

# Sustaining Successful Efforts to Increase Home Visiting Referrals

## Thornburg Early Childhood Education Grant Year 4 Summary Report

### Background

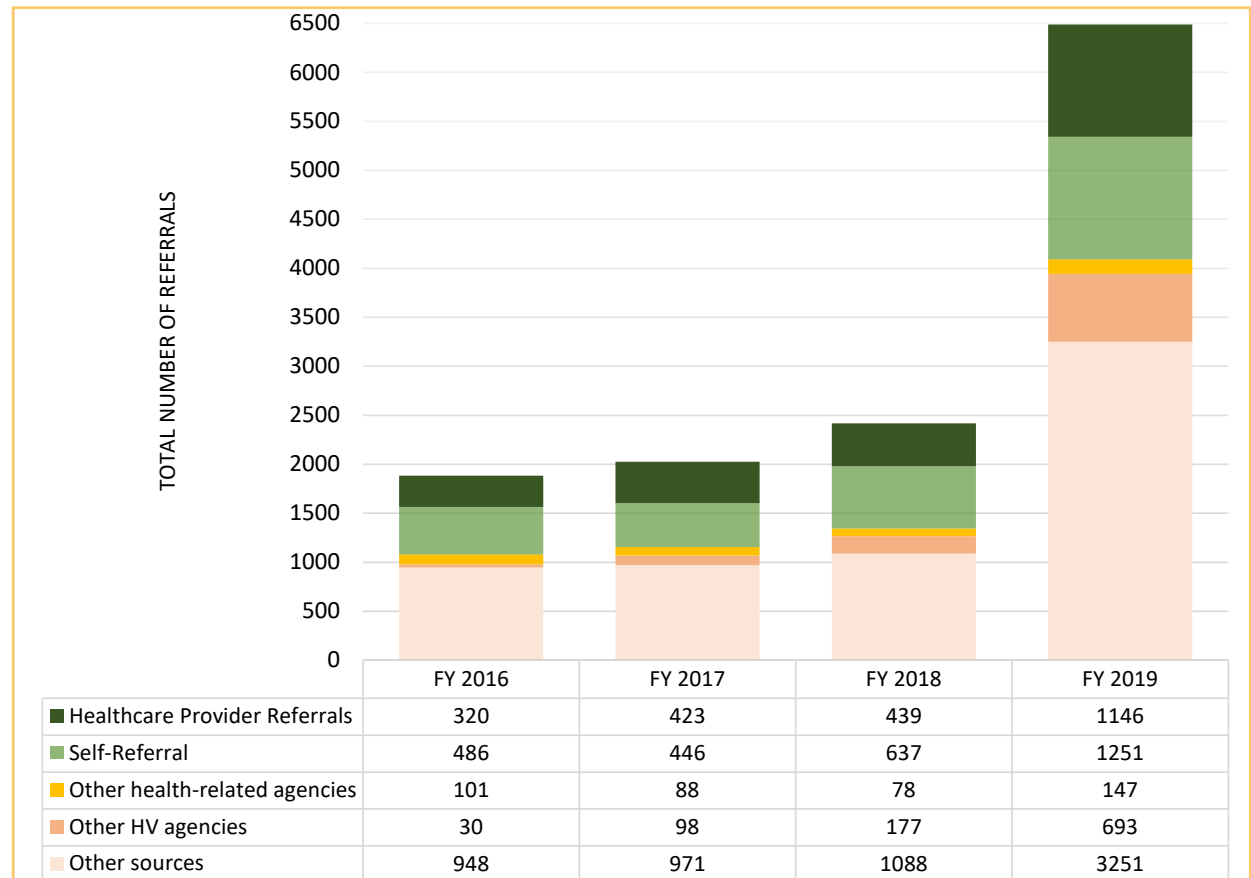
Evidence-based early childhood home visiting (ECHV) is a primary prevention strategy that has shown to be effective in preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (abuse, neglect, family violence, etc.), as well as promoting family stability and economic well-being.<sup>1-3</sup> Strengthened coordination among ECHV programs and medical homes is a recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics to improve pediatric health outcomes.<sup>4</sup> However, research conducted by the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC) and others has shown that coordination between medical providers and ECHV remains limited.<sup>5,6</sup> Since 2016 the UNM PRC has conducted research aimed at increasing healthcare provider referrals to ECHV programs in NM through implementation of strategies focused on:

- **Healthcare provider education** about the benefits of ECHV in medical school and residency programs, grand rounds, and professional conferences and trainings
- **Messaging** to encourage a culture of universal referrals
- **Engagement** to promote ECHV champions
- **Technology** to incorporate ECHV referrals into electronic medical records



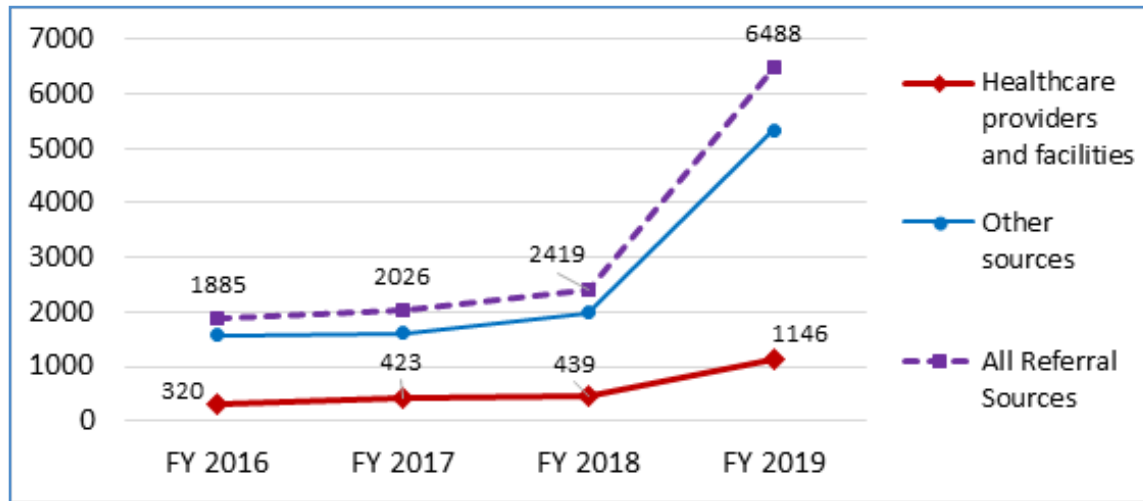
According to NM Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD) ECHV referral data, ECHV referrals from multiple referral sources have increased every year since 2016, including a 161% increase in referrals from healthcare providers IN 2019 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Number of incoming early childhood home visiting referrals by year and source of referral, FY 2016-2019**



CYFD ECHV Referral data show that the increase in healthcare provider referrals to ECHV was 2.6 times greater in FY 2019 than in FY 2018 (see Figure 2). The increase was greatest (2.07 times) among those programs where all intervention strategies were being implemented.

**Figure 2. Referrals to home visiting services from healthcare providers and facilities, FY 2016-2019**

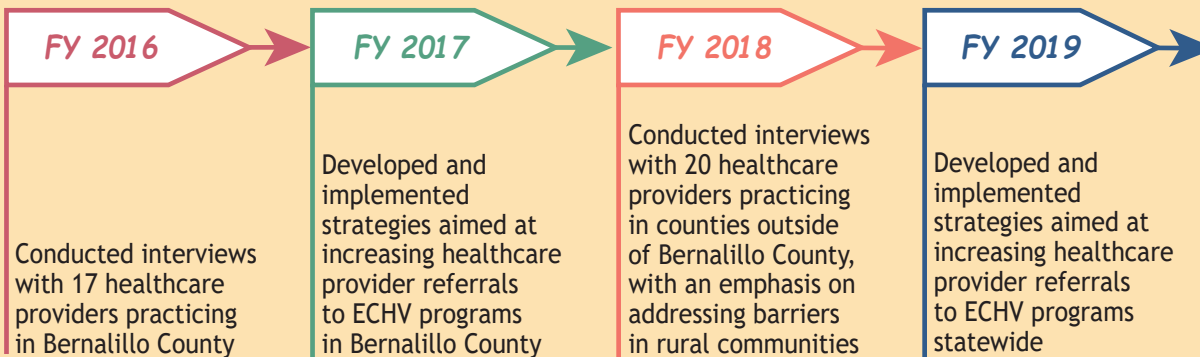


### Future Directions

Increasing coordination between ECHV programs and healthcare providers is a recommended strategy for improving pediatric and maternal health and social outcomes. Implementation of multiple systems strategies to increase healthcare provider referrals to early childhood home visiting programs is associated with an increase in referrals in NM. Next steps that may contribute towards continued increases in healthcare provider referrals include:

- Ongoing collaboration among state and local partners to implement a comprehensive ECHV centralized intake and referral system where healthcare providers can send patients with confidence that they will be matched with the ECHV that is the best fit for them
- Evaluating the utilization of an increased intensity and number of strategies to increase healthcare provider referrals in the areas of NM with the highest unmet needs

### UNM PRC ECHV Research Time Line



1. Cannon JS, et al. *Investing Early: Taking Stock of Outcomes and Economic Returns from Early Childhood Programs*. The RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, CA. 2017. 2. Council on Community Pediatrics. The role of preschool home-visiting programs in improving children's developmental and health outcomes. *Pediatrics*. Feb 2009;123(2):598-603. 3. Sama-Miller E, et al. *Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness Review: Executive Summary*: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Washington, D.C.; October 2018. 4. Duffee JH. Strong roots: Home visiting programs expand medical home into communities. *Pediatrics*. Sep 2017;140(3). 5. Morrison C, Sparr M. *Strengthening service coordination between home visitors and pediatric primary care providers*. Arlington, VA: James Bell Associates; 2019. 6. Cruz TH, et al. *Increasing Home Visiting Referrals through Implementation, Dissemination and Evaluation: Perspectives from Rural Providers*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center; 2019.