Pierce and Thurston counties together receive about $750,000 of MCHBG funding to improve the health and lives of pregnant and reproductive-age women, infants, children, and adolescents, including children and youth with special health care needs.

In 2015, MCHBG funding helped more than 14,000 pregnant women, approximately 89,000 newborns, more than 11,000 children with special health care needs, and about 48,000 additional children, adolescents, and adults statewide.

Pierce County: Building support for all new parents and babies.

The Perinatal Collaborative of Pierce County is the MCHBG dollars at work! The Collaborative brings together perinatal providers from around Pierce county to work together towards the common goal of improving maternal-child health outcomes. The Collaborative is involved in several projects throughout Pierce county that aim to improve the services available to mothers and babies. One example of this work includes: the Safe Sleep Sub-Committee, which works to reduce SIDS deaths in Pierce county through education and safe crib distribution to at-risk families. In addition, the Perinatal Homelessness Sub-Committee is working to address the complicated challenges of homeless mothers, and the affects that homelessness can have on infants and young children. The greatest successes of the Perinatal Collaborative come from the connections made between agencies that might not have worked together otherwise, which created a network of care providers in the community working toward improved health for women and children.

Client Story

All new moms in Pierce County who receive home visiting are screened for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and offered a chance to talk about the science of ACEs and resilience. One young mother said this was very emotional, but gave her a chance to think beyond the family’s current situation and imagine the future she wanted for her son.
The Maternal and Child Health Block Grant provides funding to every county so all children in Washington State can achieve their highest health potential.

Thurston County- Nurse home visiting makes a difference to families

There are approximately 30,000 families in Thurston County with children under 18 years of age (US Census Bureau). About 500 women in Thurston County who are on Medicaid were first-time mothers in 2016. Of those, Thurston County Health Department provides support and home visiting services to 160 families bearing burdens of trauma such as: experiencing violence, the absence of a parent, substance use, and work that does not pay enough to secure clean, safe housing. The Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) is a key home visiting service funded by the MCHBG. Nurses in NFP provide intensive services to families to improve: pregnancy outcomes, child health and development, and the economic self-sufficiency of families. Nurses build a relationship with parents that helps them build resilience and reduce further impact of trauma for their children. Research on the Nurse Family Partnership program shows achievements such as: a 48% reduction in child abuse, a 67% reduction in behavioral and intellectual problems in children at age six, and improved economic self-sufficiency for families. NFP is also shown to increase the likelihood of mothers becoming employed, reduce the need for government cash and other government assistance, support the father’s presence and relationship stability, and lengthen the time in-between pregnancies. MCHBG dollars are interwoven with private, county, and local community funding to sustain home visiting services to families in Thurston county.