



Date: March 6, 2025

To: Senator Janeen Sollman, Co-Chair
Representative Ricki Ruiz, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

From: Healthy Families Oregon Coalition

RE: SB 5514 – Support for DELC Budget, Healthy Families Oregon Program

Healthy Families Oregon is an evidence based, family centered, culturally responsive home visiting program funded through the Department of Early Learning and Care, providing services in all 36 Oregon counties since 1993. Our services are designed to work with overburdened families facing various challenges that are risk factors for negative social and educational outcomes for children, including child abuse and neglect. Healthy Families improves outcomes for families and children by addressing historical, generational, and current sources of trauma through a relationship-based approach to supporting secure parent-child attachment and healthy coping skills.

Families are enrolled either prenatally or during the first three months postpartum. This window of time provides a critical opportunity for establishing healthy attachment and bonding for parents and infants, as well as a vital period for monitoring the mental health and well-being of birthing parents. Healthy Families provides home visits until the child is age three, or up to age five for families involved in child welfare.

Healthy Families Oregon is shown to:

- Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect–HFO reduces the incidence of child abuse by 77% and neglect by 33% by promoting nurturing parenting practices.
- Avoid Foster Care Placements–Healthy Families America is the only program to be rated as effective across all racial and ethnic groups by federal Family First Prevention services. Families are more likely to parent in ways that promote healthy child development, interact more positively with their children, and use less physical punishment and yelling.
- Increase Housing Stability–27 percent fewer families experienced homelessness.
- Improve Physical Health–Families are more likely to attend well-child visits, receive immunizations, and data shows a 48 percent reduction in low infant birth weight.

- Improve Behavioral Health—HFO screens for substance use, depression, and stress. HFO families have improved mental health, are better able to cope with stress with less need to use alcohol or drugs as coping mechanisms. Screeners and home visitors refer parents to treatment and mental health services if appropriate, and encourage adherence to treatment and accessing a supportive community.
- Increase Economic Self-Sufficiency—Families access family support services, and parents are five times more likely to enroll and participate in school and training programs.
- Improve School Readiness and Academic Performance—Participating children show enhanced cognitive development, 26 percent fewer children receive special education services, and more excel academically and receive gifted services.

2023 Service Data:

- 2,120 families served in 2023 and over 26,000 home visits
- 63% of families identify as a race/ethnicity other than white and families in our HFO programs speak over 100 languages!
- For every \$1 invested in HFO, the community gets a return of up to \$3.16.

National Institute of Justice study in 2010.

Healthy Families Oregon Coalition would like to express support for the programmatic funding for HFO in DELC's budget, as well as the Case Management System for the HFO program that is in POP 101. This will allow improved service tracking and data accuracy, and reduce the administrative burden on DELC staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to share additional information about Healthy Families Oregon. Please reach out with additional questions to Elizabeth Howe, elizabeth@howepa.com.

With appreciation,

Beth Dasher, Co-Chair
Karin Tauscher, Co-Chair
Healthy Families Oregon Coalition