

The *Help Me Grow* Manual



We are pleased to introduce the newly revised *Help Me Grow* Manual. Whether you are a new or long-standing affiliate, I and the team at the *Help Me Grow* National Center appreciate your enthusiasm for creating a *Help Me Grow* system in your State. We are honored to work with you and your team to build a system emphasizing the early detection of vulnerable children at-risk for adverse developmental and behavioral outcomes and the connection of these children and their families to community-based services and supports.

We hope you will find the Manual comprehensive, informative and easy to access. The content supports the core components and structural requirements that are essential to maintaining fidelity to the system. We acknowledge that this is an ongoing project that we will continue to modify and expand, as needed.

Help Me Grow National is pleased to provide states with information, resources, and support to assist in the replication of *Help Me Grow*. This manual is an example of the benefits of membership in the *Help Me Grow* National Network, which provides affiliate states member-only access to these resources and information.

This Manual could not have been created without the support of and contributions from our affiliate network, the staff at *Help Me Grow* National and, especially, our marketing and social media professional, Becky Karush.

Please contact us at *Help Me Grow* National with your questions. We are excited and gratified to help you help at-risk children and their families in your State.



Best regards,

Paul Dworkin, MD, Founder and Director



www.HelpMeGrowNational.org

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What Is *Help Me Grow*?

Help Me Grow is a unique, comprehensive, and integrated statewide system designed to address the need for early identification of children at risk for developmental and/or behavioral problem, and then to link these children and their families to community-based developmental and behavioral services and supports.

Why *Help Me Grow* Is Needed

Undetected and untreated behavioral and developmental problems in children can have a profound impact on the lives of children and families and on our society. Mental health, education, and juvenile justice costs are demonstrably higher when such problems are not managed.

Nationwide, it is estimated that 12 to 16 percent of American children experience developmental, behavioral and/or emotional delays or problems. Experts agree that early detection of at-risk children offers the best hope for optimal outcomes. Yet current early detection efforts are primarily focused on children with significant delays and disorders. Further, eligibility for early intervention programs typically requires significant evidence of delays and precludes the provision of services based on risk for *potential* or *subsequent* delay.

Even when the needs of at-risk children are recognized and appropriate programs and services are identified, connecting children to such services often proves difficult. In most cases, successful linkage requires knowledge of programs and eligibility requirements and persistence in overcoming barriers.

Many states have some of the necessary components for a comprehensive, coordinated system for the early detection and referral of at-risk children. However, few states have a statewide system that is integrated, comprehensive, and effective.

Use of the *Help Me Grow* system has been shown to **improve access to services for children at risk, encourage collaboration across sectors, and lower costs.**



The *Help Me Grow* National Network

***Help Me Grow* Washington Video**



This moving [5-minute video](#) features a mother who found help for her one-year-old daughter through *Help Me Grow* Washington.

Learn more at www.parenthelp123.org

Core Components & Structural Requirements

The four core components of a comprehensive *Help Me Grow* system are:

1. *Centralized telephone access point* for connection of children and their families to services and care coordination
2. *Community and family outreach* to promote the use of *HMG* and to provide networking opportunities among families and service providers
3. *Child health provider outreach* to support early detection and early intervention
4. *Data collection and analysis* to understand all aspects of the *HMG* system, including the identification of gaps and barriers

The three structural requirements for building an *Help Me Grow* system are:

1. *An organizing entity*
2. *A strategy for expanding statewide over time*
3. *The implementation of a continuous quality improvement plan*



The *Help Me Grow* National Network

***Help Me Grow* Utah & the National Network**

“We have networked with multiple affiliate states through phone calls and emails. We have found that this affiliation has helped us to articulate our methods and means of executing *Help Me Grow* and made it possible to discuss problems within our system and how to make changes. We have talked to Colorado, California, South Carolina, Delaware, New York and Florida. The national team has also facilitated discussions and webinars for all affiliates on timely topics. They have also been instrumental in highlighting affiliates’ creativity so that we can learn from each other.”

Learn more at www.helpmegrowutah.org



Members of the *Help Me Grow* National Network at the 2012 *Help Me Grow* National Forum.

The History of *Help Me Grow* Replication

Over the past ten years, *Help Me Grow* Connecticut (CT), an initiative of the Children's Trust Fund within the State's Department of Social Services, has not only successfully identified at-risk children, but has also effectively and efficiently linked them and their families to services.

This has been accomplished through a state level partnership among CT's Department of Public Health, Department of Developmental Disabilities Services, Department of Education, the CT Children's Trust Fund within the Department of Social Services, and a specialized call center housed at the CT United Way/2-1-1. This state level partnership supports the involvement of pediatric primary care practices, early care and education professionals, families, and community providers at the grass roots level.

In 2005, with support from the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, California, *Help Me Grow* Orange County (*HMG OC*) became the first replication site of the Connecticut *Help Me Grow* model. Experts knowledgeable in the *HMG CT* system provided technical assistance and support to the *HMG OC* planning activities.

Expansion of replication efforts continued in 2008 with a grant from The Commonwealth Fund to Connecticut Children's Medical Center. The grant supported the provision of technical assistance to five states selected through a competitive application process.

Sites selected were in Colorado, Kentucky, New York, Oregon, and South Carolina. Replication activities are ongoing in these states. Effective May 2010, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation began support for the provision of technical assistance for the replication of the *HMG* system to 16 states over 3 years.

The addition of 10 more replication sites began in December 2010. These new *HMG* affiliates were Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Utah and Washington

As of June 2013, Michigan, the District of Columbia (The District), and West Virginia have been added as affiliates. A total of 19 states including the District are currently part of the National Network, with more beginning the affiliation process.

For more background on *Help Me Grow*, please visit www.HelpMeGrowNational.org.

States affiliated with the *Help Me Grow* National Center use the *Help Me Grow* system to implement effective, universal, early surveillance and screening for all children, and then link them to existing quality programs.

Building *Help Me Grow*

BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE

Select an Organizing Entity / Structural Requirement

Designate a Program Manager

Identify & Recruit Leadership Team Members (ongoing)

Create a Leadership Team

Coordinate a *Help Me Grow* National Site Visit & Host a Community Meeting

Depending on your state's needs, this step may take place earlier in the process.

BUILDING THE SYSTEM

Design & Implement the Core Components

Centralized
Telephone Access

Child Health
Provider Outreach

Community &
Family Outreach

Data Collection &
Analysis

SUSTAINING THE SYSTEM

Establish Sustainable Funding (ongoing)

This work may begin earlier in the process.

Design & Implement a Plan for Statewide Expansion / Structural Requirement

It is advisable to develop a vision for statewide expansion early in the process.

Develop Continuous Quality Improvement / Structural Requirement

Your Help Me Grow system may follow a different path than the diagram above. Building a Help Me Grow system isn't a rigid process; it is designed to adapt to the needs and strengths of your community in order to support and maximize your resources for children at developmental and/or behavioral risk.

Becoming an Affiliate

The *Help Me Grow* system is specifically designed to help states organize and leverage existing resources in order to best serve families with children at-risk.

Affiliation with the *Help Me Grow* National Network provides states with the guidance and technical assistance needed to seamlessly implement a system reform that promotes both early detection of and service delivery for children at risk of developmental and behavioral problems.

Affiliate states also find that implementation of an *HMG* system improves their ability to inform policy, programs, and legislation with critical concepts from early brain research that have a positive, far-reaching impact on young children's healthy development. This includes maternal and child health, public health, and health safety net programs.

The *Help Me Grow* National Center brings interested states into affiliation as they demonstrate readiness to move toward fidelity to the system's core components and structural requirements, as well as a willingness to meet the requirements of affiliation.



The *Help Me Grow* National Network

***Help Me Grow* Connecticut in Action**

During a follow-up interview for a 2012 *Help Me Grow* Connecticut study of parents served by the system, a mother of a two-year-old stated, "I don't know what I would have done without *Help Me Grow* and that is the understatement of my life."

She had called seeking support for her son, who was exhibiting aggressive behaviors both at home and child care. Given his frequent ear infections, she had already taken him to doctors to ensure that he was healthy.



The *Help Me Grow* Care Coordinator referred the family to a community agency that provides mental health consultation services. The provider met with the parents and child care staff, observed the child at home and at the child care center, and provided specific strategies to help with his behaviors.

"I now feel like I am not the only one out there," the mother said. "Now, he is less aggressive at home. Some of his behaviors have stopped and he is not harming himself any longer."

Image David Castillo Dominici/FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Learn more at www.ctunitedway.org

Benefits of Affiliation

Affiliation to the *Help Me Grow* National Center and payment of the annual membership fee provides Affiliate States the following:

- Use of the *Help Me Grow* name, logo and tagline
- Regional technical assistance conference calls held quarterly
- Access to the comprehensive Building a *Help Me Grow* System manual
- Access to the resources of the affiliates-only section of the National website
- Use of common indicators reports
- Access to e-newsletters, research, and webinars
- Invitations to participate in the annual National Forums, regional peer-to-peer activities, and summits
- Support for federal and state advocacy, including policy briefs

Additional technical assistance is available on a fee-for-service basis (see page 12).



The *Help Me Grow* National Network

***Help Me Grow* Alabama & the National Network**

“*Help Me Grow* National Forums and Regional Peer-to-Peer meetings have been an invaluable source of ideas, insight, and information. The camaraderie developed at these events makes it much easier throughout the year to seek out individuals in other states who have experience or may be able to help with particular concerns. Face-to-face meetings with peers have been immensely valuable as *HMG* Alabama grows”

Learn more at helpmegrowal.blogspot.com



Jane Witowski (*HMG* South Carolina), Joanna Bogin (*HMG* National), Patsy Hampton (*HMG* California) at the Fourth Annual Home Visiting Summit in Washington, D.C., January 2014

Requirements of Affiliation

Affiliation will be contingent on a sustained fidelity to the *Help Me Grow* system and fulfillment of the following responsibilities of affiliation.

- Annual membership fee
- Agree to contract with *Help Me Grow* National for on-going technical assistance as part of the annual Affiliate Membership fee, as well as any recommended targeted technical assistance and support (see next page)
- Designation of a project lead that serves as a local convener/facilitator of planning and related meetings for the *Help Me Grow* Leadership Team
- Creation of a Leadership Team with identified partners who are committed to implementing *Help Me Grow* in their state
- Participation in regularly scheduled Regional quarterly calls with *Help Me Grow* National staff
- Participation in webinars and learning collaboratives
- Funding of travel, lodging and meals for at least two participants to attend *Help Me Grow* annual forums
- Sharing of relevant marketing materials, data and documents with *Help Me Grow* National, including contributions to the *Help Me Grow* National website and annual Forums
- Sharing of agreed-upon common indicators data with *Help Me Grow* National
- Demonstration of a commitment to fidelity to the model, always including the four core components (see page 6)
- Establishing a plan for the three structural requirements

[The *Help Me Grow* National Network Affiliate State Profiles](#)

Help Me Grow National

Additional Technical Assistance

Listed below are the types of initial Technical Assistance *Help Me Grow* National can provide to a state beyond the benefits of membership. This assistance is provided on a fee-for-service basis.

Initial Site Visit

Three-day preliminary site visit by National Center staff to meet those involved in Affiliate State's early childhood systems, programs, and services and to assess the unique strengths and needs of the community.

Activities can include preparation and site visit follow-up report. These items can be added in or taken out depending on the budget.

In preparation for an initial site visit, National Center staff will review documents, conduct interviews with critical stakeholders, and research relevant services, agencies, and community-based efforts.

Site Visit Follow-Up Report

Help Me Grow National will produce a site visit report/strategic plan for implementing a *Help Me Grow* system and obtain consensus from the Affiliate State's team on the report recommendations and plans for implementing them. The *Help Me Grow* system will be designed to assist Affiliate State's early childhood programs, providers and services in effectively and efficiently linking young children and young children and their families to needed developmental services and supports and related community resources.

Ongoing Consultation Based on Site Visit

Ongoing consultation will be based on key components of a *Help Me Grow* system, including the development of a centralized call center; the development of outreach campaigns that target communities and health care providers; and the collection and analysis of data. Activities include: ongoing communication with the project manager by phone calls and emails; at minimum, monthly TA conference calls with the Affiliate State's team with a summary write up from each call; sharing relevant information (research, affiliate activities, data, marketing efforts, etc.); a second site visit to Affiliate State; and a site visit to Connecticut by an Affiliate State delegation.

Additional Site Visit

Affiliate states can invite the National Center for a second site visit for several reasons, including the *Help Me Grow* system formal launch or to meet with targeted stakeholders.

Assess Your State's Readiness for Affiliate Membership

The following questions are designed to help states assess the resources, support, and personnel needed to implement a successful *Help Me Grow* System. They are designed to prompt conversation and questions within your state, community, and/or organization.

- Do you have a neutral organization to facilitate the creation of an organizing entity (including partners from state agencies, public officials, health care providers, early care and education services, social services, funders, parents and advocates)?
- Do you have the capacity to hire or designate a program manager to provide leadership and guidance in the implementation of the system?
- Are you willing to bring together existing call centers, such as 2-1-1, Maternal Child Health Hotline, Child Find, and/or Child Care Resources and Referral Systems (CCR&R), that serve or have the potential to serve as a centralized telephone access point for programs/services for children from birth to eight and their families?
- Do you have experience and are you familiar with the resources that exist in your state/region for Community Outreach activities that may help to promote the use of *HMG* and to provide networking opportunities among families & service providers?
- Do you have a relationship with your state chapter AAP and a physician who will champion/advocate for the program within the medical community?
- A successful plan for creating a *HMG* system includes identification and recruitment of partners in key areas. Do you have existing partnerships with any of the following?
 - State Early Childhood Special Education (i.e., Part B)
 - State Early Intervention (i.e., Part C)
 - State Health Department (i.e., Title V)
- Do you have a funding mechanism to support the annual membership to the *HMG* National Network and targeted technical assistance from *HMG* National for one year?
- Can you describe 1-2 scenarios for sustaining *Help Me Grow* over the long term?

The *Help Me Grow* National Network Affiliate State Profiles*

[*Help Me Grow Alabama*](#)

[*Help Me Grow California*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Colorado*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Connecticut*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Delaware*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Florida*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Iowa*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Kentucky*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Louisiana*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Massachusetts*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Michigan*](#)

[*Help Me Grow New Jersey*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Oregon*](#)

[*Help Me Grow South Carolina*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Utah*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Washington*](#)

[*Help Me Grow West Virginia*](#)

[*Help Me Grow Western New York*](#)

*as of July 2014