



RESEARCH BRIEF

EVALUATION: COLORADO HUMANITIES MOTHEREAD/FATHEREAD STUDY



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COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

In 2012, more than one-quarter of Colorado's third graders failed to meet proficiency standards on the state's reading test. The State of Colorado recognized these gaps and the importance of quality early childhood programming to provide children with the critical language and literacy skills they need for success in school.

PROMISING SOLUTION

Motherread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC) is a community-based program for parents that enhances shared reading skills and the home literacy environment. The program addresses reading proficiency gaps by building parents' skills and motivation for frequent, active reading at home to prepare children for success in school.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Colorado Humanities, in partnership with OMNI Institute, conducted a randomized controlled trial impact study of the MFC program to test

At-a-Glance

CNCS Program: Social Innovation Fund

Intervention: Motherread/Fatheread Colorado Program

Subgrantee: Colorado Humanities

Intermediary: Mile High United Way

Focus Area: Youth Development

Community Studied: Morgan County, CO

Study Design: Randomized controlled trial impact study

Evaluator: OMNI Institute

Level of Evidence Achieved: Moderate

the impact of parental program participation on child literacy outcomes. The assessments came from parent surveys and preschool teachers' ratings of children's literacy and language skills. Between spring 2014 and spring 2016, 148 parents in five schools in Morgan County, CO, took part in the study. The impact study addresses a set of confirmatory questions about the efficacy of the MFC program on children's literacy and language outcomes and mediation of those outcomes via parents' outcomes. In tandem with the MFC impact study, an implementation study was also conducted to assess MFC program fidelity.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Overall, evaluation results demonstrated positive links between program participation and improvements in adult and child literacy outcomes and have provided "moderate" evidence of program impact on literacy outcomes:

- Parents in the study had more active reading behaviors and read aloud with their children more often after participating in MFC.
- Parents' participation also had an impact on their children's literacy skills, as measured by parent assessment.
- The program appears to have a delayed but meaningful effect on the Teaching Strategies GOLD language score, a comprehensive observational measure designed to assess child development and learning from birth to Kindergarten.

USING FINDINGS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Colorado Humanities plans to continue to scale up implementation of the MFC program at the school district and community levels across the state. As part of their scaling efforts, Colorado Humanities also plans to build in more support for MFC program infrastructure, including fundraising for trainings, providing direct support for implementation costs, MFC Coach trainings, and evaluation. Additionally, Colorado Humanities plans to develop strategies to continue to collect impact data from partners implementing the MFC program.

"MFC is based on the theory that sharing stories in a manner that encourages child engagement is an effective and powerful instructional practice that improves children's literacy development."

Full report and methodology:
nationalservice.gov/research

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