

**The Guidance Center's  
Social Innovation Fund  
Evaluation Report: 2014-15**

**Submitted to  
The Guidance Center**

**by  
Meg V. Blinkiewicz, Ph.D.  
Innovatus Consulting, LLC**

**August 19, 2015**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

The purpose of The Guidance Center's (TGC) Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is to increase Kindergarten readiness in children who live in River Rouge, Michigan and attend River Rouge Schools. The theory behind this initiative is that if parental knowledge about how to create an enriched environment for their child increases and parents with the greatest need are able to improve their ability to support their child's education, Kindergarten readiness rates will improve.

The specific goals of the River Rouge Social Innovation Fund are to:

- Engage parents in Families and Schools Together (FAST) learning and support groups to enhance family functioning and reduce parenting stresses by building a successful parenting community that allows parents to support their child's education successfully;
- Implement the Community Organizing Around Family Issues (COFI) model to recruit families for FAST; and
- Involve River Rouge leadership in data-driven decision making so that early childhood programs reach their capacity, continually improve, and are sustained over time.

### Evaluation Design

The evaluation was guided by a series of questions that sought to collect data to describe and explain the context in which the initiative was implemented, implementation of COFI and FAST, and outcomes achieved by the intervention. Data were collected through:

1. Secondary data related to the educational outcomes of River Rouge students;
2. Interviews with staff;
3. Focus groups with staff, COFI, and FAST participants;
4. Observations of COFI and FAST programming;
5. Parent surveys (see page xx of the report for a full description of each instrument);
6. Classroom Observation Record (COR) of Head Start students, collected three times during the past four school years; and
7. Ages and Stages Questionnaire for 2014-15 Head Start students at the end of the school year.

### Description of Programming

The Guidance Center offered two programs through its SIF initiative: (1) Community Organizing around Family Issues; and (2) Families and Schools Together. A description of each program and related evaluation findings are presented in this section of the Executive Summary.

COFI uses parents' strengths and commitment to their children and neighborhood to help make positive change in their own lives, their families, and their communities. It emphasizes commonalities, rather than differences, between family and community leadership and between private and public issues.

Twenty-three (23) River Rouge residents graduated from COFI over the life of the SIF initiative. COFI was staffed by a Coordinator who recruited residents, facilitated training sessions during the ten week cohorts, and guided graduates through implementing their work in the following areas:

- Early childhood education;
- Quality of life;
- Housing; and
- Safety.

These campaigns were identified by COFI participants and have resulted in the removal of two blighted homes in River Rouge, meetings with the Mayor of River Rouge, park clean-ups, the creation of business coalition, and the development of an improvement plan for River Rouge.

COFI graduates who participated in focus groups discussed the sense of unity the cohorts have along with an enhanced sense of confidence in themselves as individuals and as a collective. Participants stated,

- “It opened my eyes to using these skills in my everyday life.”
- “COFI was a wake-up call for me. I found goals I didn’t know I had. I’m getting my GED now.”

With respect to the results of the parent surveys related to general self efficacy, parental efficacy for helping their children in school, parent’s perception of their personal knowledge and skills, parent’s report of home-based involvement, and parent’s report of encouragement, no significant improvements were found. Given that that 18 parents completed both the pre- and post-tests, the small sample size can make detecting changes difficult.

**Families and School Together, or FAST**, is a prevention and parent involvement program designed to prevent school failure by strengthening families’ protective factors and reducing risk factors. Kids FAST, for preschool-age children, is an eight week program that offers a structured set of activities including meal, scribbles, feeling charades, special play, lottery, parent group, and table-based coaching. The River Rouge FAST team earned its “Exemplary Implementation” certification, by receiving ten out of ten points for implementation fidelity.

Twenty-one (21) parents graduated from FAST over the course of three cohorts offered during the last three years. During this time, 108 parents were recruited, 53 agreed to attend, and 46 attended at least one FAST session. FAST parents who participated in focus groups indicated a high level of satisfaction with the program and indicated that they did not want it to end. They cited specific examples of how the program helped them be better parents and specific examples of their child’s improved behavior.

Specific findings from the pre- and post-assessments found statistical significant improvements in:

- Parent’s relationship with the FAST child;
- Reduction in conduct problems for the FAST child as reported by parents;
- Reduction in peer problems for the FAST child as reported by teachers;
- Improved community-social relationships for parents;
- Total social relationships for parents;
- Tangible support for parents (help with cooking, chores, child time)

- Emotional support (listening, getting together, getting advice); and
- Total support for parents.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire was used to measure kindergarten readiness at the conclusion of the 2014-15 pre-school year. The ASQ provides feedback to children's stage with respect to five scales: (1) communication; (2) gross motor skills; (3) fine motor skills; (4) problem solving; and (5) personal-social skills. Children are rated "above cut-off," "at cut-off," or "below cut-off."

With regard to Kindergarten Readiness as measured by the ASQ,

- FAST children from cohort two scored significantly lower than other FAST children and non-FAST children;
- Children in cohorts one and three scored above non-FAST children in Fine Motor Skills, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social Skills; and
- Children in all FAST cohorts scored below non-FAST children with respect to Communication and Gross Motor Skills.

## **Conclusions**

The River Rouge community, led by The Guidance Center and its Walter White Community Resource Center, designed and implemented a comprehensive community-driven, socially-innovative approach to kindergarten readiness. As with any change effort, lessons were learned along the way.

One of the lessons learned relates to designing and implementing a locally-driven initiative within the context of sometimes rigid federal guidelines. Two guidelines influenced the design of the River Rouge project in a less than desired way: (1) the requirement that families be River Rouge residents and reside in a specific zip code; and (2) the moderate level of evidence needed to be achieved through the evaluation of each SIF program.

The SIF requirement that participants live within a certain zip code reduced the number of potential participants significantly given the fluid boundaries that exist across River Rouge and its neighboring communities. A family's move across the street and can transition them to another city and zip code. The high mobility rates in the "downriver" area, of which River Rouge is a part, make the SIF requirements problematic for consistent recruitment and retention of families. In addition, downriver residents define "community" differently than a zip code. For instance, individuals who participate in a community garden activity may not live in River Rouge but they identify with it as their "community" and are engaged with the Walter White Community Resource Center's programming. This may an issue that future federally funded, community-based work may want to take into account.

Second, roughly a year and a half ago, the Guidance Center's original design was modified to meet SIF guidelines. Specifically, the original design included a family literacy component that had to be eliminated because its level of evidence would not reach the moderate level by the conclusion of this SIF initiative. All SIF projects are required to reach the moderate level of evidence by the conclusion of their work. This program helped parents understand the importance of literacy and provided them with tangible strategies to make their home literacy rich.

This mid-course change, which occurred during year two, caused a shift in the theory of change as well as shift in staffing and approach to the work. Originally, parents were going to be recruited for a literacy program and then made aware of, and recruited for, the COFI and FAST programs.

As a result of the decision to eliminate the adult literacy program, the focus of FAST recruitment changed and turned to Head Start teachers, which proved to be an effective strategy. In addition, COFI was used a recruitment strategy for FAST. This intentional partnership between COFI and FAST seems to have been effective as well as may explain the positive outcomes in the area of parent social relationship improvements.

Once these SIF guidelines were addressed, the River Rouge Kindergarten readiness project was implemented with full fidelity and was well received by families and community partners. In fact, COFI and FAST focus group participants repeatedly stated that they wanted both programs to continue for many years to come.

With regard to COFI, residents came together to improve the physical nature of their community, thereby making it more attractive and possibly increasing the number of families who attend River Rouge schools. In addition, an early childhood education campaign is being planned to kick-off for the 2015-16 school year.

The FAST program also was implemented with high fidelity over the past eighteen months. Participants rated the program highly and according to pre/post survey assessments, parents reported improvements in their social relationships and the behaviors of their FAST child.

Finally, given the relatively short period of full implementation and the small numbers of FAST children, influence on kindergarten readiness may be premature to fully assess. However, given that COFI participants have picked up the mantle of quality early childhood education in River Rouge, kindergarten readiness should continue to be monitored.

## INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION ---

The purpose of The Guidance Center's (TGC) Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is to increase Kindergarten readiness in children who live in River Rouge and attend River Rouge Schools. The theory behind this initiative is that if parental knowledge about how to create an enriched environment for their child increases and parents with the greatest need are able to improve their ability to support their child's education, Kindergarten readiness rates will improve.

The specific goals of the River Rouge Social Innovation Fund are to:

- Engage parents in Families and Schools Together (FAST) learning and support groups to enhance family functioning and reduce parenting stresses by building a successful parenting community that allows parents to support their child's education successfully;
- Implement the Community Organizing Around Family Issues (COFI) model to recruit families for FAST; and
- Involve River Rouge leadership in data-driven decision making so that early childhood programs reach their capacity, continually improve, and are sustained over time.

The SIF programs help parents and families reduce stress and give them the ability to be involved productively and actively in their child's education by offering Families and Students Together or FAST. Families will be recruited for FAST through Community Organizing and Family Issues or COFI. The target population of the intervention is children age 0 to 8 and their parents and caregivers. The outcome of the intervention is to impact the level of kindergarten readiness among River Rouge children, beginning the process of school readiness before age three when it is most effective.

The following objectives were projected for the entire life of the grant:

- Head Start children will begin their preschool experience better able to take advantage of the opportunity this high quality experience provides them;
- Parents will be more actively and productively involved in their child's education beginning in Head Start and continuing in Kindergarten;
- There will be an increase in enrollment of children, parents and caregivers in early childhood programs (0 – 3 programming prior to Head Start enrollment) that help children get ready for school;
- There will be an increase in overall Kindergarten readiness among River Rouge children whose parents took part in FAST, enrolled in non-Head Start early childhood programs, and developed the skills needed to achieve family stability and functioning;
- Programming aimed at increasing school readiness will be developed using information and input from community stakeholders; and
- Community members will play an increasingly visible role in community decision-making.

The level of Kindergarten readiness was measured using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – a recognized measure of collective Kindergarten readiness. Individual growth in parents knowledge about child development and early learning support and self-reports about how they use the knowledge; increases in enrollment in existing programming for children and decreases in the number of children being identified with social-emotional, developmental, or physical problems upon entry into Head Start and/or Kindergarten and increased abilities to support their child's education among families who are enrolled in FAST programs, should all be tied to an increase in the ASQ scores of children enrolled in the River Rouge Schools. Parental

engagement will also be measured at the time of Kindergarten enrollment. It is expected that children whose parents participate in FAST and children who received early interventions will have higher Kindergarten readiness and parental involvement in education than parents and children who were not involved in programming.

The 2014-15 program year marked the second full year of implementation for both FAST and COFI. Multiple cycles of each intervention were conducted during the 2014-15 program year, thus providing a higher degree of evidence for the collective impact of the project – increasing Kindergarten readiness for children living in River Rouge who attend the River Rouge Schools.

## **EVALUATION DESIGN**

---

The evaluation is framed by 12 questions categorized as context, implementation, or outcomes questions. Data collection and analysis methods are described following the list of questions.

### Context Questions

1. In what context was each program implemented (COFI, FAST)?
2. What environmental factors influenced the implementation of each program?

### Implementation Questions

3. To what extent was COFI implemented with fidelity to the model? What variations occurred? Why?
4. What helps and what hinders the implementation of the COFI model within the River Rouge community?
5. Was the COFI model successful in achieving its expected targets in terms of the number of:
  - a. adults trained as trainers?
  - b. family members who become community organizers?
  - c. parents recruited into FAST and early childhood support services?
6. How many and what types of families enroll and how many completed FAST?
7. Was FAST implemented with fidelity to the national model?
8. What helps and what hinders the ability of FAST to be implemented with fidelity to the model?
9. What helps and what hinders parents' ability to use what they learn in FAST back at home?

### Outcome/Impact Questions

10. Do parents whose family participated in FAST report significantly better family functioning and less parenting stress than the national average for parents who did not participate in FAST?
11. Do Head Start children whose parents participated in FAST show significantly greater improvement in social competence and emotional maturity compared with Head Start children whose parents did not participate in the workshops?
12. Are children whose parents participate in FAST significantly more ready for Kindergarten than Head Start children whose parents did not have the opportunity to participate?



The implementation evaluation will focus on three aspects of program implementation:

1. **Fidelity:** FAST programming has developed program implementation measures designed to be administered by program personnel. This model of measuring fidelity to the model will be used in this evaluation as well. COFI training has been manualized and fidelity to the model can be measured based on completion of individual training modules and the extent to which the content of the training modules was inclusive. In order to ascertain whether or not fidelity has been achieved, the external evaluator will conduct periodic observations of program operations. Staff supervisory meetings will be used to give feedback about any fidelity problems that are identified.
2. **Utilization:** The Guidance Center's program participant database will be used to collect data on parents who participate in COFI and FAST. Analysis of this database will provide information about who participates in these programs, average session attendance, and completion rates. The database will also be used to provide key demographic information about participants and non-participants. Information about program involvement in other Guidance Center programming will also be contained in the program participant database allowing information on program enrollment among non-participants to be controlled for as well. In addition, self-report information about program involvement prior to head Start enrollment that did not involve Guidance Center programming can also be collected from non-participants and participants at the time of COR assessments. It is possible that Head Start parents received early childhood programming from other agencies or in other communities including parenting classes, center-based childcare, parent-infant attachment support, etc.
3. **Quality:** With the aim of continuous quality improvement, periodic assessments will be gathered from COFI and FAST participants and staff regarding what is helping and what is hindering participation and outcome achievement. Data for these assessments will come from three sources:
  - a. **Focus Group Interviews with Program Participants:** Innovatus Consulting will facilitate focus group interviews with all FAST and COFI participants at the conclusion of each cycle. Participants will be asked about why they think parents participate or do not participate in the program, what aspects of the program seem to help them achieve the expected outcomes, and what aspects of the program need improvement.
  - b. **Focus Group Interviews with Program Staff:** Innovatus Consulting will facilitate focus group interviews with COFI and FAST team members at the conclusion of each cycle. Staff will also be asked about why they think parents participate or do not participate in the program, what aspects of the program seem to help them achieve the expected outcomes, and what aspects of the program need improvement.
  - c. **Open-Ended Questions on Participant Surveys:** Open-ended questions will be included on the COFI participant surveys. The questions will inquire about how the program can be improved in terms of what and why participants feel aspects of the program are important to keep, could be eliminated, need to be changed, and/or are missing and need to be created.

Sampling Plan

The entire population of COFI and FAST participants was included in the implementation evaluation. Recruitment of program participants will begin on the first day of each COFI and FAST program session. The program facilitators read a script that explains the evaluation and its benefits, describes what evaluation data will be used and how it will be kept confidential, and invites participants to enroll. Consent forms were distributed at that time and participants had the opportunity to either sign an agreement for themselves and their children to be part of the evaluation, or sign that they refuse participation for themselves and/or for their children.

Measures

Tables 1 and 2 describe the various data collection instruments used to evaluate COFI and FAST over the past three years.

**Table 1  
Data Collection Instruments and Administration**

Program	Assessments	Given By Whom, When
<u>FAST</u>	FAST Parent and Teacher Pre/Post Survey  New General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen et al, 2001).  The Parental Role Construction for Involvement in the <i>Child's Education Scales</i> (Walker, Dallaire, Sandler, Hoover-Dempsey, 2005): Parental Self-Efficacy for Helping Child Succeed in School Scale. <i>Parents' Perceptions of Personal Knowledge and Skills</i> Scale. Parent Report of Home-based Involvement Activities Scale. Parent Report of School-based Involvement Activities Scale. Parent Report of Encouragement Scale.  Family Environment Scale (FES), Form R.	Program staff, pre at beginning end of program and post at end of program.
<u>COFI</u>	New General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen et al, 2001).  The Parental Role Construction for Involvement in the <i>Child's Education Scales</i> (Walker, Dallaire, Sandler, Hoover-Dempsey, 2005):	Program staff, pre at beginning end of program and post at end of program.

Data Collection Activities

Data collected through focus group interviews, observations by the evaluator, and individual interviews with staff and other stakeholders were collected, analyzed, and managed by the external evaluator. All other evaluation data will be collected and entered into existing databases by Center for Excellence staff as part of standard program enrollment.

The FAST pre-post parent survey was administered by program staff at the beginning and last session of the program per the program design. Pre and post-tests in each of the program areas will be administered by program staff and submitted to The Center for Excellence for entry into the appropriate database. Program staff will be trained in the administration of the standardized instruments and will administer them as part of intake to the program. Center for Excellence staff will monitor data collection at the beginning of the evaluation to make sure that protocols are being followed and will spot check adherence to protocols over the course of the evaluation.

Staff were given a script to read that provides instructions for completing the parent surveys. The instructions will tell parents that the survey is confidential and to place the completed survey into the blank envelope and seal the envelope before giving it to the staff. The staff placed all small envelopes into a large envelope and seal the large envelope in front of the participants to demonstrate that confidentiality of their responses were maintained. The envelopes will be given to The Guidance Center, Center for Excellence for data entry.

A parallel script was prepared for Head Start staff to administer to willing comparison group parents. The same data collection procedures were used for the comparison group parents as are described above for program participants. As noted above, FAST does not require the use of a comparison group.

COR data were collected as a normal course of business at Head Start in January and again in the Spring. Data are entered into The Guidance Center's program participant database by data entry staff. Comparisons of COR scores will be made across participant groups including the number and level (dosage) of programming received. The Guidance Center has the ability to link records across programming to look longitudinally at what programming children and families have experienced.

ASQ data were collected by the Guidance Center as children left Head Start. ASQ results are used in the aggregate to individuate general kindergarten readiness of students.

## **Data Analysis**

The Guidance Center de-identified all evaluation data and provide individual-level data and the data dictionary to Innovatus Consulting for quantitative analyses. The data were analyzed as follows:

### Implementation Evaluation

Frequency tables were computed from The Guidance Center's program participant database to calculate how many and what types of parents participate in the two programs. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate attendance and completion rates.

A simple thematic analysis was used to categorize responses to the open-ended questions on surveys and responses to focus group questions. The analyses focused on identifying what participants and staff say is helping and hindering program implementation and outcome achievement in order to identify specific aspects of COFI and FAST that need to be maintained, eliminated, changed and added. However, these themes are no longer available due to the early termination of the program from the portfolio.

For the program participant focus groups, Innovatus Consulting identified like concepts in the data. Grouped concepts were then examined to identify the underlying themes. Themes were presented to SIF team members for their assessment of the resulting themes seem to be reasonable interpretations of the data.

### Impact Evaluation

**Study design:** This evaluation utilized a quasi-experimental design with a pre-post test and a non-random control group. The control group in this case is a pseudo-control comprised of the national FAST evaluation sample. Baseline equivalence was assessed using an independent sample t-test between the two groups. The logic of the design is that the baseline scores should be equivalent between the two groups and because they both received the intervention the post-intervention scores should also be equivalent or the local sample should be significantly higher than the national evaluation sample.

This design controls for multiple threats to internal validity:

**History** Because the national evaluation sample was collected substantially earlier than the local evaluation sample, there is no direct way to control for historical impacts, however, there are not any substantial changes in policy, funding, or social service environment that should reasonably be expected to favor the local evaluation sample

**Maturation** Because the intervention and comparison group both used pre-post test designs with similar intervals of assessment any differences due to maturation should be equivalent.

**Testing and Instrumentation** The national and evaluation groups were tested using the same assessment tools and as such any testing / instrumentation influence should be consistent across the two groups.

**Selection** There is a risk of selection bias as participants are recruited into the FAST evaluation on a voluntary, non-random basis and more motivated, higher functioning parents may be more likely to participate. However, assuming that the local evaluation sample scores from pre-test to post-test are statistically equivalent to the national evaluation sample, then the improvement from pre- to post-intervention scores for the local sample are at least independent of the outcome assessment. It does not preclude the effects being associated with more motivated parents or some other attribute of the parent that is correlated with the decision to participate, however, this is more generalizable to the typical service population.

**Directionality of causal influence** The direction of causal influence is addressed via the use of a pre- post-test design.

The biggest limitation to the current design is the limited sample size which reduces power and the stability of parameter estimates used for comparison with the national evaluation sample. However, this limitation is a function of the early exit of the program from the SIF portfolio rather than factors directly related to the design of the evaluation or the sampling/recruiting procedures.

Originally we had proposed the use of a propensity score matched design and the use of the national evaluation sample findings were intended as a secondary validity check. However, due to limited ability to recruit control families and the shortened time-frame of the project this aspect of the design was not able to be implemented and the national evaluation sample was the only comparison group utilized. Unfortunately, sample demographics at the non-aggregated level

were not available so sample matching with the national evaluation participants was not possible.

For the FAST survey items, first paired t-tests was computed to test the statistical significance of the pre-post differences in scale scores between participants' self assessments at the beginning and end of each FAST cycle. While families may have more than one child in their family, each parent/caregiver must identify a "FAST child." Thus, only one child in the family will be studied.

For the COR, repeated measures ANOVA was used, with the statistical test of interest being the group [program/comparison] \* time [pre/post change] interaction. For ASQ scores, independent group t-test was used to compare the scores of Kindergartners whose parents participated in FAST with scores of Kindergartners whose parents did not participate in FAST.

On any given comparable measure, the FAST program calculates statistical significance using paired t-test for the pre-post differences and independent groups t-test for the comparison of mean scores between Guidance Center FAST participants and the national average.

Missing data was assumed to be Missing at Random and a non-significant Little MCAR test ( $\chi^2(45) = 48.15, p=.346$ ) confirmed this assumption. Therefore missing data was handled with pairwise deletion. Given the small absolute amount of missing data in the sample the impact on analyses should be minimal.

## FINDINGS

---

This section of the report presents a discussion of the context in which this SIF project was implemented, the results of the implementation study as well as the outcomes achieved by the COFI and FAST programs. COFI is discussed first, followed by FAST.

### Context of the River Rouge SIF Project

River Rouge Michigan is a community of 7,903 (2010 U.S. Census) occupying 3.3 square miles in Wayne County, Michigan. The city is 39% White and 50% African America, and 11% Hispanic/Latino. There are 3,640 households, 36% of which have children under the age of 18 living in them. About a quarter of families live below the poverty line, including 31% of those under the age of 18.

Over the past five years, the River Rouge community has begun to examine kindergarten readiness as a major factor to address. One way to move children toward Kindergarten readiness is enrollment in high-quality pre-school programs like Head Start or GSRP (The Great Start Readiness Program - high quality preschool for low-income four year olds), programs that have been shown effective in terms of increased COR scores (Head Start 2011; U.S. Census 2010; Head Start 2010 COR). In River Rouge, most children who are eligible for Head Start or GSRP are enrolled and most children (%) who enter Kindergarten have completed Head Start or GSRP. And yet, very few children enter kindergarten in the River Rouge School District (RRSD) ready to learn. Over 21% of kindergartners who entered RRSD in the fall of 2010 were judged to be very vulnerable in two or more domains of kindergarten readiness (UMSEM, 2010), and about half of the children were judged to be either ready or vulnerable in areas other than communication.

**Table 2**  
**RRSD Kindergarten Kids Not Ready (% completed Head Start or GSRP)**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>VULNERABLE</b> (Below the 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile on the EDI)	<b>VERY READY</b> (Above the 75 <sup>th</sup> percentile on the EDI)
Physical Health and Well-Being	30% (17)	11% (6)
Emotional Maturity	14% (8)	9% (5)
Social Competence	27% (15)	14% (8)
Language and Cognitive Development	13% (7)	14% (8)
Communication Skills and General Knowledge	0% (0)	16% (9)
Vulnerable on 2 or More Domains	21% (12)	
Very Ready on 4 or More Domains		4% (2)

N=56 kindergartners at Ann Visger Elementary School

Children from low-income families, most of the children who attend the RRSD, are disadvantaged from birth in terms of school readiness (Hart, 1995). The adult population of uninsured in River Rouge is 38 percent compared to 16 percent nationally. High poverty combined with the lack of public transportation and shortage of nearby health care facilities

presents the potential for problems in pregnancy and delivery, low-birth weight babies, and undiagnosed in-vitro problems associated with developmental delays.

Socio-economic status of children can negatively impact kindergarten readiness among children. For children in this population who may have developmental delays, early assessment and intervention is crucial to prevent developmental delays from exacerbating problems in school readiness and making remediation even more difficult. Lack of a consistent medical provider who is able to follow a child over time, lack of parent knowledge of normal developmental stages, and un-licensed, informal child care options all lead to a lack of early identification of developmental barriers to school readiness. In fact, a significant number of three year olds entering Head Start in the RRSD are developmentally unprepared to learn: twenty-six percent of 3-year-olds given screenings by River Rouge Head Start were identified as developmentally delayed during 2011 compared to 20 percent nationwide (Meisels, 2008). It is troubling to note that school readiness interventions may have limited effectiveness if they start after children are three years old (Lally, 2010).

The problem in River Rouge is that children do not get the early learning experiences they need before they enroll in high quality preschool programs, and high quality preschool can only do so much to mitigate these early experiences. Parents and caregivers of children younger than three years of age do not have the skills needed to provide the early foundations for the children in their care. In addition, because children do not attend licensed and center-based childcare, or have medical homes (providing continuity of care for babies and toddlers), children are not screened effectively for developmental delays or medical and emotional conditions that could be mitigated prior to preschool enrollment – becoming barriers to full utilization of the preschool experience in getting children ready for kindergarten.

Students who enter school not ready to learn do not catch up, reflected in standardized tests scores used throughout Michigan to measure competency at specific grade levels. Children in the third grade in River Rouge score in the bottom 1<sup>st</sup> percentile compared to the rest of Michigan students in third grade. Standardized test scores do not get much better over time, and there is a surge of students who leave RRSD in middle school for enrollment elsewhere and a final surge of students who leave school all together after ninth grade. Graduation rates (measured as the proportion of all students who enter the ninth grade who graduate) are below state averages and are even worse than rates in Detroit. Students start out not ready to learn and never catch up.

**Table 3  
Percent of Students Proficient: MEAP Test 2011**

Subject	Age	River Rouge School District		Detroit Public School District	Michigan – All Public School Districts
		#	%		
Math	3rd Graders		4%	10%	36%
	6th Graders		6%	13%	37%
Reading	3rd Graders		16%	33%	62%
	7th Graders		17%	30%	60%
Science	8th Graders		4%	2%	17%
<b>Michigan Merit Exam High School Proficiency Scores 2011</b>					
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Subject Test		River Rouge High School		Detroit – All High Schools	Michigan – All High Schools
Math			1%	17%	24%
Reading			9%	33%	53%
Science			0%	21%	26%
Social Studies			2%	46%	47%
Writing			33%	17%	41%

**Table 4  
RRSD Graduation Rates**

	Graduation Rate 2010	Graduation Rate 2011	Change from 2010 to 2011
River Rouge School District	61.11%	38.78%	-22.33%
Detroit School District	62.27%	59.74%	-2.53%
Michigan - All School Districts	75.95%	74.33%	-1.62%

Source: The State of Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information.

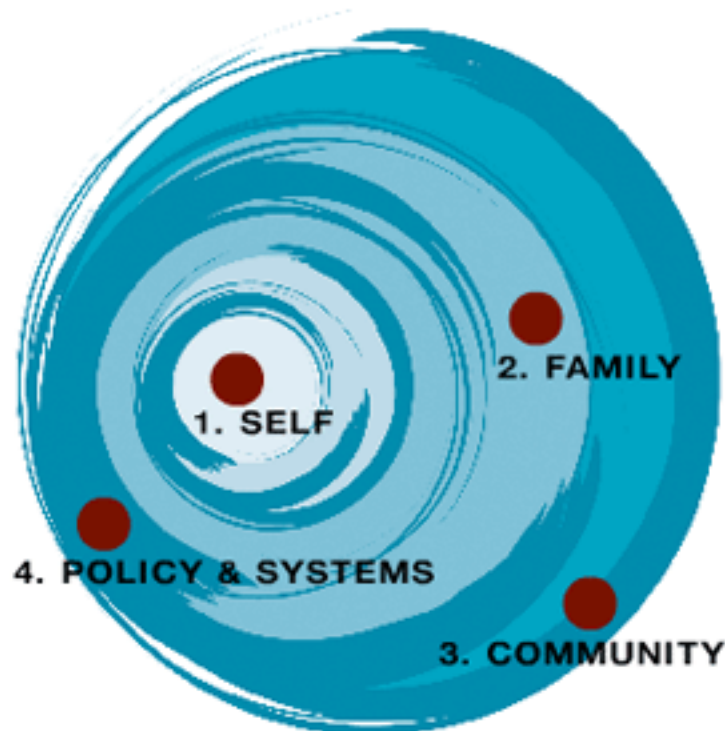
It is in this context that The Guidance Center and its Walter White Community Resource Center partnered with residents and other community organizations to design and implement its SIF project. The next section of this report describes the implementation and outcomes associated with the COFI and FAST programs offered through the SIF initiative in River Rouge.



## Community Organizing for Family Issues Evaluation Findings

Community Organizing for Family Issues uses parents' strengths and commitment to their children and to their neighborhoods to help make positive change in their own lives, their families and their communities. It emphasizes the commonalities (rather than the differences) between family and community leadership, and between private and public issues.

**Figure A**  
**COFI Model**



Family-focused organizing consists of four elements:

**1. SELF:** Leadership begins from within. Parents individually assess their needs, wants and values. They create supportive teams with one another, set goals, and establish plans for achieving those goals.

**2. FAMILY:** Parents become stronger leaders in their families. Parents support one another in gaining skills and confidence as family leaders, and also learn to set goals with their family members.

**3. COMMUNITY:** Parents work together to create change in community institutions such as schools, day care centers and social service agencies. To make their community more family-friendly, parent leaders meet with neighbors, find common ground, develop new programs, organize community-wide campaigns, and realize the power of a collective voice.

**4. POLICY AND SYSTEMS:** Parent leaders create a community-based policy agenda that starts with common concerns raised by parents, such as childcare, safety and school quality. Together, parent leaders organize to communicate their ideas and concerns to community decision makers. They may change programs and challenge policies that aren't meeting the needs of families, and they build partnerships with professionals to develop programs and policies that work.

Family Focused Organizing is distinct from, but also can be complementary to, more "traditional" community organizing models. COFI targets its organizing work toward a population that is often not involved in traditional organizing or the public sphere — very low income families including welfare recipients, recent immigrants (primarily mothers), and grandmothers raising grandchildren.

In River Rouge, the COFI program served a growing number of River Rouge families over the past two years. This increase is due, primarily, to a change in staffing and efforts to implement the COFI model with complete fidelity. COFI is a program designed to train community members to become active in the support of a community goal they believe is important. In this case, COFI trained community members interested in promoting school readiness in River Rouge. Participants are trained in individual and collective leadership skills and in the basic premise behind the need for enrollment in early childhood programming.

COFI training takes place over a 10-week period and is broken down into three distinct pieces. First, COFI trainees learn about leadership by examining their own style, develop teams and decide on the target of their involvement. Second, trainees are organized into teams and supported in reaching out to parents, community members, leaders, businesses, human service organizations, and government to build partnerships around accomplishing their objectives. Third, trainees come back together to plan for sustainability.

Working with the early childhood Systems Coordinator, COFI-trained community leaders helped develop and implement a campaign to increase knowledge of existing programs that help children and families get ready for school, work to get the community involved in supporting programming that supports early childhood development, and advocate for new programming as the need is recognized. Some of the community members interested in continuing to engage in community activism were trained as trainers in the COFI model and will use their training to draw in other community residents for other issues they identify as important.

The COFI model begins its training in helping the individuals being trained to look at their own personal leadership traits and the role leadership plays in their personal lives and environments. Trainees move on to learn techniques for recruiting others, public speaking, how to conduct door-to-door surveys, canvassing and information sharing. Trainees also learn how to actively take part in public meetings and to organize information into sharable bytes. COFI-trained individuals develop socially based cohort support groups made up of others they trained and/or worked with. In other settings tracked by the originators of the program, these cohorts have gone on to change communities through policy changes and the individuals themselves have moved from an activist to a community leader.

The fall COFI session ran from October to December 2014, the winter session operated from January to February 2015. The 2014 fall cohort yielded 13 graduates, which is the goal for each cohort, and 11 graduates for the winter 2015 cohort. COFI staff have also held six workshops for residents and have attended 30 community meetings, hosted by other organizations.

As a result of the community organizing efforts, several “campaigns” are forming:

- Early childhood education;
- Quality of life;
- Housing; and
- Safety.

These campaigns were responsible for establishing and sustaining quarterly meetings with the Chief of Police, parents, and the Mayor of River Rouge. In addition, COFI participants helped to successfully demolish one blighted home across from the building which houses the River Rouge Head Start and Community Resource Center and successfully seal four vacant homes in River Rouge, one block from the building. Finally, a “celebration of community” was held on MLK day in January 2015 with the intent of announcing the goals of working to address education, blight, violence, and opportunities for families.

In addition to campaigns, COFI staff supported the creation and sustaining of several block clubs in River Rouge. One block in particular, had little to no “sense of community,” according to a focus group participant who stated that if COFI got a Block Club going on that block, it really did something.”

Finally, through COFI, several community partnerships have been created, including:

- Two meetings with River Rouge/Downriver Ministerial Alliance; and
- Four River Rouge Block-by-Block meetings to discuss education, blight, and opportunities for River Rouge families.

Table 5 summarizes the activities that occurred during the past year of COFI.

**Table 5  
COFI Summary of Activities**

Activity	Purpose
272 one-on-one meetings  Cohort 1: 23 recruited 15 participated 13 graduated  Cohort 2: 27 recruited 18 participated 11 graduated	Recruitment for COFI
Training workshops (6)	Train River Rouge residents in COFI method
Meetings with local partner organizations:  Block by Block (4) River Rouge Ministerial Alliance (2) Ann Visger Kindergarten Roundup (2) Ann Visger PTA (1)	The COFI Coordinator and River Rouge residents partnered with local organizations to leverage local resources to address education, blight, violence, and other resident-driven interests.

Rouge Tenant Council (3) River Rouge School Board meetings (2) River Rouge Economic Development Corp meetings (2) River Rouge city council meetings (7) Organized MLK day celebration of community in January 2015	This event addressed education, blight, violence, and opportunities for families
Block Club organizing: Met with DPW director to discuss vacant lot maintenance and block clean-up Summer clean-up projects on two streets Meetings with individual block clubs Created Holford families to create Block Club	To reinvigorate existing and start new Block Clubs as a way of engaging River Rouge residents in community improvement

The community organizing techniques used for recruitment of the fall 2014 COFI session helped to make the session a success. One of the first techniques used is the one-on-one which consists of meeting with parents in Head Start and the community at large to hear their hopes and concerns for the community as it relates to their children and families. The one-on-one is extremely helpful because it builds relationships among the organizer and the person. The one-on-one is a one sided conversation; it is meant to let the organizer hear uninterrupted about the things the person likes and does not like about the community and what they would like to see changed in the community. The relationship is continued as people are invited to join the first COFI session and the larger River Rouge Block by Block initiative. All members interviewed who expressed interest in working on initiatives to improve the community are invited to participate in COFI.

The other important aspect of building connections and relationships is meeting people in various locations in the community. The organizer has met with members of the community at churches, civic organizations, public housing, senior center, businesses, city hall, and schools. The location is important because the organizer gets an understanding of the community and what is important to people. The goal of the organizer is to see the River Rouge community through the interviewee's eyes. To this point, TGC has been successful in this effort and gained a level of respect in the community.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014, the orientation of COFI took place and nearly 20 people participated. In the orientation they discussed the aspects of the community they liked and did not like and asked to describe a vision for the community. Over the following weeks participation remained high between 10 to 15 people. One of the reasons for the high participation is built from the relationships developed. Many of the older participants started to guide and mentor the younger participants. These relationships were built from the task to establish goals for themselves and their family. This task can be difficult for people when they are in high stress situations such as heading single family households, living in public housing, and being chronically underemployed or unemployed.

During two focus groups with nine and seven COFI participants, they explained each cohort of COFI was very effective and that each component (individual plan development, family planning, web of support, asking for help) was very helpful. As participants stated,

- "It opened my eyes to using these skills in my everyday life."

- “COFI was a wake up call for me. I found goals I didn’t know I had. I’m getting my GED now.”
- “We had unity in our group. No one was working against us. No feuding. We built our foundation and made a lot of progress.”

Others talked about how quickly COFI was able to “get to results” as illustrated by the home that was demolished and the other house that was boarded up. One resident talked about the youth who used to walk across her yard and litter and now, by using the skills she learned in COFI, she was able to talk to them and now they help her maintain her yard.

Members of the second focus group and the second COFI cohort talked about the “movement to make River Rouge better for kids.” They stated,

- “Things happened, it wasn’t just talk and broken promises. We tore down a home, we boarded up another. The Mayor acted. He delivered paint to our block club.
- “We don’t have any parks, we want to stop the violence, and we want to make sure our neighborhoods don’t have drugs. We are gaining insight into how River Rouge works so that we can make our neighborhoods a better place to live. We have a sense of determination and a sense of togetherness.”

Finally, focus group members talked about improvements in River Rouge including:

- Removal of blighted homes and properties;
- Clean-up of parks;
- Creation of a business on Visger; and
- Improvement plan for River Rouge.

COFI participants were asked to complete the Family Environment Scale (FES), the results of which are presented in Table 6. The FES consists of ten subscales that are rated on a zero to nine scale. As the data indicate, a statistically significant decline occurred in the independence domain while a statistically significant improvement occurred in the moral-religious orientation domain.

**Table 6**  
**COFI: Family Environment Scale Results**

<b>Subscale</b>	<b>Pre-test n=11</b>	<b>Post-test n=11</b>	<b>Change</b>
Cohesion	7.36	7.64	0.27
Expressiveness	5.45	6.27	0.82
Conflict	1.91	2.00	0.09
Independence	7.64	6.55	<b>-1.09</b>
Achievement orientation	6.09	6.45	0.36
Intellectual-cultural orientation	6.82	6.73	-0.09
Active-recreational orientation	5.91	5.27	-0.64

<b>Subscale</b>	<b>Pre-test n=11</b>	<b>Post-test n=11</b>	<b>Change</b>
Moral-religious orientation	6.64	7.82	<b>1.18</b>
Organization	6.18	6.09	-0.09
Control	5.82	6.27	0.45

Table 7 presents the General Self Efficacy Scale results for COFI participants. No significant differences were detected between the pre- and post-test results. Scores increased for three items, remained the same for four items, and declined for one item.

**Table 7**  
**COFI: General Self-Efficacy Scale**

<b>Item</b>				
	<b>Mean (n=11)</b>	<b>Mean (n=11)</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>p-value</b>
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	4.3	4	-0.3	0.635
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them	4.1	4.1	0	1
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	4.3	4.4	0.1	0.871
I believe that I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind	4.2	4.3	0.1	0.882
I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges	4.1	4.3	0.2	0.871
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks	4.2	4.2	0	1
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well	4	4	0	1
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well	4	4	0	1

As the data in Table 8 illustrate, COFI participants' scores related to parent self efficacy for helping their child succeed in school did not significantly change over the course of the program. Improvements were detected for four items, scores did not change for one item, and scores declined for one item.

**Table 8**  
**COFI: Parent Self-Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale**

Item				
	Pre-test Mean (n=10)	Post-test Mean (n=10)	Difference	p-value
I know how to help my child do well in preschool/school	5.4	5.7	0.3	0.279
I don't know if I'm getting through to my child	2	3.2	3.2	0.177
I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school	1.3	1.6	0.3	0.572
I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn	5.6	5.2	-0.4	0.341
Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do (reverse)	1	1.3	0.3	0.133
I don't know how to help my child learn (reversed)	1.1	1.0	-0.1	0.332
I make a significant difference in my child's school performance	5.3	5.3	0	0.957

Parent's perception of their personal knowledge and skills also were assessed. As Table 9 shows, scores improved for three items, remained the same for four items, and declined for two items.

**Table 9**  
**COFI: Parent's Perception of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale**

Item				
	Pre-test Mean (n=10)	Post-test Mean (n=10)	Difference	p-value
I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school	5.4	5.4	0	1
I know about special events at my child's school	5.3	5.5	0.2	0.647
I know effective ways to contact my child's	5.8	5.6	-0.2	0.449

Item			Difference	p-value
	Pre-test Mean (n=10)	Post-test Mean (n=10)		
teacher				
I know how to communicate effectively with my child about the school day	5.8	5.8	0	1
I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework	5.5	5.6	0.1	0.754
I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her	5.5	5.7	0.2	0.600
I know how to communicate effectively with my child's teacher	5.8	5.8	0	1
I know how to supervise my child's homework	5.8	5.8	0	1
I have the skills to help out at my child's school	5.9	5.8	-0.1	0.620

With regard to parents' self-report of home-based involvement activities, four of the five items experienced a decline from the pre- to the post-test (Table 10). The fifth item showed no change.

**Table 10**  
**COFI: Parent Report of Home-based Involvement Activities Scale**

Item			Difference	p-value
	Pre-test Mean (n=10)	Post-test Mean (n=10)		
Talks with this child about the school day	5.7	5.5	-0.2	0.600
Supervises this child's homework	5.7	5.3	-0.4	0.450
Helps this child study for tests	5.3	5.1	-0.2	0.781
Practices spelling, math or other skills with this child	5.6	5.1	-0.5	0.376
Reads with this child	5.7	5.7	0	1

Table 11 presents the results of the parent encouragement scale for COFI participants. Thirteen items comprise the parent report of encouragement scale. Parents reported an improvement on



two items, a decline on ten items, and one item's score did not change between the pre- and post-test.

**Table 11**  
**COFI: Parent Report of Encouragement**

Item	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Difference	p-value
	When he or she doesn't feel like doing school work	5.00	5.4	0.4
To look for more information about school Subjects	4.7	4.3	-0.4	0.636
To develop an interest in schoolwork	5.5	4.6	-0.9	0.142
To believe that he/she can do well in school	5.6	5.6	0	1
To stick with problems until he/she solves them	5.7	5.2	-0.5	0.247
To believe that he/she can learn new things	5.7	5.4	-0.3	0.431
When he or she has trouble doing schoolwork	5.7	5.4	-0.3	0.464
To ask other people for help when a problem is hard to solve	5	5.5	0.5	0.402
To explain what he/she thinks to the teacher	5	4.6	-0.4	0.592
To follow the teachers directions	5.5	5.3	-0.2	0.743
When he or she has trouble organizing schoolwork	5.5	4.8	-0.7	0.308
To try new ways to do school work when he/she is having a hard time	5.5	5	-0.5	0.454
To be aware of how he or she is doing with schoolwork	5.2	5.1	-0.1	0.880

### **Families and School Together Evaluation Findings**

Kids FAST is a prevention and parent involvement program designed to prevent substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, school failure, child abuse and neglect, mental health problems, and violence. The FAST approach is to help parents reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors by using a family-based model for young children and their families. The theory is that building protective factors creates resilience to school failure and build a positive family culture.

The FAST team in River Rouge consisted of the Director of Programming for the Walter White Community Resource Center, the FAST trainer, and four partners (parent, education, and community). The FAST trainer received her certification in Kids FAST and FAST Works early on in the SIF initiative and provided training to local FAST team members. The CRC Director served as the overall director of FAST and supervised the FAST team.

Each FAST team receives a fidelity rating based on program standards. FAST, Inc. rates each team's fidelity to the model for each cycle, based on the following criteria:

- A complete, fully trained team;
- Representation from two different community based organizations;
- The Special Presentation is held during the 5<sup>th</sup> session;
- Weekly inclusion of all core program components: (1) a meal shared as a family unit; (2) family communication games played at a family table; (3) time for couples or buddies; (4) a self-help parent group; (5) one-on-one parent-child time; and (6) a fixed lottery that lets every family win once followed by a closing ritual;
- Communication and interactions according to FAST empowerment strategies
- Successful resolution of team conflict, if any;
- A minimum of five graduating families;
- Complete data (pre- and post-tests) from at least five of the graduate families; and
- Active and ongoing FASTWORKS program.

Teams are awarded one point for each met criteria and no partial points are awarded. The fidelity rating is based on total points, as follows:

- 1-3 points = Promising
- 4-5 points = Effective Implementation
- 6-8 points = Model Implementation
- 9-10 points = Exemplary Implementation

The Guidance Center's FAST team achieved certification with an Exemplary Implementation rating for fidelity. The FAST implementation received a ten out of ten implementation points. Certification is awarded based on information provided on the Team Review and Terms and Conditions for Accreditation and Evaluation Services Form.

Kids FAST is an eight-week program with families participating in a set schedule of structured activities including:

#### Meal

Activities, like the meal, in which a boundary is drawn around the family unit to the exclusion of non-family members and the inclusion of family members will strengthen the family unit. Eating together at a table is a positive activity that many families fail to organize on a regular basis. The meal gives parents an opportunity to be in charge of their family; parents use power and delegate power by requesting that a child serves them their meal, and this clarifies the hierarchy in the family. Parent empowerment works best when parents have opportunities for reciprocity. The meal is cooked by FAST staff who then assist children as they serve their family. Each whole family wins the prize once, and in exchange for being the winner one week, the family becomes the host for the next week.

#### Scribbles

Parents instruct family members to take turns asking questions of each other. Family members are encouraged to become more open and expressive with each other. In this family exercise, each person gets an opportunity to say "I think" and to have others in the family listen and learn by asking more questions. Openness and turn-taking is helpful in conflict resolution. With support from the team, parents see their children repeatedly listening to them, which empowers the parent. Clear rules about communication within the family unit are set by the parents, which promotes the differentiation of self and sets a basis for conflict resolution.

### Feeling Charades

Playing Feeling Charades lets family members practice recognizing each others' feelings. When family members can accurately identify feelings, they can offer support to one another and resolve conflict, making misunderstandings less likely. The team helps ensure that the parent is in charge of turn-taking and talking about feelings.

### Special Play

One-on-one bonding occurs in Special Play, 15 minutes of child-directed play. When the parent attentively follows the child's lead, the relationship between parent and child becomes stronger. The emotional nurturing supports parents' beliefs that they are emotionally available. Children are more likely to listen to their parent when they feel special in the eyes of their parent. Contrary to expectations, parents wind up gaining more control over their children when they briefly give up control. The team coaches parents to experience the benefits of this counterintuitive activity.

### Lottery

Winning the lottery celebrates the importance of each family. Family cohesion or sense of togetherness is celebrated. The team generates enthusiasm and helps to make each family feel special.

### Parent Group

A sense of personal effectiveness often grows through social supports. Strong social support means that parents have other adults they can call upon. The ability to make friends is vital in creating the protective factor of social capital.

### Table-Based Coaching

Table-based coaching empowers parents. Team members communicate with parents who instruct their children.

### FAST Participants

Three cycles of FAST were implemented over the course of the grant: (1) May 15, 2014 to June 17, 2014; (2) October 1, 2014 to December 12, 2014; and (3) January 23, 2015 to March 27, 2015. Table 12 presents a summary of recruitment and participation data for each of the three cohorts along with a total for the three. As the data illustrate, just over 100 families were recruited for FAST, 50% of those agreed to attend, 46% attended at least one session and 46% graduated (21 families in total).

According to feedback obtained through FAST team focus groups conducted at the conclusion of each session, the FAST team learned what recruitment strategies were most successful. These include:

- Collaborating with Walter White Head Start teachers to recruit families;
- Coordinating with Communities and Family Involvement (COFI) program to recruit FAST participants from COFI cohorts; and
- Collaborating with the Parents as Teachers (PAT) staff person to identify and recruit potential FAST participants.

**Table 12**  
**Summary of FAST Recruitment and Participation: Three Cohorts**

Cohort	Number Recruited	Number Agreed to Attend	Number Attended at least One Session	Graduation		Percentage of Sessions Graduated Families Attended
				#	%	
1	30	25	24	10	42	83%
2	65	15	12	6	50	88
3	13	13	10	5	50	95%
TOTAL	108	53	46	21	46	n/a

With regard to the demographics of FAST participants, 36% of children were African American, 24% were White, and 21% were Hispanic/Latino. Gender was split equally between boys and girls. About 40% of parents were under the age of 32 and one-third were over the age of 36. Approximately 35% of parents were African American, 26% White, and 21% Hispanic/Latino. One third of parents hold a high school diploma or GED and 18% completed some college. Almost 40% have a full-time job, 14% work part-time, and 25% were not currently working at the time of FAST. Forty (40%) of families were married while 24% have never been married. One-fifth reported household income of less than \$10,000 and 30% reported income of between \$10,000 and \$24,999. (See the Appendix for a more detailed description of participant demographics). The FAST team in River Rouge consisted of the Director of Programming for the Walter White Community Resource Center, the FAST trainer, and four partners (parent, education, and community). The FAST trainer received her certification in Kids FAST and FAST Works early on in the SIF initiative and provided training to local FAST team members. The CRC Director served as the overall director of FAST and supervised the FAST team.

A critical component of the FAST model relates to improving family functioning. The Family Environment Scale was administered before and after each FAST cycle to help the FAST team and stakeholders understand the impact of the program on families.

The Family Environment Scale's subscale scores range from 0 to 9 and the mean scores are presented for all three FAST cohorts in Table 13. As the data illustrate, no significant improvements were demonstrated through the pre- and post-tests. Specifically, improvements were evidenced in four subscales (a decline in conflict is an improvement), no change in one subscale, and a decline was measured in three subscales.

**Table 13**  
**Family Environment Subscales: All FAST Cohorts**

Subscale	Pre-Test		Post-Test		Change	
	Raw Score Mean (n=18)	Standard Score Mean (n=18)	Raw Score Mean (n=18)	Standard Score Mean (n=18)	Raw Score (n=18)	Standard Score (n=18)
Cohesion	7.78	57	7.72	57	-0.06	0
Expressiveness	5.06	47	5.56	50	0.50	3
Conflict	2.78	48	2.22	45	-0.56	-3
Independence	6.61	51	6.06	45	-0.56	-6
Achievement orientation	6.28	54	6.22	54	-0.06	0
Intellectual-cultural orientation	6.11	52	6.28	54	0.17	2
Active-recreational orientation	5.56	51	5.56	51	0.00	0
Moral-religious orientation	7.28	63	6.89	61	-0.39	-2
Organization	6.11	53	6.22	54	0.11	1
Control	6.00	59	5.33	56	-0.67	-3

Families' self-efficacy also was studied as part of the evaluation through the pre- post-administration of the eight item General Self Efficacy instrument. As Table 14 shows, no significant improvements were demonstrated by FAST participants during the three cohorts. However, slight gains were made in five items, no change in one, and declines in two.

**Table 14**  
**General Self-Efficacy: All FAST Cohorts**

Item	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	p-value
	Mean (n=18)	Mean (n=18)		
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	4.39	4.5	0.11	0.65
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them	4.39	4.39	0	1
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	4.61	4.72	0.11	0.54
I believe that I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind	4.77	4.71	0.06	0.72
I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges	4.56	4.61	0.05	0.75
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks	4.61	4.67	0.06	0.67
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well	4.67	4.39	-0.28	0.1
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well	4.72	4.39	-0.33	0.08

The relationship with the FAST child is assessed by a subscale on the Social Relationship Scale; scores range from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent quality). Parents reported a statistically important improved in their relationship with their FAST child, as indicated by the results in Table 15.

**Table 15**  
**Social Relationship with FAST Child**  
**Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 17)		National Average (n = 8527)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Relationship with FAST Child	8.90	<b>9.22**</b>	7.80	<b>8.61****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Twenty-three items on the Self Efficacy Questionnaire assessed three dimensions of personal efficacy, with lower responses indicating lower effectiveness and higher responses indicating higher effectiveness:

- Nurturance efficacy (capacity to provide children with love and support)
- General efficacy (mastery in daily tasks, setting goals, and completing projects)
- Social self-efficacy (confidence to establish and maintain social relationships)

Parents reported no statistically significant improvement in self-efficacy scores (Table 16).

**Table 16**  
**Self Efficacy Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 15-16)		National Average (n = 8278)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Nurturance Efficacy	4.40	4.40	3.79	<b>3.87****</b>
General Efficacy	4.07	4.13	3.51	<b>3.58****</b>
Social Self-Efficacy	3.67	3.64	3.29	<b>3.35****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Eight items on the Parent Involvement in Education Questionnaire assessed three dimensions of parental involvement in education: (1) parent school involvement; (2) parent to school contact; and (3) school to parent contact. Parents and teachers reported on parents' involvement in children's education. A score for total parent involvement can be obtained by adding the scores of the subscales. Parent responses range from "never" (0) to "six or more times" (4).

Parents reported no statistically significant improvement in their involvement in schooling scores (Table 17). Specifically, one score (parent school involvement) declined between ratings while the other three scores improved slightly.

**Table 17**  
**Parent Involvement in School**  
**Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 13-15)		National Average (n = 7705)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Parent School Involvement	2.56	2.33	2.12	<b>2.38****</b>
Parent to School Contact	1.95	2.05	1.24	<b>1.40****</b>
School to Parent Contact	1.70	1.93	1.28	<b>1.41****</b>
Total Parent Involvement	2.02	2.24	1.56	<b>1.76****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Twenty-eight items on the Parent Involvement in Education Questionnaire assessed four dimensions of the parent-teacher relationship and their impression of the parents' involvement. The scores range from 1 to 5, with higher numbers indicating better relationship with the child's parent, more frequent contact with the parent, and a perception of greater parental involvement in school.

Teachers reported no statistically significant improvement in parent involvements in school scores (Table 18). In FAST, all three post-test averages declined from the pre-test average.

**Table 18**  
**Parent Involvement in School Reported by Teachers**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 11-19)		National Average (n = 7883)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Teacher Relationship with Parent	4.28	3.93	4.10	<b>4.23****</b>
Teacher Involvement with Parent	3.34	3.32	2.63	<b>2.68****</b>
Parent Involvement in Schooling	3.96	3.75	3.80	<b>3.92****</b>
Gave Negative Report to Parents	1.63	1.53	1.85	<b>1.83**</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Twenty-five items on the Children's Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire assessed five dimensions of children's behavior: prosocial behaviors, emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, and peer problems. Five additional questions addressed the impact that the FAST child's difficulties have on his or her everyday life. Subscales, including prosocial behaviors, range from 0 to 10. Total difficulties (a composite of all difficulties scores) can range from 0 to 50 and the impact scores can range from 0 to 15.

Parents reported a statistically significant improvement in conduct problems (Table 19) while the other subscales improved slightly (n=5) or decline (n=1). The national averages show that significant improvements were made by FAST children across the country.

**Table 19**  
**Strengths and Difficulties of Children Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 16)		National Average (n = 7868)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Prosocial Behaviors	7.63	7.75	7.56	<b>7.92****</b>
Difficulties				
- Emotional Symptoms	1.81	1.75	2.46	<b>2.01****</b>
- Conduct Problems	1.50	<b>1.13*</b>	2.40	<b>1.99****</b>
- Hyperactivity	3.94	4.19	4.50	<b>3.96****</b>
- Peer Problems	1.25	1.50	2.34	<b>2.12****</b>
Total Difficulties	8.50	8.56	11.70	<b>10.07****</b>
Impact of Total Difficulties	0.63	0.88	1.33	<b>0.92****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Teachers reported no statistically significant improvement on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Table 20). The teacher data are confirmatory of parent feedback in that both teachers and parents reported an improvement in peer problems among FAST children. Teacher ratings of FAST children's prosocial behaviors was lower than parent's rating of this skill. As was the case with parent ratings, the national data indicate FAST children improved in their strengths and difficulties in other communities.

**Table 20**  
**Strengths and Difficulties of Children Reported by Teachers**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 18-19)		National Average (n = 8596)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Prosocial Behaviors	6.32	5.95	6.59	<b>6.96****</b>
Difficulties				
- Emotional Symptoms	1.63	2.11	1.56	<b>1.44****</b>
- Conduct Problems	1.26	1.11	1.85	<b>1.72****</b>
- Hyperactivity	3.47	3.53	4.23	<b>3.92****</b>
- Peer Problems	2.05	<b>1.42*</b>	2.00	<b>1.87****</b>
Total Difficulties	8.42	8.16	9.63	<b>8.95****</b>
Impact of Total Difficulties	0.72	0.78	1.20	<b>1.15****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

The parents' social relationships were assessed by a subscale on the Social Relationship Scale; scores range from 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent quality). Parents reported a statistically significant improvement in community social relationships (+7%) scores (Table 21). It should be noted that



this was cited as a strength of both the FAST and COFI programs by parents who participated in focus groups. Parents discussed how they had developed strong relationships with other FAST and COFI families and that these families were neighbors so that their relationships extended beyond program time.

**Table 21**  
**Social Relationships with Community**  
**Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 17)		National Average (n = 8537)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Community Social Relationships	8.25	<b>8.64**</b>	7.51	<b>8.09****</b>
Total Social Relationships	8.52	<b>8.88***</b>	7.64	<b>8.31****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

Social support is assessed with two questionnaires: the Social Support Questionnaire and the Reciprocal Support Questionnaire. The Social Support Questionnaire assesses three dimensions of social support:

- tangible support (for example, help with cooking, chores, and child care);
- affectionate support (for example, showing love and affection and giving hugs); and
- emotional support (for example, listening, getting together and getting advice).

A score for total social support can be obtained by adding the scores of the subscales. Parent responses range from “never have support” (0) to “always have support” (3). Parents reported statistically significant improvements in three social support scores (Table 22), including tangible support, emotional support, and total support. In addition, the River Rouge post-test scores were higher than the national average in “tangible support.” As was stated earlier, this was the strength of FAST... providing social support for participating parents.

**Table 22**  
**Social Support Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 17)		National Average (n = 8521)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Tangible Support	2.12	<b>2.44*</b>	1.91	<b>2.07****</b>
Affectionate Support	2.33	2.51	2.23	<b>2.38****</b>
Emotional Support	2.14	<b>2.46**</b>	2.06	<b>2.23****</b>
Total Support	2.16	<b>2.44**</b>	2.03	<b>2.20****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*<.001

FAST provides opportunities for parents to support one another. Parents were asked about the support they received from and provided to other parents. Scores could range from 0 to 5 with higher levels meaning more support. Parents reported no statistically significant improvement in reciprocal support scores (Table 23) but the mean scores did improve for “support provided to other parents” and “total support reciprocal support.” It should be noted that the pre-test and post-test mean scores for River Rouge FAST participants were greater than the national average, indicating this was a strength of TGC’s FAST program.

**Table 23**  
**Reciprocal Support Reported by Parents**

Subscales	Site Average (n = 17)		National Average (n = 8270)	
	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean
Support provided to other parents	2.59	2.98	1.54	<b>2.26****</b>
Support received from other parents	2.47	2.27	1.40	<b>2.16****</b>
Total reciprocal support	5.06	5.25	2.92	<b>4.41****</b>

\*p<.10

\*\*p<.05

\*\*\*p<.01

\*\*\*\*p<.001

Stakeholder Feedback

Parents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the FAST program and their relationship with FAST participants. As the data in Table 24 suggest, FAST participants were very satisfied with the program and their relationships with FAST partners, or staff.

**Table 24**  
**Parents Ratings of FAST**

	Site Average (n = 16)	National Average (n = 8073)
	Mean	Mean
<b>On a scale of ‘very dissatisfied’ (1) to ‘very satisfied’ (10)</b>		
- All things considered, how satisfied were you with FAST?	8.75	9.29
<b>One a scale of ‘poor’ (1) to ‘excellent’ (10)</b>		
- How do you rate your relationship with other FAST parents?	8.75	8.52
- How do you rate your relationship with the parent partner?	9.06	8.83
- How do you rate your relationship with the school partner?	9.06	8.85
- How do you rate your relationship with the community agency partner?	8.56	8.76

During focus groups with FAST participants, parents talked about the most beneficial aspects of FAST and provided this specific feedback:

- I learned how to listen to my FAST child and all my children. I learned they should have a voice in the family and how to actually listen to their needs and change my behavior.
- I got to spend time with other adults and talk about “adult things” without my children being around.
- I made friendships that will last outside of FAST. I met neighbors that I never talked to before and now we’re friends and help with each other’s families.

When asked how FAST helped them with parenting, participants offered:

- I am more open with my children and expressing our feelings.
- I learned to count to ten before I comment or get mad. It has helped me to not yell at my kids.
- I understand her behavior better now. I know she’s not doing something just to make me mad; she is trying to communicate with me, not make me mad.

Parents also talked about the changes they have seen in their FAST child:

- She expresses herself better. We do feeling charades at home to help both of us talk about our feelings.
- My child is more social. Before FAST, I couldn’t leave her with anyone or she would scream. Now, she loves coming her and can’t wait to leave me and go play with her friends and the FAST staff. That’s a huge accomplishment for her and me.

When asked what they would change about FAST, responses varied by cohort. The first cohort talked about meal time and the need for it to be more efficient in terms of serving the food and making sure there was enough food. First cohort members also commented on Table-based coaching, which was addressed by staff in their feedback session as well. The cohort one FAST team was not completely comfortable with, or understand, the rationale behind Table-based coaching and thus implemented it somewhat unevenly, leading to some confusion by parents. Using this feedback, the FAST trainer emphasized Table-based coaching during cohort two and three team training, thereby improving its implementation.

Teachers were also asked to rate the program on a scale of 1 to 10 in two areas: improvement in the child’s behaviors, relationships, academics, attitudes, and attendance and benefits of FAST to the parents, themselves, and children. Data in Table 25 suggest that River Rouge Head Start teachers rated the FAST program similarly to other teachers who have had students participate in FAST. Specifically, River Rouge teachers’ ratings were lower on each of the eight items but in four cases, the differences were less than 0.5 points on the ten point scale.

**Table 25  
Teacher Ratings of FAST**

	<b>Site Average (n = 10-18 )</b>	<b>National Average (n = 7936)</b>
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>On a scale of 'no improvement' (1) to 'excellent improvement' (10)</b>		
- Did you see any improvement in this child's behavior as a result of participating in FAST?	5.56	5.63
- Did you see any improvement in this child's relationship with peers in the FAST program as a result of FAST?	5.28	5.72
- Did you see any improvements in this child's academic performance as a result of participating in FAST?	5.00	5.54
- Did you see any improvement in this child's attitude toward school as a result of participating in FAST?	5.20	5.90
- Did you see any improvements in this child's attendance?	5.40	5.63
<b>On a scale of 'no benefit' (1) to 'great benefit' (10)</b>		
- Did you see benefits to this child's parents as a result of participating in FAST?	5.94	6.32
- Did you benefit from FAST being in your school?	6.33	6.77
- Did you see any benefits from this child's participation in FAST?	5.83	6.50

### **Kindergarten Readiness**

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire was administered by Head Start teachers and Guidance Center staff at the conclusion of the 2014-15 school year to determine if any differences exist between FAST children and children who did not participate in FAST. As the data in Table 26 illustrate:

- Cohort two FAST children scored significantly lower than other FAST children and non-FAST children;
- Children in cohorts one and three scored above non-FAST children in Fine Motor Skills, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social Skills; and
- Children in all FAST cohorts scored below non-FAST children with respect to Communication and Gross Motor Skills.

**Table 26**  
**2014-15 Ages and Stages Questionnaire Scores: FAST/Non-FAST Children**

Scale	Cohort 1		Cohort 2		Cohort 3		Non-FAST	
	% Above Cutoff	N	% Above Cutoff	N	% Above Cutoff	N	% Above Cutoff	N
Communication	62.5%	8	20%	5	60%	5	87%	61
Gross Motor Skills	75%	8	20%	5	60%	5	88.5%	61
<b>Fine Motor Skills</b>	<b>87.5%</b>	<b>8</b>	20%	5	<b>80%</b>	<b>5</b>	69%	61
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8</b>	40%	5	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	74%	61
<b>Personal-Social Skills</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8</b>	40%	5	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	98%	61

Head Start students were assessed three times during the 2014-15 school year by their teachers using the Classroom Observation Record (COR). As the data in Table 27 illustrate, a higher proportion of FAST children scored “above the cut-off” than non-FAST children on ten of the thirteen COR measures.

**Table 27**  
**2014-15COR Assessment Results**

Measure	FAST		Non-FAST	
	% of students who ended above 3	N	% of students who ended above 3	N
<b>Approaches to Learning</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	94%
<b>Creative Arts</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	94%
<b>Language Literacy and Communication</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	97%
Mathematics	67%	3	33	88%
<b>Physical Development and Health</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	97%
<b>School Readiness-Approaches to Learning</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	94%
School Readiness-Cognition and General Knowledge	67%	3	33	88%
<b>School Readiness-Language and Literacy</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	97%
<b>School Readiness-Physical Development and Health</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	97%
<b>School Readiness-Social and Emotional</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	94%
Science and Technology	100%	3	32	100%
<b>Social and Emotional Development</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	33	94%
<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	32	97%

For the 2013-14 school year, a higher proportion of FAST children scored higher than non-FAST children on five of the thirteen measures, as shown in Table 28. Again, the relatively small sample size for FAST children makes drawing conclusions difficult.

**Table 28**  
**2013-14 COR Assessment Results**

Measure	FAST		Non-FAST	
	N	% of students who ended above 3	N	% of students who ended above 3
Approaches to learning	14	79%	68	96%
Approaches to learning	14	79%	68	96%
<b>Cognition and general knowledge</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>86%</b>	68	85%
<b>Creative arts expression</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>86%</b>	68	82%
English language development (Expressive)	14	93%	68	94%
English language development (receptive)	14	79%	68	94%
Language and literacy	14	93%	68	94%
Language development	14	93%	68	94%
Literacy knowledge and skills	14	79%	68	94%
Logic and reasoning	14	86%	68	85%
Mathematics knowledge and skills	14	71%	68	74%
<b>Physical development and health</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	68	99%
<b>Physical development and health</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	68	99%
Science knowledge and skills	14	71%	68	74%
Social and emotional development	14	79%	68	96%
Social and emotional development	14	79%	68	96%
Social studies knowledge and skills	14	79%	68	84%

## CONCLUSIONS

---

The River Rouge community, led by The Guidance Center and its Walter White Community Resource Center, designed and implemented a comprehensive community-driven, socially-innovative approach to kindergarten readiness. As with any change effort, lessons were learned along the way.

One of the lessons learned relates to designing and implementing a locally-driven initiative within the context of sometimes rigid federal guidelines. Two guidelines influenced the design of the River Rouge project in a less than desired way: (1) the requirement that families be River Rouge residents and reside in a specific zip code; and (2) the moderate level of evidence needed to be achieved through the evaluation of each SIF program.

The SIF requirement that participants live within a certain zip code reduced the number of potential participants significantly given the fluid boundaries that exist across River Rouge and its neighboring communities. A family's move across the street and can transition them to another city and zip code. The high mobility rates in the "downriver" area, of which River Rouge is a part, make the SIF requirements problematic for consistent recruitment and retention of families. In addition, downriver residents define "community" differently than a zip code. For instance, individuals who participate in a community garden activity may not live in River Rouge but they identify with it as their "community" and are engaged with the Walter White Community Resource Center's programming. This may an issue that future federally funded, community-based work may want to take into account.

Second, roughly a year and a half ago, the Guidance Center's original design was modified to meet SIF guidelines. Specifically, the original design included a family literacy component that had to be eliminated because its level of evidence would not reach the moderate level by the conclusion of this SIF initiative. All SIF projects are required to reach the moderate level of evidence by the conclusion of their work.

This mid-course change, which occurred during year two, caused a shift in the theory of change as well as shift in staffing and approach to the work. Originally, parents were going to be recruited for a literacy program and then made aware of, and recruited for, the COFI and FAST programs.

As a result of the decision to eliminate the family literacy program, the focus of FAST recruitment changed and turned to Head Start teachers, which proved to be an effective strategy. In addition, COFI was used a recruitment strategy for FAST. This intentional partnership between COFI and FAST seems to have been effective as well as may explain the positive outcomes in the area of parent social relationship improvements.

Once these SIF guidelines were addressed, the River Rouge Kindergarten readiness project was implemented with full fidelity and was well received by families and community partners. In fact, COFI and FAST focus group participants repeatedly stated that they wanted both programs to continue for many years to come.

With regard to COFI, residents came together to improve the physical nature of their community, thereby making it more attractive and possibly increasing the number of families who attend River Rouge schools. In addition, an early childhood education campaign is being planned to kick-off for the 2015-16 school year.



The FAST program also was implemented with high fidelity over the past eighteen months. Participants rated the program highly and according to pre/post survey assessments, parents reported improvements in their social relationships and the behaviors of their FAST child.

Finally, given the relatively short period of full implementation and the small numbers of FAST children, influence on kindergarten readiness may be premature to fully assess. However, given that COFI participants have picked up the mantle of quality early childhood education in River Rouge, kindergarten readiness should continue to be monitored.

## **Appendix**

- **Demographic Data**
- **Cohort Level Data for FAST**

### Demographic Characteristics of Children

AGE	Site Average		National Average	
	#	%	#	%
≤ 6	16	76.2	3450	35.1
7			1565	15.9
8			1444	14.7
9			1157	11.8
≥ 10			1523	15.4
Missing <i>n</i>	5	23.8	691	7.0
Average	3.8		7.4	
RACE/ETHNICITY				
African-American/Black	15	71.4	3526	35.9
American Indian or Alaskan Native			298	3.0
Asian			89	0.9
Caucasian/White			2335	23.8
Hispanic/Latino			2062	21.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander			22	0.2
Mixed Race/Ethnicity			610	6.2
Other	1	4.8	227	2.3
Missing <i>n</i>	5	23.8	661	6.7
GENDER				
Male	3	14.3	4737	48.2
Female	13	61.9	4482	45.6
Missing <i>n</i>	5	23.8	611	6.2

## Demographic Characteristics of Parents

AGE	Site Average		National Average	
	#	%	#	%
≤ 32	5	23.8	3913	39.7
33			492	5.0
34			422	4.3
35	1	4.8	385	3.9
≥ 36	10	47.6	3562	35.8
Missing <i>n</i>	5	23.8	1056	10.7
Average	43.8		35.1	
RACE/ETHNICITY				
African-American/Black	15	71.4	3480	35.4
American Indian or Alaskan Native			286	2.9
Asian			111	1.1
Caucasian/White	2	9.5	2603	26.5
Hispanic/Latino			2107	21.4
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander			28	0.3
Mixed Race/Ethnicity			247	2.5
Other	1	4.8	226	2.3
Missing <i>n</i>	3	14.3	742	7.5
GENDER				
Male	2	9.5	867	8.8
Female	16	76.2	8258	84.0
Missing <i>n</i>	3	14.3	705	7.2
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade or Below			584	5.9
Some High School	2	9.5	1276	13.0
High School Graduate or GED	8	38.1	2986	30.4
Junior or Vocational College	1	4.8	698	7.1
Some College (not Junior/Vocational)	2	9.5	1735	17.7
College Graduate	3	14.3	915	9.3
Some Graduate or Professional School			285	2.9
Graduate/Professional School Degree	1	4.8	395	4.0

Missing <i>n</i>	4	19.0	956	9.7
EMPLOYMENT				
Full-time Job			3750	38.1
Part-time Job	4	19.0	1346	13.7
Unemployed, looking for work	5	23.8	1400	14.2
Not employed outside home	1	4.8	1129	11.5
Disabled, unable to work	6	28.6	687	7.0
Student			400	4.1
Retired	1	4.8	154	1.6
Missing <i>n</i>	4	19.0	964	9.8
ACTIVITIES BEFORE FAST				
Church	11	52.4	5861	52.9
Substance Abuse Treatment	1	4.8	247	2.7
Parent-Teacher Organizations	11	52.4	2990	32.7
Counseling for You/Children	3	14.3	1670	18.3
Community Center	8	38.1	1158	12.7
Hospitalized	2	9.5	560	6.4
Adult Education Program	2	9.5	2135	23.4
Volunteer Work	12	57.1	1907	20.8
Move to New Home	1	4.8	1025	11.7

## Demographic Characteristics of Families

TOTAL FAMILY SIZE	Site Average		National Average	
	#	%	#	%
1	1	4.8	39	0.4
2	4	19.0	690	7.0
3	1	4.8	1603	16.3
4	1	4.8	2646	26.9
5	5	23.8	2123	21.6
6	3	14.3	1037	10.5
7	1	4.8	455	4.6
8	1	4.8	181	1.8
9 or more			230	2.3
Missing <i>n</i>	4	19.0	826	2.3
Average	4.4		4.5	
MARITAL STATUS				
Married	4	19.0	4116	41.9
Divorced	4	19.0	1009	10.3
Separated	2	9.5	693	7.0
Never Been Married	6	28.6	2345	23.9
Member of an Unmarried Couple	1	4.8	657	6.7
Widowed			201	2.0
Missing <i>n</i>	4	19.0	809	8.2
ANNUAL INCOME				
Less than \$10,000	11	52.4	2131	21.7
\$10,000-\$14,999	2	9.5	1346	13.7
\$15,000-\$24,999	4	19.0	1621	16.5
\$25,000-\$34,999			1405	14.3
\$35,000-\$49,000			927	9.4
\$50,000-\$74,999			762	7.8
\$75,000-\$99,999			276	2.8
\$100,000 or more			150	1.5
Missing <i>n</i>	4	19.0	1212	12.3

### Family Environment Scale: Three FAST cohorts

	Cohort 1 (5/15/2014) N=10			Cohort 2 (10/1/2014) N=4			Cohort 3 (1/23/2015) N=4		
	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change
<b>Cohesion</b>	7.9	8.1	0.2	7.75	7.5	-0.25	7.5	7	-0.5
<b>Expressiveness</b>	5.7	5.3	-0.4	3.75	7	3.25	4.75	4.75	0
<b>Conflict</b>	2.8	2.2	-0.6	2.75	2	-0.75	2.75	2.5	-0.25
<b>Independence</b>	6.8	6.5	-0.3	6.75	5.75	-1	6	5.25	-0.75
<b>Achievement orientation</b>	6.2	6.2	0	6.25	6.25	0	6.5	6.25	-0.25
<b>Intellectual-cultural orientation</b>	6.5	6.4	-0.1	5.75	5.75	0	5.5	6.5	1
<b>Active-recreational orientation</b>	5.4	5.6	0.2	5	5.25	0.25	6.5	5.75	-0.75
<b>Moral-religious orientation</b>	7.2	6.6	-0.6	7.5	7.25	-0.25	7.25	7.25	0
<b>Organization</b>	5.8	6.7	0.9	7.75	6	-1.75	5.25	5.25	0
<b>Control</b>	5.8	5.5	-0.3	6.25	5.25	-1	6.25	5	-1.25

### General Self-Efficacy Scale (FAST Cohort 1)

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	10	4.8	10	4.6	-0.2	0.511
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them	10	4.8	10	4.6	-0.2	0.449
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	10	4.9	10	4.7	-0.2	0.288
I believe that I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind	10	4.9	10	4.8	-0.1	0.556
I will be able to successfully overcome	10	4.8	10	4.8	0	1

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
many challenges						
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks	10	4.8	10	4.8	0	1
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well	10	4.6	10	4.9	0.3	0.135
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well	10	4.6	10	4.9	0.3	0.135

**Parent Self Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale (FAST Cohort 1)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
I know how to help my child do well in preschool/school	10	5.3	10	5.6	0.3	0.464
I don't know if I'm getting through to my child	10	2.40	9	2.44	0.04	0.956
I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school	10	1.60	10	2.10	0.5	0.392
I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn	10	5.5	9	5.44	0.06	0.850
Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do (reverse)	6	-	4	-	-	-
I don't know how to help my child learn (reversed)	9	1.56	10	2.60	1.04	0.230
I make a significant difference in my child's school performance	10	5.40	10	5.10	0.3	0.408



**Parent's Perception of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale (FAST Cohort 1)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school	10	5.8	10	5	-0.8	0.087
I know about special events at my child's school	10	5.6	10	5.5	0.1	0.722
I know effective ways to contact my child's teacher	10	5.1	10	5.3	0.2	0.759
I know how to communicate effectively with my child about the school day	10	5.6	10	5.6	0	1
I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework	10	5.6	10	5.7	0.1	0.660
I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her	5.7	10	9	5.7	0	0.905
I know how to communicate effectively with my child's teacher	10	5.6	10	5.8	0.2	0.355
I know how to supervise my child's homework	10	5.6	10	5.7	0.1	0.660
I have the skills to help out at my child's school	10	5.5	10	5.6	0.1	0.754

**Parent Report of Home-based Involvement Activities Scale (FAST Cohort 1)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
Talks with this child about the school day	10	5.6	10	5.6	0	1
Supervises this child's homework	10	5.7	10	5.8	0.1	0.628
Helps this child study for tests	10	5.7	10	5.8	0.1	0.628
Practices spelling, math or other skills with this child	10	5	10	5.8	0.8	0.151
Reads with this child	10	5.7	10	5.5	-0.2	0.470

**Parent Report of Encouragement (FAST Cohort 1)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference	p-value
	n	Mean	n	Mean		
When he or she doesn't feel like doing school work	9	4.1	10	5.1	1	0.226
To look for more information about school subjects	9	5.3	10	5.2	-0.1	0.730
To develop an interest in schoolwork	10	5.5	10	5.5	0	1
To believe that he/she can do well in school	10	5.7	10	5.6	-0.1	0.749
To stick with problems until he/she solves them	10	5.6	10	5.5	-0.1	0.754
To believe that he/she can learn new things	10	5.7	10	5.6	-0.1	0.749
When he or she has trouble doing schoolwork	9	5.7	10	4.7	-1	0.181
To ask other people for help when a problem is hard to solve	10	5.5	10	5.4	0.1	0.795
To explain what he/she thinks to the teacher	10	5.4	10	5.1	-0.3	0.605
To follow the teachers directions	10	5.7	10	5.8	.1	0.628
When he or she has trouble organizing schoolwork	9	5.7	9	5.1	-0.6	0.172
To try new ways to do school work when he/she is having a hard time	9	5.7	10	5.3	-0.4	0.315
To be aware of how he or she is doing with schoolwork	9	5.7	10	5.4	-0.3	0.420

**General Self-Efficacy Scale (FAST Cohort 2)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	4	4.75	4	4.25	
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them	4	4.5	4	3.75	
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	4	4.75	4	4.25	
I believe that I can	3	5	4	4.5	

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind					
I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges	4	4.5	4	4.25	
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks	4	4.5	4	4.5	
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well	4	4.75	4	4.25	
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well	4	5	4	4.25	

**Parent Self Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale (FAST Cohort 2)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I know how to help my child do well in preschool/school	4	5.25	3	5.33	0.08
I don't know if I'm getting through to my child	4	2.5	4	2.75	0.25
I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school	4	3	4	2.5	-0.5
I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn	4	5	4	5.25	0.25
Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do (reverse)	1	1	0	-	
I don't know how to help my child learn (reversed)	4	1.25	4	2.25	1
I make a significant difference in my child's school performance	4	5.25	4	5.25	0

**Parent's Perception of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale (FAST Cohort 2)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school	4	5.75	4	5.25	-0.5
I know about special events at my child's school	4	5.5	4	5.25	-0.25
I know effective ways to contact my child's teacher	4	5	4	5.25	0.25
I know how to communicate effectively with my child about the school day	4	5.75	4	5.25	-0.5
I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework	4	6	4	5.25	-0.75
I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her	4	5.25	4	5.25	0
I know how to communicate effectively with my child's teacher	4	6	4	5	-1
I know how to supervise my child's homework	4	6	4	5	-1
I have the skills to help out at my child's school	4	6	4	5	-1

**Parent Report of Home-based Involvement Activities Scale (FAST Cohort 2)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
Talks with this child about the school day	4	6	4	5.75	-0.25
Supervises this child's homework	4	6	4	6	0
Helps this child study for tests	4	4.75	3	4.333333	-0.41667
Practices spelling, math or other skills with this child	4	5.5	4	5.25	-0.25
Reads with this child	4	5.75	4	5.5	-0.25

**Parent Report of Encouragement (FAST Cohort 2)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
When he or she doesn't feel like doing school work	4	5.5	4	5.5	0
To look for more information about school subjects	4	5	3	3.666667	-1.333333
To develop an interest in schoolwork	4	5	4	5.25	0.25
To believe that he/she can do well in school	4	5	4	5.5	0.5
To stick with problems until he/she solves them	4	5.5	4	5.5	0
To believe that he/she can learn new things	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
When he or she has trouble doing schoolwork	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
To ask other people for help when a problem is hard to solve	4	5.25	4	5.75	0.5
To explain what he/she thinks to the teacher	4	4.25	4	5.5	1.25
To follow the teachers directions	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
When he or she has trouble organizing schoolwork	4	5.25	4	4.25	-1
To try new ways to do school work when he/she is having a hard time	4	5.25	4	5.25	0
To be aware of how he or she is doing with schoolwork	4	5.5	3	5	-0.5

**General Self-Efficacy Scale (FAST Cohort 3)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	4	3.5	4	4	0.5
When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them	4	3.75	4	4	0.25
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	4	4.25	4	4.75	0.5
I believe that I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind	4	4.5	4	4.5	0
I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges	4	4	4	4.5	0.5
I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks	4	4.25	4	4.5	0.25
Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well	4	4	4	4	0
Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well	4	4	4	4	0

**Parent Self Efficacy for Helping the Child Succeed in School Scale (FAST Cohort 3)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I know how to help my child do well in preschool/school	4	5.25	4	5.25	0
I don't know if I'm getting through to my child	4	1.25	4	2.5	1.25
I don't know how to help my child make good grades in school	3	2	4	1.5	-0.5
I feel successful about my efforts to help my child learn	4	5.75	4	5.5	-0.25
Other children have more influence on my child's grades than I do (reverse)	0		1	2	2
I don't know how to help	4	1.5	4	1	-0.5

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
my child learn (reversed)					
I make a significant difference in my child's school performance	4	4.5	4	5.5	1

**Parent's Perception of Personal Knowledge and Skills Scale (FAST Cohort 3)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
I know about volunteering opportunities at my child's school	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
I know about special events at my child's school	4	5	4	5	0
I know effective ways to contact my child's teacher	4	4.5	4	4.75	0.25
I know how to communicate effectively with my child about the school day	4	5.75	4	5.5	-0.25
I know how to explain things to my child about his or her homework	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
I know enough about the subjects of my child's homework to help him or her	4	5.25	4	5.5	0.25
I know how to communicate effectively with my child's teacher	4	5.5	4	5.5	0
I know how to supervise my child's homework	4	5.5	4	5.25	-0.25
I have the skills to help out at my child's school	4	5.25	4	5.25	0

**Parent Report of Home-based Involvement Activities Scale (FAST Cohort 3)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
Talks with this child about the school day	4	5.75	4	6	0.25
Supervises this child's homework	4	5.75	4	6	0.25
Helps this child study for tests	3	3.67	3	4.33	0.67
Practices spelling, math or other skills with this child	4	5	4	5.5	0.5
Reads with this child	4	5	4	5.25	0.25

**Parent Report of Encouragement (FAST Cohort 3)**

Item	Pre-test		Post-test		Difference
	n	Mean	n	Mean	
When he or she doesn't feel like doing school work	4	5.5	4	4.5	-1
To look for more information about school subjects	4	3.75	4	5.25	1.5
To develop an interest in schoolwork	4	6	4	5.75	-0.25
To believe that he/she can do well in school	4	6	4	6	0
To stick with problems until he/she solves them	4	5.75	4	5.75	0
To believe that he/she can learn new things	4	6	4	6	0
When he or she has trouble doing schoolwork	4	6	4	5.75	-0.25
To ask other people for help when a problem is hard to solve	4	5.75	4	5.75	0
To explain what he/she thinks to the teacher	4	5	4	6	1
To follow the teachers directions	4	6	4	6	0
When he or she has trouble organizing schoolwork	4	5.75	4	6	0.25
To try new ways to do school work when he/she is having a hard time	4	6	4	6	0
To be aware of how he or she is doing with schoolwork	4	5.75	4	5.75	0