

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts
Health Care & Health Promotion Synergy Initiative Project Impact Highlights

Updated: June 7, 2021

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4
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Oral Health	Grants totaled: \$6M
❖ Central Massachusetts Oral Health Initiative (CMOHI) <i>Nov. 2000 – June 2011</i>	
❖ Oral Health Initiative of North Central Massachusetts (OHINCM) <i>Jan. 2001 – June 2008</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental services were introduced and continue at one community health center (with three sites) and services were doubled at two other community health centers in the region. • Preventive dental care services were introduced and continue to be provided at 55 public schools in the region. • A fully accredited dental hygiene program was established and clinical training continues at one community health center. • Due to public policy changes won through advocacy with the state legislature, the number of dentists in the region accepting Medicaid patients went from fewer than 10 at the outset of these projects to nearly 200, boosting participation rates to 50%. 	

Children’s Mental Health	Grants totaled: > \$4M
❖ Together For Kids (TFK) <i>May 2001 – June 2009</i>	
Grants totaled: \$1.8M	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TFK model demonstrated that with an average of 24 hours of behavioral health consultation for teachers and parents, children’s challenging behaviors and developmental skills significantly improved as compared to those in matched nonintervention preschools. • Preschool expulsions were reduced to near zero in the intervention preschools. • Advocacy efforts resulted in the state providing \$19M for mental health consultation services in preschool settings from 2008 to 2020. 	
❖ Choices <i>Jan. 2007 – Dec. 2011</i>	
Grants totaled: > \$2.2M	
❖ The Winchendon Project <i>Jan. 2007 – Dec. 2012</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These projects focused on access to mental health services and the prevention of substance abuse among adolescents in the Webster-Dudley and Winchendon communities. • A school-based health center was opened at Winchendon middle/high school that continues to provide on-site medical and behavioral health services for students. • Both projects joined the statewide Children’s Mental Health Campaign (CMHC) to advocate for issues pertinent to children’s mental health. These efforts led to the passage of legislation which included early identification of children with mental health needs, the creation of a task force to assess the capacity of schools to deliver behavioral health services and make recommendations to promote effective delivery; improved insurance coverage for children with mental health needs; and the restructuring of the Commonwealth’s provision, coordination, and oversight of children’s behavioral health services. 	

Child Abuse	Grants totaled: \$2M
❖ Child Abuse Prevention and Protection Collaborative <i>Jan. 2001 – Nov. 2007</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The collaborative developed a coordinated, community-based effort to prevent child abuse and neglect, establish a continuum of care for victims and families, and advocate for legislation to address shaken baby syndrome and provide for sexual assault nurse examiners. • As a result of the successful implementation of a Shaken Baby Syndrome Campaign at two area hospitals, Massachusetts now requires that all birthing parents receive education about shaken baby syndrome. • The state continues to fund sexual assault nurse examiners, totaling more than \$42M through FY21 since 2008. 	

Homelessness	Grants totaled: > \$2.2M
❖ Home Again <i>Jan. 2007 – June 2013</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Again documented the efficacy of the “Housing First” approach, including savings in healthcare costs that exceeded the cost of this intervention. Massachusetts then transitioned all of its housing supports from sheltering to housing first. • In January 2011, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness recognized Worcester as the first city of its size to effectively end chronic adult homelessness. • Since 2011, funding for case management/community supports has been provided by all Medicaid behavioral health providers. • Massachusetts received a federal planning grant in 2011 to address serving “dual eligibles” with Medicaid and Medicare funds for vulnerable populations. Services began in 2013 and under the federal CMS section 1115 waiver that was approved for Massachusetts in 2016, these services will continue through June 2022. • Funding for occupancy costs through HUD and state funding, combined with Social Security income has resulted in several million dollars to pay the rent for these individuals who have been housed. 	

Hunger/Healthy Eating	Grants totaled: > \$4.3M
❖ Hunger-Free & Healthy <i>Jan. 2007 – Dec. 2012</i>	Grants totaled: > \$1.5M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership with the Worcester Public Schools improved the quality of meals offered to 25,000 students. In 2018, 21 schools in the district out of only 100 schools across the state, provided free breakfast after the bell. • A SNAP outreach worker was hired and worked with eligible individuals and families to submit more than 550 SNAP applications, of which, more than 60% were approved. • Hunger-Free & Healthy participants worked for the passage of the School Nutrition Bill that initiated the creation of a statewide Food Policy Council, which remains actively engaged in food-related advocacy efforts. 	
❖ Worcester Regional Food Hub (WRFH) <i>Jan. 2015 – Present</i>	Grants totaled: >\$2.8M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of the WRFH is to improve the regional food system by strengthening sustainable agriculture, promoting healthy eating, and fueling economic development. WRFH is working to increase access to fresh local food by providing aggregation and distribution services from farms to institutions, schools, and farmers markets and by incubating local food entrepreneurs through a commercial kitchen and business consulting services. • In January 2019, the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, was awarded a \$65,000 Urban Agenda Grant from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development for collaboration with the WRFH for the "Launching Diverse Food Entrepreneurs" program (one of nine grants awarded statewide). Eighteen participants graduated from the program, and some continue to use the WRFH commercial kitchen. • In 2020, the WRFH was awarded a MassDevelopment Collaborative Workspace Program Fit-Out grant for up to \$100,000 to purchase equipment for two of the six kitchen stations planned in Union Station. The Foundation is providing the \$100,000 match for this grant. • In January 2021, Governor Baker signed a \$16.5 billion Transportation Bond Bill, which includes approximately \$3.2 million in funding for the renovation of Union Station for the WRFH. This funding should cover all renovation costs associated with installing sprinklers in the lower level of Union Station, building out the space, and purchasing/installing all necessary equipment. Governor Baker also signed "An Act enabling partnerships for growth," which includes \$100,000 for the WRFH to support diverse urban food entrepreneurs. 	

Prisoner Reentry	Grants totaled: > \$2.3M
❖ Worcester Initiative for Supported Reentry (WISR); Wiser Men; Wiser Women <i>Jan. 2011 – Aug. 2017</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of these projects was to reduce recidivism among men and women who were formerly incarcerated, thereby improving public safety and public health. Key elements in achieving this goal included access to social and health services, housing placement, employment readiness and job placement. • The recidivism rate among WISR participants three years post-release was 20.8%, a reduction of 47% relative to a historical comparison group; a savings of more than \$375,000 for a 59% return on investment based on one-year incarceration costs. • 96% of participants were housed immediately upon release, and the remaining 4% were housed within one day of release. 97% of participants in need of Medicaid insurance were enrolled. 93% of participants referred to substance abuse treatment services accessed them and 75% of participants referred to mental health services accessed those services. • The Worcester County Sheriff's Office also received \$750,000 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in 2014, one of only seven grants awarded nationally, to implement Wiser Men, a region-wide reentry program modeled after WISR. The Middlesex Sheriff's Office received a Bureau of Justice Assistance \$244,000 grant in July 2018 to implement the WISR model. • Advocacy efforts with state officials resulted in reentry programming being included in the state's 2018 Criminal Justice Reform legislation. The state allocated \$7 million from FY19-21 to pilot reentry services in Worcester and Middlesex Counties. In FY21, \$4,075,000 was allocated for MassHealth's statewide expansion of services for persons in the criminal justice system. • Senate Bill #2021, "An Act relative to motor vehicle license suspension" was signed into law in March 2016, thereby repealing the automatic suspension of drivers' licenses and accompanying fines for people convicted of a drug crime. 	

Economic Self-Sufficiency	Grants totaled: > \$3M
❖ A Better Life (ABL) <i>Jan. 2011 – Dec. 2017</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of this project was to enable families to achieve economic self-sufficiency and transition out of public housing. • As of December 2020, 100 families have used their escrow, averaging nearly \$10,000 per family, to move out of public housing. • The employment rate at Great Brook Valley and Curtis Apartments jumped by 23% (from 39% in 2014 to 62% in 2019). • In July 2014, "An Act to Foster Economic Independence" was approved by the state legislature and included a provision that required MA DHCD to allow the Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) to operate ABL in its state-subsidized housing properties, which represent about 20% (493) of its units. In April 2015, DHCD approved the administrative details to implement the work/education requirement. • Advocacy efforts at the state level have led to system changes to sustain and replicate ABL. In May 2015, ABL was selected by DHCD as an innovative model program to replicate at other Housing Authorities. In March 2019, nearly \$1 million was awarded by DHCD to enable the Gloucester, New Bedford, and Taunton Housing Authorities to implement ABL. 	

Healthcare Access	Grants totaled: > \$900K
❖ Improving Access to Health <i>Jan. 2011 – Dec. 2015</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milford Regional Medical Center (MRMC) identified concerns about access to primary care in its service area and the impact it was having on the emergency department. MRMC brought together a group of community organizations that determined that a community health center would improve local access. The Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center, which was already seeing several hundred patients from the Milford area at its Worcester and Framingham sites, agreed to construct a satellite in Milford. • Funding from The Health Foundation, together with \$400,000 from the MetroWest Health Foundation, enabled the construction of a satellite health center in Milford, which opened in March 2014. • In the first year, more than 3,800 patients (over 13,000 visits) were seen for primary care services. Of these, approximately 500 patients transferred from the health centers in either Framingham or Worcester, freeing up access at those sites. • As of 2020, the health center serves around 5,000 patients a year and has grown from 7,000 visits in 2014 to 15,000 visits in 2019. 	

Childhood Adversity	Grants totaled: > \$1.9M
❖ Worcester HEARS (Worcester Healthy Environments and Resilience in Schools Initiative) <i>Jan. 2015 – July 2020</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the project was to test the effect of integrating trauma-sensitive education practices and individual student supports into the school day at four elementary schools and one middle school in the Worcester Public Schools on the number of disciplinary actions, including suspensions. The project also introduced social emotional learning curricula MindUp, Open Circles, and Second Step, and the district continues their use. • 53 teachers and staff participated in credit courses on trauma sensitive schools offered by Lesley University, with 39 completing four courses. All district staff received professional development on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and creating responsive learning environments. Disciplinary policies were reformed at the district level. Educators at HEARS schools who received the training were frequently transferred to comparison schools, while educators who did not receive the training were frequently transferred to HEARS schools. Thus, the research model was not able to demonstrate efficacy of the intervention. Widely accepted as best practice, the district continues trauma training through a partnership with UMass Medical School. • A HEARS Support Team, comprised of a behavioral health clinician and social worker, provided individualized services to students and their teachers. The district will continue this practice as mobile Stabilization Teams. • A closed school-based health center at Worcester East Middle School was renovated and re-opened by Family Health Center Worcester in April 2018. The center continues to provide access to health care and behavioral health services to more than 800 students. • The use of community-based behavioral health providers in after school programming was piloted at the HEARS schools and is expected to continue. • Following a presentation of the final evaluation report for the project on May 20, 2021, the Worcester School Committee requested the administration to reach out to community-based behavioral health providers to establish service during the school day and report back to the Committee. 	

Community Development	Grants totaled: > \$2.1M
❖ Relmagine North of Main <i>Jan. 2015 – Dec. 2020</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal of Relmagine North of Main was to transform the North of Main neighborhood in Fitchburg into the “Gateway to Arts and Culture,” a vibrant community where people want to live, work, play and invest. • In addition to the \$2.1 million from the Foundation, a wide array of other organizations and foundations, including the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the City of Fitchburg and state government contributed to the project. The project can take some measure of credit for helping the community leverage investments totaling more than \$54.7 million and an additional \$32.1 million in pipeline capital projects, bringing the total community impact to date to \$87.5 million, as of February 2021. • Collaborative community efforts will continue with: Fitchburg State University (FSU) funding the project coordinator position and the Resident Leadership Institute; NewVue Communities funding the Community Stewards; and NewVue and the Fitchburg Art Museum (FAM) constructing the Fitchburg Arts Community (apartments and studios). • The collaborative partnerships started by RNOM have continued even after the conclusion of the Foundation’s funding. For example, the FAM and FSU officially signed a memorandum of agreement in April 2021 to strengthen their partnership, which began through RNOM, to collaborate on university program and curriculum development and to integrate FAM into the life of the campus community. 	