



APPENDIX

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

Do place-based programs, such as Family Resource Centers, **reduce risk of child maltreatment and entry into foster care?** (APPENDIX)

Appendix: Snapshot of Research on Family Resource Centers

The table below provides a brief summary of existing research on family resource centers. For the companion issue brief on this topic, please see: [Do place-based programs, such as Family Resource Centers, reduce risk of child maltreatment and entry into foster care?](#)

JURISDICTION AND PROGRAM	EVALUATION SUMMARY
Alachua County, Fla. <i>Family Resource Centers</i>	After four years of FRC operation, data showed a 45 percent reduction in cases of child abuse and neglect in the area directly served by the SWAG Family Resource Center in Alachua County. ¹ Additionally, while child maltreatment rates have declined drastically throughout the county, rates in the neighborhoods served by FRCs experienced an 8 percent higher decline compared to neighborhoods without FRCs. ²
Alabama <i>Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers</i>	The Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers' parenting programs (including parenting education and support, fatherhood programs, and home visitation services) had a large fiscal impact, with a return on investment of about \$29 million compared to program delivery costs of about \$2.1 million. ³

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<p>Allegheny County, Pa.</p> <p><i>Family Support Center Network</i></p>	<p>Evaluation findings indicated positive outcomes in three key areas:⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing child abuse and neglect: Neighborhoods with FSCs had significantly lower rates of child maltreatment investigations (30.5 investigations per 1,000 children) than comparable neighborhoods without an FSC (41.5 investigations per 1,000 children). • Increasing protective factors: The FSC helped increase families’ social connections. More than 60 percent of participants indicated that they connected with another participating family outside of FSC programming. • Engaging high-risk families: Two-thirds of the participants in the FSCs’ Parents as Teachers home visiting program were found to be at higher risk of being involved in the child welfare system. This indicated to the FSC that they were successfully reaching its target audience, even though the families are categorized as “hard to reach.” <p>A 2018 study noted that areas within Allegheny County served by FSCs had fewer maltreatment investigations once the level of social disadvantage and population size were considered.⁵</p>
<p>Brooklyn, N.Y.</p> <p><i>The Center for Family Life in Sunset Park</i></p>	<p>The agency operates a child maltreatment prevention program that has the capacity to serve 300 families, including those referred by the child welfare system and those that voluntarily enroll. Recent data shows that out of 1,012 children served, none entered foster care. In the previous program year, out of a total of 1,189 children served, only one child entered foster care.⁶</p>
<p>Colorado</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>At intake, about 60 percent of the families served had incomes at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level (\$24,600 for a family of four), and families generally scored lowest on concrete supports when they completed the Protective Factors Survey. From baseline to follow up, statistically significant gains were seen for all families with regards to their basic needs (including economic self-sufficiency, housing, employment, food security, children’s education, child care, health care, mental health, and transportation) and a number of protective factors (for example, family resilience, concrete supports, and social connection). FRCs helped move families out of crisis situations that were identified as being “below the prevention line” to more safe and stable situations.⁷</p>
<p>Connecticut</p> <p><i>Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>An examination of Connecticut-based FRCs and data from participant surveys indicate that Connecticut’s FRCs increased access to high quality preschool and child care, promoted a network of support, and increased parental knowledge and skills related to child development and behavior, all of which can strengthen families’ protective factors and help children remain more safe and stable in their homes and communities.⁸</p>

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Jacksonville, Fla. <i>FAMILY Support Services of North Florida</i>	Pre-and post-service assessments of participating families found that foster care placements decreased 41 percent from 2006 to 2017. ⁹
Maryland <i>Maryland Family Network</i>	Parents involved with Maryland’s FRCs have demonstrated significant gains in family self-sufficiency, with almost twice as many parents being employed one year after participating in services. ¹⁰
Massachusetts <i>Family Resource Centers</i>	FRC Family Member Satisfaction Surveys were consistently high (mostly 90 percent or above) across all domains. ¹¹ After receiving parenting education services through the FRC, 90 percent of the participants felt they were aware of parenting skills that fit their child’s ages and needs. The parenting classes aim to increase the “Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development” protective factor. ¹²
New York State <i>Family Resource Centers</i>	Using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Survey, an evaluation of New York FRCs showed slight improvements between the baseline study and the follow-up survey for all families, and more significant changes for families with higher needs. ¹³ Specifically, the evaluation demonstrated improvements in parenting skills that protect against child maltreatment — 56 percent of sampled caregivers who had low scores (in two or more domains) initially on the Protective Factors Survey significantly improved their scores at the conclusion of services. ¹⁴
Orange County, Calif. <i>Families and Communities Together (FaCT) Family Resource Centers</i>	Using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors as a framework, in 2017, FaCT FRCs reported notable increases in participants’ protective factors from initial enrollment to post-test. For example, only 72 percent of participants in the FRCs’ personal empowerment programs felt they could keep themselves and their children safe from abuse during the pre-test; however, that number increased to almost 100 percent after services were delivered. In addition, pre- and post-tests showed that while only 24 percent of the families that received assistance from a family support specialist were initially assessed as “safe” or “stable” in the domain of “Community Resources and Knowledge,” more than 90 percent were assessed as “safe” or “stable” at the time of their second assessment. ¹⁵

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<p>San Francisco County, Calif.</p> <p><i>Network of Family Resource Centers</i></p>	<p>Through a network of neighborhood-based centers that often target supports to families with specific needs (for example, families of children with special needs, homeless/under-housed families, and pregnant and parenting teens), San Francisco FRCs have surpassed their target outcomes in a number of key areas. For instance, they hoped that 65 percent of parents participating in parenting classes would show an increase in skills at the end of services, yet found that classes had a measurable impact on 80 percent of parents.¹⁶ It also has been noted that the FRCs are effective at providing differential response. Since the FRC Initiative began in 2008, San Francisco has seen a reduction in the rate of children in foster care by 52 percent and the rate of substantiated child maltreatment has dropped by 60 percent.¹⁷ Additionally, a formal evaluation of the FRC network found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families are improving on several key indicators of overall functioning, including lowering their risk of emotional/sexual abuse, increasing emotional well-being, and knowledge of community resources and systems of support. • Differential response case management through the FRCs has the ability to significantly affect the risk of maltreatment. One additional differential response case management visit per week was found to result, on average, in a 25 percent increase in the probability that a family improved on the risk of abuse indicator. • For every additional 10 hours of case management a parent received, the likelihood of showing an improvement on the parenting skills indicator rose by 4 percent.¹⁸
<p>Vermont</p> <p><i>Parent Child Center Network</i></p>	<p>A Strengthening Families demonstration project, launched in 2014, provides intensive services to families that have open family support cases with the Family Services Division of the state Department for Children and Families. Families have been assessed at “high” or “very high” risk of maltreating their children in the future. Seventy percent of all DCF open cases have a child under the age of 3. Without Strengthening Families, 30 percent of children with open family support cases come into state custody. With Strengthening Families, only 7 percent of children with open cases have come into custody.¹⁹</p>

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