



News from *Help Me Grow* National

National Center News

National Center Staffing Changes

We are happy to announce that Sara Sibley has been promoted and is now the Program Manger for *Help Me Grow* National. As many of you know, Sara has demonstrated exemplary skills in all areas of her work. We are proud of all her accomplishments. We will be hiring a new administrative assistant in the next month to help manage the Center. Stay tuned for further details.

HMG National Launches Facebook Page!

The National Center is thrilled to share [our new Facebook page](#) with you. We'll post breaking news about our fantastic HMG affiliate states and the National Center, pass along interesting news about all things early childhood, and keep abreast of opportunities that might be of use to affiliate states. Please take a look, let us know what would be helpful to see on the page — and "Like" us! We hope to reach our first 100 Likes by summer's end.

HMG Quarterly Meetings

This week we begin our first round of quarterly conference calls from all four regions: East, Southeastern, Central and Western. We have 20 affiliate states joining the calls. We will be sharing information from all of the regional calls and look forward to this new technical assistance opportunity. If you are interested in joining the call and haven't received the details please contact Sara (860-837-6232 or Smartel@ccmckids.org).

HMG National Visits Michigan

Help Me Grow founder Paul Dworkin and Joanna Bogin, *HMG* director, visited the [HMG Michigan](#) team on June 18 and 19, 2013, for a productive, inspiring visit packed with meetings and events. *HMG* Michigan has done amazing, prolific work since it launched

earlier in 2013. [Read more about their work](#), including five *HMG* public service announcements produced for local public television.

Next *HMG* National Webinar

Our next webinar will take place on August 6. The topic is Partnering with Reach Out & Read and Help Me Grow. For more information, contact Sara Sibley at 860-837-6232 or Smartel@ccmckids.org.

***HMG* Affiliate Update: Alameda County, California**

[First 5 Alameda County](#) has developed a new marketing material: a postcard that informs parents about developmental screening and the referral process to Help Me Grow. They use these cards, printed in English, Spanish, and Chinese, with pediatric sites that are implementing developmental screening. [Check out the First 5 postcards here](#).

***HMG* Affiliate Update: Utah**

Recently, longtime [Utah Parent Champion Janae Moss](#) was selected by Utah Business magazine for their 2013 "[30 Women to Watch](#)" feature. In conjunction, the magazine held a social media contest: each of the 30 women had the chance to win \$1,000 cash and a \$15,000 ad campaign for the charity of their choice by garnering the most votes. Janae chose [Help Me Grow Utah](#), and after two weeks of campaigning, she won -- with more than 800 votes over the next closest contestant. [Read more here](#).

Journal Article on E.I. Points to Success of *HMG*

In a commentary for the journal [Pediatric News](#), Kevin Marks, M.D., examines the inequities in early intervention across the country. In noting the high rate of EI enrollment in Connecticut, he singles out *Help Me Grow* as a deciding factor. "This glaring difference [between Georgia and Connecticut EI enrollment] is likely because of [Connecticut's Help Me Grow program](#), which fosters early detection, referral and care coordination services, but sadly, numerous other states lack this type of infrastructure altogether." Read Dr. Marks' thoughts on [expanding EI services nationwide](#).

AMCHP Publishes Compendium to Improve Birth Outcomes

In July 2012, AMCHP released [Forging a Comprehensive Initiative to Improve Birth Outcomes and Reduce Infant Mortality](#) to help states meet the goals of these initiatives and capitalize on the momentum around reducing infant mortality. This compendium is a synthesis of policy and program options that states can use in planning and implementing comprehensive initiatives to address infant mortality. Recently, national initiatives have encouraged state and community partners to enhance or develop comprehensive approaches for improving birth outcomes, such as the HRSA Infant Mortality Collaborative, the ASTHO Healthy Babies Project, and the March of Dimes Healthy Babies are Worth the Wait. Many of these projects are taking place in Help Me

Grow affiliate states. [Read the complete compendium](#) and other AMCHP resources on infant mortality.

Connecticut Passes Screening and Referral Legislation

A section of the budget implementer bill passed earlier this month in Connecticut includes a win for young children involved in the child welfare system. Beginning in October 2013, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) must ensure all children under age three with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect are screened for developmental and social-emotional delays using validated assessment tools. Screenings must be administered every six months, and Part C Early Intervention must refer children exhibiting delays for evaluation. The screening and referral program will be expanded to include children under age three who are served through DCF's differential response program in July 2015. [Read more.](#)

Iowa Supports Young Children's Healthy Mental Development

The Iowa state legislature recently appropriated an additional \$1 million to the [1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative](#). This organization bears interesting similarities to the *HMG*. It is a public-private partnership that assists health care providers in implementing standardized, research-based tools to better identify the full range of family needs, including caregiver depression and family stress, during well-child visits. When needs are identified, families are referred to a 1st Five care coordinator who links them with appropriate services. The care coordinator follows up with the family on a regular basis to ensure they are receiving the services they need and keeps the referring physician informed of the patient's status. The initiative targets all young children birth to five and their families, with a goal of universal surveillance and screening. Eighty-three medical practices representing 284 health care providers have participated since 1st Five began in 2007, impacting nearly 77,000 children. In those five years, 1st Five received about 5,000 referrals and made approximately 12,000 connections to local resources for families. [Read more.](#)

2013 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being

The [Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2013 KIDS COUNT® Data Book](#) provides a detailed picture of how children are faring in the United States. In addition to ranking states on overall child well-being, the *Data Book* ranks states in four domains: Economic Well-Being, Education, Health, and Family and Community. To find more information related to the 2013 KIDS COUNT Data Book, or to create your own customized maps, graphs or charts, visit the Data Book home page. [Read more about the Data Book here.](#)

Video on Importance of Investing in Early Childhood

["Change the First Five Years and You Change Everything"](#) is a four-minute video from The Ounce of Prevention Fund that makes a compelling argument for investing in early childhood programs, particularly for low-income families. As [the video description](#) notes, "evidence-based programs coach low-income parents on how to best support their child's education at school and at home starting before the child is born. Only by supporting the family can we narrow the

achievement gap and break the cycle of poverty.” The video could be useful when speaking with legislators and funders about investing in *Help Me Grow* systems.

Parent Cafés on YouTube

[Alameda County First Five](#), an *HMG* California affiliate, has produced two short videos about Parent Cafés. These small-group events encourage the development of Strengthening Families Protective Factors, including increased social connections and friendship; increased cross-cultural connections; increased parent leadership; therapeutic emotional support; increased parenting knowledge and skills; and improved communication and listening skills. Watch and share the videos [here](#) and [here](#).

New Policy Paper: “Medicaid Funding of Community-Based Prevention”

[Nemours](#), a non-profit children’s health organization, has published a [new policy paper](#) that outlines five myths about Medicaid financing of prevention; provides state examples to debunk the myths; discusses payment reforms that have the potential to align incentives with improved health outcomes and support a broader spectrum of prevention services; and provides policy recommendations for CMS, as well as state and federal policymakers in order to increase Medicaid funding of community-based prevention initiatives.

Toyota Family Learning Initiative

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) is accepting applications for its new nationwide initiative: Toyota Family Learning, a three-year, \$175,000 grant that will support the implementation of “services that engage families in learning together, mentoring other families in learning together, and family service learning projects.” See the [description](#) for more details.

Early Childhood Education State Fact Sheets

The White House has released [state-by-state](#) fact sheets about increasing access to high-quality early childhood education. Select a state - or Puerto Rico - to see a PDF fact sheet on the president’s plan to increase access to high-quality early childhood education.