



Kids deserve the best.



To: Wisconsin Legislators
From: Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Nurse-Family Partnership
Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's Agencies
Date: February 18, 2019
RE: Expanding Home Visiting in Wisconsin – A strong investment for strong families

Our organizations encourage you to invest \$10 million in 2019-21 state budget to double the number of families served by Wisconsin's evidence-based Family Foundations Home Visiting Program (FFHV). Currently, this effective, high impact service is only reaching a small portion of eligible families. Increasing state funding will grow program access for rural, tribal and other underserved regions of the state through which parent educators, registered nurses, social workers, and family support workers offer families weekly to monthly visits to support their ability to nurture their children. The amount of visiting support provided to the family is determined by risk and strength assessments, the program design and the duration of program enrollment based on funding constraints.

Current Investment. The FFHV program is currently available to only 1600 families in 24 counties and 5 tribes. Thousands more families could benefit from this service. Of the \$14.2 million currently spent on FFHV, only \$1.1 million is GPR.

Return on Investment. Outcomes research has shown that each dollar invested in evidence-based home visiting programs can yield up to **\$5.70 in savings** in the long run. Long term cost savings include: reduced health services use (including emergency department visits), reduced costs of child protection services, decreased special education placements and grade repetition, which results in higher educational attainment and economic success later in life (Sources: [NCSL](#), 4/18; [NASHP](#), 9/17))

New Federal Match Available. Passage of the federal Family First Prevention Services Act creates an opportunity for Wisconsin to generate up to 50 percent federal match for new state investments in evidence-based home visiting programs. Effective 2019, states that have a plan in place may start claiming Title IV-E match for programs that prevent children from entering foster care – home visiting will be one of the key services that will qualify for matching dollars. Any new investments to prevent foster care entry made after FY 2014 will be eligible for the federal match. Investing now, means the state will be ready to start federal claiming as soon as Wisconsin's plan is approved. We will be able to double the coverage at half the cost.

Reaching More Families. However you measure it, the need for home visiting services in the state far outpaces the current capacity. There are rural and tribal communities in the state with no access to home visiting services and other underserved regions of the state due to insufficient funding and service providers. With \$10 million the number of families served could double.

Statewide Support. In statewide listening sessions held by the Legislature's Children's Caucus and the Speaker's Foster Care Task Force in 2017, home visiting consistently emerged as a key, primary prevention strategy shown to improve child school readiness, increase economic self-sufficiency and reduce child maltreatment.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.