

PARENT FEEDBACK SUMMARY REPORT

Supporting Families with Children Prenatal through Age 5 Pierce County

March 2019



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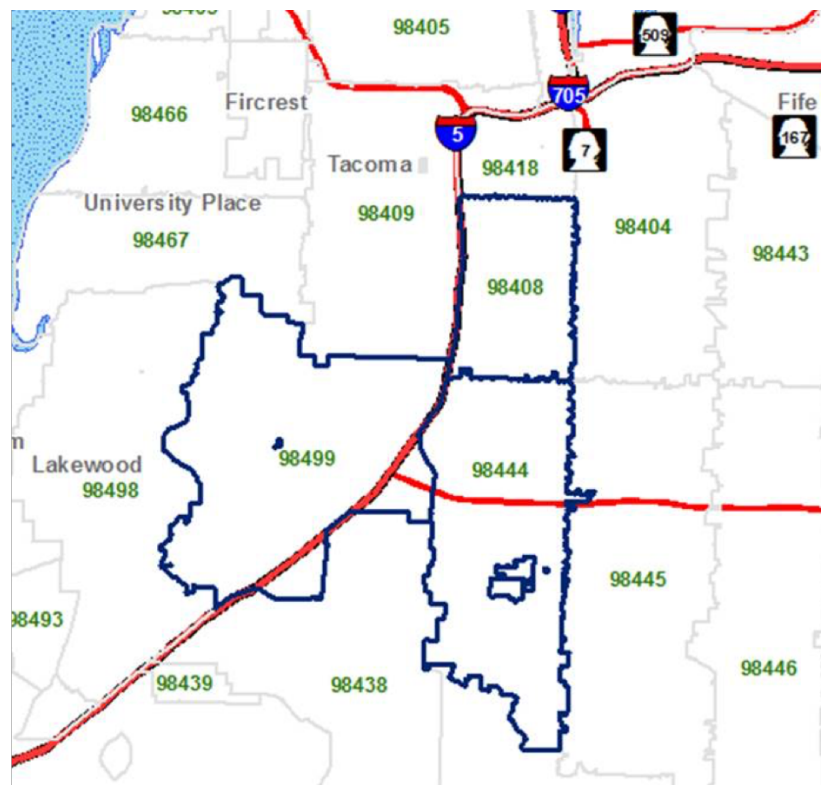
Background

In the fall of 2017, community leaders came together to brainstorm how to solve the child welfare crisis in Pierce County. 6,200 children entered out-of-home care in Washington State in 2017. Among all counties in the state, Pierce County experienced the highest number of children entering care, at 1,009. Community leaders agreed that a comprehensive system for connecting families to resources and normalizing support for all parents was a needed strategy to sustainably prevent child welfare involvement. The Help Me Grow (HMG) national system framework was identified as a useful model for building this system.

In the 2018 legislative session, Washington State included a budget proviso to conduct a one-year community planning process to determine how HMG could be implemented in Pierce County. Locally, First 5 FUNDamentals is the organizing entity convening community partners and families to facilitate this planning process. First 5 FUNDamentals is a non-profit organization whose mission is to mobilize and inspire communities to achieve their collective goals for children and families.

Target Zip Codes

In order to ensure needed resources are reaching families furthest from opportunity, the HMG pilot focuses on three zip codes touching three jurisdictions within Pierce County: 98499 (City of Lakewood, Springbrook), 98408 (City of Tacoma, south end), and 98444 (unincorporated Pierce County including Parkland, Spanaway, and Midland). Residents in these three zip codes experience higher poverty rates, lower life expectancy, and higher rates of children entering the child welfare system, in comparison to their counterparts across Pierce County. While HMG aims to provide universal access to all families in Pierce County, outreach and community engagement efforts will be intentionally focused in these three zip codes.



Map provided by Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

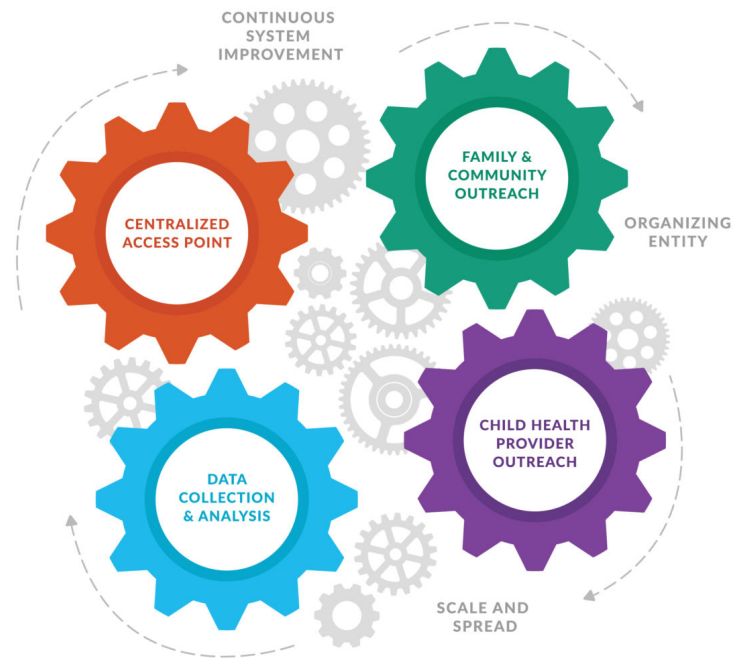
About Help Me Grow

Help Me Grow (HMG) is a system model that promotes county-wide collaboration in order to build upon existing early childhood resources to promote protective factors among families and mitigate the impact of adversity. By connecting families to existing community services through a centralized access point or call center, HMG provides timely access to resources and care coordination to reduce barriers to services.

HMG is implemented around four main components: the centralized access point for resource connection, data collection and evaluation efforts that systematically identify existing service gaps in the region, family and community outreach, and medical provider outreach. In working closely with medical providers, HMG seeks to be a resource to address the social determinants of health that impact families outside of the doctor's office, providing holistic care to families and reducing the burden of finding and accessing community resources.



SYSTEM MODEL



Methodology

In the fall of 2018, a survey was designed by community stakeholders to collect parent feedback on support services needed for young children, resource gaps in the community, and desired system components for HMG Pierce County such as call center hours (Appendix B). The survey was created using the on-line form builder JotForm, and distributed to families electronically through community service providers, the Help Me Grow Pierce County website, and parent Facebook groups. The survey was available in English and Spanish. Any caregiver residing in Pierce County with a minor child was eligible to complete the survey. Through January 2019, there were 91 responses received. These survey results including participant demographics and family composition are detailed in Appendix A.

In order to target more specifically the needs of parents who had experienced child welfare involvement and those living in target zip codes with young children, a qualitative interview form was created by community stakeholders to elicit parent ideas and involvement in co-designing the support they most need (Appendix D). The interviewer completed 21 qualitative interviews in person, and participants received a \$50 Fred Meyer gift card for sharing their time and expertise. A flyer requesting participants was posted at Pierce County Juvenile Court, and the opportunity was shared via Parent Allies (Parents for Parents) mentoring program, child welfare service providers, home visitors, child care providers in target zip codes, and a Head Start early learning program. Interviewees were invited to participate in future planning meetings or receive information about advocacy opportunities, if they were interested.

Qualitative Interview Participants

The demographics and experiences of parents completing qualitative interviews is summarized below. Child welfare involvement was defined as experiencing a child protective investigation regarding one's children in the past, having children in a dependency case currently or previously, or having had parental rights terminated.

Caregiver Status and Child Welfare Involvement	Number
Mother with child welfare involvement (past or present)	9
Father with child welfare involvement (past or present)	4
Grandparent raising grandchildren due to child welfare involvement in family	1
Mother of young child(ren) residing in a target zip code, with no history of child welfare involvement in family	7
Total	21

Ethnicity (as defined by parent)	Number
African or African-American	5
Hispanic	4
Multiracial	2
White or Caucasian	10
Total	21

Summary of Findings

Parent Survey respondents: 91	Where do you go First for Parenting Information? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family/Relatives 2. Internet/Social Media 3. Friends
42% had 2 children 76% had children under age 5 64% felt <i>somewhat prepared or not prepared at all</i> when they first became a parent 97% of children had a primary care doctor	What Child Development Information Do You Most Wish You Knew More About? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotional development, understanding feelings, mental health 2. Social development, building relationships 3. Academic skills, being ready for school
	Parenting is Hard! What Do You Find to be the Hardest? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finding good and affordable child care 2. Maintaining my own health and wellness 3. Managing my child's behavior 4. Finances and meeting basic needs
	What are the Hardest Services to Find in the Community? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing 2. Mental Health Treatment 3. Educational Resources

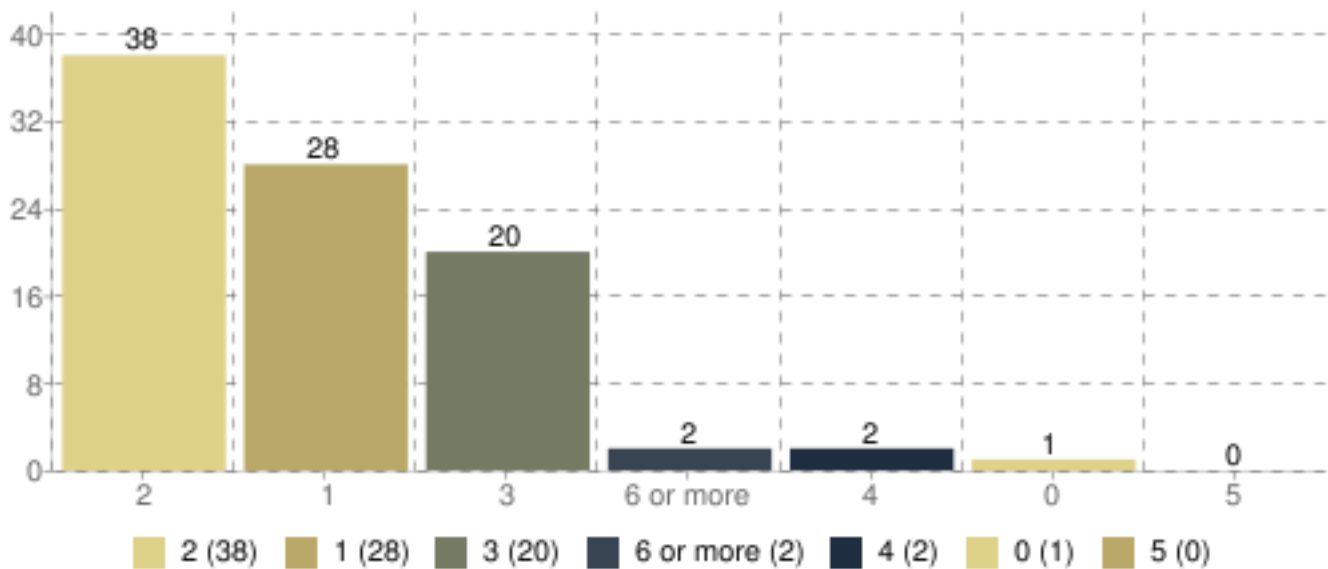
Qualitative Interview Participants: 21	What is the Best Part of Being a Parent for You? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watching them learn • Teaching them things 									
Pierce County residents Mothers: 16 Fathers: 4 Grandmother raising grandchildren: 1 Experience with child welfare system: 14 Single parents: 13 Median number of children: 2	What is the Most Challenging Thing About Being a Parent? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience • Time Management 									
	What Would Have Made you feel More Prepared to Be a Parent? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation classes that include life skills • Being older and more stable in job, home, and finances 									
	What Services for Families in your Community do you use? <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>YMCA</td> <td>Parks</td> <td>Libraries</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)</td> <td>Head Start Early Head Start</td> <td>Church</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WIC</td> <td>Play groups</td> <td>Medical clinics</td> </tr> </table>	YMCA	Parks	Libraries	Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)	Head Start Early Head Start	Church	WIC	Play groups	Medical clinics
	YMCA	Parks	Libraries							
	Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP)	Head Start Early Head Start	Church							
	WIC	Play groups	Medical clinics							
	What Topics Would You Like to see in Parent Trainings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication/language development • Discipline • Managing behavior, temper tantrums • Nutrition 									
	What are the Barriers to Accessing Services? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Money and child care 									
How would you Change Your Community for your Child and Others? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable and accessible housing • Free or affordable child care • Drop-in, flexible child care [brief respite opportunities for parents] • Opportunities for parents to meet each other, and children to play together 										

Parenting and Family

The most common number of children for survey respondents and interviewees was two (See Figure A). For parents who had experienced child welfare involvement with their children, many cited histories of a Substance Use Disorder (SUD), unstable housing, and limited family and social support. All parents want the best for their children, and reported loving them regardless of whether or not they were in their custody. For those children with whom the parent had lost custody and contact, they reported sadness and multiple attempts to try to find their child or establish contact.

Parents enjoy watching their children learn and grow, being able to teach them, and feeling motivated to be a better person (such as going back to school) in order to set a good example. When asked about the most challenging part of being a parent, interviewees reported having patience, managing time, getting enough breaks for self-care, and managing behavior. New parents largely relied on their parents or other relatives for help, while some were able to have a doula or assistance through Maternity Support Services which they felt helped tremendously.

Figure A. How Many Children do you Have?

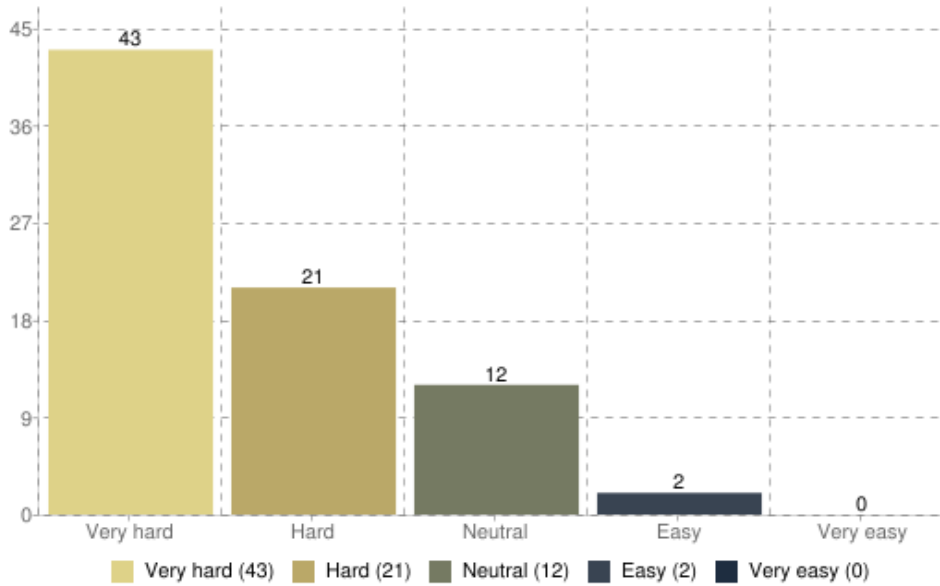


Access and Services

Of the parents interviewed who needed child care, many relied on the Working Connections Child Care Subsidy in order to afford it. Survey respondents overwhelmingly ranked finding high-quality, affordable child care as “very hard” (See Figure B). The other parenting difficulties ranked the hardest by respondents were maintaining one’s own health and wellness, and meeting basic needs (finances).

Parents who participated in home visiting such as Early Head Start or brief support through Maternity Support Services reported positive experiences. Most parents were unaware of specific parenting websites where they could find child development information, instead relying on Google and searching for what they needed as it came up. Most either relied on parents and relatives or the Internet and Social Media to answer their parenting questions.

Figure B. How hard is it to find services in Pierce County? Affordable Child Care



Services and resources that parents reported utilizing in their communities:

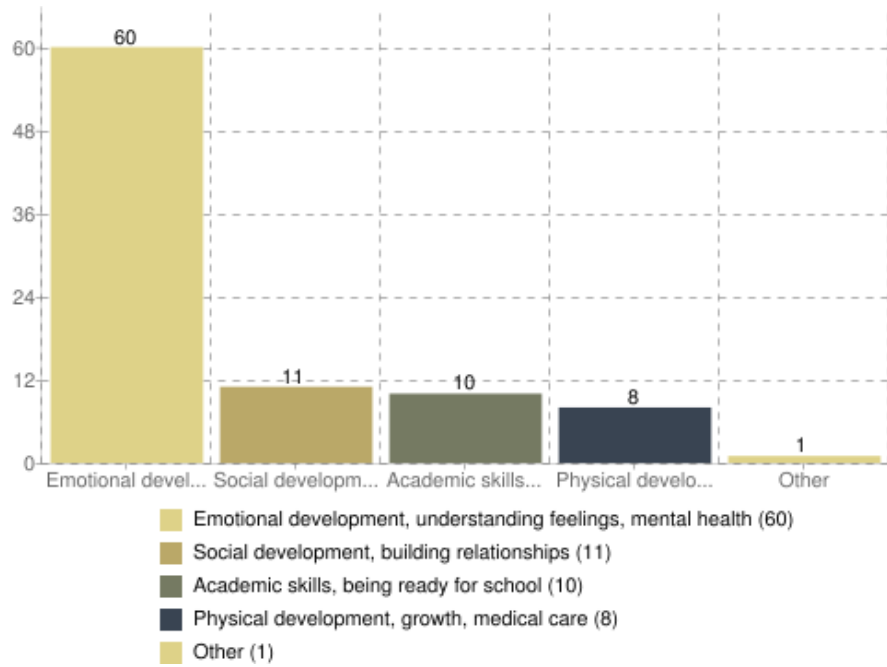
- YMCA [offering reduced fee memberships based on income, and Child Watch care up to 2 hours]
- Maternity Support Services [Step By Step, Answers, Community Health Care, SeaMar]
- CareNet [prenatal and postpartum services such as diapers and parenting classes]
- Parent-Child Assistance Program
- Early Head Start home visiting for children up to age three
- Head Start Early Learning Center [free preschool with income qualifications]
- Libraries
- Churches
- Parks
- South Sound 2-1-1
- Public benefits such as WIC, TANF, and Food Stamps [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program]
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Early Intervention [Birth to Three, HopeSparks, and other contracted providers]
- Mental Health Counseling
- Goodwill [financial coaching and employment services]
- Food banks
- Incredible Years parenting classes
- Flames of Recovery [daytime drop-in shelter that provides meals and daily AA/NA meetings]
- Forever Changed Ministries [transitional, temporary sober housing]

Child Development and Health

Most parents reported feeling “somewhat prepared” when they had their first child, citing life circumstances such as their career, educational attainment, age, financial situation, or lack of family support as barriers to feeling more prepared. Access to a primary care physician was generally not an issue. 97% of survey respondents reported that their child had a primary care physician. Interviewees in general noted having positive relationships with their child’s physician, although they were not the first or most accessible option for obtaining parenting and child development information.

The majority of parents were interested in additional training opportunities that combined getting to know other parents with child development information. Topics of interest were discipline (how to deal with tantrums), understanding and encouraging language development, patience, and nutrition. Survey respondents overwhelmingly selected their child’s emotional development, feelings, and mental health as the area they wanted to know more about (See Figure C). Parents stressed the importance of the time a class is offered due to unconventional work schedules and the need to provide food and child care.

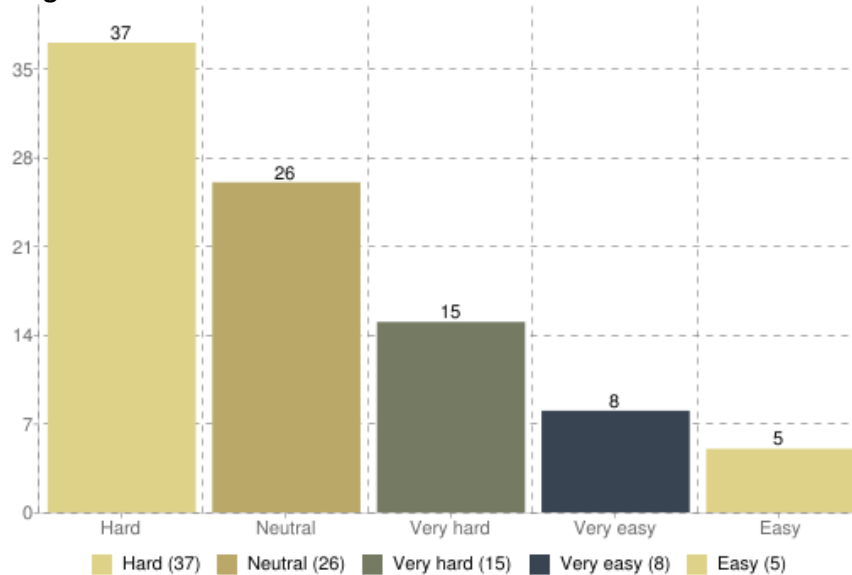
Figure C. What Child Development Information Do You MOST Wish You Knew More About?



Parent Health

Over half of survey respondents rated “maintaining my own health and wellness” as “hard” or “very hard” (See Figure D). In order to understand this further, interviewees were asked about their strategies for managing stress and any barriers they face in taking care of themselves. The most frequently reported strategies that parents find helpful for managing stress revolved around taking a break or having some time to themselves. This could take the form of a bath, a walk, working on a hobby, or breathing.

Figure D. How Hard is it to Maintain Your Own Health and Wellness?



Barriers and Needs

Many parents discussed the importance of needing support in finding and accessing services, such as service navigation. They reported knowing a lot of services available due to child welfare involvement, but that prior to a crisis happening in their family they were not aware of many community-based resources. While they liked the idea of having a parent help line to connect to services, many wanted it to be available 24/7 and stressed the importance of not having a lengthy intake process in order to get questions answered. Finding the time to make a phone call as a parent with a busy work schedule is difficult, and while many were interested in talking to someone in person over the phone, they noted that having multiple points of connection such as text, e-mail, or on-line chat would accommodate the needs of different parents.

While home visits are welcomed by the majority of parents interviewed as convenient and eliminated the need for transportation, others would prefer opportunities to meet other parents in the community and have activities for their children with other children. When asked about how they would change their community to provide what is needed, the following areas were identified as needs: more affordable child care (especially for infants and toddlers), more flexible or drop-in child care for brief respite or emergencies, employment training, more affordable housing, in-patient substance abuse treatment that accommodates children with their parents, free family activities including more indoor play spaces, transportation assistance, safer park spaces, and connection with other parents.

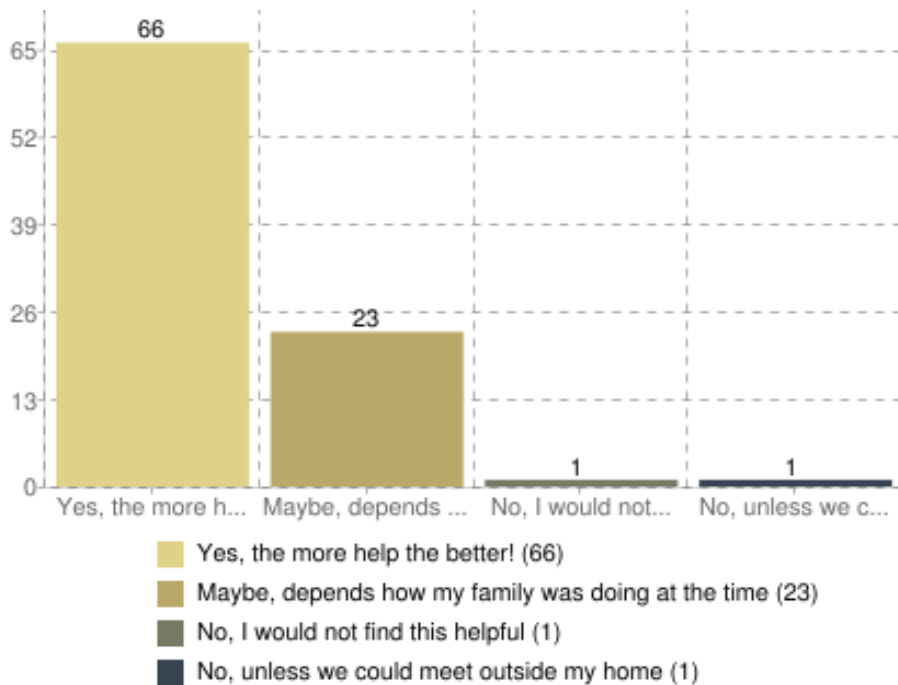
Universally Offered Home Visits

In order to address the challenge of having community-wide impact on reducing child maltreatment, the Family Connects model of offering every newborn one to three home visits in their first 12 weeks of life was first piloted in Durham County, North Carolina in 2008. This model has been replicated in other counties nationally due to its strong evidence base in reducing emergency room costs, increasing positive parenting practices, reducing child welfare investigations, and reducing Postpartum Mood and Anxiety Disorders. By offering every family this care at birth, families who may otherwise be disconnected from services are connected to support to assess their interests and link them to additional services as needed.

Parents were asked about their interest in participating in these services, if they were available in Pierce County. Most survey respondents reported that they would have benefitted from this support when they had

a newborn, with some others stating that they would want to know more before deciding or it would depend on how well their family was doing at the time (See Figure F). The qualitative interviewer was well versed in the Family Connects model, and was able to explain its offerings to parents in order to elicit their feedback. The majority of parents reported wanting this support in their home, due to the convenience. Many reflected on the in-home support they received during the perinatal period through Maternity Support Services, and stated having positive experiences from this support. One mother and one father respectively stated that they were not comfortable with service providers in their homes, but may be interested in the support via phone or meeting elsewhere in the community.

Figure F. If you were a new parent and were offered 1-2 free home visits from a nurse during your baby's first 2 months of life to provide information and a medical check-up, would you be interested in this?



Recommendations

1. Build and Sustain a Centralized Access Point for Family Resources

There is a need for families to easily find support to navigate and connect to the services and resources they need, when they need them. Families who are struggling often have multiple needs covering a range of concerns such as housing, mental health treatment, transportation, and child care. Ensuring that there is a widely known centralized access point for service connection would eliminate the burden of multiple phone calls, and provide expert guidance in informing a family of all available options. This need exists in particular for families of young children, as the early childhood system of support is more fragmented than the school system that begins in Kindergarten. This finding confirms the first recommendation from the 2017 report conducted by Project Child Success based on provider interviews: *0-3 System Navigation in Pierce County*.

Parents appear to be stretched for time and resources while meeting the demands of parenting. A centralized access point must include staffing capacity to follow through on referrals and resources for parents, consistent and accurate maintenance of the resource directory, and continuous quality

improvement to ensure trust in the access point is built. The access point must accommodate parents' variable schedules and provide resources in a timely and efficient manner.

2. Provide Flexible Child Care and Respite Opportunities

Many parents expressed desperation around parenting and not finding enough time for themselves to maintain their own health and wellness. The lack of affordable child care and the difficulty of finding a provider who accepts the child care subsidy, if a parent qualifies, means that many parents are finding it more affordable to stay home with their child while still struggling to make ends meet and missing out on career advancement opportunities. Pierce County does not have a crisis nursery, or a safe place where children can be dropped off for a limited amount of time such as 48 hours.

Parents who are the primary caregiver need flexible options to have a break from their children to complete errands, or simply for self-care. Some parents reported utilizing the Child Watch at the YMCA as the one break from parenting they had during the week, and that they would use the two hours provided not just to exercise but to make phone calls or take a shower uninterrupted.

3. Build Social Connections among Parents and Children

Parents overall are interested in meeting other parents who have children of similar ages, either through support groups, classes, or "parent night out" opportunities with free child care provided. Many wanted to know more about their children's emotional development and mental health, and would be interested in attending trainings with other parents that provide food and transportation. Parents with an only child wanted spaces where their child could play with other children their age, even if they were enrolled in a child care center.

Social isolation is a growing phenomenon in American culture, and parents who have adequate social support are less likely to experience mental health issues. The widespread use of technology platforms and social media should be used to promote accessible opportunities for families to interact in person and to become involved in their local communities.

4. Offering Multiple Access Opportunities and Formats for Services

While not all families are interested in home visiting, most parents surveyed and interviewed in this assessment found home-based services to be more convenient and helpful. Many discussed the difficulty of adjusting to having a newborn, and the positive impact any support they received during this period had on their families and their child. If Pierce County were to offer more nurses or other professionals to support families, the families should be able to choose to receive services in the home, at a public place in the community, or via phone as needed. Some families may need to develop trust with a professional over time before being open to a home visit, so offering support over the phone or outside the home may be a needed first step to meet the family where they are.

Pierce County is a geographically diverse county with vast rural areas and island communities, and it can be difficult to access needed services. Accommodating all families means offering services in multiple formats by culturally diverse professionals who can meet the variety of needs presented by families and move toward greater health equity.

Appendix A. Survey Results

1. Zip Code of Respondents	98198* King	98310* Kitsap	98327	98329	98332	98371	98372
	1	1	2	1	1	6	1
	98373	98374	98375	98387	98391	98397	98402
	1	6	2	1	1	1	1
	98403	98404	98405	98406	98407	98408	98409
	2	4	10	6	8	3	7
	98418	98422	98424	98444	98445	98446	98465
	6	1	1	3	1	1	3
	98466	98467	98498	98499			
4	1	3	1				

2. My children are (select all that apply):	I am pregnant and have no other children	0-4 years old	5-10 years old	11-17 years old	No Selection
		2	69	31	26

3. How many children do you have?	0	1	2	3	4
	1	28	38	20	2
	5	6 or more			
	0	2			

4. I am (select all that apply):	Alaska Native/ American Indian	Asian	African-American/ Black	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Arab
		2	4	7	4	18	70

5. How prepared did you feel when you first became a parent?	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	As prepared as you can be!	Very prepared
		12	46	28

6. Where do you go FIRST for parenting information?	Family and Relatives	Friends	Doctor	Childcare Provider or Teacher	Internet/ Social Media	Books	Other
		36	16	8	2	19	8

7. Parenting is hard! What do you find to be the hardest/easiest?	Very Easy	Easy	Neutral	Hard	Very Hard	No Response
	Finances and meeting basic needs	10	17	25	24	14
Managing my child's behavior	3	12	34	30	12	
Getting support from family/friends	15	29	26	12	8	1

Finding good and affordable childcare	0	4	15	27	45	
Understanding my child's development and meeting education needs	10	36	25	17	2	
Maintaining healthy relationships	13	30	24	22	2	
Maintaining my own health and wellness	8	5	26	37	15	

8. How easy or hard is it to find the following services in your community?	Very Easy	Easy	Neutral/ Don't Know	Hard	Very Hard	No response
Medical Care	23	40	14	14	0	
Mental Health Treatment	6	17	38	21	9	
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Treatment	6	11	60	10	4	
Food and Nutrition	13	26	39	11	1	1
Parenting classes or information	10	29	32	16	3	1
Educational Resources	9	34	26	19	2	1
Housing	6	15	38	18	14	
Job and Career Assistance	6	9	60	12	3	1
Child Development Information	12	36	27	13	2	1

9. What child development information do you MOST wish you knew more about?	Physical Development, Growth, Medical Care	Social Development, building relationships	Emotional Development, understanding feelings, mental health	Academic skills, being ready for school	Other	No Response
	8	11	60	10	1	1

10. Does your child have a primary care doctor?	Yes	No	No response
	88	2	1

11. If you were a new parent and were offered 1-2 free home visits from a nurse during your baby's first 2 months of life to provide information and a medical check-up, would you be interested in this?	Yes, the more help the better!	Maybe, depends how my family was doing at the time	No, unless we could meet outside my home	No, I would not find this helpful
	66	23	1	1

11. (Added later): When you were pregnant, how many prenatal visits did you receive?	0 to 3	4 to 7	8 to 12	13 or more	No Response
	1	8	22	32	1

12. What time is best for you to make a phone call? (Check all that apply)	Early Morning (6-9am)	Morning (9am-12pm)	Afternoon (12pm-5pm)	Evening (5pm or later)	No Response
	16	37	25	33	2

13. How do you prefer to communicate? (Check all that apply)	Phone Call	Texting	E-mail	In Person	Social Media Messaging	Other
		42	65	57	17	15

14. How do you mostly get around?	I own a car	Public transportation	I get a ride with family or friends	Walking or bicycle	Rideshare (Uber, Lyft)	Other	No Response
		86	3	1	0	0	0

15. Is there anything else you would like to share?
The Children's Museum of Tacoma is a great partner in providing and sharing educational and social/emotional development tools.
We are not low income, but we struggle financially. We don't have a lot of extended family support or friend support.
I think it would be beneficial for all parents to get parenting classes and early childhood development knowledge prior to the birth of their baby. It would be nice if this was offered as part of prenatal care. Also if there were educational flyers and news letters mailed home to the parents of each newborn address for the first two-three years of life
Help for those who are in financial hardship but don't qualify for state benefits
I feel as kids get older there is less child focused activities, parenting workshops etc. MS and HS youth still need engaged parents but this tends to be a time people back off and allow freedom. I'd like more education/support for these ages.
What I found most challenging is a clear, simple list of don'ts that covers your whole pregnancy - because you don't see your doctor for several weeks after you know you're pregnant. the person on the phone actually said 'just google it'. But I wanted to know exactly what I could and couldn't do, eat, etc. Also I would love a section on 'advice that has changed recently' e.g. allergies, car seats, etc. it's hard to stay up to date on those!
Really hard to meet other parents because I work full time. No family here to help.
I had to use local breastfeeding resources for both my girls. My 4-year-old may have some sensory issues that I am just learning about from other moms posts in a Facebook mom's group. Social media has helped me with advice and knowing I am not alone in my feelings and struggles of raising tiny humans and connecting with other moms.
Finding affordable childcare that accepts children in a reasonable time frame has been a big stressor. To specify, not preschool, but rather full day child care. It's very difficult to get into places unless you've been on the waitlist for a year. Is this true for other communities?
I see more of a barrier for getting mental health evaluations for patients WITH health insurance rather than state provided coordinated care, and it would be great to have more resources to teach young children (and parents) emotional regulation (and parenting techniques) in a play group setting for free.
I would like to see there be help for how to handle toddler emotions and how to discipline your kids and set boundaries with them.
We are not low income, but we struggle financially. We don't have a lot of extended family support or friend support.
Why doesn't Pierce County have a PEPS program?

Appendix B: Parent Survey Questions

Parent Survey

Did you know that 100s of people across Pierce County are working together to make it easier for parents to find resources? "Help Me Grow" is a county-wide system that supports parents of children from before birth through age 5. A future call center will serve as a central location to provide child development information and connect families to nearby community resources. Through June 2019, community members are planning what Help Me Grow needs to provide for families, and we need your input to make it a reality! If you live in Pierce County and are pregnant or a parent of a minor child under age 18, please share your opinion below.

1. Zip Code *

2. My children are (select all that apply):

- I am pregnant and have no other children
- 0-4 years old
- 5-10 years old
- 11-17 years old

3. How many children do you have?

- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 or more

4. I am (select all that apply):

- Alaska Native / American Indian
- Asian
- African-American / Black
- Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latinx
- White
- Other (specify)

5. How prepared did you feel when you first became a parent?

- Not prepared at all
- Somewhat prepared
- As prepared as you can be!
- Very prepared

6. Where do you go FIRST for parenting information?

- Family and relatives
- Friends
- Doctor
- Child care provider or Teacher
- Internet/Social Media
- Books
- Other

7. Parenting is hard! What do you find to be the hardest or easiest?

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Hard	Very hard
Finances and meeting basic needs					

Managing my child's behavior					
Getting support from family/friends					
Finding good and affordable childcare					
Understanding my child's development and meeting education needs					
Maintaining healthy relationships					
Maintaining my own health and wellness					

8. How easy or hard is it to find the following services in your community?

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral/Don't know	Hard	Very hard
Medical Care					
Mental Health Treatment					
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Treatment					
Food and Nutrition					
Parenting classes or information					
Educational Resources					
Housing					
Job and Career Assistance					
Child Development Information					

9. What child development information do you MOST wish you knew more about?

- Physical development, growth, medical care
- Social development, building relationships
- Emotional development, understanding feelings, mental health
- Academic skills, being ready for school

10. Does your child have a primary care doctor? Yes No

11. When you were pregnant, about how many prenatal visits did you receive?

- 0-3
- 4-7
- 8-12
- 13 or more
- Not applicable

12. If you were a new parent and were offered 1-2 free home visits from a nurse during your baby's first 2 months of life to provide information and a medical check-up, would you be interested in this?

Yes, the more help the better!

Maybe, depends how my family was doing at the time

No, unless we could meet outside my home

No, I would not find this helpful

13. What time is best for you to make a phone call? (Check all that apply)

Early morning (6am-9am)

Morning (9am-12pm)

Afternoon (12pm-5pm)

Early Evening (5pm-7pm)

After 7pm

14. How do you prefer to communicate? (Check all that apply)

Phone call

Texting

E-mail

In person

Social Media messaging

15. How do you mostly get around?

I own a car

Public transportation

I get a ride with family or friends

Walking or bicycle

Rideshare (Uber, Lyft, etc.)

16. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix C: Qualitative Interview Results

Interview questions were grouped into five major themes: Parenting and Family, Access and Services, Child Development and Health, Parent Health, and Barriers and Needs. The common themes from parent responses are recorded below, along with quotes. Over 20 community stakeholders participating in Help Me Grow pilot planning identified the themes from reading the interview text, in order to reduce bias.

Group	Survey Question	Themes	Subthemes	Quotes
Parenting and Family	Tell me about your family.	Single parenting	13 single parents (11 moms and 2 dads)	"I was in foster care myself from age 9-11. Now my family is just my daughter and myself"
		Multiple children	Average of 2 children per parent	"Dad is in and out but we make the best of it"
		Substance abuse		
		Homelessness		
	Living with relatives	"I lost custody of my two oldest children because of drinking"		
	What do you like best about your family?	Love	Love for family and children	"The fact that we can be really open and honest"
		Enjoy time together	Having a bond	"Our foundation is love and we work through all kinds of issues with that foundation"
	What do you like best about your children?	Loving children	Helpful	"How fast they are learning"
		Personality	Smart	"If I'm home doing chores he likes to help"
	What is the best part of being a parent for you?	Enjoy watching them learn	A real desire to see their kids grow and learn	"Trying to do better with my kids than my parents did with me"
		Teaching them things	Personal growth	"I'm a new, better version of me"
	What's the most fun thing you've done with your child/children in the past few months?	Fun letting their kids play	Seeing relatives	"The community events are pretty limited for my daughter because of her needs" [in wheelchair]
		Visits to parks	School events	
		YMCA	Holidays	
		Children's Museum	McDonald's play area	"She's at that age where she wants to be running around with other kids"
	What is the most challenging thing about being a parent?	Need patience	1-on-1 time with other kids	"I think patience and the need to have that with not enough food and sleep"
		Time management	Fear that I'm not doing	

			enough	
	How prepared did you feel when you first became a parent? What would have made you feel even more prepared?	Wasn't prepared at all or thought I was but I wasn't	Being too young or not financially ready	"They need a preparation class in high school to teach you how to find an apartment, do taxes, child care"
		Classes would have helped	Would have felt more prepared with a stable job and housing	"Offering classes as soon as you find out you are pregnant through prenatal care"
	How much support did you have when you were a new parent? Who helped you?	Mostly mom, with some extended family support	Social network is often limited to family	"I did have some help but I was still a kid myself" "I had a doula and that was very helpful. She was amazing...I had a little Postpartum depression after and she helped me with that"
Access and Services	If Pierce County were to offer 1-3 home visits from a nurse for every newborn in the first 12 weeks of life to offer support, would you be interested in this? Please explain why or why not.	Yes	Some would use, some used Maternity Support Services and had a good experience, and 2 were distrustful of outsiders in the home	"At-risk populations are not going to let people in their house. It would probably work for middle class, working poor. But for at-risk population you need a peer to be available on call, stipend, to be able to explain the services and why it should be helpful. There needs to be a special approach for at-risk populations" "That I think is fabulous! ... Especially when I had my daughter no one really told me what to expect after she was born"
	Have you been able to find good and affordable child care?	Child care Subsidy	Affordable child care is a huge barrier for families	"For every person who takes advantage of the system, there are 95% of parents like me who are working really hard to barely make it"
		Early Learning		
	What services for families in your community do you use? (Libraries, parks, medical providers, etc.)	YMCA	More affordable family experiences	"Overall there are lots of resources, but new parents and young parents don't know about them. It's especially hard for people moving into the area to try to figure out" "We need someone to guide us on getting into programs" "If you're not in CPS [child
		Park		
		Library	Play groups	
Parent-Child Assistance Program		Services for families not		

		(PCAP)	involved in the child welfare system	protective services] it's hard to find any services really"
		Head Start		
		Church		
		WIC		"I have a car so that helps. We go to anything free. If they had more free indoor events we'd probably go"
	If you use specific websites to find parenting information, please list these.	Google search	Need parenting hotline	"We just don't know where to get help from"
		Some Facebook	Need peer mentoring	"I didn't have that much support from my immediate family or my husband. So I got on the internet, that helped a lot"
Child Development and Health	Would you be interested in attending trainings with other parents on child development topics? Please explain why or why not, and what incentives are needed.	Yes, most would be interested in attending	In-person parenting classes with child care and incentives	"If the information is out there you have to keep saying it and make sure parents know the information. Don't just hand us stuff, literally talk to us." "The time it is offered is huge. Ask parents what time works? Sometimes on a weekend day more will be off work."
		Need to provide child care or kid friendly training events	Vouchers for transportation or gas cards	
		Gift cards	Tickets to zoo or community family activities	
		Food		
	If so, what topics would you most want to learn about in person with other families?	Communicating	Language development	"Learning patience with your children and remembering that they are kids and they're learning too. Just to know that your kid is not the only one - just to get parents together and talk to other parents about the stuff they do."
		Discipline	More support and training wanted on basic parenting	
		Healthy parenting	Nutrition	
		Managing behavior	Temper tantrums	
	Does your child have a primary care doctor? If so, how is your relationship with them?	Yes, most had a primary care doctor	Helpful but not first source for parenting information	"They have Saturday hours too. They actually answer the phone - you can get someone in the office."
		Doctor is helpful		

Parent Health	How do you care for yourself when you feel stress?	Bath	Without child care, many parents reported taking a bath, shower, or just a break in the bathroom.	“Everybody needs that break so you can be a good parent.” “Being aware of my triggers when I get overwhelmed...and reaching out to my support team”
		Walk		
		Music		
		Prayer/Church		
What barriers do you face in trying to maintain your own health and wellness?	Time	Financial	Prioritize children’s appointments above their own	“Stuff for the kids gets in the way and is more important. But this year I know I need to take care of myself” “I sometimes feel like I don't have time to myself. I feel like I'm on my own a lot.”
		Chronic health issues		
Barriers and Needs	What are the barriers to accessing services?	Transportation	Transportation is a barrier to accessing services	“They've [DCYF] helped me to get things back on track. I'm just going to take the services they give me and make the best out of it” “I didn't know how to navigate the system and the system isn't built to be easy to navigate” “I tried to find in-patient treatment where [my daughter] could stay with me, and it was impossible” “I didn't know about all these support centers and resources until I am now court ordered to take parenting class.”
		Money	Many don't have a car.	
		Putting off needed medical appointments	Lack of in-patient substance abuse treatment that accommodates families	
	What do you wish your child had more of? Materials or experiences	More community events for experiences	Time with caring adults	“More experiences in the community doing things - I can't afford to take them places like I want to. That's why I'm always googling what is free.”
		Indoor spaces to play	Time with other children playing	
	If you could change your community to offer exactly what is needed for your child and others, what would be different?	Affordable and accessible housing	More job opportunities and training	“Indoor play areas that are free other than McDonald’s. Some things that kids need are so expensive - if they had a sliding scale for certain things...like buying a car seat, stroller, diapers, wipes - depending on your income.”
		Free or affordable child care	Safety in community	
		Drop-in or flexible child care	Respite – parent nights out, etc.	

Appendix D: Qualitative Interview Questions

Parent Interview

The purpose of this interview is to understand the needs of parents with young children in Pierce County, and to understand what support they would like from their community. The information will be used to assist the planning teams designing the Help Me Grow framework for our county, a parent helpline that connects caregivers and their children to resources and support for child development. For more info visit www.helpmegrowpierce.org

About parent (if willing to share):

Zip Code	
Ethnicity	
Gender	
# of children	
Ages of children	

1. Tell me about your family.
2. What do you like best about your family?
3. What do you like best about your children?
4. What is the best part of being a parent for you?
5. What is the most challenging thing about being a parent?
6. How do you care for yourself when you feel stress?
 - a. What barriers do you face in trying to maintain you own health and wellness?
7. How prepared did you feel when you first became a parent? Looking back now, what would have made you feel even more prepared?
8. How much support did you have when you were a new parent? Who helped you?
9. If Pierce County were to offer 1-3 home visits from a nurse for every newborn in the first 12 weeks of life to offer support, would you be interested in this? Please explain why or why not.
10. Have you been able to find good and affordable child care?
 - a. If not, what are the barriers?
11. What services for families in your community do you use? (Libraries, parks, medical providers, etc.)
 - a. What are the barriers to connecting to services in your community?
12. If you use specific websites to find parenting information, please list these.
13. What child development information do you wish you knew more about?

14. Would you be interested in attending trainings with other parents on child development topics? Please explain why or why not, and what might make you want to attend (free food, child care, gift cards, etc.)
15. If so, what topics would you most want to learn about in person with other families?
16. Does your child have a primary care doctor? If so, how is your relationship with them?
17. What is it like to be a parent of a young child in Pierce County?
18. What do you wish your child had more of?
19. If you could change your community to offer exactly what is needed for your child and others, what would it look like?
20. What time of day is best for you to make or receive a phone call?
21. What method of communication do you prefer – call, texting, e-mail, other?
22. Is transportation a barrier for you? Do you prefer to meet with someone in your home or at a location in the community?
23. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix E: Word Cloud

