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February 8, 2018
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Minnesota Awarded Grant to Explore the Ability to Track Long-Term Impacts of Local Home-Visiting Programs

ROSEVILLE, MN – A new pilot program will help Minnesota begin connecting information from home-visiting programs to the state’s [Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System \(ECLDS\)](#). If successful, the program will help educators and policymakers measure the long-term benefits of home-visiting programs in Minnesota for the first time. Early childhood home-visiting programs provide parents of children from birth to age 5 with supports and resources to improve children’s development and well-being.

“Many children need better access to high-quality early learning opportunities and home-visiting programs well before kindergarten so they are ready to learn on their first day of school,” said Education Commissioner Brenda Cassellius. **“Linking home-visiting data to our early childhood data system will help us evaluate the long-term benefits of early learning investments. We are excited to work on this important project and learn more about what Minnesota children need early in life to help them succeed.”**

The grant was provided by Child Trends, a research organization focused on improving children’s lives. The Minnesota Departments of Education and Health will work with Child Trends and Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health to explore the feasibility of linking public health home-visiting and school data. Saint Paul-Ramsey County has the largest nurse-based home-visiting program in the state, touching the lives of more than 1,200 families with young children per year.

“This is a great opportunity to add to our knowledge about family home visiting and improve how we support families,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Jan Malcolm. **“We’re hopeful data sharing will help us gain new insights and allow us to make sure all children get a healthy start and keep succeeding throughout their lives.”**

Child Trends selected Minnesota to participate based on the clarity of the state’s related goals and objectives, the capacity of its team to advance project goals, and Minnesota’s potential to strengthen data linkages to inform future policymaking.

In addition to Minnesota, four other states (North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Utah) were chosen to participate in State-level Home Visiting Integration (SHINE). With support from the Heising-Simons Foundation, states participating in SHINE will receive financial and technical support to accomplish goals related to exploring the feasibility of linking home-visiting data, as well as access to a peer-learning network.

State Investments in Home Visiting

In 2017, Governor Dayton worked with the Minnesota Legislature to invest \$12 million in the Department of Health’s Home Visiting Program, which helps children of teen parents and other high-risk mothers get off to a strong start. Home visiting helps young parents of at-risk children develop the skills they need to care for their children. This investment will reach an additional 2,300 families statewide after four years.

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