

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

INNOVATIVE MCH FUND APPLICATIONS

Overview: American Rescue Plan

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 is a \$1.9 trillion rescue package created to help the United States recover from the devastating economic, social, and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The package includes a number of key provisions that impact maternal and child health (MCH), including appropriating \$150 million to support Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) programs. It also allocates billions of dollars for strengthening public health programs, vaccine distribution, assistance for underserved populations, education and housing stabilization, economic recovery assistance, and direct assistance for families and individuals.

This brief provides MCH agencies and professionals with examples of innovative ways that AMCHP and its partners have used ARPA and other COVID-19 funds to advance maternal and child health, including through cross-sectoral partnerships with entities outside of MCH departments. Our aim is that these examples will serve as inspiration for states and jurisdictions as they look to spend their own ARPA funds to enhance the lives of women, children, and families. This brief also includes a compilation of tools, trackers, and fact sheets that offer guidance and information around service coordination, planning, and policy efforts.

AMCHP Resources Highlighting Innovative Uses of COVID-19 Funding Relevant to ARPA Funding

Innovation Hub CARES Cutting-Edge Practices

Following a request for proposal, AMCHP made 21 awards totaling nearly \$2 million to state, territorial, and tribal MCH agencies to implement telehealth programs during the ongoing pandemic. The awards were funded by a recent grant from HRSA as part of the CARES Act Covid-19 pandemic response and directly improved the experience of the families being served

through telehealth, by expanding services to those who previously could not access it or by easing barriers to access within communities. Below are the CARES practices that were accepted to AMCHP's [MCH Innovations Database](#), a searchable repository of “what’s working” in the field of MCH that includes effective practices and policies from the field that are positively impacting MCH populations.

- ◆ [Alaska Virtual Home Visiting Summit](#): A virtual summit of home visitors across the state, agnostic to models and funding sources, to increase home visitors’ capacity to address interpersonal violence as well as improve their own self-care and resilience.
- ◆ [Arizona Virtual Support for Families of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing \(DHH\) during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#): When the COVID 19 pandemic hit in March, Arizona Hands & Voices quickly transformed their operations to provide families with one-to-one and group support from teachers of the DHH, Deaf mentors and DHH Guides by adapting their Guide By Your Side Program for a virtual setting.
- ◆ [Connecticut Newborn Diagnosis and Treatment Network](#)¹: The Network centralizes reporting, coordination, and follow-up of out-of-range newborn screens; and provides high-level family-centered support for families and healthcare providers throughout the pre-diagnosis, diagnosis, and long term follow up phases.
- ◆ [Federated States of Micronesia \(FSM\) Virtual training for Awake ABR services for non-audiology staff](#)¹: Provides a culturally relevant virtual diagnostic teleaudiology training for public health staff to deliver remote services in FSM.
- ◆ [Guam CARES Telehealth Project](#)¹: Provides early hearing intervention services to families by working collaboratively with other organizations to innovatively provide teletherapy and telehealth services through the utilization of technology.
- ◆ [Massachusetts Community Telehealth Kiosk in City of Lawrence](#)¹: After engaging families and community-based organizations located in the City of Lawrence in a needs assessment, the Massachusetts Department of Health and its partners implemented a telehealth kiosk in a local library to serve as a secure and accessible space for families to access telehealth and early intervention services.
- ◆ [Nevada Prenatal Care via Telehealth Pilot Program](#)¹: Facilitates access to prenatal care for underserved pregnant persons through telehealth.
- ◆ [New Jersey Virtual Programming and Mental Health Support for CYSHCN Families](#): Provides telehealth services to the Binder Autism Center, endocrinology and Cystic Fibrosis patients and their families such as facilitating virtual, social skill development groups, cooking, yoga, and karate classes, open parent support groups, and parent workshops.

¹ This practice has been accepted to the MCH Innovations Database, but its link is still pending. Visit www.amchpinnovation.org/database/ to see our current practices and/or contact evidence@amchp.org with questions.

- ◆ [Oregon EHDl Data to Action for Hearing Screening and Follow-Up²](#): The Oregon EHDl program used existing EHDl data, ArcGIS mapping and analytic capability to identify primary care providers, birth facilities and neighborhoods where hearing screening equipment and tele-support resource allocation would provide significant benefit to families disproportionately at risk of not meeting the EHDl 1-3-6 milestones.
- ◆ [Turtle Mountain Group Connections Livestream Home Visiting Education](#): During the pandemic, the Turtle Mountain Tribal Home Visiting program implemented monthly group synchronous Facebook Live video conferences that provided virtual health education and support to families.
- ◆ [Utah Integrated Services Program: Facilitating telehealth through the loan or lending of cellular technology and tablets²](#) (link pending): The Bureau of Children with Special Health Care Needs created a “lending library” consisting of 30 laptops and mobile hotspots to be available to families who would benefit from telehealth visits. The lending libraries are located at various agencies throughout the State of Utah.

A Roadmap for Collaboration among Title V, Home Visiting, and Early Childhood Systems Programs: Accelerating Improvements in Early Childhood Outcomes (2021)

[This roadmap](#) features recommendations for enhancing collaboration among early childhood programs for anyone working with Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) programs. It also suggests a flexible framework for increasing collaboration around a common priority – such as aligning current and future funding to achieve a shared early childhood vision – that states and jurisdictions can replicate in both in-person and virtual settings.

AMCHP COVID 19 Town Hall, 9/2/2021

[This episode](#) highlights key information related to innovative use of ARP funds, including MCHB’s goal to strengthen systems coordination through: Health Promotion Across Diverse Settings; Cross-Sector Workforce Development; Comprehensive Equity Assessment, Planning & Action; Coordinated Data Infrastructure & CQI; Family & Community Engagement; and Coordinated Screening & Referral. Three states, Georgia, Maryland, and Colorado, then spoke about how they have used ARP related funds. Jeanine Galloway from Georgia’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau discussed their partnership with the Georgia Dept of Education’s Mobile Audiology Unit to give access to hearing screenings and follow-up services for infants in need, particularly in rural areas. Dr. Shelly Choo, Maryland’s Maternal and Child Health Bureau Director, and Jen Wilson, WIC Director, shared information about how ARP funding has been used to supplement the amount of money that families received for fruits and vegetables through the

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WIC Program. Isabel Dickson, Economic Mobility Specialist from MCHB in Colorado shared how they have leveraged their Title V and CYSHCN networks to promote the expanded child tax credit. The variety of needs addressed was impressive and speaks to the aims expressed by MCHB.

Child Tax Credit for Families Promotional Toolkit

Through the American Rescue Plan, the federal Child Tax Credit (CTC) was expanded, and families with children under 18 are now eligible for more financial assistance. Your help is needed to spread the word about this important federal benefit, designed to address family poverty and improve health outcomes. Families can receive up to \$300 a month for every child aged 0-5, and \$250 a month for every child aged 6-17 living in their household. The expanded CTC is available through 2021, so it's not too late to reach families with the CTC message! Help promote the CTC by using [this toolkit](#) with English and Spanish messages, a flyer, and social media content. [Learn more here](#) (or [in Spanish](#)).

Additional Resources

Alliance for Early Success

[State Plans and Actions](#): A state plan and action tracking webpage to learn how advocates are working proactively to press states to utilize the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for maximum benefit to children and their families.

American Head Start Association

[The American Rescue Plan: Policy Change Affecting Head Start Families and Programs](#): A policy resource outlining how the American Rescue Plan Act provisions for Head Start and Early Head Start provides essential support for local programs' continued delivery of safe, high-quality services to children and families from under-resourced backgrounds.

American Public Human Services Association

[American Rescue Plan Provisions to Serve Young Families](#): An overview of the key provisions of the American Rescue Plan that are relevant to young parents with children that will allow public sector leaders to maximize their capacity in serving young families. The document also contains recommended steps that state and local human service agencies can take to maximize the ARPA benefits for young families and their children.

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) Re: American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#): An FAQ that expands on how several of the American Rescue Plan Act provisions directly impact the lives of people with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who support them.

Bipartisan Policy Center

[Child Care in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#): A summary of the ARPA provisions that impact working families and the childcare sector.

BUILD Initiative

[Start with Equity: Advancing Equity in Early Care and Education Systems with the American Rescue Plan Act](#): A brief that reviews concrete ways to invest in ensuring equitable access, experiences, and outcomes to support states and tribes in building a pathway towards stronger, higher-quality, more equitable childcare systems.

BUILD Initiative

[Supporting Prenatal-to-Three with Federal Relief Funds](#): A planning tool that showcases how the federal relief funds can be used to support infant, toddler, and family well-being through strategies to expand, improve, target, and make early care and education, family support, and maternal and infant/toddler health services more accessible and responsive.

Child Care Aware

[American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#): A webpage of tools for how states can use the ARPA childcare provisions to expand and support childcare infrastructure.

Children's Funding Project

[Children's Funding Project ARPA Database](#): An online database which highlights the ARP funding available to all 50 states, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia as well, plus more than 27,000 counties, cities, and towns; nearly 17,000 school districts and 3,500 higher education institutions. With this tool, you are able to search your state, community, school district, college, or university to determine how much federal relief money your community will receive for children and youth.

[Fact Sheet on Intermediary Organizations](#): A fact sheet on the role of intermediaries in financing children's services, as these groups are uniquely well-positioned to support agencies and provide additional administrative capacity by coordinating and deploying the new funding.

[American Rescue Plan FAQ](#): A webpage that answers such questions as when specific communities will receive SLFRF dollars, how spending guidelines differ from those of other COVID-19 relief packages and more.

The Council of State Governments

[How States Can Utilize American Rescue Plan Funds: Food Programs and Nutrition Assistance:](#) A fact sheet to help states leverage ARPA funding to successfully invest in food programs and nutrition assistance.

Kaiser Family Foundation

[Postpartum Coverage Extension in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021:](#) An article explaining the provision in the American Rescue Plan Act that makes a major change to Medicaid coverage for low-income pregnant and postpartum women. The post also raises questions that policymakers are likely to grapple with as the policy implementation process unfolds.

National Academy for State Health Policy

[American Rescue Plan Act Presents Opportunities for States to Support School Mental Health Systems:](#) An issue brief outlining how the ARPA mental health funds can be used to address the youth mental health crisis through school-based mental health systems building.

National Association of Counties

[American Rescue Plan Act Funding Breakdown:](#) An interactive tool that helps counties navigate the roughly \$1.5 trillion in county related funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

National Conference of State Legislatures

[ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Fund Allocations Database:](#) A database detailing state actions as to how they are utilizing their Fiscal Recovery Fund allocations. This database provides up-to-date, real-time information in the 50 states, updated daily.

National Consumer Law Center

[A Guide for Advocates to Recent Federal COVID-19 Relief to Help Consumers Pay for Essential Energy, Water, and Broadband Service:](#) An issue brief that provides an overview for advocates of the key federal COVID-19 relief programs that can help consumers pay for essential energy, water, and broadband service.

Prevent Child Abuse America

[The American Rescue Plan Act: Frequently Asked Questions on the CAPTA and MIECHV Provisions:](#) An FAQ page on the ARPA provisions related to emergency funding for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.

School House Connection

[Overview of U.S. Department of Education Guidance on American Rescue Plan Act Homeless Children and Youth Funding:](#) A Q&A summary of the ARPA provisions to support children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Start Early

[How American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) Funds Can Support Children with Disabilities and Their Families](#): A PDF resource outlining strategies for how to use several of the ARPA provisions to assist states' COVID-19 recovery and lay the groundwork for long-term transformation of early childhood systems to best support children with disabilities and developmental delays as well as their families.

United States Department of Education

[IDEA American Rescue Plan Funds](#): A compilation of resources and materials pertaining to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ([IDEA](#)) American Rescue Plan Act supplemental funds for Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021.



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