



such as transportation issues, difficulties making appointments, long waiting times, and complex administrative processes. It will help and encourage vulnerable populations to receive the necessary health services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to service gaps, as there are reported reductions in the immunization rates for children under 2, child screening services, and preventative dental services. The overall goal of the unit is to increase access to comprehensive services for children, and pregnant women by providing all needed services at once, in a safe and sanitized environment.

### School District Collaboration to Provide Consistency for Families

#### Economic Security Corp., Joplin, MO

Each year, grantee programs work collaboratively with each school district to ensure children with special needs receive high-quality services and interventions. The collaboration is outlined in a memorandum of understanding and implemented in a variety of ways. This year, programs faced many challenges due to the coronavirus, such as getting these children the services that they need while not putting other children at risk by having outside providers in the classroom.

The grantee is particularly proud of the innovative approach established with Carthage school district. The Carthage Head Start staff developed a partnership with the school district several years ago, where an early childhood special education teacher from the school district is now housed in the Carthage Head Start center. This partnership eliminated the need for children to be transported to another location to receive services and allowed them to learn in their own classroom. It also provided consistency in that one person provided all the services to our Head Start children.

When presented with restrictions from the pandemic, the Head Start program started brainstorming with the school district on ideas to continue that quality of services. Area supervisor Kathy Miller presented the idea to make a change to the child's IEP and name the Head Start teacher as the implementer of services and overseen by the school district. The school district agreed.

The Carthage school district now provides a packet that is specifically designed for the child with the IEP. They meet with Head Start staff every other week, via phone or Zoom, to discuss progress and needs. This is working very well. It's strengthening the program's partnership with their school district and building the skills of their teaching staff. The teachers are very appreciative of the opportunity to be implementers and partners with our local school district. And best of all, children are receiving the services they need.

### Regular Virtual Visits and Delivery of Activity Packets

#### Clay Center, Clay Center, KS

During the spring shutdown, this program had a military mom who did not know many people in the area. She was pregnant and had a 2-year-old daughter. She looked forward to our virtual visits and our delivery of activity packets. We

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