

Socioemotional Well-Being in Preschool and Early Childhood Education Settings



2019-2020 OFCY Strategy Report

The three programs funded under the Socioemotional Well-Being in Preschool and Early Childhood Education Strategy provide support to early childhood educators and parents to promote healthy emotional and social development. This report draws on an interview with two partners from a funded mental health collaborative, administrative records, and program reports to summarize strategy achievements and progress to date.

“ *Sometimes the work seems subtle and then it has a very clear, concrete effect in the classroom. It can be hard for people to see that, because it can feel slow, because it is a quieter, more subtle approach. But ultimately,, if we're doing [consultation] well, it really empowers the teacher and it really allows for things to shift in the classroom.*

-Staff, Family Paths, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Collaboration

STRATEGY ACHIEVEMENTS



2,487 young children benefited



7,537 hours of consultation provided



55 ECE centers served

FUNDED PROGRAMS

- Family Paths, Inc. - Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Collaborative
- Jewish Family & Community Services East Bay - Integrated Early Childhood Consultation Program
- Lincoln - Early Child Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC)

Total Funding: \$999,999



Strategy Results

For the 2019-2022 funding cycle, OFCY is piloting a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework to assess its role in contributing toward city-wide goals. The RBA model is a comprehensive approach for assessing the quantity of services provided by programs, the quality of those services, and the effect of those services on the lives of children, youth, and families. *It does this by addressing three guiding questions: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?*

Program Achievements – How much did we do?

Number of Mental Health Consultation Hours Provided	7,537
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Program Performance and Quality - How well did we do it?

Total Hours of Service: Average progress toward projected total hours of service	87%
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Diversity and Inclusion: Percent of teachers who say the consultant has a good understanding of the diversity of the community	*
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Supportive environment: Percent of teachers who say that the consultant supports them	*
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Participant Outcomes – Is Anyone Better Off?

Knowledge of development: Percent of teachers who say working with the consultant has deepened their understanding of child behavior	*
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Teacher confidence: Percent of teachers who say their work with the consultant has made them more confident as a teacher	*
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Connection to resources: Percent of teachers who say that the consultant connects parents to resources	*
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* Survey results not available in FY19-20 due to shelter-in-place order.

The remainder of this report includes the following sections aligned with this RBA framework:

- 1) Achievements: How much did the programs provide?
- 2) Performance and Program Quality: How well did programs do it?
- 3) Outcomes: Is anyone better off as a result of the strategy's work?

Achievements: 7,537 Hours of Consultation Provided

Licensed mental health professionals consult with early childhood educators around the mental health and developmental needs of children in their classroom, provide individualized mental health services and referrals to children and families, and deliver parent education workshops.

Consultants partnered with 55 early childhood education centers across Oakland.



The three programs funded under this strategy partnered with 55 Head Start sites and Oakland Unified School District Child Development Centers (CDCs) that served 2,487 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers across Oakland.¹ The consultants integrate child development services and direct therapeutic work into a proven mental health consultation model to support children's healthy social-emotional development and promote learning readiness. Individual consultants spent anywhere from three to eight hours at each site, depending on the size of the early childhood center.

Consultation During the Shelter-in-Place Order

After the shelter-in-place order was implemented, consultants supported sites by participating in team meetings through video conferencing or conference calls as well as supporting individual staff members around their work with the families. In the words of a staff member, "Our work has shifted to keeping that web of relationship and contact going." Consultants also gathered resources for staff and families, provided direct support to families and children as needed, offered trainings to staff, and offered emotional support to staff when requested as the staff dealt with the trauma of the public health crisis.

“*OFCY has made it possible for us to [provide consultation] more comprehensively. Instead of just being at a site for an hour or two to troubleshoot, we're able to be there and actually build these great relationships and start having meetings and working in a grander way.*

-Staff, Family Paths – Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Collaborative

¹ Based on projected enrollment at the early childhood centers.

Performance and Program Quality

The shelter-in-place order impacted the ability of programs to meet projected enrollment in FY2019-2020.

OFCY tracks a series of indicators to assess how well grantees in each strategy have implemented their programming, as shown to the right.

The first indicator assesses progress toward the total hours of consultation that programs projected they would provide over the course of the year.

In addition to this performance measure, Socio-emotional Well-Being programs are assessed on indicators that signal quality in the areas of support and diversity and inclusion. These indicators are measured by an annual educator survey administered in the spring. Because of the obstacles posed by the shelter-in-place, and to avoid placing additional burdens on educators, the survey was not administered this year. The evaluation will report on these indicators in future years when educator survey data is available.

Performance and Quality Indicators



Total Hours of Service

Average progress toward projected total hours of service.

87%



Supportive Environment

Percent of teachers who say that the consultant supports them

n/a



Diversity and Inclusion

Percent of teachers who say the consultant has a good understanding of the diversity of the community

n/a



Connection to Resources

Percentage of parents and caregivers that report that staff refer them to other organizations.

n/a

“ *[Consultation involves] relationship building on every single level that you can think of. The teachers, the teaching teams, the center director, family advocate, parents, and children of course. And that is all part of their job, which is to help develop the social, emotional wellbeing of children and families... So all the consultants supports on an individual child level, on a program level and on a systems level.*

-Staff, Family Paths, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Collaboration

Educator Outcomes: Is Anyone Better Off?

Through an interview with collaborative partners from one grantee, SPR learned about the diverse activities that support the educator outcomes aligned with this strategy. In future years, we will draw on participant survey data to assess participant progress toward those outcomes.

Knowledge of Development



Consultants share their knowledge around trauma-informed practices, appropriate developmental expectations, and strategies to support social-emotional wellbeing through coaching, reflective staff meetings, and trainings. Coaching often involves helping educators understand children's behavior so that they can best support children in their classroom. When children manifest challenging behaviors, consultants work with educators in the moment and in reflective conversations afterward to help them identify why a child may be behaving in a particular way and integrate that knowledge into how they approach their students.

Teacher Confidence



Consultants use reflective meetings to help teachers identify and build upon the assets and knowledge that they bring. As one staff member explained, "Teachers are used to being told what they have to do more of or less of, there's a lot of that feeling of 'I'm not doing enough.' [Helping educators] see what they are doing and doing well is so important and to help them feel seen for that is also really important." Consultants also use monthly reflective meetings with educators to help the teachers build their ability to mindfully self-regulate with stress-reduction techniques so that they can better manage challenging behaviors with the children and help the children co-regulate.

Connection to Resources



Consultants help educators and center directors identify children in need of additional support and intervention. Consultants partner with centers and parents to create child action plans as necessary and assist in connecting children to specialized resources, including developmental specialists employed at the partner agencies. Consultants also circulate knowledge about other services provided by their agencies and their partners, such as parenting groups and workshops.