

Evaluation Report Brief

The Colorado Parent and Child Foundation: Parents as Teachers, and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters



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What are the goals of the program?

The first five years of life are a time of enormous developmental growth for children, and their environment can have a powerful impact on what they learn. Children in low-income households or communities can be at risk of falling behind because parents or caregivers may have less resources and time to create an environment where children can learn, play, and engage. The Colorado Parent and Child Foundation (CPCF) operates Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI). The PAT and HIPPI programs support and train parent educators who visit primarily low-income families at home (i.e., home visiting) to share age-appropriate learning materials and help provide meaningful parent and child interactions to support development.

What was the purpose of evaluation?

The PAT and HIPPI programs utilize evidence-based home visiting models. The PAT program sites use the national PAT model, which has demonstrated statistically significant effects on parent and child outcomes, in particular the frequency with which parents engage in activities with their children. The SIF funded evaluation assessed the implementation or expansion of the six PAT and one HIPPI program sites and the extent to which they were implementing their models with fidelity.

What did we learn from the evaluation?

Some key findings from the evaluation are listed below.

Location and Characteristics of Families Served

- Children living closer to the program site were more likely to be served.
- The program was successful in reaching its target population of low-income families; 33% of parents in the program had less than a high school education (compared to 12% of US adults age 25 and older); 31% of families in the program reported an income of less than \$20,000; and 39% reported an income between \$20,000 and \$40,000.¹

Children's Early Literacy Outcomes

- Children's gender and the frequency of literacy activities in the home were significant predictors of language development and ability to communicate with others (as measured by the Ages and Stages questionnaire). Boys were 3.8 times more likely to have communication concerns, and a child whose parent reported lower levels of literacy activities was 3.3 times more likely to have concerns.

¹ Education level data was available for about 50% of parents, and household income data was reported by less than 50% of families.

Program At-a-Glance

CNCs Program: Social Innovation Fund

Intervention: Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPI)

Subgrantee: The Colorado Parent and Child Foundation

Intermediary: Mile High United Way (MHUW) Social Innovation Fund

Focus Area: Youth Development

Focus Population: Parents with children ages 0 to 5, particularly those who are low-income

Communities Served: 14 counties across Colorado

Evaluation At-a-Glance

Evaluation Designs: Implementation Study and Impact Study

Study Population: Parents and children ages 0 to 5

Independent Evaluator: Butler Institute for Families at the University of Denver

This Evaluation's Level of Evidence*: Preliminary

*SIF and AmeriCorps currently use different definitions of levels of evidence.

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Parent Engagement

- Parents reported statistically significant increases in talking about books with their child, looking at/talking about shapes with their child, and their child's ability to write his/her name.

Program Staff and Volunteer Reports

- Staff and volunteers reported that participation in the program increased the organizations' capacities in different ways including serving more families, providing a new aspect of programming, or expanding their existing program.

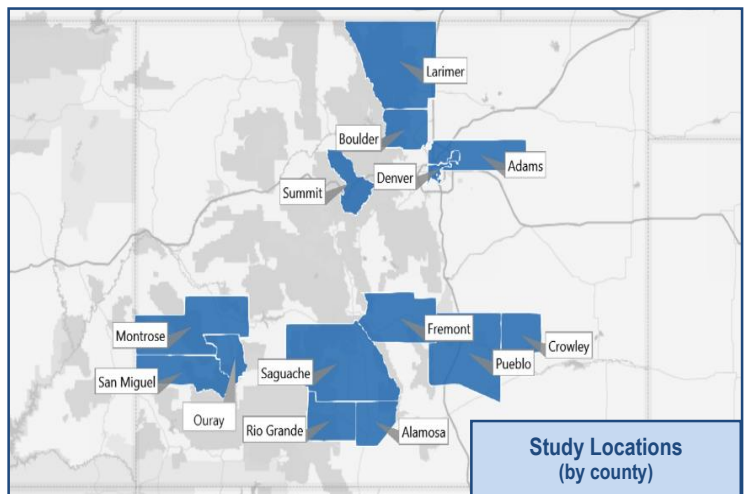


Notes on the evaluation

The evaluation took place in 2014 as the CPCF neared the end of its second year in the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant process. CPCF did not complete the 5-year SIF grant process; it chose to discontinue after two years of participation. Furthermore, the HIPPY program site participated in qualitative data collection only.

How is the CPCF using the evaluation experience and findings to improve?

As a result of participation with the SIF, the Colorado Parent and Child Foundation reported making changes to improve their PAT and HIPPY programs. To work towards reaching their goal of serving more families, PAT and HIPPY program sites hired additional program staff, provided additional services such as a bilingual family night, and expanded into new regions in Colorado.



The content of this brief was drawn from the full evaluation report submitted to CNCS by the grantee/subgrantee. The section of the brief that discusses evaluation use includes contribution of the grantee/subgrantee. All original content from the report is attributable to its authors.

To access the full evaluation report and learn more about CNCS, please visit nationalservice.gov/research.

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF), a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), combines public and private resources to grow the impact of innovative, community-based solutions that have compelling evidence of improving the lives of people in low-income communities throughout the United States.

The SIF invests in three priority areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development.