

help me **CONNECT**  
**PROFESSIONAL REFERRAL SYSTEM**

**Recruiting referral teams now!**  
Contact the Help Me Connect team with  
questions and to learn more:  
[helpmeconnect@state.mn.us](mailto:helpmeconnect@state.mn.us)

[Help Me Connect](#) launched in 2021 as an electronic resource directory to help professionals and families find services in their local communities that support healthy prenatal and early childhood development and positive family well-being services. Help Me Connect now has an electronic referral system to help professionals make and receive referrals on behalf of families they are serving.

**We are recruiting 25 professional referral teams to begin using the system as the first cohort of users, which will allow for individualized technical assistance and the opportunity for Help Me Connect staff to gather feedback about the usability of the system.** Referral teams should include at least two community partners who want to send referrals to or receive referrals from each other on behalf of families they are serving

***Example referral teams:***

*\* Family home visiting refers to Early Childhood Screening      \* Community navigator refers to local diaper bank.*

*\* WIC refers to Head Start and ECFE      \* Early Childhood Screening refers to a mental health clinic*

If you are interested in learning more or would like to participate in the first cohort, contact Help Me Connect staff at [helpmeconnect@state.mn.us](mailto:helpmeconnect@state.mn.us). The recording of the information session held on March 10, 2025 is available. Link: [Information Session](#); Passcode: a%#Vx4l8 (The presentation starts at the 01:53 time mark.)

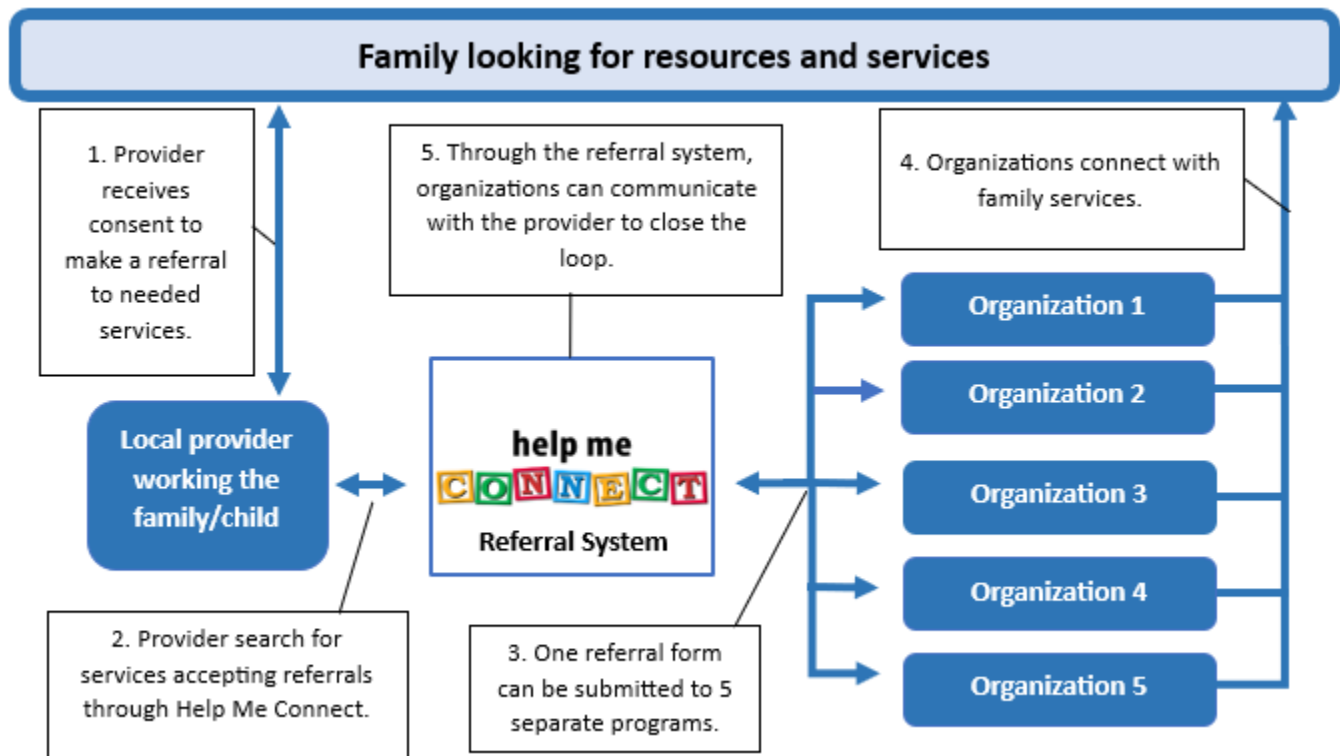
**Who is the referral system for?**

All types of professionals and organizations who serve expectant families and those with young children, such as Head Start, Family Home Visiting, child care, school-district early childhood programs, WIC, and Parent Support Outreach Program. Professionals and organizations can make and or receive referrals.

Referrals can be submitted to organizations who are currently listed in Help Me Connect that would like to receive referrals from local professionals. Organizations not in the database can be added at any time by request, as long as they are a good fit for the intended audience.

**How does the referral system work?** (see visual on next page)

1. Referring professionals access their individual accounts in Help Me Connect to search for services to support a family/child they are serving.
2. Once logged in, they can see visual indicators next to each organization accepting referrals and can add up to 5 programs in one referral form for each family/child. Minimal family contact information and a summary of needs can be shared with each program.
3. Once a referral is submitted, the selected organizations receive an email notification with a link to log into their Help Me Connect account. With their account, organizations can review referral information, update the status, communicate with the referring provider, and confirm the family/child is receiving services.
4. After a referral, referring provider logs into their account dashboard to review the status of each referral, communicate with organizations, and close the referral once complete.



### Why did we create a referral system?

Currently, many professionals help families connect to a variety of local community services by giving the family phone numbers, making a phone calls on their behalf, sending emails, and filling out individual program referral and enrollment forms. The burden is often placed on the family to tell their story multiple times, wait for return phone calls, learn they aren't eligible for programs, and in many situations, families are lost in this process and never receive services. Many professionals never learn if these connections were successful or find out weeks/months later that the family never received much needed services for a variety of reasons.

### How will the first cohort work?

1. Interested professionals will identify at least one community program/partner that they want to build a referral relationship with. Who can you work to test the system and begin using it with families?
2. Contact the Help Me Connect team about your interest [helpmeconnect@state.mn.us](mailto:helpmeconnect@state.mn.us) to discuss next steps, ask questions, and receive training resources and guidance.
3. Referral accounts will be set up. The Help Me Connect team will provide technical assistance and troubleshoot issues.
4. Referring professionals and receiving organizations will submit test referrals as many times as needed, until they feel ready to use the system with families.
5. Professionals will informally share feedback with the Help Me Connect team about how the system works and recommend improvements that will make the system easier to use.
6. Once the referral team feels the system is working well, both parties can consider adding new partners to expand the referral network.

Email [HelpMeConnect@state.mn.us](mailto:HelpMeConnect@state.mn.us) to participate in the first cohort or to learn more about the referral system  
More information will be available in the coming weeks on [Help Me Connect](#).