



RESEARCH BRIEF – ROI PROJECT

Birth & Beyond Home Visitation Program

AmeriCorps.gov

Program Description

Birth & Beyond is a parenting education and support intervention program designed to reduce child abuse and neglect. It is implemented across nine local Family Resource Centers in Sacramento County, California. B&B's Home Visitation program uses professionals and AmeriCorps State and National members to provide weekly in-home case management and parenting lessons to program participants. The program is designed to improve bonding, parent-child relationships, and child behavior in order for children to reach their full potential while parents receive the support they need in the comfort of their own homes.

Return on Investment Analysis

To better understand the impact of the program in relation to costs, AmeriCorps commissioned a return on investment (ROI) analysis by ICF, an independent research firm. ROI analyses of national service programs estimate the monetary value of benefits that a program generates for per dollar invested.

AmeriCorps, the federal agency for volunteerism and national service, provides opportunities for Americans to serve their country domestically, address the nation's most pressing challenges, improve lives and communities, and strengthen civic engagement. Each year, the agency invests more than \$800 million in grants for local nonprofit, community, tribal, and state organizations; places more than 250,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in intensive service roles; and empowers millions more to serve as long-term, short-term, or one-time volunteers. Learn more at AmeriCorps.gov.



The ROI analysis estimated the Home Visitation program's ROI to be between \$0.50 and \$2.11 per funder dollar, depending on how long program participants and AmeriCorps members experience increased earnings as a result of the program. The return on each dollar of federal support for the program is higher, between \$1.10 and \$4.58. These results are driven by favorable employment and education outcomes for AmeriCorps members following their service as well as by favorable child welfare outcomes due to program participation.

Overview of Benefits and Costs

To calculate the ROI, the program benefits were identified, quantified, and compared to the program's costs. Benefits of B&B HV include:

- **Additional lifetime earnings resulting from reduced child maltreatment.** Because of the program, participants' children experience less abuse and neglect, acquire more secondary school education, and as a result have higher lifetime earnings. In addition, government benefits from increased lifetime taxes paid due to the increased earnings of children.
- **Lifetime cost savings in healthcare, child welfare, criminal justice, and special education from reduced child maltreatment.**
- **Additional earnings by AmeriCorps members.** Serving in AmeriCorps leads to increased wages and reduced unemployment post-national service through skill acquisition, as well as increased educational attainment post-service.
- **Living allowances, stipends, and education awards.** AmeriCorps members receive living allowances and stipends during their national service and receive a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award after successful completion.
- **Increased tax revenue for government.** The government receives more income tax revenue from increased AmeriCorps member earnings post-service, as well as additional sales tax revenue related to those earnings. Government also realizes tax revenue from the taxable living allowances, stipends, and education awards provided to AmeriCorps members.
- **Reduced lifetime spending on corrections, public assistance, and social insurance.** Because of the increase in secondary and post-secondary educational attainment for AmeriCorps members, government spends less on these items.

Funding for the B&B program totaled \$1,337,219 and came from the following sources:

- Federal Government (AmeriCorps) - \$614,444
- State and Local Government - \$722,775



ROI Results

The table below shows the ROI results. Each row represents a different ROI calculation depending on which benefits are considered (all benefits or only benefits to the federal government) and which funding is considered (federal funding only, or all funding including contributions and non-federal grant, other contributions, and program fees). The ROIs are presented as dollars returned for every \$1.00 of investment. The analysis used three different scenarios to estimate benefits under different assumptions. Specifically, the study assumed that increased earnings attributable to the programs last for one year (short-term scenario), 15 years (medium-term), or 30 years (long-term).

ROI Calculation	ROI Scenario		
	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term
Total Benefits per Federal Dollar	\$1.10	\$3.13	\$4.58
Total Benefits per Funder Dollar	\$0.50	\$1.44	\$2.11
Federal Government Benefits per Federal Dollar	\$0.10	\$0.62	\$0.99

The program produces strong returns for the medium- and long-term scenarios when benefits to AmeriCorps members, children of program participants, and state/local governments are included. This is indicated by the results of the *total benefits per federal dollar* and the *total benefits per funder dollar* ROI calculations for these two scenarios.

In the short-term scenario—where benefits for only one-year post-program are included—the ROI results indicate that there is a short-term loss to investing given the results of the *total benefits per funder dollar* and the *federal government benefits per federal dollar* ROI calculations. An ROI that is below \$1 in the first year post-program is common in programs where there is an initial one-time investment made and benefits accrue in the following years. This is because it often requires several years of benefits to recoup the initial investment and generate positive returns.

The magnitude of the positive ROI estimates in the medium- and long-term scenarios are driven by the following factors:

- **Reduction in the number of children abused or neglected.** Because of parents’ participation in the program, 11 fewer children were victims of child abuse or neglect post-program. That reduction in child maltreatment results in a variety of benefits from increased lifetime earnings of those children to reduced government spending on healthcare, child welfare, criminal justice, and special education.
- **The educational attainment outcomes of AmeriCorps members.** AmeriCorps members receive an education award after serving in the AmeriCorps program, which is used by a portion of members to help pay for postsecondary degrees post-service. The additional educational attainment resulting from the use of the education award generates additional earnings for AmeriCorps members.
- **The employment outcomes of AmeriCorps members.** Past studies establish that AmeriCorps members experience increased employment and increased earnings post-service.

For more information, please contact evaluation@cns.gov.