

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

Why a State Match is Bad for Wisconsin's Children & Families

The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program supports voluntary, evidence-based home visiting models in Wisconsin and every state as well as many territories and tribal communities. Home visiting breaks multi-generational cycles of poverty and puts families on the path to good health, educational success and economic stability.

Despite strong bipartisan support and decades of evidence that MIECHV-funded home visiting programs work, Congress allowed MIECHV to expire on September 30. One funding renewal proposal would undermine Wisconsin's home visiting program by imposing a dollar-for-dollar state match.

Wisconsin may be forced to cut home visiting services if required to match federal MIECHV money.

The state match requirement works by limiting the state's use of their MIECHV grants to 50 percent of the home visiting services supported by MIECHV. States must come up with the other half of the money needed to provide MIECHV services.

To meet the required funding match, Wisconsin may be forced to cut other programs or services, to divert money to meet the match. This "rob Peter to pay Paul" approach is likely to negatively impact the health, education and well-being of Wisconsin's children and families.

Wisconsin may be forced to cut existing non-MIECHV-funded home visiting programs to divert funding to MIECHV-supported home visiting, potentially leaving thousands of children and families without home visiting services. Wisconsin should not be penalized for implementing home visiting programs in communities across the state in a way that meets the needs of its residents.

If Wisconsin is unable to meet the match, the state may be forced to cut MIECHV home visiting services in part or entirely, causing local programs to shut down, home visitors to lose or leave their jobs, and families to lose the services they rely on. And once the home visitor-family relationships at the heart of program – the very relationships that make it so successful – are lost, the damage will be irreversible.

Even if Wisconsin meets the state match, the imposition of the requirement will restrict the flexibility the state has to do what is needed for its residents. Currently, Wisconsin has the freedom to invest in and implement early childhood programs, including home visiting, in a way that best serves Wisconsin's children and families. The state match will prevent Wisconsin from helping residents in communities across the entire state by placing new restrictions on how the money is used for home visiting.



What Speaker Paul Ryan said about MIECHV

"What's really interesting about this program is how it divvies up the funding: Seventy-five percent goes to methods with proven results, while 25 percent goes to new methods that show promise. Frankly, I wish more programs were designed this way. Then we could really see what works and invest in it."

Source: [Speaker.gov](https://www.speaker.gov)