



# ILLINOIS EARLY CHILDHOOD PREVENTION INITIATIVE PROGRAM



## EVALUATION REPORT

**Illinois State Board of Education  
Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division**

**June 2008**

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## FOREWORD

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This report is provided to fulfill Section 2-3.89 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.89). The interpretations and conclusions expressed in this report have been prepared by state educational agency staff and do not necessarily reflect the position or the policy of the Illinois State Board of Education.

For further information concerning this report, contact Kalpana Desai in the Data Analysis and Progress Reporting Division at 217/782-3950.

Section 2-3.89 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.89) provides for grants to establish programs that offer coordinated services to at-risk infants, toddlers, and their families. The aim of the Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program is to create a partnership that supports the development of infants and children from birth to age three years by focusing on the child and family through a network of child and family service providers.

### **General Findings for FY 2007**

1. A total of 115 projects were funded to provide intensive services to parents and children; 15,611 parents and 16,352 children were served through the program. A total of 475 professional staff and 46 contractual personnel were employed.
2. A total of 12,296 workshops covering a variety of parenting skills and parent education topics were offered from August 2006 to July 2007. In addition, 7,070 parents participated in 6,860 play groups with parent-child interaction activities.
3. About 7,746 parents also received instructions at home. Most of the families (75 percent) received an average of one to two visits in a month.
4. Two-thirds (63 percent) of the projects used Parents As Teachers as a program model/curriculum. Baby Talk was another frequently used model. Some projects used multiple models and curricula.
5. About 31,645 parents received the Early Childhood educational newsletter, which was distributed by 90 Prevention Initiative Projects. Nearly half (44 percent) of the newsletters were distributed at least once a month.
6. A total of 9,838 families were referred to other community services and resources. Developmental screenings were provided to 10,061 children.
7. There was a high-degree of collaboration and coordination with the Illinois departments of Public Health, Children and Family Services, and Human Services; local hospitals and clinics; public school districts; libraries; Head Start; the Women, Infants, and Children Program; and the Early Intervention Program.
8. Only 62 percent of the participants responded to the demographic questionnaire. The responses indicate that almost all (89 percent) of the participants were mothers; about one-third (30 percent) were teen-age parents; almost 63 percent were minorities—black (30 percent), Hispanic (31 percent), and Asian/Pacific Islander (2 percent)—with another 3 percent reporting their ethnicity as multiracial. (See Table 6 for more information on participant characteristics.)

9. Parents were asked to evaluate the projects based on the changes that occurred in their knowledge and behavior as a result of participation. About 45 percent of the participants responded to the parent evaluation survey. Ninety-three percent of parents reported increased knowledge and awareness of the importance of parent-child relationships; 88 percent reported having knowledge of appropriate parenting skills and a better understanding of a child's physical and developmental growth and age-appropriate activities; and 87 percent reported spending more time interacting with their children. (See Table 7 for more information on the parent evaluation survey.)
10. Even as the funding level for the program increases, the demand for services continually increases. There were 2,641 parents on the waiting list, with 50 percent of projects reporting unmet services for their participants.

# Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program

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## INTRODUCTION

The Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program was initiated by the Illinois Office of the Governor in 1989 to establish community initiatives to reduce school failure by coordinating and expanding services to families and children less than three years of age living in high-risk areas.

A \$1 million appropriation funded four pilot projects in 1989. From FY90 through FY97, \$2 million was appropriated annually. The number of programs funded increased to 14 in FY93 and to 16 from FY94 to FY97. In FY98, 31 programs were funded with \$4.3 million in appropriations. Beginning in FY99, the fund became part of an Early Childhood Block Grant appropriation. The number of programs increased to 56 in FY99, and increased again to 67 in FY03, with a \$9.3 million appropriation. In FY06, 96 projects were funded; the number increased to 115 in FY07.

The number of children served increased from 1,604 in FY93 to 4,707 in FY00, 7,837 in FY03, and 8,733 in FY04. In 12 years, the number of children served increased nearly 444 percent. In FY07, 15,611 parents and 16,352 children were served. In 18 years the Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program has grown from \$1 million and four projects to more than \$10 million and 115 projects serving more than 16,000 children.

### **Data Limitations**

It should be noted that all data used in this report are self-reported by the projects. Also, these data should not be compared with FY06 data, which were collected in the middle of the school year to meet the legislative deadline.

### **Cost**

Expenditure data are not available because the budget and expenditures also include the 0-3 Parental Training Program funds as part of the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Projects were asked to provide data on program models, service populations, home visits, workshops, other services provided, staffing, collaborations, and other programmatic information.

**Model**

The majority of the projects (63 percent) used Parents As Teachers as their model/curriculum. The next most-used model was Baby Talk, which was used by 38 projects. Healthy Families and Early Head Start were other models used. Some projects used a combination of Parents As Teachers, Baby Talk, and Healthy Families as their model. About 18 projects used other models.

**Participation**

As Table 1 shows, 40,208 parents were directly contacted to participate in the FY07 program. A total of 15,611 parents and 16,352 children received direct services. Out of 15,611 parents, 1,590 were pregnant teenagers and 2,598 were pregnant adults. There were 2,948 parents on a waiting list.

**Table 1. Number of Participants, by Population Served: FY 2007**

<b>Population Served</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Families Contacted	40,208
Parents Served	15,611
Children Served	16,352
Pregnant Teenage Parents	1,590
Pregnant Adult Parents	2,598
Parents on Waiting List	2,948
Parents Exiting the Program	3,781
Parents Served at Home	7,746
Parents Participating in Play Groups	7,070

**Workshops/Playgroups/Home Visits**

As part of the services, projects conducted home visits to provide comprehensive, integrated, need-based services. The home visits also provide continuous support to the family and children to foster independence and make them knowledgeable of other services available in order to lead healthy and productive lives. About 7,746 families received one home visit per month, on average.

In addition to the home visits, projects also provided 12,296 workshops/classes or training sessions on a variety of topics, such as skills and knowledge of parenting and the developmental needs of their children. Table 2 shows the number, total hours, and topics of workshops. Parenting skill development, child growth and development, and language-literacy development were the most frequent workshop topics.

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**Table 2. Number and Hours of Workshops Offered, by Topic: FY 2007**

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<b>Workshop Topic</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Child Growth and Development	3,057	2,707
Child Birth and Child Care	1,251	1,338
Prenatal and Postnatal Care	1,364	1,342
Prevention of Child Abuse/Violence	1,491	1,317
Family Structure, Function and Management	2,481	2,869
Family Relationship	2,177	2,189
Parenting Skill Development	3,985	3,812
Language-Literacy Development	2,622	2,962
Health and Safety	1,574	1,611
Nutrition	1,177	1,431
Substance and Other Addiction	808	415
Discipline and Anger Management	1,465	2,288
Social and Family Fun Activities	1,546	2,955

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Projects also provided parent-child activities to teach parents new ways of supporting and enhancing their children's development. About 6,860 play groups were offered, with 7,070 parents participating.

### **Individual Services**

Research shows that children's health plays a major role in their mental development. The Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program offers health, vision, and hearing screenings at the project site or in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Public Health. Approximately 3,222 children received vision and hearing screenings, and almost 3,927 children received health screenings. Staff also performed developmental screenings on 10,061 children to assist with individual family plan development in order to better monitor progress. Other services provided to parents are indicated in Table 3.

Although not reported as receiving services, other children may have already received services directly through the Illinois Department of Public Health as coordinated or referred services by these projects.

**Table 3. Preventive and Advocative Services Offered, by Type of Service, Number of Projects Offering Service, and Number of Children/Parents Served: FY 2007**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Number of Projects Offering Service</b>	<b>Number of Children/Parents Served</b>
Health Screening	53	3,927
Vision and Hearing Screening	65	3,222
Developmental Screening	106	10,061
Service Coordination/Case Management	98	9,004
Development of Individual Family Service Plan	97	8,102
Developmental Monitoring	96	7,407
Family Advocacy	97	6,234
Referral to Community Services/Resources	110	9,838

### **Case Management/Family Advocacy**

Through the Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program, families receive comprehensive, integrated, continuous support services. The program helps families to increase their awareness of opportunities and activities to strengthen their role as parents. About 9,004 (58 percent) parents received case management services, which coordinate existing services available in the region and/or local community for parents.

About 9,838 families were referred to other community services and 6,234 families received advocacy services. Family advocacy not only refers and coordinates services for families, but also keeps in touch with other social service agencies to ensure continuation of services to the families. Ninety-seven projects had individual family service plans for 8,102 families, an increase from the previous year, in which only 474 families had individual family service plans.

### **Other Services**

In addition to the basic required services, many projects provided additional services to assist needy families. The variety of services, shown in Table 4, enhances the parents' lives and helps them to become more independent and successfully advance to the next phase in their children's lives. Household items, parent education, and crisis intervention were other major services provided by the projects.

**Table 4. Other Services Offered, by Type of Service and Number of Projects Offering Service: FY 2007**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Number of Projects Offering Service</b>
Food Pantry	21
Clothing Boutique	30
Donated Household Items	54
Utility Assistance	20
Housing Assistance	20
Male Involvement	58
Continuing Education for Parent	44
Bilingual Education	38
Vocational Training	18
Even Start	17
Employment Services	22
Transportation Assistance	58
Counseling and Crisis Intervention	51
Transition to Pre-kindergarten/Head Start	97
Early Head Start	14
Child Care	60
Toy/Book Lending Library	108
Open Resource Center	79
Hot Line	40
Parent Support Group	72
Parent Advisory Board	51
Other	24

Ninety projects also sent educational newsletters to 31,645 parents. The majority of these newsletters were mailed to the family at least once a month (44 percent). Fifty-eight projects also encouraged and provided services to involve males in their children’s lives, because males are an important part of the family structure.

**Collaboration and Coordination of Services**

One of the goals of this program is to provide needed services through a seamless and unduplicated system of collaboration and coordination of different services and agencies. Each project provides these collaborative partnerships according to local needs and resources. In addition to social services, each project has a referral system to place three-year-old children in other early childhood education programs after leaving the Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program to ensure the continuation of support needed for families and children. Table 5 reflects the number of projects providing collaboration and coordinated services.

**Table 5. Number of Projects Participating in Collaboration/Coordination, by Type of Entity: FY 2007**

<b>Entity</b>	<b>Number of Projects</b>
Illinois Department of Public Health	106
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services	91
Illinois Department of Human Services	85
Local Hospitals and Clinics	93
Churches	78
Local Charities and Not-for-Profit Organizations	79
Vocational Schools	28
United Way	44
Red Cross	31
Salvation Army and Other Shelters	55
Shelters for Abused Women	77
Food Pantries	85
Libraries	98
Universities/Community Colleges	76
Park Districts	60
YMCA's/YWCA's	41
Public School Districts	101
Women, Infants, and Children Program	101
Early Intervention System	105
Even Start	43
Healthy Family	54
Head Start	84
Parent-Teacher Organizations	34
Television/Radio Stations	28
Other	76

Almost 92 percent of the projects collaborate with the Illinois Department of Public Health, local hospitals, and clinics that provide health-related services. The majority of projects (79 percent) coordinate with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, 74 percent with the Illinois Department of Human Services, and 88 percent with programs such as Women, Infants, and Children to meet other needs of families.

Most of the projects have collaborative services with local libraries to encourage early literacy development. Parents are taught and encouraged to read to their children at an early age in an effort to prepare their children for better success at school.

For transition to early childhood education, most projects also collaborate with public school districts, Even Start, Head Start, and Early Intervention Systems for special needs children.

## **Unmet Services**

Major concerns for the projects were transportation assistance and mental health services, which, although needed by parents, the projects were unable to provide. Dental, vision screening, housing, and child care were some of the other major services that were not met by some projects.

## **Staff**

A total of 475 professional personnel (402.3 FTE) were employed by 115 projects, including, but not limited to, early childhood teachers, counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers.

Another 202 personnel (84.1 FTE) were employed as nonprofessionals, clerical, administrative support, or childcare staff. Additionally, 46 professional personnel were involved in providing services to parents and children as contractual staff.

## PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Projects reported the characteristics of the parents they served. Demographic and other social information was reported by 9,650 parents (62 percent). Table 6 shows participants' data.

**Table 6. Number and Percentage of Participant Characteristics, by Category: FY 2007**

Participant	Number	Percent
Mother	8,550	88.5
Father	824	8.5
Grandmother	102	1.1
Grandfather	4	0.04
Other relative	25	0.3
Legal guardian	24	0.2
Foster parent	53	0.5
Other	78	0.8
Age of Participant Served	Number	Percent
17 years and under	1,442	14.9
18 to 19 years old	1,424	14.7
20 to 29 years old	4,096	42.4
30 to 39 years old	2,216	22.9
40 years and older	478	4.9
Racial/Ethnic Background of Participant	Number	Percent
White, Non-Hispanic	3,182	33.0
Black, Non-Hispanic	2,942	30.5
Hispanic	3,024	31.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	219	2.3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	14	0.1
Multiracial/Ethnic	256	2.7
Educational Background of Mother	Number	Percent
8th grade or less	1,258	13.0
Current high school student	1,321	13.7
Some high school, no diploma	1,927	20.0
High school diploma/GED	2,421	25.1
Vocational school training	241	2.5
Associate degree	354	3.7
Some college	1,078	11.2
Bachelor degree	529	5.5
Other	293	3.0
Unknown	229	2.4
Employment Status	Number	Percent
Unemployed, not seeking employment (Includes full-time homemaker)	3,605	37.5
Unemployed, seeking employment	1,521	15.8
Unemployed, enrolled in job training	59	0.6
Employed fewer than 20 hours per week	865	9.0
Employed 20 hours or more per week	2,956	30.8
Self-employed	150	1.6
Students	448	4.7

**Table 6. Number and Percentage of Participant Characteristics, by Category: FY 2007**  
(continued)

<b>Family Information</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Teenage parent	2,318	24.0
Pregnant, expecting first child	855	8.9
Non-English-speaking family	1,918	19.9
Receives Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	1,447	15.0
Receives Women, Infants, Children Program Assistance	5,377	55.7
Has family member involved with judicial system	598	6.2
Has family member incarcerated	412	4.3
Has family member with a disability	750	7.8
Homeless	205	2.1
None of the above	1,989	20.6
Parent(s) deceased	106	1.1
<b>Child Information</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Enrolled in KidCare	2,122	22.0
Enrolled in Medicaid	4,927	51.1
High-risk birth	658	6.8
Developmentally delayed	547	5.7
Enrolled in Early Head Start	338	3.5
Involved with social service agency(ies)	1,522	15.8
Receiving Early Intervention Services	808	8.4
None of the above	2,015	20.9
<b>Family Structure of the Child</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Two-parent home	4,524	46.9
Single-parent home	3,320	34.4
Living with grandparents	591	6.1
Living in an extended family	718	7.4
Living with other relative	161	1.7
Living with guardian	69	0.7
Living with foster parent	88	0.9
Other	181	1.9

The majority (89 percent) of the participants were mothers. More than half (53 percent) were unemployed or not seeking employment and another 9 percent were employed for fewer than 20 hours per week. About one-fourth (24 percent) of the participants were teenage parents.

Almost three-fourths (72 percent) of the participants had no education beyond high school, with 25 percent having a high school diploma and 47 percent having no high school diploma or GED credential. Just over half (51 percent) were enrolled in Medicaid programs and about 22 percent were enrolled in KidCare. Almost 56 percent of the children received Women, Infants, and Children Program services. Nearly half (47 percent) were from two-parent homes and almost 67 percent were minorities.

## PARENT EVALUATION SURVEY/OUTCOMES

Each project was required to ask parents to complete a questionnaire to evaluate the changes in their attitudes and knowledge as a result of participation in the program. Out of 15,611 participants, about half (7,101), responded to the parent evaluation survey. Table 7 shows the positive impact the program has had on parents.

**Table 7. Number and Percentage of Participants Responding to Parent Evaluation Survey, by Survey Question: FY 2007**

Survey Question	Number	Percent
1. Knowledge and awareness of importance of parent-child relationship.	6,626	93.0
2. Knowledge of appropriate parenting skills.	6,271	88.0
3. Knowledge of pre- and postnatal care.	3,848	54.0
4. Awareness of child's health/nutritional needs.	5,774	81.0
5. Awareness and better understanding of child's physical and developmental growth.	6,153	87.0
6. Knowledge of age appropriate activities for my child.	6,204	87.0
7. Knowledge of my rights and responsibilities as parents.	5,542	78.0
8. Awareness of parent advocacy/support groups.	5,047	71.0
9. Knowledge of existing community/government services.	5,280	74.0
10. Knowledge of family function and management.	4,939	70.0
11. I am more responsive to my child's needs.	5,844	82.0
12. I spent time interacting with my child.	6,171	87.0
13. I encourage my child more often.	5,957	84.0
14. I read to my child more often.	5,561	78.0
15. Language/literacy activities used with children.	5,264	74.0
16. Setting appropriate limits with young children (how to discipline).	5,242	74.0
17. Knowledge of dealing with guilt, anger, and frustration.	4,857	68.0
18. Providing immunization at the appropriate age.	5,149	73.0
19. I feel better about myself as a parent.	5,748	81.0
20. I am more confident in my role as my child's most important teacher.	5,634	79.0
21. My attitudes toward school and parent-school partnership improved.	4,388	62.0
22. Increase in self-esteem.	4,841	68.0
23. Enrolled in bilingual education program.	605	9.0
24. Enrolled in adult education class.	810	11.0
25. Enrolled in vocational education class.	341	5.0
26. Enrolled in high school.	876	12.0
27. Enrolled in GED class.	531	7.0
28. Enrolled in a college.	523	7.0
29. Acquired GED.	320	5.0
30. Acquired high school diploma.	826	12.0
31. Awareness of alcohol/drug abuse programs.	1,707	24.0
32. Enrollment in alcohol/drug abuse programs.	214	3.0
33. Acquired better housing.	1,272	18.0
34. Actively looking for a job.	1,529	22.0
35. Acquired a job.	1,300	18.0
36. Other (specify).	285	4.0

Approximately 93 percent of the parents reported gaining the knowledge and awareness of the importance of parent-child relationships. Almost 87 percent to 88 percent of parents also reported that their participation in the program resulted in knowledge of appropriate parenting skills and a better understanding of a child's physical and developmental growth and age-appropriate activities.

Seventy-eight percent of parents reported that they read to their children more often and 74 percent reported using more language and literacy activities with their children.

Almost two-thirds of the parents reported that their self-esteem increased. About 9 percent enrolled in bilingual education and 11 percent enrolled in adult education classes. Almost 900 parents enrolled in high school and 531 parents enrolled in GED classes. Additionally, 320 parents acquired GED certificates and 826 parents acquired high school diplomas. Through prevention initiative staff intervention and encouragement, 1,272 parents acquired better housing, and 1,300 (18 percent) acquired a job.

The Illinois State Board of Education is committed to supporting early childhood education to ensure that all Illinois children develop a strong foundation for learning. The Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program not only emphasizes the relationship among early childhood education, parenting education and parent involvement, and future success in school, but also stresses the importance of strengthening families as a whole. The program provides grants to school districts and entities that offer coordinated services to at-risk infants, toddlers, and their families.

### **ISBE Emphasis**

The Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative Program is based on the following important components of successful implementation:

1. **Screening:** Appropriate screening procedures are required to identify the neediest children and families and to determine their need for services, in order to provide individual services. The participant characteristics identified in Table 6 reflect that most families served were unemployed, without high school diplomas, and received services through the Women, Infants, and Children Program.
2. **Program Model and Parent Education and Training:** Programs are designed so that parents will gain knowledge and skills in parenting through implementation of a research-based program model. Interaction between parent and child is encouraged through play groups and other parent-child activities designed to teach parents ways of supporting and enhancing their child's development. Education activities are site-based, home-based, or both, depending upon the need of the community and families. The program also encourages father/male involvement in children's lives. A total of 12,296 workshops and 6,860 play groups were provided to approximately 15, 611 parents. About 7,746 parents were also served at home.

The Illinois State Board of Education has developed the Illinois Birth to Three Program Standards to help projects provide successful research-based prevention services for at-risk families.

3. **Community Collaboration and Linkages:** Collaboration and linkages are highly promoted to avoid duplication of services and to maximize the efficiency of the resources and services. A referral system to ensure transition of three-year-old children into other early childhood education programs is a required component for this program. This ensures the continuous support for the at-risk child and family. Table 5 shows the collaboration of projects with state agencies such as the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Department of Human Services, and with service providers such as hospitals, school districts, and libraries.

4. ***Parent/Community Involvement Plan:*** By communicating with parents about the program, linking parents with community resources and services, and providing parenting education activities, the program will emphasize and strengthen the role of a parent as a child's primary educator. Approximately 9,838 parents were referred to other community services and resources.
5. ***Case Management Services:*** For successful long-term outcomes, case management services are necessary to coordinate existing services available in the region. The program should have a written agreement with other agencies to ensure intensive, comprehensive, and integrated continuous support services to families. In case management services, the educator also generally follows up with the parents and agencies to ensure that families received the services they need. Table 3 shows that about 9,004 parents received these services.
6. ***Individual Family Service Plan:*** Each family should have an individual plan based on a family needs assessment that will assist them in reaching their goals. Case management services and an individual family service plan work together to help families meet their needs. In FY07, 8,102 families had an Individual Family Service Plan. Projects need to provide this service to all families.
7. ***Qualified Staff:*** The Illinois State Board of Education requires projects to hire qualified staff who have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the Illinois Early Childhood Prevention Initiative program.
8. ***Professional Development:*** It is important for staff to continue to attain skills and knowledge based on current research and best practices to improve outcomes for families. The Illinois State Board of Education provides numerous workshops throughout the year for early childhood program staff.

The Illinois State Board of Education has continued to improve the quality of services to parents and children. Although Illinois legislators have continued to increase funding, the need for services is greater. Additional resources will enhance the ability to provide extensive, comprehensive services and to serve more at-risk families. Almost 3,000 parents are on waiting lists, but there are many more families who need help, which in turn will help children to be successful in school and in their lives. Investment in this program has a high social and economic return.

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**PARENTS' COMMENTS**

“The staff is fantastic and very experienced, which is important when dealing with children.”

“This is a great program. There should be more programs available like this one.”

“The staff was absolutely great! I would highly recommend any parent to this program.”

“My daughter loves the classroom. Tuesday’s Child has helped me set her up for success.”

“It is wonderful to have group discussions with other trainers and parents who are able to give input from other perspectives.”

“Overall, a very positive experience. I have seen marked improvement in my child and myself!”

“The materials are excellent. I’m saving mine for the next 18 years!”

“The consultants have been really outstanding teachers. They do an incredible job of delivering information in a relevant way, with lots of stories, personal experience, etc., plus an uncanny ability to apply their own learning to our experiences. Sensational!”

“Parent sessions with fun in addition to being enlightening—everyone got involved, everyone was encouraged to be involved.”

“I’m very happy that my son has been in this group. I am very satisfied with all the great ideas that you have taught us.”

“My daughter has learned how to share with other kids—she is really happy.”

“I am really grateful for all the support you gave me, for understanding me, and for teaching me how to play with my kids.”

“My husband found enjoyment in sitting down to a nice cup of imaginary tea with his son.”

“I was inspired so much by this program that I went to school to become a teacher.”

“You empowered me to advocate for my children and gave me tools to be a better mom.”

“You inspired me to go on with my education.” (She just received her CAN.)

“This program is vital to the health/development of young children and parents. There is no other program like it.”

“This service to the community is outstanding.”

“I enjoy the one-on-one experience and the verbal conversation. I couldn’t have asked for anyone better to work with me and my family than *Consultant*.”

“*Consultant* and the things she has taught my children—she has also been a big help with his medical needs and how to approach the doctors.”

“I like it because it’s like having an early start on development and growth. Also, my children and I have learned so many extra things from the program.”

“I like their education program for the kids. They are interested in many aspects that link with child development. They feel part of or look like a member of our family.”

“Watching my son play with his teacher it helps me better understand what he should be doing at his age.”

“The staff has been really nice, and the help that they give, the caring of others.”

“It’s a place for my child to interact with other children as she does not have any siblings or cousins close to her age.”

“Meeting other parents and watching my child grow in her social skills. Opportunity to talk with people regarding breastfeeding and nutrition and check out materials to take home and learn more.”

“The staff is there for you no matter what your need for your child is. They are very empowering.”

“It was very interesting and I learned a lot about disciplining children.”

“They help us with our families and help children to begin their lives.”

“It would be nice if the state could give this program more money to expand.”