



Advancing Equity in Home Visiting: Implementation Findings and Recommendations of the Best Practices Hiring and Retention Guide for Increasing African American Staff

Anna Ghukasyan, MPH, Laurel Murray, Lynnette Marquez
LA Best Babies Network, Los Angeles, California

INTRODUCTION

This poster presentation highlights the implementation and outcomes of the Best Practices Hiring and Retention Guide for Increasing African American Home Visiting Staff at two Los Angeles County home visiting agencies.

What is the Consortium?

The Los Angeles County Perinatal and Early Childhood Home Visitation Consortium, or "The Consortium" for short, is a collective body made up of more than 60 member organizations focused on parental and child health. The Consortium has six workgroups focused on specific goals outlined in the body's strategic plan.

Consortium Workgroups

- Advocacy Workgroup
- African American Home Visiting Engagement Workgroup (AAHVE)
- Best Practices Workgroup
- Parent Voice Subgroup
- Data Workgroup
- Father Engagement Workgroup
- Referrals Workgroup

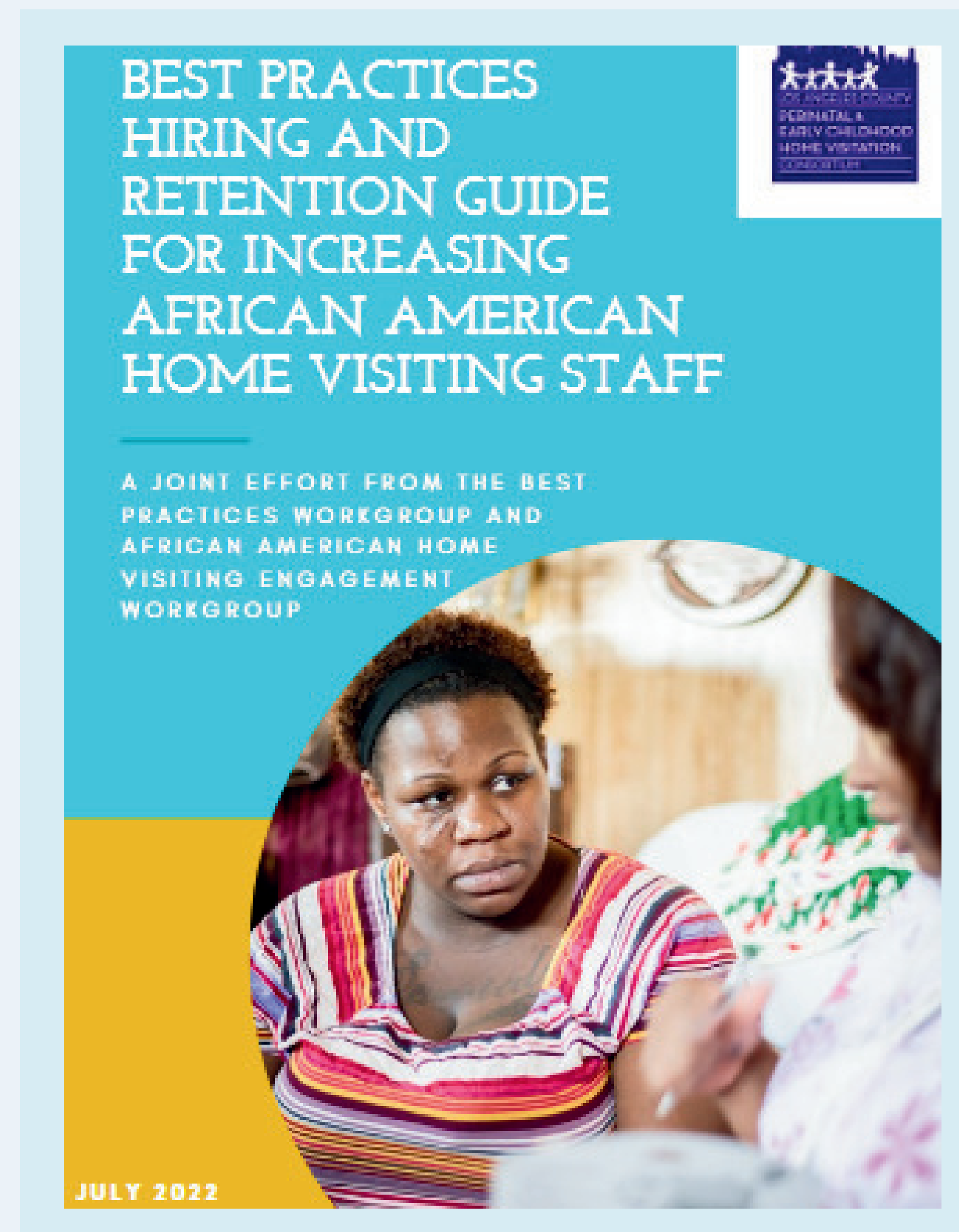
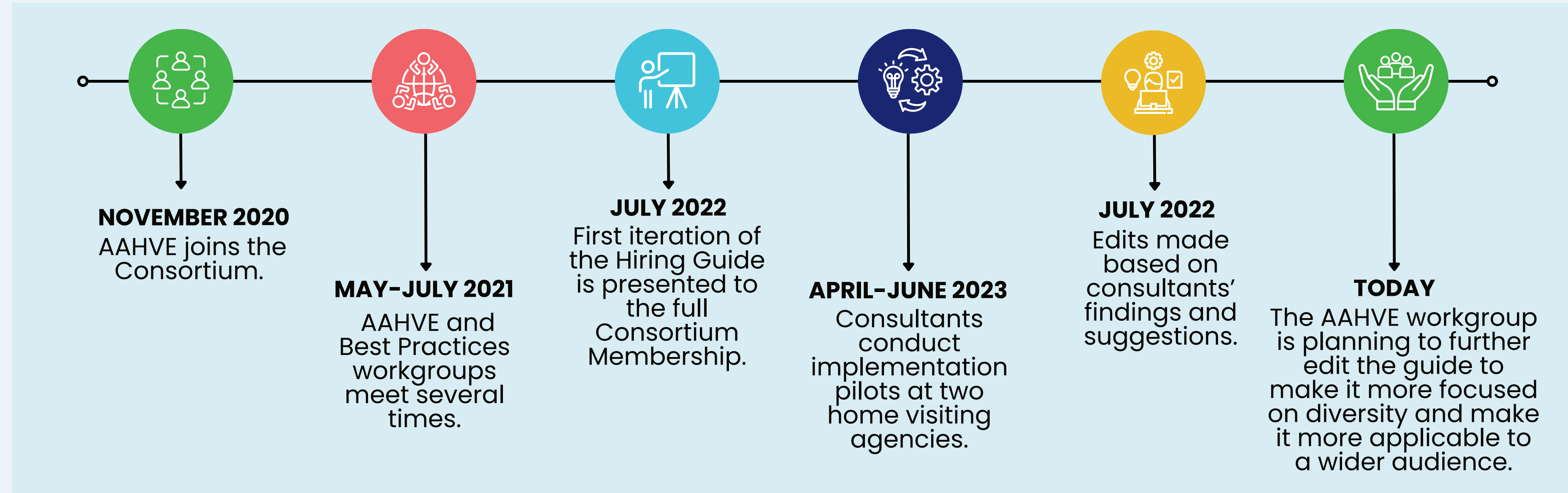
Workgroup Purpose Statements

AAHVE: Raise consciousness, build trust, and change practices to recruit and support African American home visiting staff and increase African American families in home visiting.

Best Practices: Partner with families and providers to elevate the quality of home visiting and integrate racial equity.

The idea to create the hiring guide came from open forum conversations about the factors that either encourage or discourage African American applicants from applying for home visiting positions. Members from the two workgroups wanted to create a guide that organizations could utilize to help make their agencies more welcoming and appealing to African American applicants.

TIMELINE



USING THE RACIAL EQUITY LENS

We believe that investing in staff who are culturally and linguistically representative of the families they serve is a vital way of addressing the maternal and infant death rates inequities in LA County. African American women across the country experience disproportionate mortality rates. Even though home visiting has been shown to improve infant and maternal health outcomes, only

With this in mind, the Hiring Guide was created with the overall intention of increasing African American client engagement within home visiting programs. The guide includes job description considerations, tips for recruitment, and ways of supporting and retaining a diverse, representative staff.

PILOT METHODOLOGY

Between April and June of 2023, consultants met 4 times with Agency 1 and 3 times with Agency 2.

The consultants offered:

- Help setting goals around hiring and retention of Black staff
- Guidance about how to use the Consortium's Hiring Guide
- Thought partnership and advisement
- A space for their team to spend dedicated time discussing hiring and retention of Black home visiting staff

CHANGES & RESULTS

The results from the pilot program were extremely positive as the two organizations proactively embraced diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives while also enhancing transparency in job applications.

Changes made by organizations:

- Agency 1 added a "Values and Commitment" statement to their job description, actively encouraging applications from Black candidates.
- Agency 1 updated the job application to incorporate a new program goal focused on reducing Black maternal and infant mortality rates.
- Agency 2 internally acknowledged the need to hire Black staff to better represent the communities they serve at the time the pilot took place.

Results:

- Agency 1 was able to hire a Black home visitor and a home visiting supervisor. The home visitor who was hired attributed their interest in applying for that role to the inclusive language that was used in the job description.
- Agency 2's Human Resources Director utilized the job description developed in partnership with LABBN from the hiring guide and will be using it across all agency programs when rolling out their new recruitment process.

LESSONS LEARNED & NEXT STEPS

Lesson learned:

- Create an open communication with Human Resources, preparing for pushback when necessary.
- Include organizational values, particularly those related to equity and anti-racism, in job descriptions to attract applicants
- Job descriptions should not only outline what the organization requires but also highlight the support employees can expect, especially in equity-related initiatives.

Next Steps:

- Create intentional communities of practice and reflective groups for African American home visiting staff (internal or cross-agency).



For more information, visit www.HomeVisitingLA.org

