



APPENDIX

SAFE STRONG SUPPORTIVE

September 2024

What do we know about Family Resource Centers? (APPENDIX)

This summary of research about the effectiveness of family resource centers (FRCs) is an appendix to the issue brief that provides an overview of the topic: [What do we know about family resource centers?](#)

Jurisdiction and program	Evaluation summary
<p>Alabama</p> <p><i>Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>The Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers' parenting programs (including parenting education and support, fatherhood programs, and home visitation services) had a large fiscal impact, with an estimated social return on investment of about \$55 million compared to program delivery costs of about \$11.7 million in 2014.</p>
<p>Allegheny County, Pa.</p> <p><i>Family Support Center Network</i></p>	<p>Evaluation findings from 2016 indicated positive outcomes in three key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing child abuse and neglect. Neighborhoods with Family Support Centers (FSCs) had significantly lower rates of child maltreatment investigations (30.5 investigations per 1,000 children) than comparable neighborhoods without an FSC (41.5 investigations per 1,000 children). • Increasing protective factors. Family Support Centers helped increase families' social connections. More than 60% of FSC participants indicated that they connected with another participating family outside of the center and its programs.

Jurisdiction and program	Evaluation summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging high-risk families. Two-thirds of the participants in the centers' Parents as Teachers home visiting program were at higher risk of being involved with the child welfare system. This indicates that the centers were successful in reaching their target families. <p>A separate study, in 2018, noted that areas within Allegheny County served by FSCs had fewer maltreatment investigations, once the level of social disadvantage and population size were considered.</p>
<p>City and County of San Francisco, Calif.</p> <p>Network of Family Resource Centers</p>	<p>In San Francisco, a network of neighborhood-based centers target supports to families with specific needs (such as families of children with special needs, families experiencing housing instability, and pregnant and parenting teens). Since FRCs launched in 2009, along with other interventions in child welfare and demographic changes, San Francisco has seen a 52% reduction in the rate of children in foster care and the rate of substantiated child maltreatment has dropped more than 60%. A 2012 formal evaluation of the FRC network found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families improved on several key indicators of overall functioning, including lowering their risk of emotional/sexual abuse, increasing emotional well-being, and knowledge of community resources and systems of support. • Differential response case management resulted in a decrease on an indicator of risk of abuse. • For every additional 10 hours of case management a parent received, the likelihood of showing an improvement on the parenting skills indicator rose by 4%.
<p>Colorado</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>A statewide program evaluation from 2019-2020 indicates that follow-up assessments of 1,823 families demonstrated statistically significant gains in addressing their basic needs (including income, cash savings, debt management, housing, employment, food security, child care, children's education, mental and physical health, and transportation) and protective factors (family functioning and resiliency, concrete supports, and social support). Families also demonstrated improved parenting practices and increased understanding of child development.</p> <p>In Teller County, a recent study found that, adjusting for population changes, there were 51 fewer cases of child maltreatment in 2018 compared to 2015. Attributing all reduced cases to the county's FRC, and with an estimated cost per case of child maltreatment in Teller County of \$49,026, the reduction in child maltreatment saved the Teller County child welfare system an estimated \$2.5 million in 2018, meaning that for every dollar invested in the FRC, the county saved \$2.92.</p>

Jurisdiction and program	Evaluation summary
<p>Connecticut</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>A 2009 evaluation of Connecticut-based FRCs and data from participant surveys indicate that the state’s FRCs increased access to high-quality preschool and child care, promoted a network of support, and increased parental knowledge and skills related to child development and behavior, all of which can strengthen families’ protective factors and help children remain safe in their homes and within their communities.</p>
<p>Illinois</p> <p><i>Illinois Family Support Network</i></p>	<p>According to a 2022 snapshot report, 90% of families that participated in services through a Family Advocacy Center after being identified as at risk for having their children removed were able to stay together.</p>
<p>Maryland</p> <p><i>Maryland Family Network</i></p>	<p>Parents involved with Maryland’s FRCs have demonstrated significant gains in family self-sufficiency, particularly with regard to employment status. Almost twice as many parents were employed one year after participating in FRC services than at their initial enrollment.</p>
<p>Massachusetts</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>After receiving parenting education services through the FRCs, 87% of participants said they were aware of parenting skills that fit their child’s ages and needs, up from 29% at baseline. Parents participating in parent-child activities reported that they receive support from others during playgroups, that the playgroups help them learn new parenting skills, and that attending playgroups help them cope with parenting challenges.</p>
<p>New York</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>All families served by FRCs in the state of New York State demonstrated improvements in a number of protective factors, including parental resilience, nurturing and attachment, social connections, and concrete support, according to a 2021 data brief. Families considered to be at higher risk for child maltreatment showed the most improvement.</p>
<p>Orange County, Calif.</p> <p><i>Families and Communities Together (FaCT) Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>FaCT FRC service areas had small but statistically significant lower rates of initial and additional referrals to CPS, compared to similar areas in surrounding counties (an “additional referral” could take place any time after an initial referral). In 2017, for example, 20.7 per 1,000 children in FaCT service areas experienced an initial CPS referral, compared to 23.0 per 1,000 children in comparison areas in Los Angeles and San Diego.</p> <p>The Westminster Family Resource Center is one of the FaCT FRCs. A study found there were 56 fewer cases of child maltreatment in WFRC’s service area than the comparison area in 2017. Attributing half of these reduced cases to WFRC, and with an estimated cost per case of child maltreatment in California of \$65,808 in 2017, the reduction in child maltreatment saved the Orange County child welfare system an estimated \$1.84 million. For every dollar invested in WFRC, the county saved \$3.65.</p>

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Casey Family Programs

Casey Family Programs is the nation's largest operating foundation focused on safely reducing the need for foster care and building Communities of Hope for children and families in the United States. By working together, we can create a nation where Communities of Hope provide the support and opportunities that children and families need to thrive. Founded in 1966, we work in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and with tribal nations across North America to influence long-lasting improvements to the well-being of children, families and the communities where they live.

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