



PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Cost Analysis

Operating In-Home Family Education Programs with Model Fidelity in West Virginia

Report prepared by:

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Funding for this report provided to Partners in Community Outreach, a program of TEAM for WV Children Inc., by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation



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Introduction and Purpose

Partners in Community Outreach enlisted the services of an independent consultant to prepare this report in order to establish an accurate estimate of current costs associated with the delivery of In-home Family Education Programs operating with fidelity in West Virginia. Three such program models are currently being provided in some counties of the state and these include:

- Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker (MIHOW)
- Healthy Families America (HFA)

These three programmatic models have all collected data that support their effectiveness in supporting families with young children; however, only the PAT and HFA models are currently recognized by the US Department of Health and Human Services as meeting the HHS criteria for evidence-based programs. The MIHOW program currently lacks sufficient high or moderate quality impact studies to meet the HHS criteria for evidence-based. There is a randomized controlled study currently underway in West Virginia in order to address this lack of a high quality study related to the impact of the MIHOW program.

Costs associated with providing each of the three research-based home visiting programs will be different since the requirements to deliver the program with fidelity are different from one program to another. Available information about the costs of service provision was reviewed including the average cost per family estimated by each respective national office supporting and certifying each type of home visiting program. A recent study of salaries within the West Virginia home visiting programs was also reviewed and considered in estimating program costs – *The West Virginia In-Home Program Compensation Study* (Whitley, 2012).

Estimated Costs of Providing the Home Visiting Programs

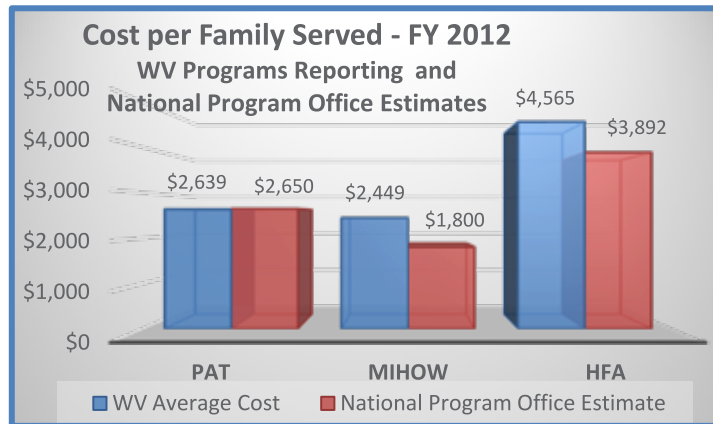
Information about expenditures and numbers of families served during the 2012 Fiscal Year was collected from 10 PAT programs, 3 MIHOW programs, and 1 Healthy Families America program currently operating in West Virginia utilizing an on-line survey. Based on this information the average cost per family for providing these programs in West Virginia during FY 2011-12 was:

- Parents As Teachers - \$2,639/ family
- Maternal Infant Home Outreach Workers - \$2,449/ family
- Healthy Families America - \$4,565 /family

Each of the national offices supporting the three in-home family education models also has estimated the cost per family for providing each of the programs with model fidelity. These costs estimated by the respective national program offices (2011 dollars) are:

- Parents as Teachers - \$2,650/family,
- Maternal Infant Health Outreach Workers - \$1,800/family,
- Healthy Families America - \$3,214 to \$3,892/family.

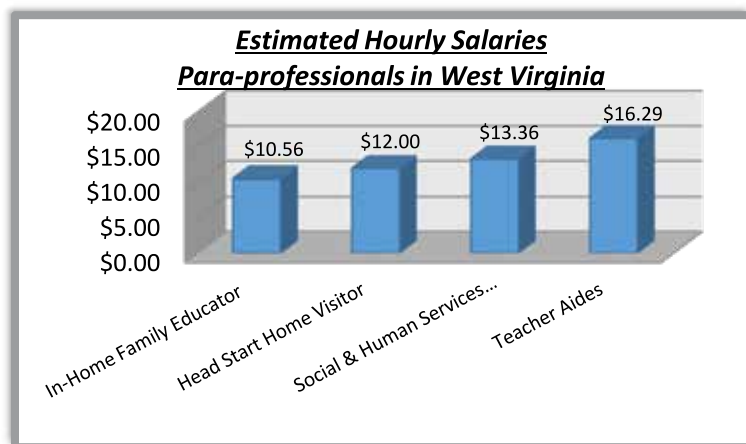
A comparison of the average costs per family reported by the in-home family education programs in West Virginia and the estimated cost by the national program office for all three program models is summarized in the chart.



Other Cost Considerations

Many of the currently operating in-home family education programs are not able to provide a compensation package for home visitors that is competitive with similar types of work found in the local community. Further, most programs offer little in the way of additional benefits beyond the hourly wage. When asked how much salaries and benefits would need to increase in order to “be competitive with other providers in the area that employ staff with similar qualifications”, the in-home family education programs reported needed increases in personnel costs ranging from 0 to 50%. The median level of the response from current programs indicates a 30% increase would be necessary to compete with other social services and healthcare providers employing staff with similar qualifications.

The hourly wage of home visitors (in home family education workers) employed by evidence-based programs is less than wages paid for similar positions within early childhood and social services programs. The chart provides a comparison of the estimated average hourly wage for positions requiring similar levels of education and experience in West Virginia. Wage data is compiled from several sources including the In-Home Family Education Compensation Study, the Head Start Association Survey, U.S. Department of Labor Wage Estimates for WV, and the



WV DOE Average Contracted Salaries for Service Personnel.

In addition to low wages, the majority of in-home family education programs examined offer no health insurance, life insurance, or retirement benefits while such benefits are generally available to workers employed by other human services programs operating in local communities with whom they must compete for qualified staff.

Conclusions

An accurate estimate of per family costs related to providing in-home family education services with model fidelity is somewhat difficult to determine given the variation in costs reported by programs currently operating in West Virginia. Costs vary depending on the scale and location of each home visiting program; however the average costs of providing each research-based model across West Virginia can be estimated with a reasonable degree of accuracy. A more in-depth review of the in-home family education programs may be useful in order to determine which factors most influence the cost of service delivery and how local contextual factors might best be considered when determining an adequate funding level for operating additional programs.

Based on the average cost per family reported by the programs operating in West Virginia and the documented discrepancies in wages and benefits as compared to similar jobs, it is estimated that current average costs would need to be increased by at least 30% in order to compensate in-home-family educators at levels that are comparable to other similar jobs in the health and human services area.

Using the average costs estimated from survey data collected, the cost of providing each research-based program with model fidelity during FY 2012 was:

- Parents As Teachers - \$2,639/ family
- Maternal Infant Home Outreach Workers - \$2,449/ family
- Healthy Families America - \$4,565 /family

Adjusted for inflation to 2013 dollars these costs would be:

- Parents As Teachers - \$2,740/ family
- Maternal Infant Home Outreach Workers - \$2,543/ family
- Healthy Families America - \$4,740/family

If these costs were increased by 30% in order to bring the average wages and benefits of in-home family education workers to a level comparable to other education, healthcare, or social service jobs requiring similar qualifications the costs would increase to:

- Parents As Teachers - $\$2,740 + 30\% = \$3,562$ / family
- Maternal Infant Home Outreach Workers - $\$2,543 + 30\% = 3,306$ / family
- Healthy Families America - $\$4,740 + 30\% = \$6,162$ /family

