

Building Home Visiting Partnerships with Pediatricians via Integrated Referrals

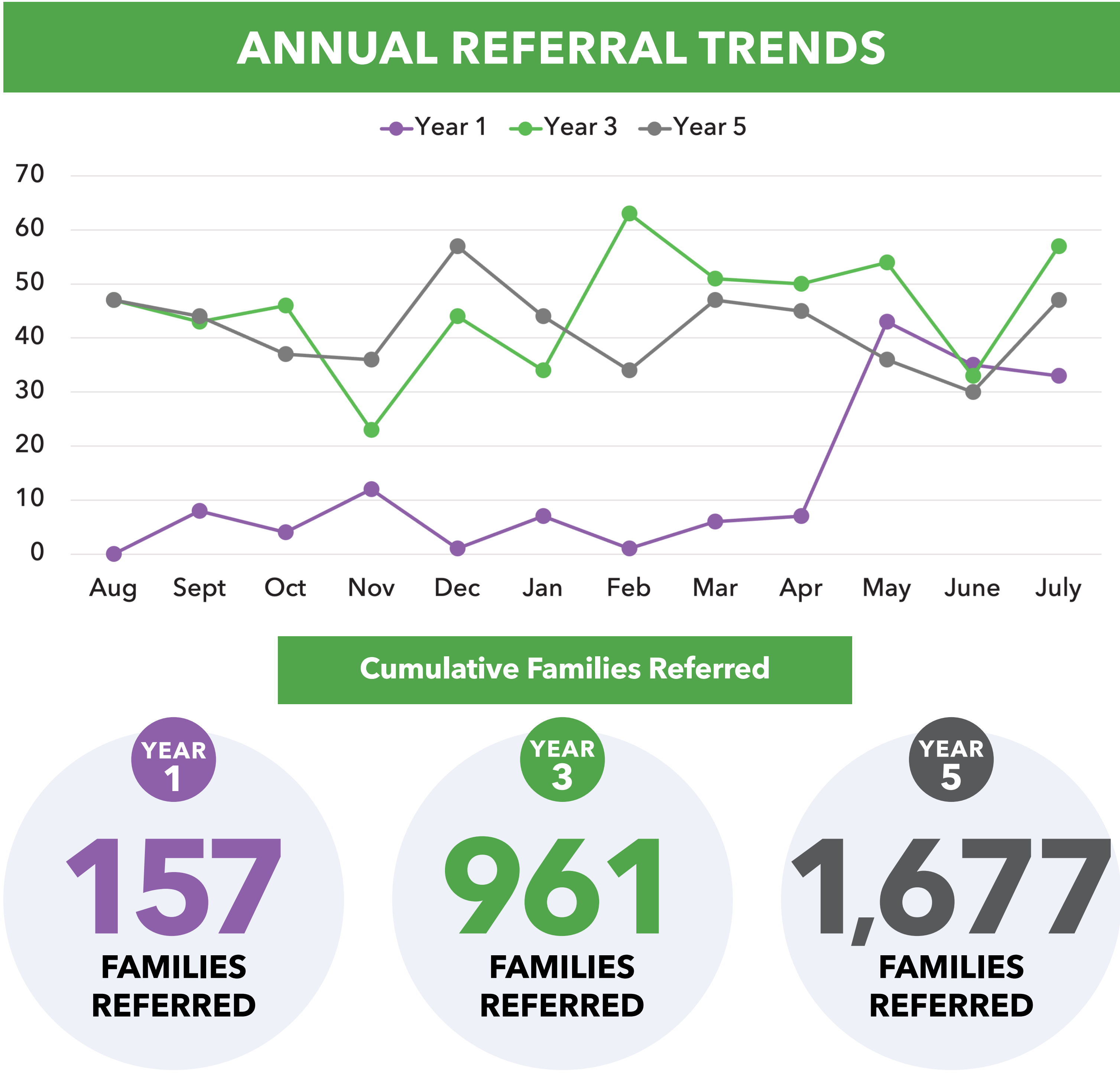
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"How do you get doctors to see the value of home visiting and make referrals? This was the connection we needed for this to come full circle for this system to work. IRIS was the answer." - Debbie, RN at Healthy Families

In 2015, community members in Sangamon County, IL strategized how to improve outcomes for children age birth to 3 years¹. Home Visiting was specifically identified as an available but underutilized service. It is well known that effective early childhood Home Visiting programs can improve multiple outcomes for children and families².

Sangamon HEART was awarded a grant for the PDG B-5 IRIS for CIHV pilot project in 2019 to develop an **Integrated Referral and Information System (IRIS)** community in conjunction with the University of Kansas Center for Public Partnership and Research aimed at improving coordination among medical and social service partners. In the five years since launch in 2021, the Sangamon HEART IRIS community has flourished, and integration of an order in the EMR has made it easy for pediatricians to make referrals to home visitors and other partners.

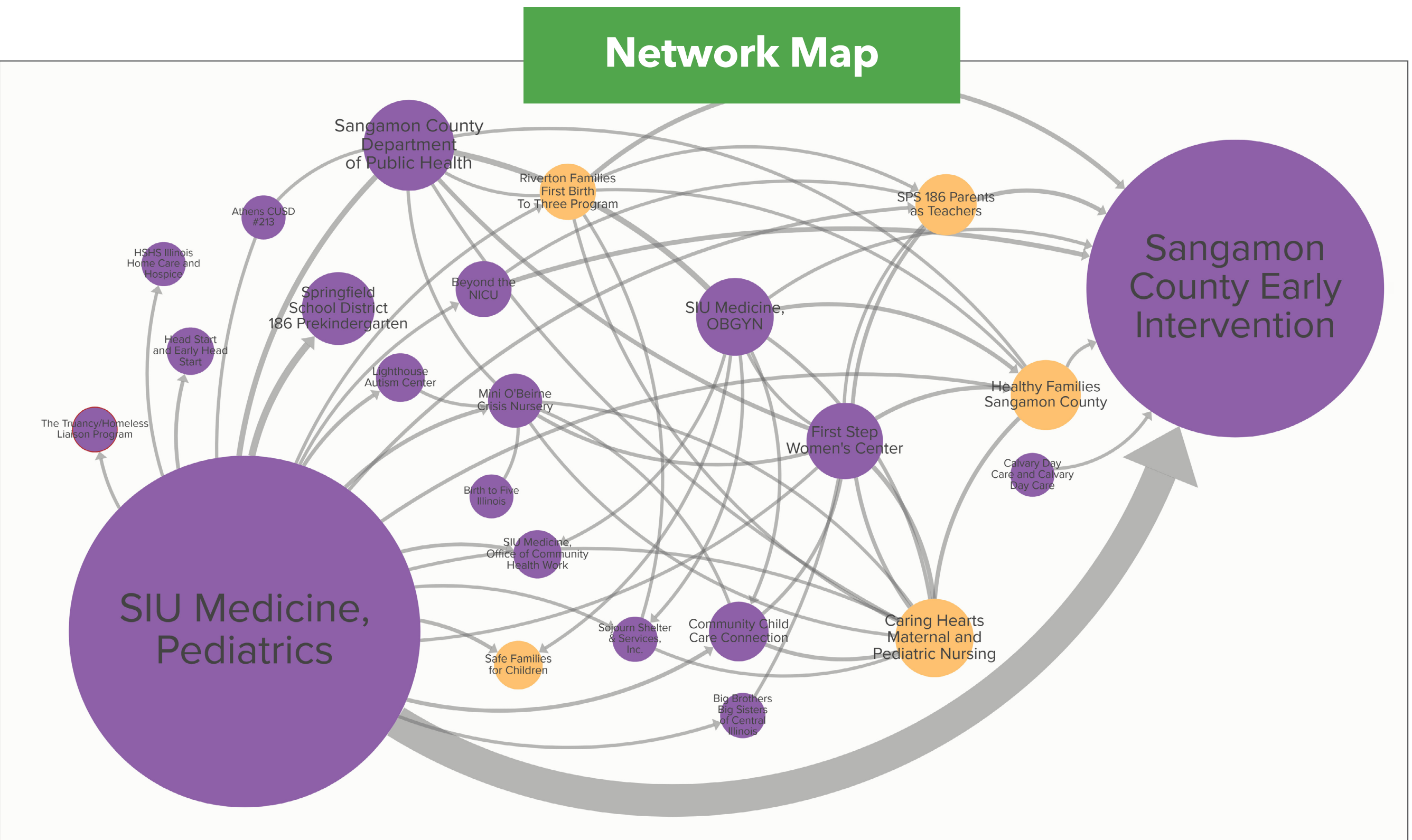
References: 1) <https://cfl.org/Initiatives-Projects/Continuum-of-Learning/>; 2) <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2017-2150>



IRIS is a data-driven, tool that enhances communication and connections between organizations and community resources. It **streamlines referrals**, **ensures effective follow-ups**, and **supports collaborative discussions to improve service pathways**. At the state level, IRIS data highlights service gaps and opportunities for broader collaboration and best practice sharing.



Sangamon Home Visiting Education and Referral Team (Sangamon HEART), a collaborative led by the Department of Pediatrics at SIU SOM, is working to address this gap in our community. In 2019, SIU SOM pediatricians united with social workers, obstetricians, **Sangamon County Public Health, Early Intervention, Healthy Families, Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, Early Head Start, and the school district preK program among others** and determined that a formal system to inter-refer was an essential need in our community.

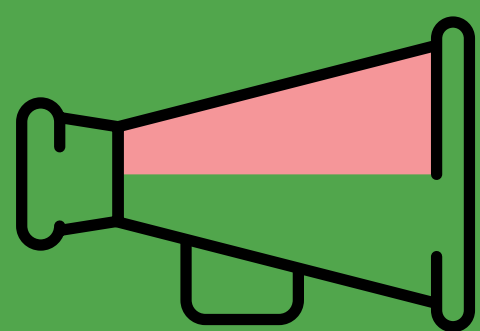


CONCLUSIONS

The SIU SOM-led IRIS program enhanced early childhood Home Visiting referrals and increased pediatrician utilization of other social services in Sangamon County.

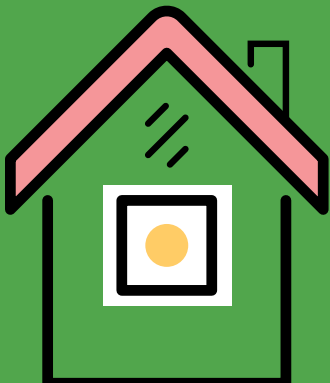
Partner agencies increased from
5 to 27

42 Average monthly referrals



Partner advocacy boosted IRIS referrals by over

350%



Increased awareness of home visiting and early childhood benefits

Connected families with the services that best align with their unique needs



Average referral response time

1.4 days

Strengthened partnerships to expand support for families