Community Engagement Assessment Tool

For Family, Youth and Community Engagement in Wisconsin's Maternal and Child Health Programs

WI State Performance Measure: Percent of State Action Plan Strategies that engage family members, youth, and/or community members with an action plan strategy to support family, youth and community member engagement in MCH programs.

A project designed by the following implementation team:
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Purpose

Family, youth and community engagement is a core value of all of our MCH programs. We know from the evidence that family, youth and community engagement improves planning and policies, resulting in services more directly responsive to their needs.

The Wisconsin Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Program has a state performance measure of: Percent of State Action Plan Strategies that engage family members, youth, and/or community members with an action plan strategy to support family, youth and community member engagement in MCH programs. To track this performance measure, the MCH program needs to assess current engagement of families, youth and community members at all levels across Wisconsin. This assessment is informed by several existing tools and resources; the full list of resources is found at the end of this document. This assessment specifically aligns with the Foundational Practices for Health Equity tool that was developed as part of the Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network (CoIIN) to reduce infant mortality.

Our goal: By December 31, 2025, 75% of Wisconsin's MCH funded programs have embedded concepts of family, youth and/or community member engagement on at least three indicators of the Community Engagement Assessment Tool, or are making progress, because programs that respond to participants' experiences are more effective.

Instructions

You will be asked several questions about your programmatic work. Although some questions may relate to organization-wide structures, policies, or practices, the MCH program asks that you think about your day-to-day work on Title V MCH Block Grant activities, those contracted activities that serve to improve our national performance measures.

Best practice is to complete this assessment with family, youth and community members, specifically people from the population your program serves. This can be done in one of two ways. You can provide this document as well as a SurveyGizmo link to family, youth and community members and ask them to complete the online survey and then your program can average the results. Alternatively, your program can invite family, youth and community members to join in a work group to complete the assessment together.

For family, youth and community members: This assessment is about understanding how well the program involves program participants and other community members in its work. Family, youth, and community engagement means integrating family, youth, and community member's views in all areas of the program. Your program is answering the same questions and will use yours, theirs, and other's answers to determine how they should improve their family, youth, and community engagement. When you answer the questions, think about your interactions with your program over the last year. Be truthful. If you are unsure how to answer a question, leave it blank.

Definitions

Family, Youth and Community Engagement: Support for family, youth and community members from an organization, agency, or program, as well as community stakeholders, to ensure that they are given the opportunity to participate in multiple ways. Family, youth and community engagement reflects a belief in the value of family, youth and community leadership at all levels from individual to peer, community, and policy. Furthermore, family, youth and community engagement is the active intention of infusing the family, youth and community member perspective in all areas of systems design, implementation, evaluation and ongoing improvement. Family, youth and community engagement is successful when effective partnerships are built upon mutual respect and shared responsibility, expertise, and decision-making.

Health inequities and health equity: The World Health Organization defines health inequities as "health differences, which are socially produced." According to Healthy People 2020, when we achieve health equity, every person has the opportunity to "attain his or her full health potential" and no one is "disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances." Moreover, achieving health equity "requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and healthcare disparities (*Foundational Practices for Health Equity*)."

Additional Resources Available

o   This assessment in SurveyGizmo for you to share with your partners
o   A REDCap database to store your final annual assessment answers and action plan
o   Webinars that explain the project, action plans, and success stories
o   A website of resources: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/mch/family-youth-community-engagement.htm
o   A team of staff excited about this work to answer your questions

Overall Project Annual Objectives

o   Within the first quarter of your contract year, complete the Community Engagement Assessment Tool with family, youth and/or community members.
o   By the end of the second quarter of your contract year, create (with family, youth and/or community members) an action plan focusing on one indicator from the Community Engagement Assessment Tool.
o   Implement the action plan throughout the remainder of your contract year to support at least one practice change to enhance family, youth and community engagement.

Program Assessment

I.   Demographic Information
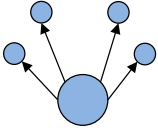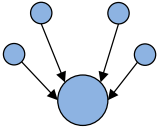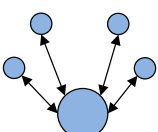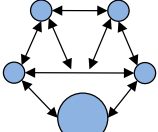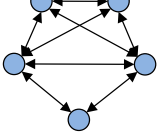
Annually:
1.   Name and email of program lead staff
2.   Date
3.   Population Domain [drop down]
4.   National Performance Measure [from list]
5.   State Performance Measure [from list]
6.   Who contributed to this program self-assessment (name/role)?
7.   How did you come to the final decision of the answers to this assessment?
   *   By averaging everyone's scores
   *   By meeting and coming to consensus

Annually after the first year:
1.   What changes have you made in your program over the past year to enhance family, youth and/or community member engagement?
2.   The work of family, youth and/or community member engagement compliments other MCH contracted activities.
   *   Strongly Disagree
   *   Disagree
   *   Neither Disagree or Agree
   *   Agree
   *   Strongly Agree
3.   Our program has adequate technical assistance to make progress in our goals of family, youth and/or community member engagement.
   *   Strongly Disagree
   *   Disagree
   *   Neither Disagree or Agree
   *   Agree
   *   Strongly Agree
4.   Please share success stories of engaging family, youth and community members this past year.

II.   Overall Category of Engagement

There are multiple categories of engagement described in the chart below. **Please select which category best describes the majority of the work your program is doing related to family, youth and community engagement,** recognizing that certain activities for specific communities or populations may fall into different categories.

	Inform &/or Educate	Family, youth and communities are recipients of information or education. They are informed about our program and activities. There is no other participation from families, youth or communities.
	Gather	Family, youth and community members are informers. Their input is solicited through opportunities to provide feedback. Input may not always be incorporated. Typically input is provided through surveys.
	Discuss	Family, youth and communities and program staff discuss issues. The program offers opportunities for family, youth and community input. This input is included in the program's activities. Typically input is provided through discussions that allow for give and take as well as clarification.
	Involve	Family, youth and communities are advisors to a program. They are provided program challenges to problem-solve.
	Partner	Family, youth and communities are full partners with programs. They are fully engaged from the start of decisions around policy, programming, implementation, etc.

III. Components of Engagement

Think about the MCH/CYSHCN programmatic work in the following six domains:

1. **Family, Youth and Community Partnership**
2. **Culture of Inclusion, and Equity**
3. **Program Environment**
4. **Program Leadership**
5. **Professional Development**
6. **Continuous Improvement**

Use the following descriptions to indicate which best represents the program's activities for each indicator:

> 0) **I have not experienced this** = In my interactions with this program, I have not seen any effort towards this activity of engagement.
> 1) **Not at all well** = In my interactions with this program, I have seen some of this activity, but it was either done very poorly or hardly ever.
> 2) **Fairly well** = In my interactions with this program, I have seen several program staff make an effort to this type of engagement, but it is not seen in all staff or all activities.
> 3) **Well enough** = In my interactions with this program, I have seen most program staff making an effort towards this type of engagement and it occurs throughout most activities.
> 4) **Very well** = In my interactions with this program, I have seen program staff take to heart the value of engagement and make every effort to promote engagement in all activities.
> 5) **Extremely well** = In my interactions with this program, I have seen program staff always embrace this activity of engagement with a quality that surpasses all expectation.

Component	Indicator	Response					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
Family, Youth and Community Partnership	**1. Respectful, Trusting Relationships Between Staff and the People They Serve** Agencies train program staff members to develop trusting relationships with the people they serve. This relationship building extends to interactions between peers within the community. There is a clear plan and effort to improve access to services and overcome anything that gets in the way. **What this might look like to family, youth and community members:** For example, family, youth and community members: • Have respectful and trusting relationships with program staff. • Trust that program staff members maintain confidentiality. • Are listened to by program staff. • Come to events (e.g., open houses) to connect with the program staff. • Have a way to share concerns with the program that feels safe and respected. • Share their experience with the program and program staff members (by completing surveys). • Work with program staff to overcome problems in communication with the program. • Receive opportunities from the program for peer to peer support and connection.	○	○	○	○	○	○
	2. Family, Youth and Community Members Working in a Cooperative Way and Having Shared Goals Programs embed engagement so that those they serve are a vital part of the program's success. The program works to identify and use the strengths of community members. It designs programming to meet the needs of its community. The program schedules opportunities at times that work for community members. The program teaches those they serve how to look for and use services that best fit their strengths, needs and cultures. **What this might look like to family, youth and community members:** For example, family, youth and community members: • Believe the program is quick to respond to their needs. • Have their ideas and strengths valued by program staff. • Attend activities held at a time that works for their schedule. • Find the program services are designed to meet the needs of a variety of people. • Decide what services they want or need.	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○

	3. **A Commitment to Social Support Systems Within the Program and Larger Community**	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○

3. **A Commitment to Social Support Systems Within the Program and Larger Community**

Programs build networks of opportunities within the community they serve. Working with community members, programs design services that work for the community. Program staff members are present in the community. Program staff members identify local champions to help make change in their own programs.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Are more involved in their own communities with support from the program.
- See the program's services as supportive of other community services.
- See program staff members as a part of the community they serve.
- Receive direct communication, updates and outreach by program staff members.
- Receive services in the community in which they live, work and play.

Culture of Inclusion and Equity

4. **A Commitment to Health Equity** (0 ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○)

Programs value and promote health equity. Program staff members understand that social and economic conditions impact health. And further, all people do not have the same opportunities to be healthy. Program staff members are trained on Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma Informed Care. Program staff member's interactions with the people they serve are respectful and thoughtful. Policies and practices reflect this commitment. Program staff members respect the breadth of cultures which include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, and ability.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- See the program as a leader in social and economic conditions that impact health equity.
- Have support and opportunities from the program to build their leadership skills to address health inequities.
- Have support and opportunities from the program to speak on issues of inequity that they are experiencing.
- Are aware of how the program addresses racism and other inequities.
- Know that program staff members understand Adverse Childhood Experiences and how they impact Trauma Informed Care.
- Receive respect for their own cultural background and history.
- Engage with program staff members who are from cultures different from their own.
- See program staff members who represent their own cultural background.
- See that the program focuses outreach efforts to help underserved communities.

Program Environment	**5. Cultural and Language-Based Responsiveness** The program's activities and services respond to the cultural characteristics represented in the people they serve. Community members take part in making sure written and visual materials are appropriate and effective. **What this might look like to family, youth and community members:** For example, family, youth and community members: • Help make decisions about activities and services that are sensitive to the cultural needs of the community. • Review written and visual materials to ensure they are clear and easy to understand. • Receive written and visual materials that are culturally appropriate and easy to understand. • Receive written and visual materials in their language. • Attend events and trainings with language interpreter provided if needed.	0 1 2 3 4 5
	6. A System of Regular Communication with Families, Youth and Communities The program maintains open communication with the population they serve. Communications are regular, frequent, clear and positive. Programs encourage open communication and help develop an exchange of ideas. **What this might look like to family, youth and community members:** For example, family, youth and community members: • Share their ideas and suggestions through one-to-one contacts, surveys, focus groups, listening sessions, etc. • Receive true, reliable information. • Know that private information is kept private by all. • Offer ideas about how the program can improve communication. • See and hear all references to family, youth and community members in a positive way. • Have opportunities to interact often with program staff members. • Receive communications (e.g., newsletter) from the program. • Receive information through many methods of communication (mail, email, text, social media, etc.).	0 1 2 3 4 5
	7. A Welcoming and Inviting Setting (Physical Space and Online) Programs design their environments, both physical and online, with input from community members. They focus on the strengths and successes of the community. Their spaces reflect the languages and cultures of the people they serve. **What this might look like to family, youth and community members:** For example, family, youth and community members: • View the program's public space as clean, calm, safe, accessible, welcoming, and easy to access. • Help design the reception area and office space. • See their language and culture reflected in the program's physical space. • See their language and culture respected through the program's website and social media. • Provide feedback on the program's website and social media. • Help develop a social media plan. • See the strengths of family, youth and community members in the program's website and social media.	0 1 2 3 4 5

Program Leadership	**8. Family, Youth and Community Engagement as a Shared Priority**	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○
	Agencies make sure that all program staff members share the value of engagement. This value is clear in all written and verbal communications. The leadership of the program leads by example. Decisions about the use of program resources increase engagement.						

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:

- Are equal members of the team and treated as fellow workers by program staff.
- Receive support from the program that enables engagement. For example,
  - Clear expectations of involvement
  - Financial payment for personal knowledge
  - Coaching and mentoring
  - Meeting times that are convenient for families, youth and community members
  - Option of virtual participation
  - Knowing who to go to if participants have questions or need support
- Feel welcomed and that their opinions are respected when they engage with the program.
- Hear the program staff often talking about the value of family, youth and community engagement.

	9. Increasing Success in Engaging Families, Youth and Communities	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○
	Program leaders, managers, and staff members have a solid commitment to engagement with the people they serve. They set policies and goals that support engagement with all aspects of work; from design of programs through implementation and evaluation. The program uses resources to support those who are giving their personal lived experience and knowledge to benefit the program.						

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:

- Share their ideas and opinions to create a better environment.
- Take part in planning, implementing and evaluating new activities and projects with the program.
- Receive regular communications from the program leaders and/or staff about the program's activities and practices.
- Are always offered payment or other valued compensation when asked to share their lived experience or knowledge, including participation in meetings and focus groups.
- Help design and take part in evaluation activities.

		0	1	2	3	4	5

10. Group Decision-Making

Programs have systems in place that support partnership with the people they serve. People served by the program take part in making decisions that affect the program as a whole. The program is open and honest about their needs and main concerns. Recommendations from community members and partners are fully considered.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Take part in decision making with the program, including serving on advisory and governing boards.
- Feel encouraged by program staff members to share ideas with decision makers.
- Know how to become involved in decision making opportunities with the program.
- Receive honest information from the program related to the program's main concerns and challenges.
- Feel heard when they make suggestions for change within a program. If their idea is not used, they know why it wasn't.

Rating: 0 1 2 3 4 5

11. Support for Developing New Skills

Programs improve the leadership abilities of the people they serve through training, coaching, and teaching. They offer opportunities to learn and practice advocacy on issues of importance. Programs invite the people they serve to co-lead support groups or training sessions with program staff.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Take part in opportunities to improve their leadership and advocacy skills.
- Attend events offered by the program at no cost for the development of new skills.
- Lead or co-lead support groups or training sessions with program staff.
- Receive payment and other support (e.g., teaching, travel costs, coaching) to take part in community events.

Rating: 0 1 2 3 4 5

Professional Development

12. High-Quality Training for All Staff

Agencies train program staff on topics such as engagement, racial equity, and diversity. The program invites community members to join in these training events. They further improve learning by holding discussions with everyone's input.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Work with program staff members who are responsive to their needs.
- Work with program staff members who are sensitive to issues related to equity and diversity.
- Take part in program sponsored training events on issues of equity and diversity.
- Have conversations with program staff about equity and diversity.
- Work with program staff members who are well-trained and receive the support they need to do their jobs well.
- Exchange information and ideas with program staff about the value of engagement.

Rating: 0 1 2 3 4 5

		0 1 2 3 4 5

13. Career Pathways and Leadership Opportunities

0 ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○

Programs partner with family, youth, and community members to learn from shared knowledge. Programs invite people to shadow program activities. Community members take part in the hiring process and help make the hiring decision. Programs encourage community members to apply for open positions. Program staff members reflect the diversity of the people served.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Shadow program activities.
- Are welcome to work side by side with program staff to add ideas to the program.
- Apply for open positions within the program.
- Receive recognition for what they have given to the program.
- Take part in the hiring process at the program (e.g., being part of an interview panel).
- Have program staff members who reflect the diversity of the people served.

Continuous Improvement

14. Data About Engagement Efforts and Results Driving Decision-Making

0 ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○

Program staff members partner with family, youth and community members to decide what data is important. They also discuss how to collect data, how to use data to make program decisions, and how to share results with the community. Data collected by the program includes engagement success and impact.

What this might look like to family, youth and community members:
For example, family, youth and community members:
- Are aware that the program evaluates the needs of family, youth and community members (through surveys, listening sessions, focus groups, etc.).
- Work with program staff to collect data.
- Provide feedback and data points themselves.
- Learn about a variety of methods used to collect data that are culturally-relevant, like stories or focus groups.
- Have data collected by the program shared with them in a timely manner.
- Take part in making decisions about what the program should do based on the data they have collected from the community they serve.

IV. Looking Forward

1. Which Component of Engagement (**Component and Indicator**) is your program going to work to advance in the coming year? [dropdown]
2. What activities are you going to implement to reach your goal to enhance family, youth and community engagement?

Resources:

1. The National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. Office of Head Start. Using the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework in Your Program: Markers of Progress.
2. Eileen Forlenza, Increasing Meaningful Partnerships between Families and MCH Partnerships
3. International Association for Public Participation. IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation
4. Foundational Practices for Health Equity: A Learning and Action Tool for State Health Departments
5. Center for Patient Partnership, Patient Engagement in Quality Improvement Toolkit
6. National Family Support Network, Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support