Timeline of Reporting	Local health departments submit quarterly vouchers for reimbursement provide annual information about services delivered and conduct a community health assessment and community health improvement plan every four years.
Reporting Requirements	See above
Other Notes	Effective January 1, 2014 new regulations and guidance on Article 6 will be issued. The new regulations will clearly articulate that home visiting is an allowable optional service.

Article 6 General Public Health Work Program[6]	
Eligible Populations	
Required Eligibility	The state does not specify eligibility requirements.
Priority Populations	Low income and high risk children and families.
Income Status	N/A
Geographic Location	Home visiting is not a required service. Therefore, local health departments have the discretion as to whether to provide home visiting services.
Staff Qualifications	
Required Staff Qualifications	Staff qualifications for some titles used by local health departments (i.e. public health nurse) are in the state sanitary code.
Services	
Encouraged Services	No encouraged services within the context of home visiting.
Allowable Services	Provision of public health home visits associated with services that are eligible as per Article 6 of the Public Health Law. Such visits should assess women's preconception, prenatal, postpartum and inter-conception health and social support needs, assess child and family health and social support needs, provide information to promote positive birth outcomes and child health and refer persons to needed services. Allowable services are: screening and assessment; referral to services; training and education for parents; school readiness services; health promotion services; direct health services; case management (note: often basic case management is provided by the local department of social services); supplies; exit planning; crisis intervention (allowable as long as appropriate referrals are made to the local department of social services which would normally handle crisis intervention.
Disallowed Services	Traditional home care services offered by a Certified Home Health Agency (CCHA). Services that should be provided by the local department of social services such as child protective services. Mental health and counseling.
Evidence Based Programs	Local health departments are encouraged to use evidence based practices.

Article 6 General Public Health Work Program[6]	
Infrastructure Expenses	
Encouraged Infrastructure	Article 6 funds can be used to support program infrastructure costs that are identified as eligible in the law and regulation.
Allowable Infrastructure	Staff training; support staff; data and management information systems; quality assurance and evaluation; program licensing; security/safety (on-call staff, escort services) as part of doing business; mileage reimbursement as part of home visiting ; cell phones as they pertain to work during working hours and/or as per local health department contract.
Disallowed Infrastructure	Membership dues and licensing for staff (unless specified in the local department of health contract); stipends; indirect rate; fringe benefits.

Tips on How to Use Article 6 Funds: It's always important to match your reporting to the intent of the program. In this case, the program priority is to address the health needs of women and children. Providing data and stories that help to show how your home visiting program meets this need will be beneficial to the local public health department as they report up to the state on how the funds are used.

Funding Stream 5: Medicaid

The Department of Health (DOH) administers the Medicaid program in New York State. Its primary purpose is to make health and medical services available to eligible individuals. The different aspects of Medicaid that are explored here are: Medicaid Managed Care; and Targeted Case Management (TCM). Information is about these funding streams will be forthcoming in a separate document. To find out more about Medicaid please visit http://www.health.ny.gov.

Exploring the Gaps in Funding

After completing your analysis of each of your potential funding sources, the next step in developing a blended or braided model is to explore the larger pattern created by the allowable and non-allowable costs with each funding stream. Using the funding streams analyzed above and a standard set of activities and eligible populations common to many home visiting programs, an example gaps analysis is below. To customize this to your program, including expanding or deleting services, adding other eligible populations, etc., use ***Template B: Analyzing Your Gaps.*** You will need to populate the template with details about your population and their service needs.

Template B: Analyzing Your Gaps, Completed for Key Home Visiting Funding Streams. What are the services or interventions that are part of our program? Who will deliver the services? What infrastructure is needed to support the program?

	CBCAP	General Fund (HFNY)	SSBG	Art. 6 Health
What population do we need to serve?				
Pregnant women	Yes, family must be at greater risk of child abuse, maltreatment and/or foster care placement.	Yes, pregnant women must reside in a targeted service area and meet the Parenting Stress Index score.	Services for pregnant women could fall under different service categories and thus eligibility requirements, such as income limits, vary based on factors such as if a service is state mandated or not. Families receiving Flexible Funding for Family Services (FFFS) must be at or under 200% FPL. For more detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit: http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/reports/FFY%202014%20NYS%20SSBG%20IUR.pdf	Yes
Families with young children birth through age 2	Yes, family must be at greater risk of child abuse, maltreatment and/or foster care placement.	Yes, but family must have a child 3 months of age or younger and meet a certain score on the Parenting Stress Index to be eligible. Also, they must reside in a targeted service area. Once enrolled can serve family and child up to child's fifth birthday.	The same information captured above related to service eligibility requirements for pregnant women is applicable to young children and their families birth through age 2.	Yes

	CBCAP	General Fund (HFNY)	SSBG	Art. 6 Health
Families with young children who are three through five years of age.	Yes, family must be at greater risk of child abuse, maltreatment and/or foster care placement.	No, only if the family was already enrolled when the child was under three months.	Please see eligibility information above. Also applicable to young children (3-5 years) and their families.	Yes
Pregnant women and families who are not low-income.	Yes, family must be at greater risk of child abuse, maltreatment and/or foster care placement.	Yes, pregnant women must reside in targeted service area and meet the Parenting Stress Index score.	See Above	Yes
What does the "Front Door" of our program look like?				
Intake - Child Screening and Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, to assess women's preconception, prenatal, postpartum & inter-conception.
What are the services or interventions that are part of our program?				
Referral to Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case Management	Yes	Yes	Yes	Depends on what it is for. If it is basic case management, that is often provided by local social services department
Parent Training & Education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Only to provide information to promote positive birth outcomes and child health.
School Readiness Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Health Promotion Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

	CBCAP	General Fund (HFNY)	SSBG	Art. 6 Health
Health Care Services	No	No	Eligibility varies. Direct provision of medical services is not eligible for funding. Identification, referral & monitoring follow-up services are eligible.	Yes
Mental Health Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Transportation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Supplies for families	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staff Qualifications	No required certifications or licensing for staff.	Frontline staff does not have to be licensed. Education level requirements for other staff.	No required staff qualifications.	Staff qualifications for some titles used by local health departments (i.e. public health nurse) are in the state sanitary code.
Staff Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support Staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Data and MIS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Quality Assurance	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Insurance	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Security (on-call staff & escort services)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

	CBCAP	General Fund (HFNY)	SSBG	Art. 6 Health
Membership Dues	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Licensing	Yes	No	No	Yes
Indirect Rate	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Food/Meals	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Stipends	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Travel Reimbursement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cell Phones	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

As you can see from the information in the gaps chart, comparing the funding streams side by side across specific sets of eligible populations and services helps in identifying which funding streams together can cover the range of services in a typical home visiting program.

Template B shows that although collectively the funding streams cover the different populations typically served through home visiting, they all have certain eligibility requirements that have to be met. Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds require that there be a high risk of child abuse and neglect in order for families to be eligible. But once the family meets the eligibility requirement, the funding stream covers many of the services and infrastructure costs of a home visiting program. On the other hand, the General Fund which supports Healthy Families New York (HFNY) may be broader in terms of eligibility based on the program requirements, and the funding is limited to certain areas of the State. If it was expanded, Healthy Families New York funds can cover many of the typical expenses of a home visiting program. Article 6 and the Social Services Block Grant also have fairly broad eligibility and a broad range of allowable services and infrastructure costs.

Overall, this means that home visiting programs using these funding streams need to be careful to identify which eligible populations can be served and whether there will be some limits on the services available to different eligible populations. If there will be limits using the program's current funding streams, it is important to then decide (1) should you identify additional funding streams; (2) should you redefine their program scope; or (3)

some combination of the two. This is a great example of where foundation, corporation, or the more flexible public grant programs would be needed to fill in the gaps.

Keep in mind you are likely to find yourself engaging in an iterative process of selecting and analyzing funding streams, exploring gaps, assessing changes to your program design, and deciding to identify new funding streams and redoing the process of analyzing and gap finding. After you have reached the point where you are satisfied that you know your funding streams AND have adapted your program design as necessary to fund the full program realistically with the funding streams available, you are ready to move to developing a Coordinated Financing Plan found in the Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide.

Tips from Foundations

"Most foundations want to fund and support kids." Kara Williams, Program Officer Health Foundation for Western & Central New York

In the context of blended or braided funding, foundation funding can help fill in the gaps when more restrictive government funding streams leave you unable to serve populations in need or provide specific needed services. Foundation support from local and/or state dollars varies in size, population focus and goals. Some foundations welcome unsolicited requests and others have clear funding cycles. Check web-sites or call for specific instructions on submitting proposals.

There are three health foundations in New York State:

- Health Foundation for Western & Central New York;
- Greater Rochester Health Foundation; and
- New York State Health Foundation.

There are also multiple local community foundations that are passionate about helping children and families. Foundations typically have specific goals; some may have an identified approach or best practice, and most want to work with children and families.

What do Foundations Like?

- Foundations love collaborations of multiple organizations and leveraging resources;
- Foundations also want to help programs get started (but typically don't have sustainability funds); and
- Foundations encourage programs to blend and braid to extend their funding further! This is great for sustaining programs.

Typically foundations do not fund:

- Back filling state funding gaps;
- Continued funding of existing programs; and
- Operational support.

Foundation funding varies: Community foundations are more likely to fund for one year at a time. Health Foundations and other larger private foundations may fund for 1-3 years.

Tip: Be prepared to offer a sustainability plan.

Resource: Sustainability Toolkit by Scott Thomas and Deborah Zahn on the Health Foundation for Western & Central New York's website at www.hfwcny.org.

HOME VISITING PROGRAMS THAT BLEND AND/OR BRAID FUNDING

The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) and the Parents-as-Teachers are examples of how programs are already blending or braiding funds: This provides a statewide overview of these fiscal coordination models.

PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM

Overview: The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) is a research-validated early childhood program, which focuses on equipping parents with young children with the knowledge, skills, and materials necessary to strengthen families and foster the children's academic success. The Program utilizes trained community-based early literacy specialists who visit families in their homes and "model behaviors for parents that enhance children's development - helping parents realize their role as their children's first and most important teacher and generating enthusiasm for learning and verbal interaction through the use of engaging books and stimulating toys."[7]

Parent-Child Home Program sites: New York's 24 PCHP sites operate out of social service agencies, school districts, community-based organizations, and public libraries. They are located in New York City's boroughs, Long Island, Westchester, Rockland County, Buffalo, and Albany.

Operational Structure: PCHP's national center is based in New York and offers extensive services and supports to sites implementing the PCHP model. National Center staff train local staff at participating sites in the skills and knowledge necessary to replicate the PCHP model. The National Center staff includes a New York Regional Coordinator who works with the 24 local partners across the state, providing technical assistance as well as support identifying funding opportunities, cultivating funder relationships, and securing public funding.

PCHP Funding Resources and Infrastructure - Blending and Braiding: Organizations that are interested in becoming PCHP sites must secure the funding necessary to operate the Program in their community. New York's existing PCHP sites receive 95% of their funding from private foundations, United Ways, and individual and corporate donors. Due to the flexibility of these private funding sources, local PCHP sites often utilize a blended fiscal coordination strategy and are able to "co-mingle their funds into one pot where service dollars, personnel, and other program expenses can be drawn down as needed."[8]

While the vast majority of PCHP funding in New York is private funding, approximately 5% of the funding consists of federal, state, local and school district government funding. For example, three PCHP sites receive state level funding through *Public/Private Partnership* dollars (a New York State grant initiative, which funds unique partnerships between private and non-profit organizations to support early childhood to youth-aged programs in local communities in need."[9]). *State general funds* are utilized for the Public/Private Partnerships grant initiative, which is administered through the New York Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Grants are awarded through a competitive RFP process.

Several sites are recipients of the OCFS managed *Children's Trust Fund* grant, which also consists of state general funds as well as federal *Community Based Child Abuse Prevention* (CBCAP) funds. In addition, PCHP school based programs may also receive federal *Title I* (Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding), which is allocated to school district based upon their disadvantaged student population and requires coordination with the McKinney-Vento Act.[10] A handful of PCHP sites receive local funding from city council, the county, and school district funding.

While PCHP sites can braid local, state, and federal funding with their private funding, bringing them together to maximize the funding needed to operate their Program; they need to be able to pull those government funding streams back apart in order to report to funders how the money was spent and meet specific eligibility, reporting, and tracking requirements.

Funding Challenges and Opportunities: Funding remains a challenge for PCHP sites and some have had to close their doors due to a lack of funding. On average, it costs organizations $125,000 to $150,000 to operate a PCHP site serving 40-50 families. As part of its ongoing work to address funding challenges, the PCHP National Center and local sites are exploring the possibility of securing funding from New York State's *Community Schools Initiative*, a new statewide program, launched in August 2013, that is intended to "transform schools in distressed communities into hubs for a wide range of support services for children and their families."[11]

Staff Professional Development and Training Requirements: The Program utilizes a model where the local site Coordinator at each site receives training through the National Center, participating in a three-day training institute with a fourth follow-up day 3 to 6 months later, which prepares them to not only operate a site but train their site's community-based early literacy specialists to conduct home visits. The early literacy specialists then receive 16 hours of training prior to beginning home visits and a minimum of two hours of training and supervision weekly throughout the Program year.

Reporting Requirements and Timeline: All PCHP sites must enter family and program data into the National Center's Management Information System (MIS) database. Included in this data entry are the books that were read during a home visit, number of family visits, books and educational toys distributed, demographic data on the families served, and reporting on a parent/guardian and child's progress over the course of the two program years. In addition, the early literacy specialists complete a written report after each home visiting, tracking the child's development and parent's engagement. The MIS system generates overall performance scores per site based on the data entered. While sites are not required to submit a fiscal report, they must provide an annual narrative report with some financial information to the National Center.

Program Year: Most PCHP Home Program sites operate on a school year calendar, conducting home visits from September - June. Some sites, however, do provide home visits year-round, enrolling families on a rolling basis as they are identified.

Eligible Populations: The Program serves low income and high need families/legal guardians/primary caregivers (including grandparents), with children 16 months to 4 years of age, many of whom are challenged by poverty, limited education, language and literacy and language barriers, isolation, and/or homelessness. Citizenship status is not a factor in whether a family can receive services. Incarcerated parents can participate in the Program as long as they have access to their children.

Services Provided: Each family receives 46 twice-weekly home visits in each program cycle. Every week the early literacy specialists "bring a carefully-selected book or educational toy, the curricular material for the week, as a gift to the family."[12] If possible, the books are provided in the families' native language and families are almost always served by a home visitor who speaks their language and shares their ethnic or cultural background. During the twice-weekly home sessions with the parent /primary caregiver and the child, the home visitor models verbal interaction, reading, and play activities, demonstrating how to use the books and toys to build language and emergent literacy skills and promote school readiness. Over the course of the two years in the Program, families acquire a library of 24 high quality children's books and 22 educational toys.[13]

Staffing Requirements: While the community-based early literacy specialists are not required to have a specific degree, they must be able to read and write well, and have good judgment and good people skills, and an understanding of the community they are working in. There is also a strong workforce development component to the Program; 25% of the home visit staff are parent graduates who are hired by the Program. Site coordinators must have a college degree; many are social workers or certified-early childhood teachers.

Evidence Based Program: PCHP is a research validated, evidence based program.

Impact: There is a large body of research that has consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of PCHP "in relation to positive parent child interactions, school readiness and later school success, reduction of risks of child abuse and neglect and cost-effectiveness. A longitudinal randomized control group study of PCHP found that low- income children who completed two years of the Program went on to graduate from high school at the rate of middle class children nationally, a 20% higher rate than their socio-economic peers, 30% higher than the control group in the community."[14]

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Overview: Parents as Teachers is a model developed in 1981 in Missouri to address educators' concerns that "children were beginning kindergarten with varying levels of school readiness. Research demonstrated that greater parent involvement is a critical link in the child's development of learning skills."[15] The model offers a training curriculum for educational and social services professionals to serve as parent educators by visiting a parent in their home to provide the information, support and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally."[16] Core goals of the model include "increasing parent knowledge of early childhood development; improving parenting practices; providing early detection of developmental delays and health issues; preventing child abuse and neglect and increasing children's school readiness and school success."[17]

Parents as Teachers in New York: Parents as Teachers was initiated in New York's Binghamton City School District in 1986. By 2005, 87 Parents as Teachers programs were operating statewide. Parents as Teachers has since experienced a substantial drop in participating programs due to funding challenges. Unlike Healthy Families New York, there is no state level funding specifically allocated to support Parents as Teachers sites. Currently 24 programs serve as Parents as Teachers affiliate sites.

New York's affiliate programs are offered at school districts, medical centers, Head Start programs, and nonprofit organizations (e.g., family resource centers). Many Healthy Families programs operate Parents as Teachers programs. Most of the participating Parents as Teachers sites incorporate the model into existing programs.

Funding Sources: Any organization interested in serving as a Parents as Teachers affiliate site must be responsible for securing the funding necessary to run and administer its program. Implementing the Parents as Teachers model includes training and certification expenses as required by the Parents as Teachers National Center. Existing affiliate sites fund their Parents as Teachers programs through a variety of grants – public and private - individual donations, hospital funding and corporate support. The handful of Parents as Teachers programs that are administered through schools may also receive school district general funds or limited discretionary New York State Pre-K funding. The majority of Parents as Teachers sites maximize their funding by either blending their private funds or braiding the government funding they receive.

School District Funding and Fiscal Management: New York State's Parents as Teachers Training Department is housed in the Binghamton City School District. The School District provides in-kind fiscal and clerical support

for the Department. Operational support for the Training Department is provided under a special projects line item in the District's budget that consisted not only of school district general funds, but also of grants that were awarded to the program, at various times throughout its operational history, including private foundation funding, a Community Schools grant, Even Start funding, Youth at Risk and a Community Care Network grant, among other sources of revenue. The District initially managed the Department's funding streams and utilized a braided funding model to support the Department - abiding by the specific fiscal accounting requirements of each funding stream. Currently, the Broome Board of Cooperative Educational Services oversees the New York Parents as Teachers Training Department's budget. Three other New York School Districts have invested school district general funds and/ or leveraged limited discretionary Pre-K funding to support Parents as Teachers programs.

Train the Trainer model: Specific to the New York State Parents as Teachers program, a small line item in the Binghamton City School District's budget supports training efforts. That line item is revenue generated from providing Parents as Teachers trainings for the past 16 years and is used only for training and technical assistance purposes. New York's Coordinating Trainer and an additional trainer (certified as trainers through the National Center – a $10,000 investment) train other New York based programs that are interested in implementing the Parents as Teachers model and want to have staff trained as parent educators.

Affiliate and Approved User Status: Organizations in New York interested in utilizing the Parents as Teachers model can either serve as affiliate sites or as approved users.

Affiliate Status: Affiliate sites abide by very specific requirements, which include "committing to providing at least 2 years of services to families with children between prenatal and kindergarten entry; establishing an advisory committee; and following the standard guidelines regarding copyright and logo use established by Parents as Teachers."[18]

In addition, affiliate sites have to meet required *staff and professional development requirements.* Parent educators, at a minimum, "must hold a high school diploma or GED and two years' previous supervised work experience with young children and/or parents. The Model has specific guidelines around the amount of time parent educators must receive supervision and dedicate to professional development. Parent educators must obtain renewal certification annually. Parent educators and supervisors must also attend the Parents as Teachers' Foundational and Model Implementation Trainings prior to delivering services to families."[19]

Reporting Requirements and Timeline of Reporting: Affiliate sites must complete an Affiliate Performance Report at the end of each program year, which documents implementation and service delivery data aligned with the Parents as Teachers essential requirements.[20] In addition, parent educators must "complete and document a family-centered assessment within 90 days of enrollment and then at least annually; and develop and document goals with each family they serve."[21]

Approved User Status: Sites can also serve as approved users where they can learn the "foundations of home visiting as a methodology within the early childhood system."[22] Approved user sites have to meet minimal requirements, which include participating in the Parents as Teachers Foundational Training, which addresses parent-child interaction; development-centered parenting; and family well-being. Approved user sites, who have successfully completed the Foundational training pay a fee, which allows them use of the Curriculum and other online materials.

Eligible Populations: Any parents or legal guardians with children prenatal-5 including single/teen parents; parents with behavioral health needs or disabilities; and incarcerated parents can receive services. However, if

the program providing the services is operating with fidelity, the incarcerated parents must have access to their children because the model focuses on the parent-child interaction. A family or legal guardian with children prenatal-5 can receive services regardless of citizenship, economic status or geographic location.

Encouraged Services: Services should be culturally competent, strength based and reflective of the special needs of the community served. Core services include "providing monthly personal visits to families and group connections focused on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being."[23] An extensive range of wrap around services can be provided to families, including child health and developmental screenings.

Evidence Based Programs: The Parents as Teachers model is recognized as an evidence-based program by the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program, Community Based Child Abuse Preventions, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration."[24]

Impact: Outcomes of the Parents as Teachers model have been well researched and have demonstrated tangible benefits for families with young children. A key finding of a 2007 research study was that "a large percentage (82%) of poor children who participated with high intensity in both Parents as Teachers and preschool entered kindergarten ready to learn, as compared to only 64% of poor children who had no involvement in either service. A similar pattern emerged for more affluent children (93% vs. 81%). In addition, for poor children, high intensity Parents as Teachers and preschool participation appears to narrow the achievement gap at kindergarten entry and third grade. Eighty-two percent of these poor children were ready for kindergarten, as compared to 81% of their more affluent peers with no preschool experience or Parents as Teachers participation. At third grade, a similar pattern emerged (88% vs. 93%)."[25]

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

As stated earlier, developing a blended or braided fiscal coordination model can allow early childhood home visiting programs to cover a broader population in need, provide a broader array of needed services, support program infrastructure costs, and sustain home visiting programs if a funding stream they have been dependent on is no longer available or has been reduced. Blending and braiding are terms that are often used, but rarely defined and explained in detail. The lack of detailed information is undoubtedly due to the fact that there is no single model for blending or for braiding, and each model must be customized to the community it exists within.

The purpose of this guide is to provide home visiting programs with relevant information and instruction related to Phase Three of the blending and braiding process detailed in the Early Childhood Blend and Braid Guide, which provides a step-by-step planning process for organizations and communities to undertake to develop a blended or braided funding model.

The process includes five phases:

1. Identifying your vision and your partners;
2. Defining your program for fiscal purposes;
3. Exploring your financing options;
4. Developing your coordinated financing plan; and
5. Implementing, tracking and improving.

As you design and implement your fiscal coordination model, we recommend engaging your stakeholders in every stage, including your staff, your leaders, and your funders (both programmatic and fiscal staff) as well as the community and families you serve. We also recommend paying careful attention to the quality of the services you provide by prioritizing quality improvement, evaluation, and research-based practices. Any blended or braided model is only as good as the quality of the program it funds and the alignment of that program with the needs of the community and clients it serves!

ENDNOTES

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