Early Family Support and Home Visiting:
Transforming Practice/Maximizing Impacts

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Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

Main Points

- Significant progress has been made in developing evidence-based strategies to build parental capacity and enhance child well-being.

- Identifying these strategies generally reflect measures of "efficacy" not measures of "effectiveness".

- As such, significant challenges exist in insuring consistency and quality as evidence-based programs scale-up.

- Expanding and sustaining an effective level of support for *all* families requires thinking "beyond the model".

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Promising Interventions
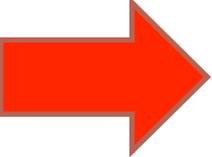
Importance of Early Child Development

Socially adjusted and emotionally healthy adult

Being fully employed in line with one's skills and competencies

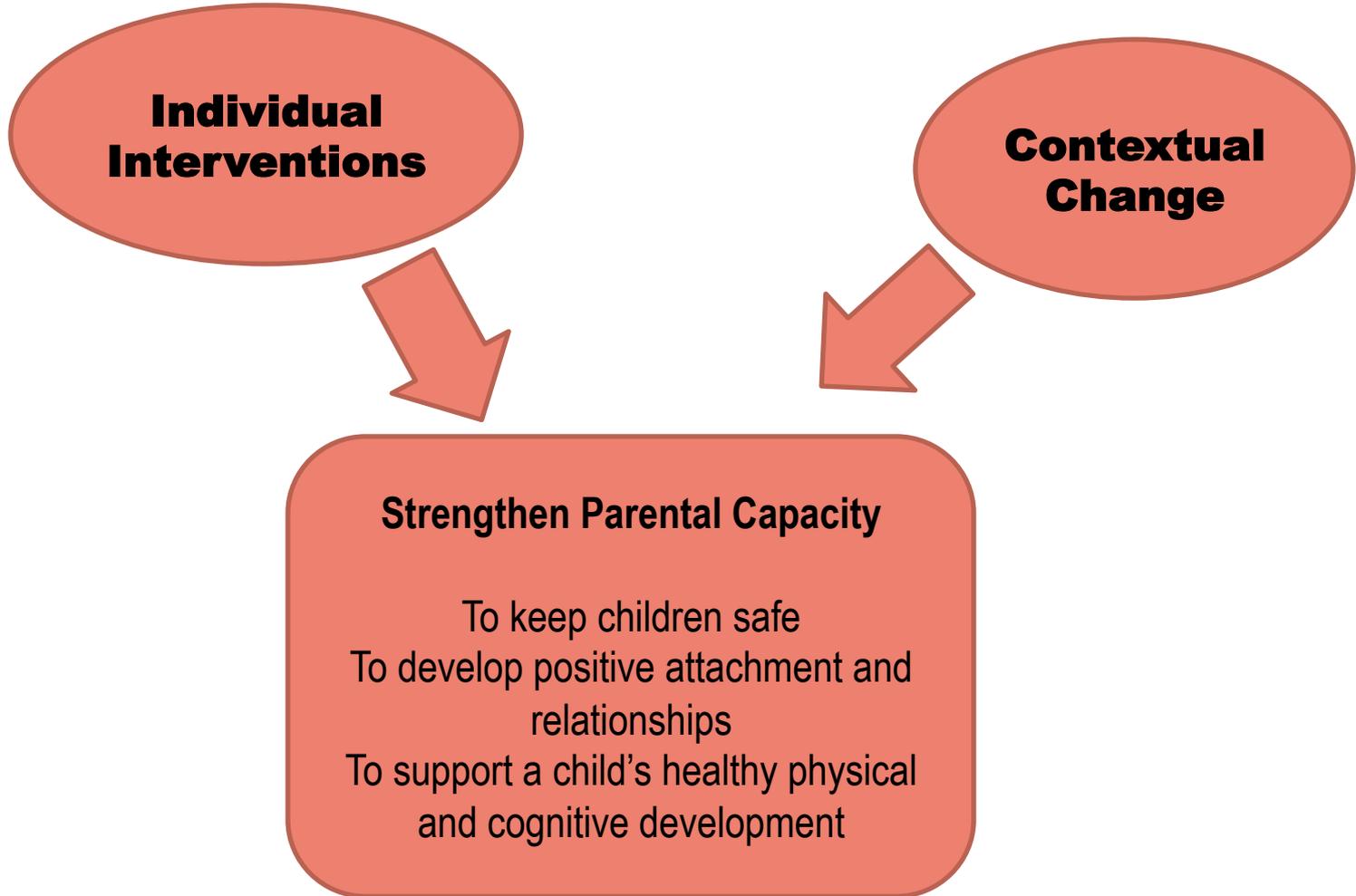Achieving economic stability and independence

Succeeding in school, achieving academic excellence and developing sustained relationships

Arriving at school ready to learn

Acquiring a basic set of cognitive and non-cognitive functions – working memory, self-regulation, cognitive or mental flexibility

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Enhancing Child Well-Being

Individual Interventions

Contextual Change

Strengthen Parental Capacity

To keep children safe
To develop positive attachment and relationships
To support a child's healthy physical and cognitive development

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Institute of Medicine and National Research Council Report

Intervention Findings

Interventions and Service Delivery Systems
Report Findings

Significant advances have been made in the development of effective programs to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect

Treatment:
- Trauma-focused therapies
- Parent training programs applied to child abuse and neglect

Prevention:
- Public awareness campaigns
- Parenting programs
- Professional practice reforms
- Early home visitation

Key Elements of Effective Programs

- Theoretical integrity and focused content.

- Focusing intervention efforts on the earliest stages of the developmental process.

- Employing persistent, but respectful, outreach methods to engage multi-problem families.

- Systematically assessing the needs of the target population across a number of domains that impact relevant risk and protective factors.

- Providing participants access to a core body of knowledge and skills and facilitating access to other community resources as needed.

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Key Elements of an Effective Work Force

- The ability to bring added value to any task.

  - Identify opportunities to enhance the service experience.

  - Balance the need for fidelity with the potential for innovation.

- A robust knowledge base in key areas and a "curiosity" to learn more.

- A skilled "relationship builder" who connects with both program participants and colleagues.

- A commitment to cultural humility.

  - Move from mastering a body of knowledge to sustaining an ongoing commitment to learning and understanding.

The Unique Promise of Home Visiting

Why is home visiting uniquely attractive?

- Convergence of political interests, clinical knowledge and empirical research.

- Establishes a promising pathway for reaching more challenged families by:
  - Providing services in a participant's home
  - Shaping service content and delivery to address participant needs and concerns
  - Engaging extended family members /care providers
  - Modeling "relationship building"

Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting

- **Goal**
  - Included in the 2010 Affordable Care Act
  - Assists states in building a ***comprehensive early childhood system*** to promote the health and safety of pregnant women, children 0-8 and their families

- **Investments**
  - $1.5 billion allocated to states FY 10 to FY14 on a formula and competitive basis
  - $11.2 million for Technical Assistance
  - $40 million for a national evaluation, to document participant outcomes and program implementation

Core Benchmark Areas

- Improved maternal and newborn health

- Child injury, child abuse, neglect, or reduction in emergency visits

- Improvement in school readiness and achievement

- Crime and domestic violence

- Family economic self-sufficiency

- Coordination and referrals to other services

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Standards of "Quality" Research

- RCT or quasi-experimental designs, with low attrition.

- High quality measures (direct observation, direct assessment, administrative records, self-report using standardized measure).

- Sustained impact (one year post-enrollment)

- Replication of findings, particularly subgroup findings

- Minimal "unfavorable" findings

- Evaluator independence

- Moderate to large effect sizes

Selected Approved MIECHV Models

- **Multi-year efforts initiated at pregnancy or birth**
  - Healthy Families America (HFA)
  - Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)
  - Parents as Teachers (PAT)
  - Early Head Start (EHS)
- **Interventions initiated with broader populations**
  - Child First
  - HIPPY
  - Safe Care

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Home Visiting and Key Outcomes

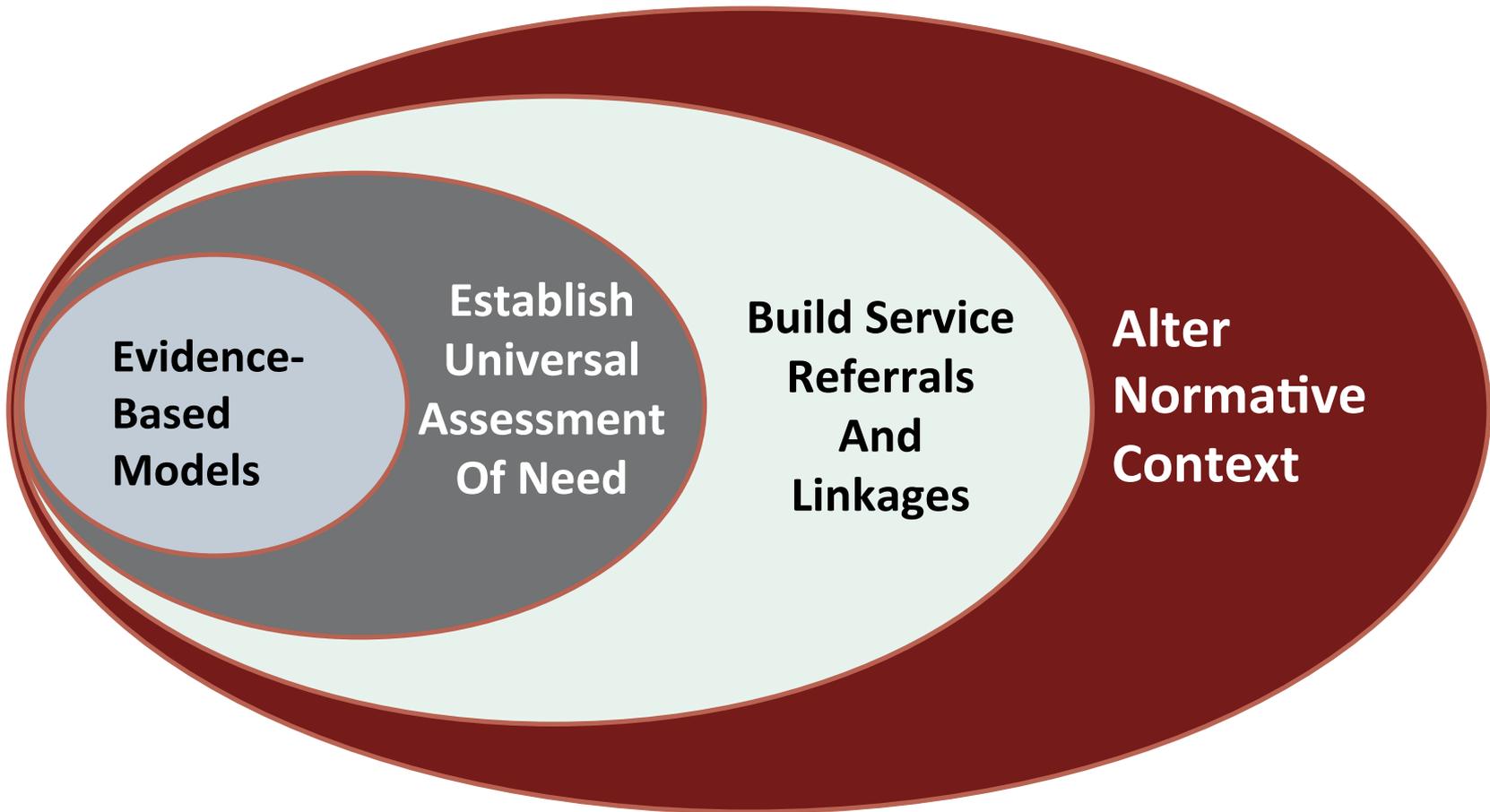| Outcomes Commonly Addressed Through Home Visiting	Outcomes Often Not Addressed Through Home Visiting
Parent/Child Factors Knowledge of child development Parental stress Parenting skills and capacity to promote healthy child development Maternal depression Positive child development and behavior	Serious mental health issues Substance abuse Domestic violence
Community/System Factors Link families to available medical, social services, and early learning opportunities Improve collaboration and service integration	Normative standards regarding parental practices Local service quality and quantity Collective efficacy Community violence

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What accounts for inconsistent outcomes?

- No program works for everyone – impacts will always be inconsistent across subgroups.

- Home visiting models often do not successfully engage and retain families at serious risk long enough to achieve impacts.

- Existing program content and service provider skills may be insufficient the fully address the full of needs presented by participants.

- Absence of reliable and robust implementation data (effectiveness research).

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Interventions and Service Delivery Systems Research Priorities

- Dissemination and Implementation
    - Implementing in communities with fidelity
    - Taking interventions to scale
    - Sustaining over time

- Infrastructure Development
    - Strengthening the workforce
    - Crafting data management systems to support CQI
    - Fostering system integration and collective impact

Creating Robust Operational Systems: Building Community Capacity

MIECHV's Successes Stories

- **Common outcomes/set of performance indicators** covering all HV models operating in a state/tribe.

- Initial implementation of **interagency collaborations** that plan and monitor program implementation.

- A **place-based focus** to encourage comprehensive coverage in areas of highest need including tribes.

- An emphasis on promoting the efficient **use of local services and supports** through service referrals.

- A commitment to **using data** to guide improvements and reassess investments.

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New Directions In Child Abuse and Neglect Research

For more information and to download the report, please visit
www.iom.edu/childmaltreatment

NEW DIRECTIONS IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT RESEARCH

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE AND
NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES