

Restore Funding for CHIP of Virginia and Healthy Families Virginia

Healthy Families and **CHIP of Virginia** are proven home-visiting programs that improve health and developmental outcomes for children and prevent long-term health, social and learning problems for thousands of at-risk children. As a result, these **home visiting programs save Virginians thousands of taxpayer dollars.**

CHIP & Healthy Families Programs WORK!

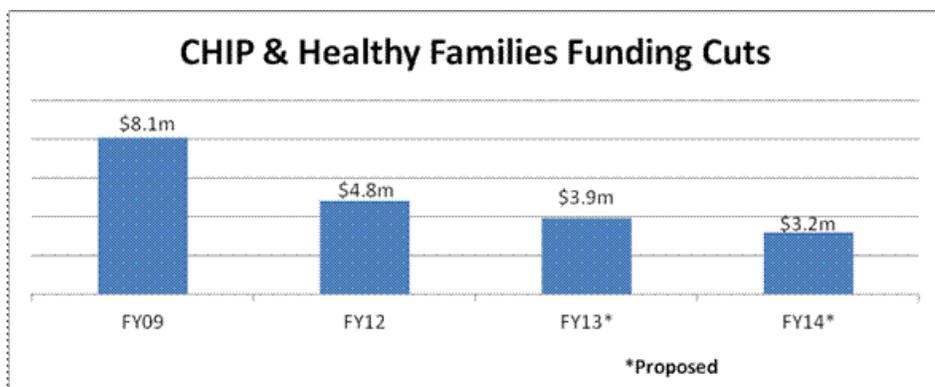
Although, almost all of the families served start behind, within a year of home visiting, they meet or exceed state and national averages.

- More than 91% have healthy, full-term babies
- More than 94% are up to date with their immunizations
- More than 95% have been enrolled in Medicaid/FAMIS and use a pediatrician instead of the costly emergency room.
- Almost all children are regularly screened for developmental delays
- More than 95% of families wait at least 2 years before having another baby

For every dollar invested in early childhood development, \$7-16 are generated in special education savings, decreased grade retention, child welfare savings, reductions in juvenile crime, reductions in adult crime, increased earnings by parents, and increased tax contributions.

For every state dollar invested in CHIP & Healthy Families, \$2 is leveraged from other sources. Moreover, Healthy Families and CHIP boost Virginia's economy by bringing more parents into the workforce each year. CHIP alone has seen a 25% increase in employment among their participants after just one year of services.

For the cost of two days in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, parents can receive home visiting services for a whole year. They learn how to get their children to school, healthy and ready to learn, and parents are able to work.



*The Governor's proposed cuts would result in up to 19 additional programs serving 37 localities closing

To date, 6 programs have closed, 10 localities are without these critical services, and in all remaining communities, services have been reduced significantly.

More than 1000 families, mostly very low-income, will no longer have access to services that result in stronger families, healthier babies and young children, children who are ready to learn, and communities with more self-sufficient families.

Home Visiting is an integral part of the early childhood foundation for our most vulnerable families. Home visitors mentor parents to help them provide a safe and healthy home environment, use positive child-rearing approaches, and stimulate early learning. Previous budget cuts have resulted in three Healthy Family programs closing and reduction in services to families in Healthy Families and CHIP.

Compounding Factors/Other funding challenges

- Other investors in Healthy Families and CHIP are struggling as well.
 - Local governments have long realized the value of Healthy Families and CHIP, but are faced with higher local match and other expenses shifting from state to local governments.
 - Corporate, individual and foundation funding is down.
 - Federal funding for evidence based home visiting programs may be at risk due to the maintenance of effort requirements.
- Demand for services continues to increase, far exceeding current supply.

Infrastructure

Training, quality assurance, evaluation, and resource development are some of the services provided through Healthy Families/Prevent Child Abuse Virginia and CHIP of Virginia. Funding cuts will severely damage the already minimal infrastructure that enables more efficient program support services.

Impact on all Service Delivery Systems

- Weaken the foundation of early childhood services
- More children born prematurely or low-birth weight
- Unnecessary use of emergency room for health care
- More children will start kindergarten behind

It is clear that Virginia must continue to rebuild its economy, and the surest way to do so is to invest in the development of its workforce. Unfortunately, public investments in the development of children – our future workers - are least when they would achieve the greatest results, in the critical period from birth-to-five years, and essential early childhood programs such as Healthy Families and CHIP of Virginia are facing even more cuts.

Neuroscience has proven that early life experiences affect the architecture of the growing brain. Healthy development and positive early experiences result in well-wired, strong brain structures. Conversely, adverse childhood experiences, such as child abuse, poverty, and parental substance abuse cause delays in brain growth and can lead to lifelong problems in learning, behavior and physical and mental health. The most cost effective way to address these problems is to tackle them before they take root.

Healthy Families and CHIP of Virginia are proven home-visiting programs that improve developmental outcomes for children and their parents, and prevent long-term health, social and learning problems for thousands of at-risk children. As a result, these home visiting programs save Virginians thousands of tax-payer dollars.

Now is the time to invest smartly in children and grow a highly capable workforce. Dr. Jim Heckman, Nobel Laureate in economics, who has researched Returns on Investment, said it best, “The question is not where to cut. The question is where to invest, and in what.”

Please support our budget amendments:

Item 343 10s (Sen. Blevins)

Item 343 11S (Sen. Carrico)

Item 297 8s (Sen. Hangar)