



Project LAUNCH New Hampshire

Cohort 4, Funding Period 2012–2017

<http://sparknh.com/project-launch-nh>

Grantee Overview

Through the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Section, Project LAUNCH New Hampshire (NH) works to support the development of social and emotional wellness of children ages birth to eight and their families, pregnant women, and immigrant and refugee families who are living at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. The pilot community, the City of Manchester, is New Hampshire's largest and most diverse urban community. Project LAUNCH NH promotes effective parenting support and child wellness; elimination of behavioral health disparities among its target populations; and strengthening early childhood, public health, and education systems serving and supporting children and families. The Manchester project and [Spark NH](#), the Governor's Early Childhood Coordinating Council, work together on behalf of New Hampshire's young children and their families to promote coordinated early childhood programs, policies, and systems.

Project Milestones

All [Project LAUNCH](#) grantees implement five promotion and prevention strategies intended to increase access to high-quality prevention and promotion services for children and families. In Project LAUNCH NH, these five strategies are implemented through the following activities:

- **Screening and Assessment:** Project LAUNCH NH provides childhood screenings for behavioral health and social-emotional development by using the [Ages & Stages Questionnaire®, Third Edition \(ASQ-3™\)](#) and [Ages & Stages Questionnaire®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition \(ASQ:SE-2™\)](#). Project LAUNCH NH works closely with the New Hampshire Watch Me Grow (WMG) program, where the WMG coordinator recruits and trains child-serving organizations to implement the ASQ-3™ and ASQ:SE-2™. In the first two years of implementation, nearly 1,300 ASQ-3™ screenings were administered in New Hampshire and Manchester. In one fiscal year, ASQ:SE™ administrations increased nearly 1,000% due to Project LAUNCH NH efforts. The WMG coordinator also assists providers in understanding screening results, thereby increasing referral recommendations and follow-up services. With this support, providers are able to submit screening and assessment results into the state-wide WMG data system, allowing organizations to identify areas of need as well as appropriate evidence-based programs for children and families.
- **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation:** In two Manchester early care and education sites, behavioral support coaches work with early childhood staff to increase their knowledge of preschool social-emotional development and implement strategies to build positive behavior in children. Behavioral support coaches work with six classrooms and 120 children on an annual basis. Project LAUNCH NH trained the behavioral support coaches using the [Pyramid Model Consortium](#) (formally known as the [Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning](#)) and the

[Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#) models. These coaches work together to ensure consistency in the training and guidance that they provide to early care and childhood providers, including practices and strategies of coaching classroom staff, observing staff and children, providing individualized support for children with elevated social-emotional screenings, developing individual behavior support plans, and engaging families. As a result of these efforts, Project LAUNCH NH has seen improvement in children’s ASQ:SE™ scores.

- **Enhanced Home Visiting:** Project LAUNCH NH provides home visiting services that focus on social-emotional well-being for parents with children ages birth to six. During home visits, parent-child interactions are videotaped and then assessed by the mental health (MH) clinician using the evidence-based [Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale](#) (KIPS) model. Based on KIPS results, the MH clinician guides home-visiting staff in providing support to parents on strengthening the child-parent relationship and addressing the needs of young children and their families. For example, parents are able to build their relationship skills to better support their children’s social-emotional development. Through Project LAUNCH NH, at least 50 parents and 50 children participate in enhanced home-visiting services every year.
- **Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care:** Through Project LAUNCH NH, a care coordinator consults, screens, and assesses children’s behavioral health at the Manchester Community Health Center (MCHC). Children are screened using the ASQ-3™ and ASQ:SE™, and parents are given a modified screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) questionnaire, which screens for depression, substance misuse, food insecurity, and domestic violence. The care coordinator also works with community health workers to provide care coordination for at least 100 parents every year, improving the success with referrals and linkages. In addition, three bilingual community health workers (fluent in Spanish, Nepalese, and Arabic) are liaisons to the MCHC, assisting families of children ages birth to eight to understand the importance of developmental screenings, the process for screenings, and referrals for behavioral health services. This work has helped at least 30 non-English-speaking parents receive coordinated care every year. As a result of integration efforts, the MCHC uses the [Survey of Wellbeing of Young Children](#) (SWYC): a survey of developmental milestones for developmental surveillance during well-child check-ups. Since the SWYC complements the ASQ-3™ and ASQ:SE™ tools, the number of screenings during well-child visits has increased. This accomplishment extended the impact of Project LAUNCH and MCHC, as other Federally Qualified Health Centers in New Hampshire saw the benefit of using the SWYC. From this effort, there are 10 Federally Qualified Health Centers, including three Healthcare for the Homeless Programs, using the SWYC in the state.
- **Family Strengthening:** In the first two years of implementation, Project LAUNCH NH used the evidence-based curriculum, [Incredible Years](#), to support and enhance parenting skills. Through Incredible Years, parents of children ages three to eight received skills training to strengthen their capacity to effectively support their children’s needs. In particular, the goal of Incredible Years is to help parents reduce their children’s aggression and behavior problems and increase their children’s social competence at home and school. However, Project LAUNCH NH learned that the time commitment (14-week curriculum of Incredible Years) deterred families from participating and completing the program. As a result, Project LAUNCH NH implemented parenting modules from the Pyramid Model Consortium, offering a 6-week class called [Positive Solutions for Families](#). In September 2015, over 25 employees from agencies partnering with Project LAUNCH NH, including the project’s Parent Education Facilitators, were trained to offer Positive Solutions for Families and

incorporate the tenets of the program within their work. Between October 2015 and June 2016, the Facilitators offered 10 sessions where at least 56 parents participated, benefiting over 100 children. Project LAUNCH NH is set to train health professionals throughout New Hampshire on how to lead Positive Solutions for Families sessions starting in September 2016. From these trainings, health professionals are expected to offer at least two sessions in their respective regions in an effort to replicate the success of this strategy experienced in Manchester, the pilot community of Project LAUNCH NH.

“Through system-building and direct services, our goal is to build adult capacities to improve child outcomes. We want to ensure there is a well-coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that reduces risk for young children and strengthens families.”

Systems Integration

Project LAUNCH is intended to improve coordination and collaboration across systems that serve young children and their families. Project LAUNCH NH strengthens the early childhood infrastructure state wide by enhancing the workforce and developing public education and marketing activities. Project LAUNCH NH strives to improve health professionals’ and early care and education providers’ understanding and competencies of early childhood. Its Workforce and Professional Development Committee from the state-level Young Child Wellness Council, Spark NH, developed the *Shared Professional Early Childhood Competencies* to share with stakeholders working with young children birth through age eight and their families. To promote the awareness of early childhood development, Spark NH created a [Public Awareness Toolkit](#) that includes the PowerPoint presentation, *Children: The Bedrock of the Granite State*, as an overview of early childhood brain development and the importance of investing in children’s development in their early years. This presentation has been shared state-wide with approximately 650 leaders from rotary clubs, business groups, and New Hampshire’s Department of Education over the past two years. Additionally, Spark NH has trained at least 17 ambassadors from early childhood partner organizations to give the presentation to their communities.

Data collection and reporting have been a major focus over the last year for Project LAUNCH NH. At the local level, staff created a database specifically for Project LAUNCH efforts in New Hampshire. Until the local project built a shared database in 2015, all data related to child and families, and evaluation outcomes were collected and maintained in paper form or in individual agency databases. Although most agencies have an electronic record system, these systems do not “talk” to each other. Project LAUNCH NH created the database using a thorough review and the development of a common intake form and a Universal Consent to Exchange Information form. Staff were trained to use the database and can enter data on a regular basis. This database system has allowed the common intake data to be shared among agencies, reducing duplication of efforts in data collection.

Grantee Events and Materials

Click on the following links to access information about grantee-developed resources.

- [A Framework for Action for New Hampshire’s Young Children](#): Presents 10 policy recommendations addressing children’s development – health, learning, and family economic stability, and provides a policy brief summarizing each recommendation’s significance, national and state policies in place, challenges facing New Hampshire, and action steps to address those challenges.

- [Public Awareness Toolkit](#): Includes a variety of printed materials, a PowerPoint presentation, and examples of outreach activities to help build awareness of the importance of early childhood.
- [Raising New Hampshire: The Early Years](#): Features Project LAUNCH NH as one of the stories highlighting a family receiving services in this New Hampshire-specific supplement of the PBS *Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of the Nation* documentary series.
- [Project LAUNCH Intake Form](#): Given to families to assess their demographics and health at the beginning of their participation in Project LAUNCH NH.
- [Project LAUNCH NH Universal Consent for Exchange of Information Form](#): Given to families to receive consent on sharing families' information with Project LAUNCH NH.

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