

# Integrating System Concepts with Mixed Research Methods: the Cross-Site Evaluation of Supporting Evidence-Based Home Visiting Grantees

August 30, 2011, Washington, DC

2011 National Child Welfare Evaluation Summit

Margaret Hargreaves, Ph.D., M.P.P.



---

**Supporting Evidence-Based  
Home Visiting to Prevent  
Child Maltreatment**

---

---

**MATHEMATICA**  
Policy Research, Inc.

---

# Acknowledgements

---

- **Sponsoring agency: the Children's Bureau (CB) within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**
- **Federal project officer: Melissa Lim Brodowski**
- **My colleagues on the work underlying this presentation:**
  - **Kim Boller, Debra Strong, Diane Paulsell, Patricia Del Grosso, Heather Zaveri, Heather Koball, Russ Cole, and others at Mathematica Policy Research**
  - **Deborah Daro, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago**

# Evidence-Based Home Visiting (EBHV) Grants

---

- **In 2008 ACF's Children's Bureau funded 17 grantees in 15 states to:**
  - **Select home visiting program models that were evidence-based (as defined for purposes of the grant)**
  - **Leverage the grant funds to build infrastructure to implement, scale up, and sustain their selected programs with fidelity to their evidence-based models**
  - **Participate in local and cross-site evaluations**
- **The grantees have engaged partner organizations to build infrastructure and implement and sustain home visiting programs over a 5-year period**

# Grantees Selected Several Home Visiting Models

<b>Home Visiting Program Model</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Number of Grantees Selecting Model</b>
<b>Nurse-Family Partnership</b>	<b>First-time pregnant women &lt; 28 weeks gestation</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Healthy Families America</b>	<b>Pregnant women or new parents within two weeks of infant's birth</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Parents as Teachers</b>	<b>Birth or prenatal to age 5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SafeCare</b>	<b>Birth to age 5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Triple P</b>	<b>Birth to age 12</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Koball et al. (2009). Grantee plan updates.

# Diverse Grantees and Partners

<b>Organization Type</b>	<b>Grantees (n=17)</b>	<b>Partners (n=226)</b>
Local or state agency	41%	35%
Other non-profit organization	35%	17%
Health care organization/Hospital	12%	5%
Community-based service provider	6%	11%
University	6%	9%
Foundation	0%	1%
Developer or support organization for home visiting model	0%	8%
Other (such as school districts, advocacy groups)	0%	13%

Source: 2010 EBHV Partner Survey, Mathematica Policy Research

# Partners' EBHV Goals also Diverse

	Total (Percentage)
Implement/Operate HV	21
Build HV Continuum of Care	11
Establish Partnerships and Collaboration	9
Prevent Child Abuse/Neglect	8
Grantee Specific or Other	8
Secure or Sustain Funding	8
Improve Parent Outcomes	7
Build Infrastructure	6
Improve Quality or Evaluate HV	5
Build Community and Political Support	5
Improve Child Outcomes	5
Communicate to Partners and/or Public	3
Train, Coach, or Supervise HV Workforce	3
Plan and Develop EBHV	2

Source: 2010 EBHV Partner Survey, Mathematica Policy Research

---

# Cross-Site Evaluation Design

# Evaluation Overview

---

- **Mathematica and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago funded to conduct a six-year cross-site evaluation**
- **Goal: identify successful strategies for adopting, implementing and sustaining high-quality home visiting programs**
- **The evaluation was designed using a participatory approach, building on local evaluation plans, with minimal data requirements and utilization-focused reporting**

# Systems Evaluation Concepts

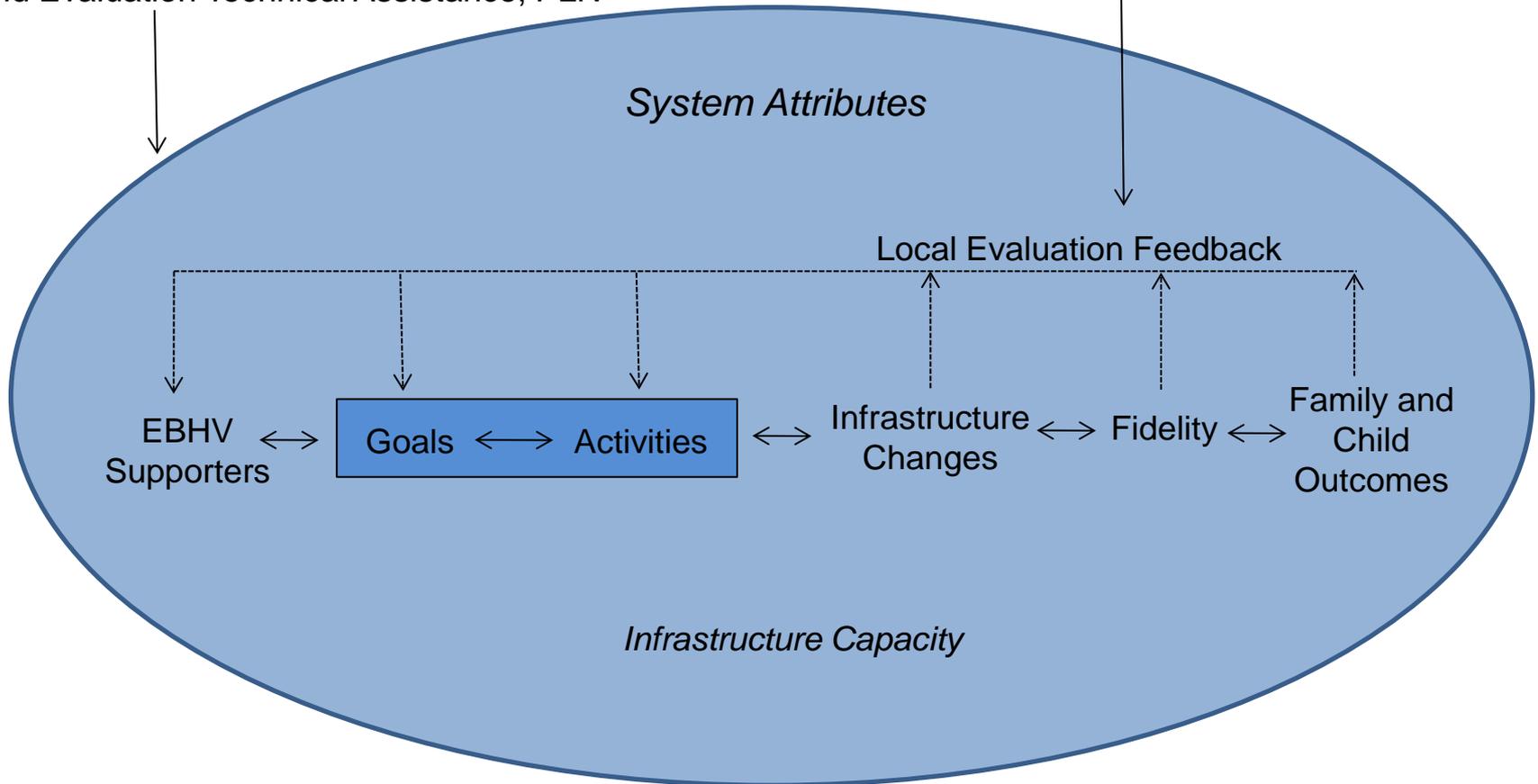
---

- **Grantee-specific systems: collective groups of interrelated, interdependent individuals and organizations that directly or indirectly influence child abuse prevention**
- **Through systems change activities, grantees develop infrastructure capacity to improve implementation, spread, and sustainability of EBHV programs**
- **Systems change: changes in the scope (boundaries), relationships, and perspectives of those involved, directly or indirectly, in grantees' EBHV systems**

# EBHV Evaluation Conceptual Framework

Grant Funds and Requirements, Program and Evaluation Technical Assistance, PLN

Cross-Site Evaluation Feedback



Source: Hargreaves and Paulsell 2009, adapted from Hodges 2007.

PLN = peer learning network.

# Evaluation Domains and Research Questions

---

- **Systems change** – How did grantees build infrastructure capacity to implement with fidelity, scale up, and sustain evidence-based home visiting programs?
- **Fidelity** – Were the home visiting programs implemented and delivered with fidelity?
- **Costs** – How much does the delivery and support of each home visiting program model cost?
- **Child and family outcomes** – Do these programs improve child and family outcomes?
- **Process** – How did grantees plan and implement their grant initiatives?

# Mixed Evaluation Approaches

---

- **Developmental:** Track grantees' development of infrastructure; document evolution of logic models, activities and results; use social network analysis to measure networked boundaries, relationships and perspectives
- **Formative:** Monitor planning, implementation, and fidelity to evidence-based models; recommend improvements in projects
- **Summative:** Develop and collect child and family outcome measures; review findings of outcome evaluations

# Systems: Developmental Evaluation Approach

---

- **How do grantees define system? Who or what is in their systems? What does change involve and look like? How to measure systems change?**
- **How do grantees adapt within their complex systems in response to their changing situations and environments?**
- **Nested levels: core operations, organizational, community, state, and national**
- **Infrastructure capacities: planning, operations, workforce development, funding, collaboration, communication, political support, evaluation/data**

# Systems: Mixed Evaluation Methods

---

- **Grantee-specific evaluation plans and theories of change that grantees update in response to critical events and other changes in their plans and environments**
- **2 waves of social network analysis surveys to track change in scope, relationships and perspectives of partners in each grantee system.**
- **Grantee-specific partner reports**
- **Tracking of grantees' development through calls, progress reports, site visits, and peer learning network calls**

---

# Early Evaluation Findings

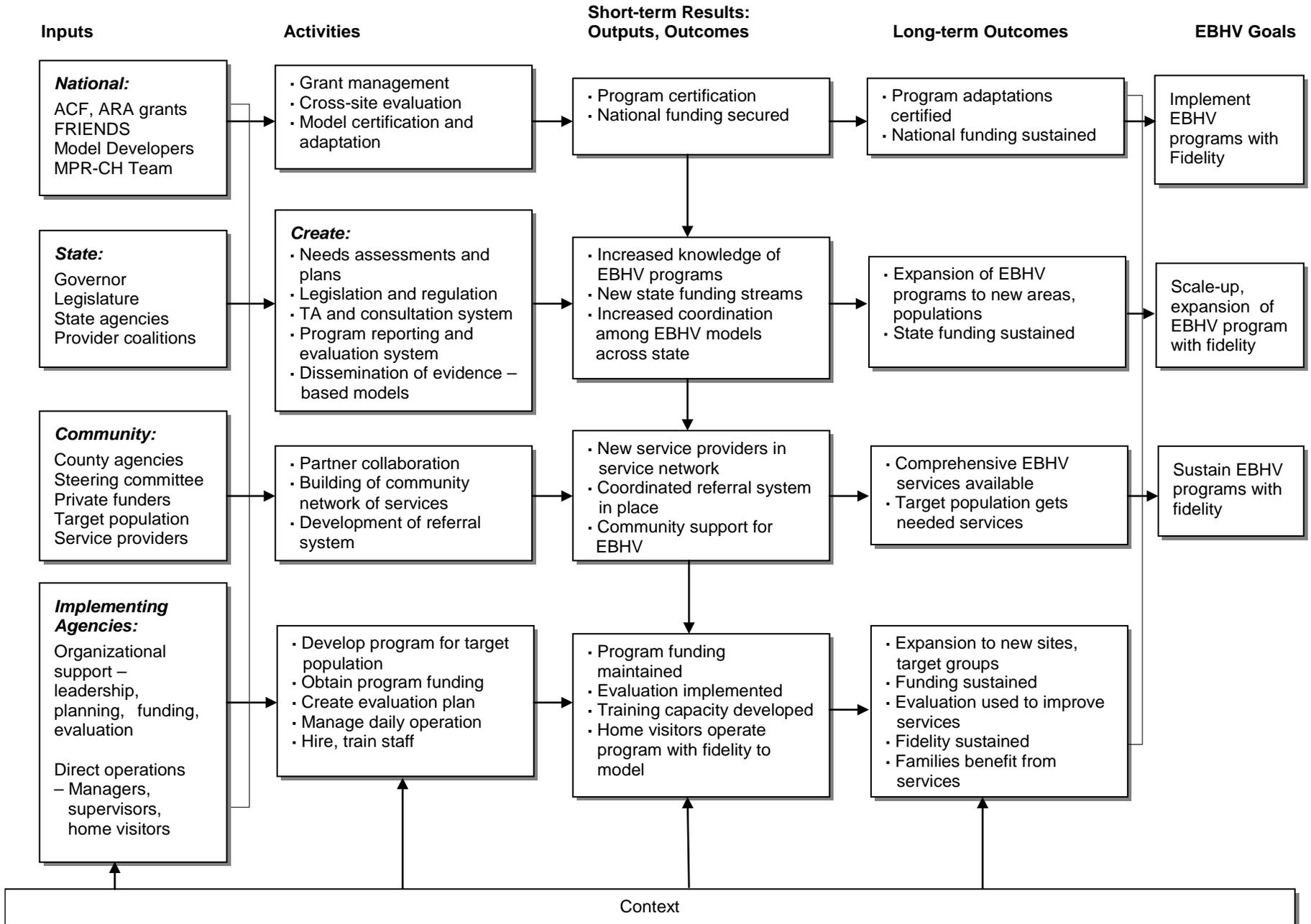
# Grantees Working in Complex Environments

---

- **EBHV programs are operating in complex, dynamic environments, supported by networks of collaborative partners working at the organization, community, state, and national levels**
- **An unstable economy with severe state budget cuts and loss of EBHV funds led grantees to focus on building fiscal capacity – sometimes at the expense of other infrastructure development and implementation of local evaluations**
- **Partners were significant in carrying out joint activities, sharing resources, and making decisions**

Source: “Assessing the Need for Evidence-Based Home Visiting: Experiences of Grantees” and Recruiting and Training Home Visitors: Experiences of Grantees,” Mathematica Policy Research

## Sample Evidence-Based Home Visiting Grant Logic Model



# Grantees Building 3 Kinds of Infrastructure

---

- **Program foundation**
  - Planning
  - Collaboration
- **Program implementation support**
  - Operations
  - Workforce development
- **Sustaining the program**
  - Fiscal
  - Evaluation
  - Communications
  - Community and political buy-in and support

Source: "Assessing the Need for Evidence-Based Home Visiting: Experiences of Grantees," Mathematica Policy Research

# Partners are Essential to Infrastructure Building

---

- **Grantees and their partners most active in foundation building activities and least involved in implementation activities**
- **Some systems more active than others in building foundation and sustaining infrastructure**
- **An important predictor of the level of system infrastructure activity was goal alignment – where partners shared goals, there was more foundation and sustaining activity**
- **Within systems, partners were more active in building infrastructure when they perceived that the quality of collaboration among their EBHV partners was high**

# Next Steps

---

- **Local evaluations**
  - Capture lessons learned and add to the literature through process studies and family and child outcome studies.
- **National cross-site evaluation**
  - Continue documenting adaptations and enhancements

# For More Information:

---

- **Meg Hargreaves**

- [mhargreaves@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:mhargreaves@mathematica-mpr.com)

- (617) 301-8994

- **Melissa Lim Brodowski**

- [melissa.brodowski@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:melissa.brodowski@acf.hhs.gov)

- (202) 205-2629

- <http://www.supportingebhv.org/>