



Help Me Grow

2024 End of Year Report



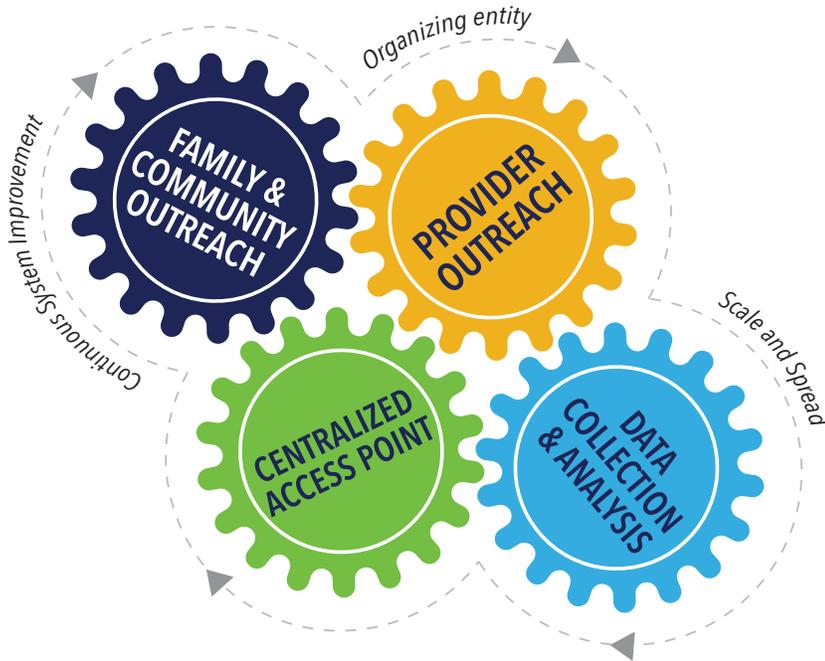
An Affiliate of the National Network

helpmegrowks.org

What Is Help Me Grow Kansas?

Help Me Grow Kansas is a foundational philosophy to ensure children and families are connected to the right resources at the right time. Using HMG KS as a guide, Kansas early childhood decision-makers, programs and services, and community leaders can direct or leverage investments and resources that support child and family well-being.

CORE COMPONENTS OF HELP ME GROW KANSAS



The four core components guide efforts to improve child health and well-being outcomes at both state and local levels:

Family & Community Outreach

Engage families and communities through education and awareness, regular feedback conversations, and access to opportunities to advance children's health and well-being.

Centralized Access Point

Establish a single resource that ensures families have streamlined access and follow-up to the referrals and services their child needs.

Provider Outreach

Offer training and resources to support providers in identifying needs and connecting families to services to support their child's development.

Data Collection & Analysis

Collect and analyze key data and family experiences to identify systemic gaps and make improvements to ensure children and families receive the services they need to thrive.

Learn more at <https://helpmegrowks.org>

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Maddie Wegner

Help Me Grow Kansas State Lead

- Creates awareness of HMG Kansas system and the services it offers to families, children, and community-facing providers
- Networks with stakeholders, communities, and providers
- Collaborates internally providing leadership and oversight

Ali Braun

Family Systems Consultant

- Supports education to advance healthy development
- Grows awareness of system and services
- Engages with community partners
- Hosts community events and trainings

Zachary Ray

Advanced Data Analyst

- Supports evaluation of data and analysis
- Helps identify systemic gaps, and bolsters advocacy efforts to create systemic quality improvements for families and children

Michelle Reichart

Statewide Information and Resource Specialist

- Provides consistent assistance to families and professionals connecting to programs and services supported by a real-time directory

TBD

Provider Outreach

- Acts as a champion to support early detection and intervention for healthy development, creating referral and linkage
- Provides training on surveillance and screening.



COLLABORATION WITH HELP ME GROW NATIONAL

Help Me Grow Kansas joined the National Affiliate Advisory Board in October 2024. The board discusses the goals, challenges, and needs of the National Affiliate Network. The kickoff meeting on October 8th focused on the Centralized Access Point (CAP) Core Component and its link to the annual HMG Fidelity Assessment.

The Core Leadership Team also attended the 2024 Help Me Grow National Forum to learn how other states are building sustainable early childhood systems.



★ HMGKS.org

Internal work was conducted on the Help Me Grow Kansas website to reflect a collective result of years of connecting with families, caregivers, and lived experience experts and the desire for a “one-stop shop landing spot” to easily find resources, connect with other parents/caregivers, etc., the Help Me Grow Kansas website was revitalized to display a family-facing platform, focusing on families’ and caregivers’ needs to include resources, information, education, and connection. The soft launch of the new forward-facing platform will occur in the first part of 2025.

★ Parent and Caregiver Fireside Chats

In response to parent feedback for increased points of connection, parents and caregivers were invited to a series of virtual Parent and Caregiver Fireside Chats, a space created to foster connection for parents and caregivers, learn more about childhood topics, and spark engaging conversation, hosted by the Family Leadership Team, HMG Kansas, and supported by KU CPPR.

Topics included:

March

Discover Vital Resources, Connections, and Screenings with 1-800-CHILDREN with guest presenter Michelle Reichart

April

All about ASQs with Stacy Clark (KSDE) and Heather Staub (KDHE)

May

All About Universal Home Visiting with Holly Frye (KDHE)

June

Resources for Ages Five to Eight with Jaquita Clark (KDHE)

August

Prenatal to Postpartum: For expecting parents and infants to 12 months with Stephanie Wolf (KDHE)

September

Family Engagement Brainstorming Session in person with Cora Ungerer (KDHE)

September’s Fireside Chat was held in-person in conjunction with the annual KCSL Parent Leadership Conference at the Ramada by Wyndham Topeka Downtown Hotel and Convention Center in Topeka, KS. On September 27–28, 2024, hundreds of parent participants and children from around the state gathered for the Parent Leadership Conference. The conference offered breakout sessions on various topics including positive childhood experiences, mental health, advocacy, healthy child development, and Family Engagement Brainstorming Session, led by Cora Ungerer (KDHE), and co-facilitated by Help Me Grow Kansas and the Family Leadership Team, in which rich conversations were had over a variety of topics including family engagement opportunities, screenings and referrals, identifying local gaps in services and resources, and many others.

★ Books, Balls, and Blocks

In addition, Help Me Grow Kansas sponsored an evening tabling event creating awareness Help Me Grow Books, Balls, and Blocks events, which are a free and fun community screening events for children (ages birth-5) and their families, comprised of volunteer-led activity stations in which children can engage in developmentally appropriate play while their parents complete an ASQ-3© and ASQ:SE-2© screening. KDHE and KU CPPR co-hosted the event, highlighting the upcoming 2025 screening events, creating awareness of 1-800-CHILDREN resource, and giving all participants and their families backpacks filled with educational materials, developmentally appropriate activities, and Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIIL) books. PDG-R 2024 funding will help support three in-person events in conjunction with child cares and local community services and providers in 2025. More details to come!

See all the spotlight pieces at www.allinforkansaskids.org/spotlight/



Back row: Alethia Braun, Cora Ungerer, Rachel Gardner
Front row: Jaquita Clark, Madeline Wegner

The future of the Family Leadership Team will be absorbed into the Help Me Grow Kansas Core Leadership Team, as part of the Family & Community Outreach core component.



Building Partnerships

Help Me Grow Kansas built partnerships across the state for fostering collaboration, sharing resources, and addressing common challenges. By connecting diverse stakeholders – such as governments, businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions – communities leverage their strengths to drive collective progress. Ultimately, strengthening these partnerships create opportunities for innovation, streamline the implementation of statewide initiatives, and improve service delivery by pooling expertise and funding to optimally serve all families and children across the state.

Kansas American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

HMG KS attended the Kansas AAP Fall Summit. Partnering with 1-800-CHILDREN, the tabling event was an opportunity to meet with medical providers to share the benefits of Help Me Grow Kansas and 1-800-CHILDREN and provide valuable resources for the families and children served in their areas.

★ **KSDE**

HMG KS continued to strengthen its relationship with KSDE to accomplish shared goals, including participation in regular meetings with KSDE and Brooks Publishing, to increase awareness of healthy development and the importance of screenings.

★ **1-800-CHILDREN/IRIS**

1-800-CHILDREN serves as the Centralized Access Point (CAP) of Help Me Grow Kansas. In 2024, the CAP served 1,618 families, connecting them to communities, services, and screenings. In 2025, HMG KS will continue to build on services provided through 1-800-CHILDREN, including connection and referral, screenings, and closed-loop processes.

★ **KDHE**

Building relationships within KDHE is vital for internal function and support while also increasing collaboration and awareness.

HMG KS worked with its Part C programs to ensure they were listed through 1-800-CHILDREN and claimed their ASQ© Enterprise accounts to successfully accept referrals through 1-800-CHILDREN.

HMG KS also worked internally with the Universal Home Visiting program to create on-site visit packets for families in Spanish and English.

By leveraging existing community resources and fostering new partnerships, we are creating a more seamless and supportive experience for families across the state. We've also strengthened our partnerships with healthcare providers, enhancing early detection and intervention efforts.

- Maddie Wegner, HMG KS State Lead





Centralized Access Point

★ 1-800-CHILDREN

1-800-CHILDREN serves as the Centralized Access Point (CAP) for Help Me Grow Kansas. Their Family Resource Specialists are available 24/7 to provide resources and education, link families to needed services, and conduct ASQ© screenings. Providers can call or utilize the online resource database to help connect families to local community resources including perinatal, early childhood, and mental health programs, as well as extensive support services.

1-800-CHILDREN received a call from a mother in Kansas City, Kansas whose six-year-old son was recently diagnosed with autism and did not know where to begin with setting up services for his education. The Family Resource Specialist, who has a background in working with families with children with special needs, spoke with the caller about 504 Plans, IEPs, and special education law. The Family Resource Specialist shared several resources that provide information and advocacy support for families impacted by autism. The caller shared how grateful she felt for calling 1-800-CHILDREN and receiving guidance.



35,021 distinct database visitors

1,618 contacts



Across the state of Kansas, 1-800-CHILDREN:

Gave **37** presentations

Attended **49** vendor events

Distributed **47,432** resources



96% of individuals or families reported that their contact with 1-800-CHILDREN met their needs



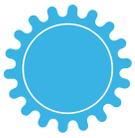
GET INVOLVED

Looking for a resource for the individuals and families you serve?

View the resource database at 1800childrenks.org or call 1-800-CHILDREN.

To claim or update your program, scan the QR code ▶





2024 HMG KS Data Fidelity Report

The Help Me Grow National Fidelity Assessment is a measurement and assessment of our single state system, collecting and utilizing data to drive continuous quality improvement. Data is collected from a variety of sources to fully reflect the scope of the Early Childhood system in Kansas, including KDHE’s internal data; 1-800-CHILDREN’s internal systems and website analytics; DAISEY and IRIS; and the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE)’s Ages and Stages Questionnaire© (ASQ) online system. The Fidelity Report also tracks provider and family outreach events, trainings, and presentations conducted by KDHE, 1-800-CHILDREN, and ASQ-related trainings as part of family and provider engagement efforts. Data from the Fidelity Report is used to develop goals that strengthen various aspects of the EC system in Kansas, including screening, referral, and follow-up.

This year, MCH programs served **4,708 children** ages birth through 5 years, and **17,058 individuals** overall

★ Screenings and Referrals

Screenings are critical in understanding individuals’ and families’ needs and the barriers they face, and can help determine next their next steps in receiving care. Help Me Grow Kansas tracks screenings across the EC system to understand the needs of children in Kansas.

The state of Kansas provides statewide access to Ages & Stages Questionnaires© (ASQ) Online. This Statewide ASQ© Online System makes it easier for organizations to improve coordination and reach more families through developmental screenings:

- **ASQ-3©** = Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (birth through age 5)
- **ASQ:SE-2©** = Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional, Second Edition (birth through age 5)

Number of children who had an ASQ© screening completed by KSDE in 2024:

ASQ-3© ASQ:SE-2©
58,772 49,607

Number of children who had an ASQ screening completed by KDHE in 2024:

ASQ-3© ASQ:SE-2©
574 97

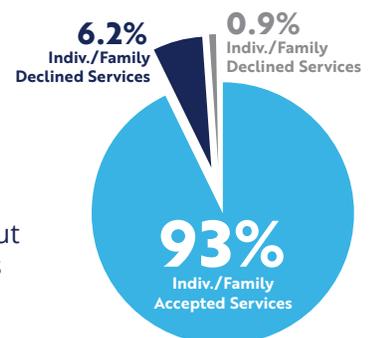
KDHE MCH programs, including providers from Teen Pregnancy Targeted Case Management (TPTCM), Pregnancy Maintenance Initiative (PMI), and Home Visiting completed 2,387 additional screenings in 2024.

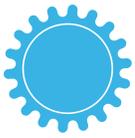
SCREENING	NUMBER SCREENED
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)	1,461
Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)	279
Patient Health Questionnaire, Adolescent Version (PHQ-A)	25
Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)	122
Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test (ASSIST)	5
Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Family/Friends, Trouble + Nicotine (CRAFT+N)	0
Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT)	0
Drug Abuse Screening Test (DAST)	72
Other	423
Total	2,387

★ Referrals

Referrals are critical for individuals and families to receive additional services that meet their needs and help them achieve overall wellness. Tracking referral outcomes, or “closing the loop”, can be accomplished by tracking through a referral system or following up with families or providers, and is an important part of the Help Me Grow framework and ensuring that families are receiving the care they want and need.

In 2024, KDHE Maternal and Child Health programs closed the loop with over 99% of individuals and families! 93% of families accepted services and 6% declined services, but less than 1% were lost to follow-up. Individuals and families were referred to programs including Women, Infants and Children (WIC), reproductive health and family planning services, and prenatal and postpartum care or education.





Data Collection & Analysis

★ Coordinated Intake/Care Coordination Survey

Discussions around coordinated intake led KDHE to partner with the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnerships and Research (KU CPPR) to develop provider and family surveys to understand care coordination roles and activities in Kansas. Providers with a number of different job titles including Family Navigators, Community Health Workers, and Home Visitors who perform tasks including intake, education, referrals, and screenings, as well as the families served by those providers were surveyed.

Responses from over 50 families and 90 providers have been received, still awaiting responses from the Spanish family survey which was disbursed at a later date. Results to date indicate what providers

in care coordination roles do, what support they may need, and how their skills and expertise can be leveraged to create a coordinated intake system that works for Kansas.

The full analysis will be available after April 1, 2025 and will dive deeper into topics such as referral patterns, how providers support families during crises, and opportunities to strengthen referral and intake processes.

This survey can be distributed and analyzed on a rolling basis. If your program would like to participate/provide your and/or your families' feedback about care coordination activities, please contact nicolestevens@ku.edu.

77% of KDHE staff that responded to the survey reported they provide screenings to individuals or families

ff
As a parent, this is one of the most valuable supports I've had. It has made me more confident as a parent and helps me better support my child.
””

KDHE providers strongly agreed that they are able to build trust with each individual or family

90% of KDHE staff who reported providing screenings said they use the results to inform what services and referrals they provide

Families who received services from KDHE strongly agreed that their **provider was supportive, understanding, and trustworthy**, and said that they were **extremely satisfied** with their provider. 

Families strongly agreed that referrals received from providers met their needs. 

Summary

As we reflect on 2024, we are filled with gratitude and pride for the progress we've made in supporting the development of Kansas's youngest residents. Our commitment to building a strong, inclusive early childhood system has never wavered, and together, we have reached meaningful milestones.

This year, we continued to strengthen cross-sector collaboration, ensuring families can easily access the services they need through a "no wrong door" approach. By leveraging existing community resources and fostering new partnerships, we are creating a more seamless and supportive experience for families across the state.

We've also strengthened our partnerships with healthcare providers, enhancing early detection and intervention efforts. In 2025, we are thrilled to welcome a new Provider Champion who will lead peer-to-peer training on developmental screenings, advocate for best practices, and help shape Help Me Grow Kansas's strategic direction. This role will further engage providers and expand our impact across the state.

Our family and community outreach initiatives have been instrumental in deepening our connections with Kansas families. Through Fireside Chats and our participation in the Parent Leadership Conference, we've gathered valuable feedback, provided critical resources, and reinforced our commitment to amplifying family voices in every step of our work.

Looking ahead, we are excited to pilot our "Books, Balls, and Blocks" developmental screening events in 2025. During the events, families will have the opportunity to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)© while connecting to vital resources and referrals. We will be partnering with child care facilities to host these events during pick up time, with the hope of eliminating barriers and increasing convenience for families. We aim to reach communities with limited access to services and screenings, ensuring families receive support where they need it most.

These accomplishments—and the ambitious goals we have set for the year ahead—are a testament to the dedication of our partners, families, and communities. Your support and collaboration make this work possible, and together, we will continue to ensure that every child in Kansas has the opportunities and support they need to thrive.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Here's to another year of growth, connection, and impact!

Madeline Wegner

State Lead, Help Me Grow Kansas

WHAT'S COMING IN 2025

JANUARY - MARCH

- HMG National Affiliate Advisory Board (AAB) meeting: Family & Community Outreach
- SICC presentation on HMG KS 2025 goals and activities
- HMG National Affiliate Advisory Board (AAB) meeting: Child Health Care Provider Outreach
- MCH Third Thursday webinar: Integrating Developmental Screenings in a clinical setting
- 1-800-CHILDREN/FindHelp meeting: Identifying major updates to their website to enhance call line navigator system, increase closed loop referral process, and allow families to start assessments to customize support
- HMGKS.org: Preparing soft launch of the family-facing website
- Kansas Governor's Public Health Conference: Tabling event; distributing resources during the all-staff MIECHV meeting

APRIL - JUNE

- HMG National Affiliate Advisory Board (AAB) meeting: topic TBD
- Physician Champion anticipated start date
- HMG National 2024 Fidelity Report submission (due April 1)
- All In for Kansas Kids Early Childhood Systems Building Webinar: Help Me Grow KS Books, Balls, and Blocks presentation
- Parent-Caregiver Fireside Chats will be held throughout 2025

JULY - SEPTEMBER

- HMG National Forum in Connecticut (July 13-17)
- 1-800-Children co-branding begins
- HMG National Affiliate Advisory Board (AAB) meeting: topic TBD
- PDG-R Y1 ends (Sept 30)

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

- PDG-R Y2 begins (Oct 1)
- HMG National Affiliate Advisory Board (AAB) meeting: topic TBD
- Hosting two Books, Balls, and Blocks events with child care facilities
- Breakout Session presentations and a Books, Balls, and Blocks event will be held during the annual Parent Leadership Conference, co-hosted with FLT
- HMG KS Physician Champion will develop training and curriculum in alignment with HMG KS goals and objectives
- Other training, events, and participation may occur throughout the year