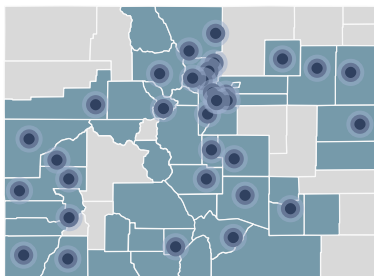


Colorado Family Resource Center Association 2018-2019 Evaluation Report Executive Summary

Background

The Colorado General Assembly established Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in 1993 to serve as a “single point of entry for providing comprehensive, intensive, integrated, and collaborative community-based services for vulnerable families, individuals, children, and youth” in local communities.

The Family Resource Center Association (FRCA) was established as a strategic statewide network for FRC advocacy and funding. Using a collective impact model, FRCA strengthens and expands Colorado FRCs through program fidelity standards; program quality monitoring; outcome measurement and reporting; state and national level advocacy; resource development; and organizational technical assistance and trainings, including capacity building for all its members. This executive summary presents key findings from FRCA's 2018-19 annual evaluation.



FRCA supports 31 member Family Resource Centers that collectively serve 48 Colorado counties, working towards a vision in which every family is thriving and self-sufficient.

Key Features of Family Resource Centers in CO

FRCs in Colorado adhere to the following standards and practices when delivering Family Development Services in Colorado.

Quality Standards

The Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support¹ ensures high-quality practices are aligned with the Principles of Family Support and the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework.²

Common Assessment

The CFSA 2.0 is a reliable index of family functioning that obtains an objective assessment of family strengths and areas for growth and change.³



Pathways Framework

The Colorado Family Resource Center Pathways Framework outlines three primary paths through which families receive services from FRCs, each with increasing intensity of service provision.

Fidelity Monitoring

The Family Pathways Essential Requirements Checklist and standard process assesses and improves fidelity implementation of Family Development core components.



Evaluation Findings: Families Served

FRCs provided 241,693 services to 28,876 individuals in 13,210 families.

This included more than:

104,000

services to help families meet basic needs

75,600

services to foster high quality parenting

15,900

services to support early childhood education

14,290

services to further adult education

23,360

services to cultivate healthy living

3,580 families (27% of families served by FRCs) received strengths-based **Family Development Services**, including CFSA 2.0 assessment, one-on-one family-driven goal-setting, and follow-up.

- ✓ 2,272 families (63% of families with a baseline CFSA 2.0) completed at least one follow-up assessment
- ✓ 1,315 (37%) completed more than one follow-up.

When families seek Family Development Services, they come equipped with many strengths.

At their CFSA 2.0 baseline assessment,



80% of families meet transportation needs at least most of the time.



In 72% of families, physical health concerns are not interfering with important life activities.



In 72% of families, mental health concerns are not interfering with important life activities.



In 64% of families, children are meeting academic and behavioral expectations at school.



Families report **high levels of nurturing and attachment** with their children, **high levels of the use of praise** when children behave well, and **low levels of losing control** when disciplining their children.

But families are also experiencing many barriers to economic security.

The median annual income of families served in 2018-19 was about 25% of the 2017 median annual income in Colorado.

Among all families served the median income was: **\$16,182**

The 2017 median income in Colorado was: **\$65,458**

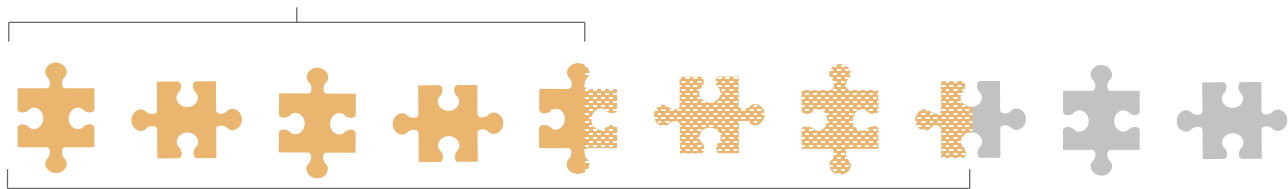


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At FRC entry **46%** of families screened with multiple unmet needs



and **75%** screened with at least one unmet need.⁴

Based on their CFSA 2.0 baseline assessment,



77% of families had no cash savings.



44% of families had increasing debt.



In 48% of families, no adult was employed full time.



In 51% of families, no adult had beyond a high school education.



39% of families did not have safe, stable, or affordable housing.

In the face of these barriers, many families are ready to make changes.

At their baseline assessment, families identified areas in which they were *most* ready to make changes. The most commonly identified areas for change were:



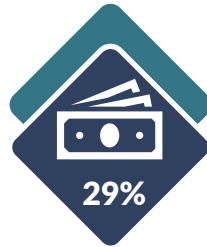
Housing



Employment



Parenting



Cash Savings



Income



Adult Education



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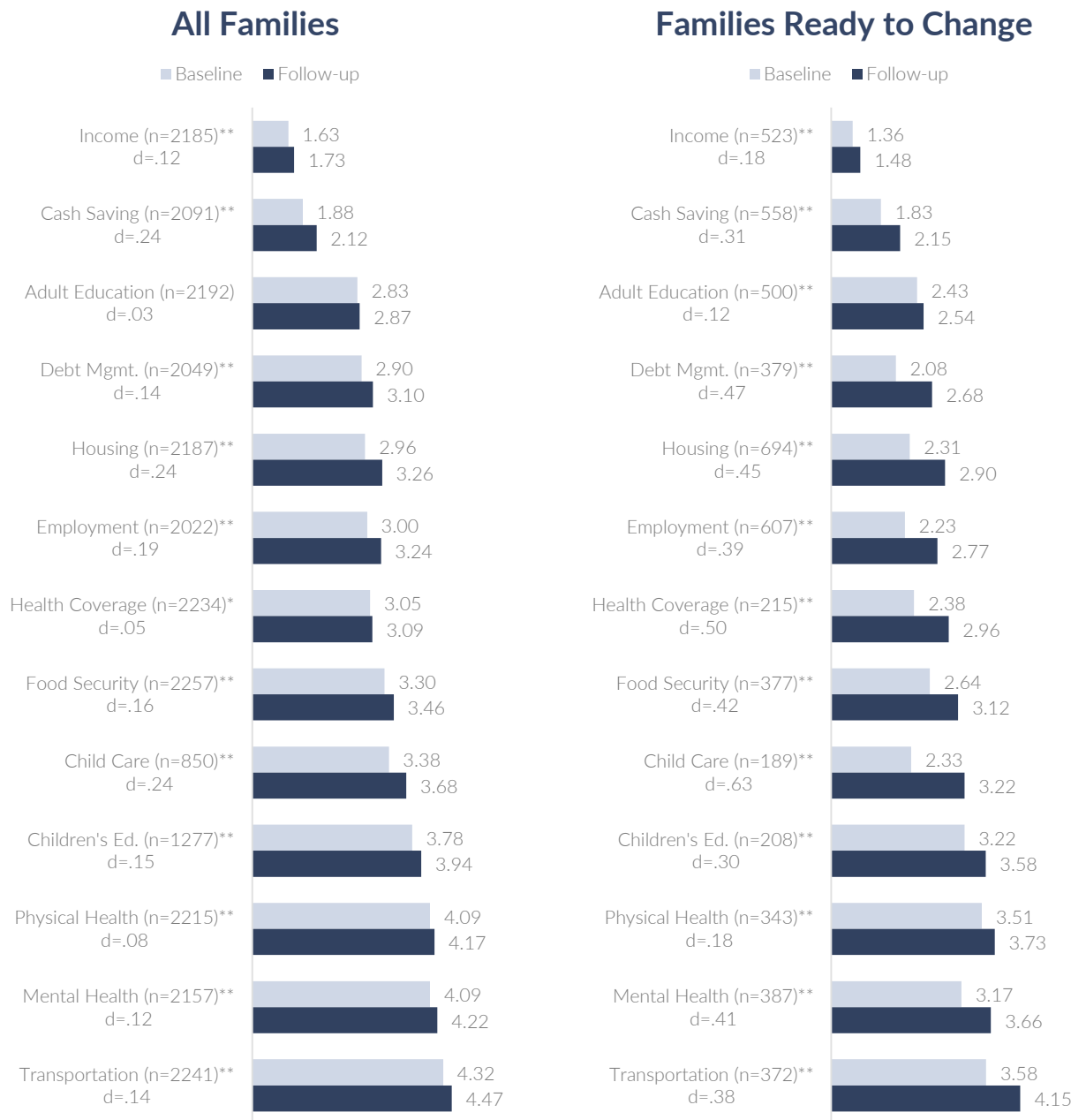


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Evaluation Findings: Family Improvements

Families improved, and families who were ready to change in the area made the greatest improvements.

Families made statistically significant gains in the areas of income, cash savings, debt management, housing, employment, health coverage, food security, child care, children's education, physical and mental health, and transportation.



In the following domains, families who prioritized the area for change had lower scores at baseline, but showed greater growth over time than families who did not:

- ✓ Adult Education
- ✓ Debt Management
- ✓ Health Coverage
- ✓ Physical Health
- ✓ Child Care
- ✓ Employment
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Children's Education
- ✓ Food Security
- ✓ Mental Health

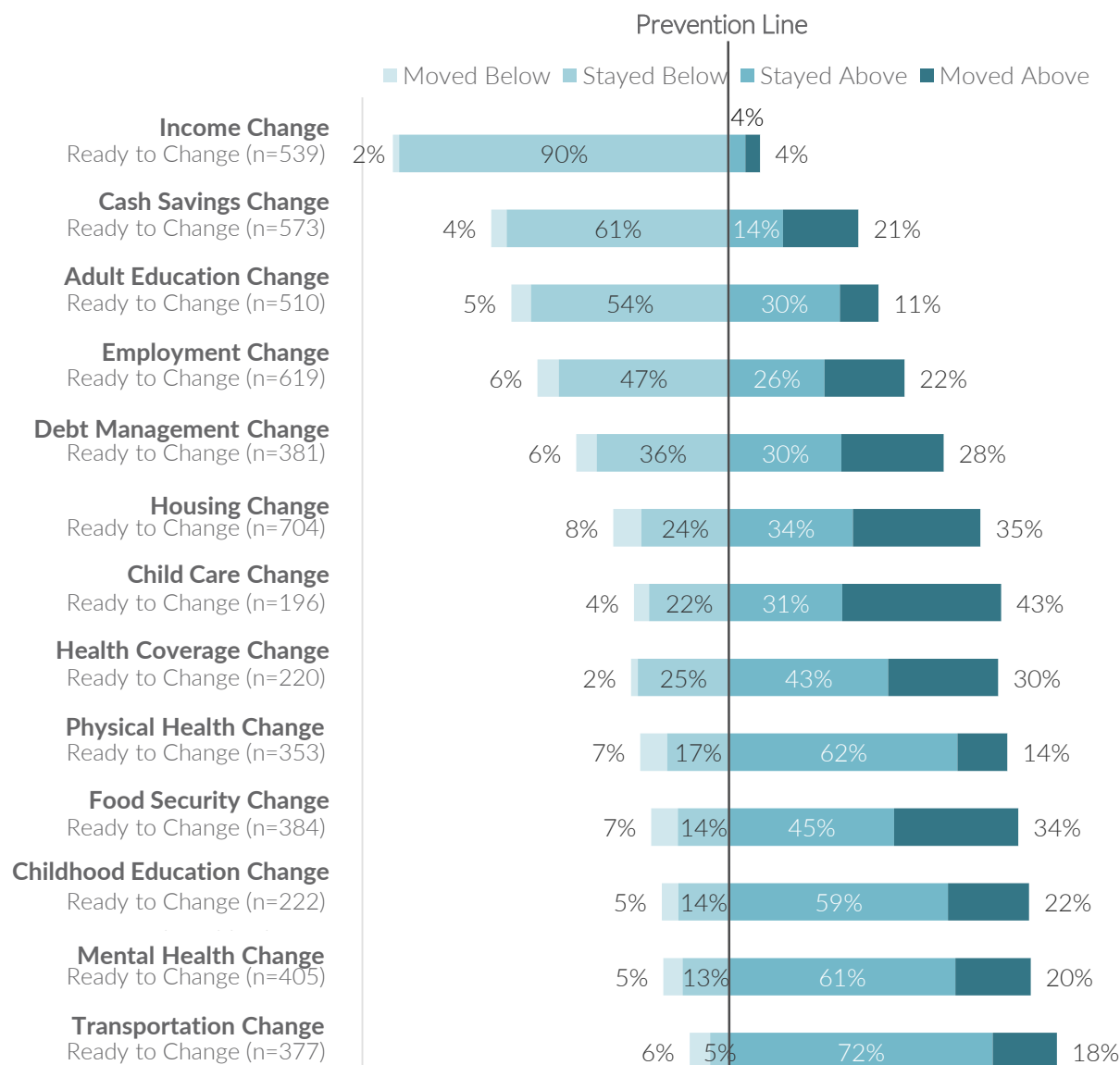


These improvements indicate that more families are safe, stable, or thriving.

On the CFSA 2.0, the prevention line is used to distinguish an in-crisis or vulnerable situation from one that is safe, stable, or thriving. For all families in the FD path, the greatest movement from below to above the prevention line was in housing (21%), debt management (18%), child care (17%), food security (16%), and cash savings (16%).

When examining families ready to change in the area, there was noticeably more movement from below to above the prevention line. As shown below, for families indicating readiness, the greatest movement from below to above the prevention line was in child care (43%), housing (35%), food security (34%), health coverage (30%), and debt management (28%).

At the families' most recent follow-up, over 75% of families ready to change were above the prevention line in physical health, food security, children's education, mental health, and transportation.

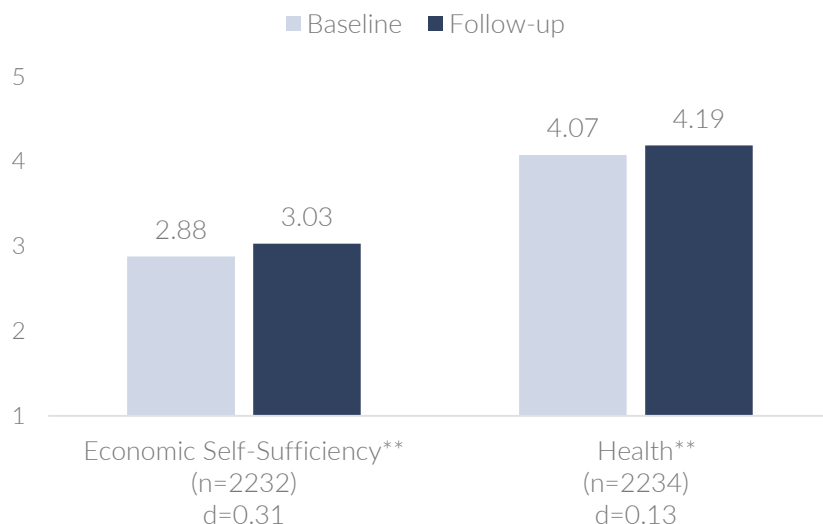


Families made strides to improve economic security and health.

The Economic Self-Sufficiency scale of the CFSA 2.0 assesses family stability across the areas of income, employment, housing, transportation, food security, adult education, cash savings and health coverage.

The Health scale of the CFSA 2.0 assesses the degree to which family members' physical or mental health concerns are impacting important areas of life.

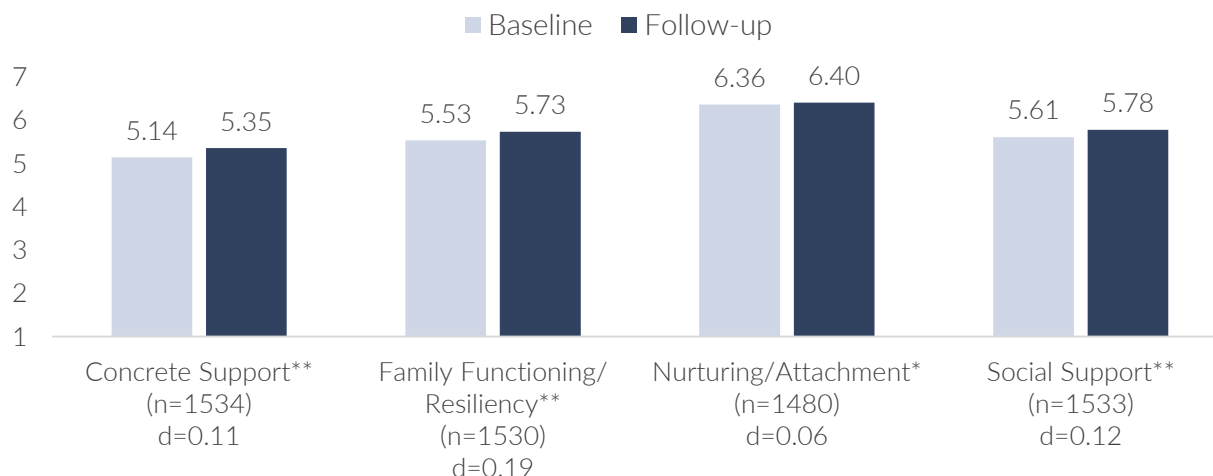
There was significant growth in indicators of family economic self-sufficiency and health.



Families increased protective factors that can help cope with adverse situations.

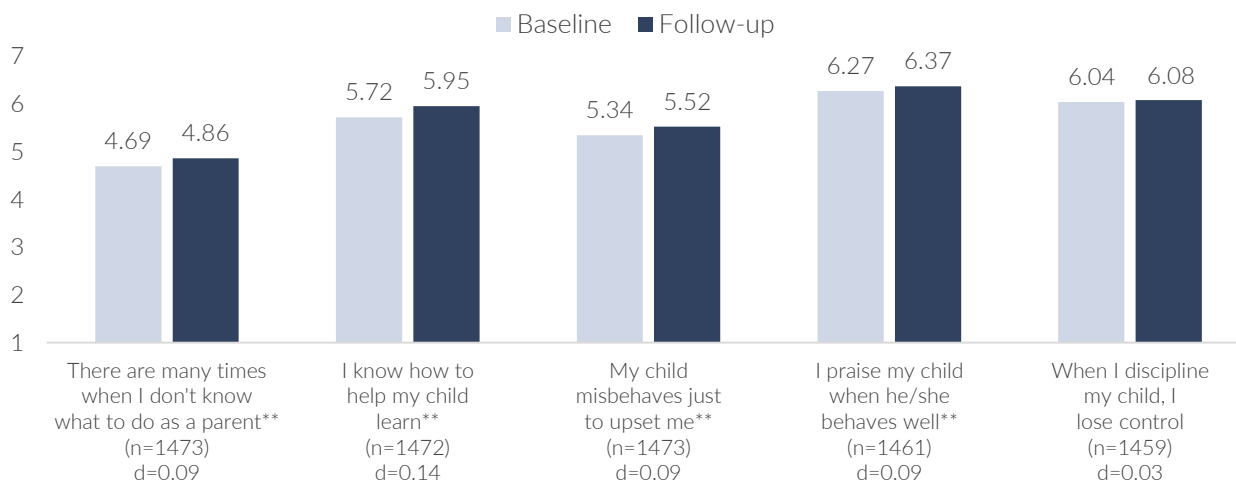
Families improved in concrete support, family functioning & resiliency, nurturing & attachment, and social support.

Families reported an increase from baseline to the most recent follow-up on all four protective factor scales.



Families also improved in levels of understanding of child development and parenting practices.

Families reported an increase from baseline to the most recent follow-up in knowing how to help their children learn and praising their children when they behave well, and a decrease in not knowing what to do as a parent and in reporting that their children misbehave just to upset them. Items were coded so that higher scores indicate a stronger protective factor.



Conclusions

Between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, across Colorado, FRCA-member FRCs served thousands of diverse families, many of whom had very low incomes and were experiencing multiple barriers to economic security when they first entered the FRC. Over the course of the year, FRCs provided over 240,000 services, most frequently in the areas of basic needs and parenting. Notably, 3,580 families (27% of families served) were in the Family Development path, which includes one-on-one, strengths-based assessment and goal-setting with a trained Family Development worker. The top six areas in which these families were ready for change were: housing, employment, parenting, cash savings, income, and adult education.

Families demonstrated significant improvements in economic self sufficiency, health, concrete support in times of need, social support, family functioning and resiliency, and nurturing and attachment. Families who indicated readiness to change in the areas of cash savings, child care, children's education, debt management, employment, food security, health coverage, housing, and mental health and showed notable improvements from baseline to follow-up (i.e., effect sizes of .30 or greater *and* 20% of more of families moved from below to above the prevention line), suggesting that these are particularly fruitful areas for goal-setting. Although the evaluation design does not allow us to attribute family changes directly to FRC services, findings are supportive of the benefits of Family Development Services on family health and wellbeing, and positive family outcomes have been observed in evaluations over the past several years.

To examine how Family Development Services lead directly to benefits in family health and well-being, we are conducting a randomized controlled trial in three FRCs in rural and urban Colorado. This project is supported by the Evidence for Action program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Results from the study are anticipated to be available in 2021.

Family Resource Centers serve thousands of families in Colorado with many strengths, diverse needs, and a readiness to change. Over time, these families demonstrated significant improvements in economic self sufficiency, health, concrete support in times of need, social support, family functioning and resiliency, and nurturing and attachment.

¹Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support <https://nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards/>

²The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies>

³The Protective Factors Survey is embedded within the CFSA 2.0 <https://friendsnrc.org/protective-factors-survey>

⁴Needs are assessed with the common screening tool at center entry. It includes eight yes/no items that assess family need in: employment, housing, transportation, food security, adult education, health insurance, child care, and children's education.

Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$. Effect size is denoted by d . In general, an effect size of $d = .2$ is a small effect, $d = .5$ is a medium effect, and $d = .8$ is a large effect. Small and medium effects are common in the social sciences.

