

PIERCE COUNTY

WASHINGTON

Strong infrastructure, trust, and relationships enabled swift and responsive pandemic action by Help Me Grow Pierce County and key partners

Help Me Grow Pierce County prepared to launch their centralized access point at the beginning of 2020. After hiring an outreach liaison and two family resource navigators, the system quickly entered emergency response mode with this established infrastructure. The team continued to activate their network by convening hundreds of partners in weekly meetings on early childhood to further develop a critical response network in the community. Elected officials and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department called upon the team to support emergency response efforts.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2020 BY THE NUMBERS

200+

calls per month to Help Me Grow Pierce County coordinated access point

2,179

families reached through new diaper banks

4,037

individuals reached through Help Me Grow Pierce County coordinated access point

SUCCESS IN 2020

- The February launch of the coordinated access point led to over 200 calls a month by December.
- 55 community members participate on the Family and Community Outreach Team, providing information about programs and services directly to families.
- HMG Pierce County secured a multi-year partnership with the Perigee Fund, a national philanthropic effort focused on prenatal to three that seeks to build field capacity, advance policy, and forge aligned partnerships nationally and in Washington state.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

- Ten diaper banks across the county, newly developed during Covid-19, served as a touchpoint for outreach and information sharing with a reach of over 600 children each month.
- Previously developed infrastructure of HMG Pierce County provided a strong pathway for the distribution of CARES Act dollars from the city and county governments.
- The strong partnership with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department enabled HMG to disseminate important messages about Covid-19 to the community.

Help Me Grow Pierce County

MISSION

Help Me Grow Pierce County promotes the healthy development of all children from pregnancy through age 5 by:

- Connecting families to information, activities, and community-based resources
- Nurturing family relationships and offering individualized support
- Partnering with families and communities to improve the availability and quality of services

VISION

Help Me Grow Pierce County envisions a vibrant community where all families have the resources and confidence to support, protect, nurture, and dream for their children.

“ THE COORDINATED ACCESS POINT – IT’S NOT ONLY A SYSTEM THAT SERVES FAMILIES, IT’S ALSO A SYSTEM THAT’S HELPING US IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES BY PROVIDING VALUABLE DATA ABOUT WHAT FAMILIES ARE CALLING ABOUT AND ASKING FOR. THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS ANALYZING THE CALLER DATA ON A MONTHLY BASIS, SO IT’S PROVIDED OUR COMMUNITY WITH A NEW RESOURCE FOR MORE REAL-TIME DATA ON HOW FAMILY NEEDS ARE CHANGING. ”

PIERCE COUNTY: WASHINGTON STATE CONNECTION

Funding for Help Me Grow Pierce County comes primarily from a budget proviso from the Washington state legislature, which led the state to consider Pierce County a pilot community for this child welfare prevention strategy. Pierce County became the first sub-affiliate of Help Me Grow Washington. The team’s work is amplified across the state in their support of Washington’s prenatal-to-three initiatives and as one of 10 regions of the Washington Communities for Children group.

STRENGTHENING OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

- Despite pandemic-related challenges in data collection, the available data guided the team’s focus toward efforts in key communities and expressed needs.
- The diaper banks, while initially a pandemic response effort, will be a permanent resource in the community that will enhance the system’s ability to reach families in need.
- HMG Pierce County’s two Family Resource Navigators received additional training in care coordination, which enhances their ability to support provide a higher level of care and resource navigation.

CATALYTIC OPPORTUNITIES

- Perigee Fund provided \$376,461 to fund family and community outreach staff, marketing, data/evaluation of the HMG system, administrative staffing, parent feedback efforts, facilitation, and filling other identified needs in the community through a multi-year grant.
- The team continues to be proactive through strategically braiding multiple funding streams from the state, county, private philanthropy, and individual donations.
- Strategic coordination enabled the team to organize a domestic violence support group facilitated by a therapist without the need for additional funding.

NEXT STEPS

- The team will continue to convene partners at weekly meetings focused on early childhood to continue activating the pandemic response network.
- Diaper banks across the county will provide resources and information to families in need after the pandemic is over.
- Shared ownership of the work will continue to create a sustainable system for infants, toddlers, and their families in Pierce County.