

# Evaluation Report Brief

## Mile High United Way: Providers Advancing School Outcomes (PASO)

### What is the community challenge?

Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care is the most common form of non-parental childcare in the nation. However, FFN providers generally have lower levels of education and training than licensed childcare providers and research conducted over the past 20 years has shown that an important school-based factor in strengthening students' educational achievement is the quality and effectiveness of the educators who teach.

#### Program At-a-Glance

CNCS Program: Social Innovation Fund  
Intervention: Providers Advancing School Outcomes (PASO)  
Grantee: Mile High United Way  
Subgrantee: Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition  
Focus Area: Youth Development  
Focus Population: Children ages 0-5 and FFN care providers  
Communities Served: Boulder County and Aurora, CO

### What is the promising solution?

PASO provides professional development through training sessions and in-home coaching visits to FFN childcare providers in low-income, Latino communities. PASO's goal is to improve the quality of early childhood education in these settings for children aged zero to five and enable them to enter kindergarten ready to learn, leading to improved early literacy outcomes and reduction in the achievement gap.

### What was the purpose of evaluation?

The evaluation of Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition's PASO program by APA began in 2012 and finished reporting in 2017. The evaluation sought to determine the impacts of PASO on FFN care, on improving children's development, and if PASO was implemented with fidelity to the program model. To answer these questions, APA conducted a feasibility analysis, implementation, and impact study. The implementation study utilized surveys of FFN providers, interviews with program leaders and *Tías*, and document reviews. The impact study utilized a quasi-experimental evaluation design using Short Interrupted Time Series (SITS) to determine the impact of PASO on children served. Since program implementation, 98 providers graduated from PASO training and 365 children have been cared for.

### What did the evaluation find?

As part of Mile High United Way and Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition's implementation of PASO, a team of external evaluators conducted a rigorous evaluation to determine the impact of the program on FFN providers and children served. Key findings from the evaluation include:

- The PASO program successfully provided professional development training sessions and in-home coaching to FFN providers in low-income, Latino communities.
- Providers' comfort level, skill level, and quality of care all increased after participating in the PASO program.
- There was a statistically significant, positive improvement – 11 Normal Curve Equivalency (NCE) points gained on average on a child's general development score – for children whose providers participated in

the PASO program (Cohen's  $d=0.52$ ; Hedge's  $g=0.51$ ). This translates to the child moving from the sixth to the 17<sup>th</sup> percentile on the DP-3 measure of child development.

## Notes on the evaluation

Since the population served by PASO is often “under the radar” a limitation of the study is that a separate comparison group could not be created. As a result, the evaluators had to use a research design where the PASO treatment group served as their own control group. In addition, the study did not include any direct assessments of children served as the program provided indirect treatment of children through providers it trained. Furthermore, the Aurora site dropped out of the study in the final year because of budgetary reasons. In order to reduce the threat of maturation, children served by PASO providers in a given cohort year were assessed nine times using the DP-3 assessment tool. Three prior to their provider starting the ASO training (April, May, and June), three times mid-training (September, October and November), and three times at the end of the training (February, March, April).

## What is the connection of the PASO study on future research?

This study was intended to contribute to the deficit of literature surrounding FFN-provided early childhood education and to build upon the existing and growing importance of provider coaching strategies by analyzing the “Tia” model which emphasizes regular, direct visits to FFN provider facilities. The study was also intended to provide research on a constructive and efficacious model to “close the achievement gap,” as children served by FFN providers are regularly over-represented by low-income and other “at-risk” demographics. Future research could include examining the program as it is replicated or expanded into other communities. A brief description of how the subgrantee (and/or grantee) is planning to or has already changed the intervention and/or how the organization operates because of what was found in the evaluation(s) is not presented. This could include specific examples of new internal policies, statistics on expanded program reach, new or improved partnerships, or new grants obtained with the help of the report findings.

### Evaluation At-a-Glance

**Evaluation Design:** Quasi-Experimental Single Group Design Using Short Interrupted Time Series

**Study Population:** Low Income Latino Children Age 0 to 5

**Independent Evaluator:** Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA) Consulting

**This Evaluation's Level of Evidence\*:** Moderate

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

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 <http://www.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 U.S. The SIF invests in three priority areas: economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development.