



Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health

A project of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Briefing Sheet

Nationwide, SAMHSA's 18 Project LAUNCH sites are pioneering new ways to promote young children's wellness. The target: children from birth through age 8. The goal: for all children to reach physical, social, emotional, behavioral, *and* cognitive milestones. Healthy growth in each of these areas prepares children to thrive in school and beyond.

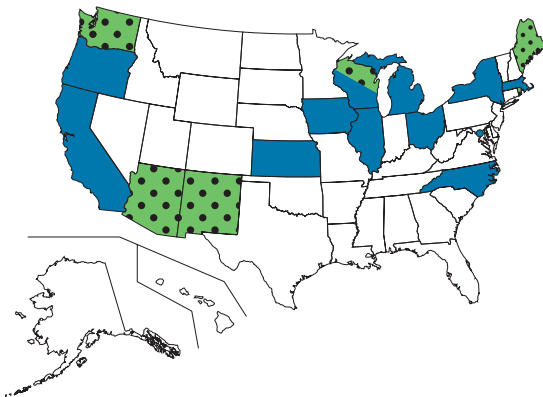
SAMHSA funds states and tribes, each of whom selects a designated "pilot" community. Over five years, these communities expand the use of evidence-based practices, improve collaboration among child-serving organizations, and integrate physical and mental health services and supports for children and their families. Lessons learned from the communities guide state- and tribal-level systems changes and policy development. Strong partnerships between the state/tribe and local communities lead to the sustainability and replication of successful practices and systems improvements beyond the life of the grant.

LAUNCH grantees form state/tribal *and* local Young Child Wellness Councils that engage key players across the child-serving system. Councils convene early childhood partners to integrate and coordinate programs, policies, data, and funding. They join with families and public and private partners to scan communities and pinpoint unmet needs. Then, they create strategic plans that guide their use of **five prevention and promotion strategies drawn from current research** (see sidebar).

In addition to providing direct services, Project LAUNCH states, tribes, and communities increase knowledge about healthy child development through cross-disciplinary workforce development activities and public education.

A unique federal-level partnership among SAMHSA, the Administration for Children & Families (ACF), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guides LAUNCH and models collaboration for grantees.

LAUNCH Grantees



2008: Arizona, Maine, New Mexico, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Rhode Island, and Washington.

2009: California, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

Key: 2008 cohort
2009 cohort

LAUNCH's Five Prevention and Promotion Strategies

- » Developmental assessments in a range of child-serving settings
- » Integration of behavioral health into primary care settings
- » Mental health consultation
- » Home visiting
- » Family strengthening and parent skills training

LAUNCH's Goals

- » Increased access to developmental assessments, screenings, and services for young children and their families
- » Expanded and improved use of culturally-relevant, evidence-based prevention and wellness promotion practices in a range of primary care and early childhood settings
- » A workforce that understands young children's healthy development
- » Improved systems of care for young children and families at the local, state, and federal levels
- » More children entering school ready to learn

CONTACT: Jennifer Oppenheim, PsyD, Coordinator • **PHONE:** (240) 276-1862 • **E-MAIL:** jennifer.oppenheim@samhsa.hhs.gov

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