

INNOVATIVE STATES

Emerging Family Support and Education Programs

Arkansas
Iowa
Oregon
Vermont
Washington

—Second Edition—



HARVARD FAMILY RESEARCH PROJECT
Harvard Graduate School of Education
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**Innovative States
Emerging Family Support
and
Education Programs**

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Since 1983, the Harvard Family Research Project has collected, analyzed and disseminated information about family support and education programs. HFRP has conducted a national survey of family support and education programs and is now preparing several publications that outline program evaluation strategies as well as a national resource guide to school-based programs. HFRP has also prepared and edited *Evaluating Family Programs* (NY: Aldine, 1988).

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Preface



The past few years have seen a burgeoning interest on the part of policy makers in family support and education as a means to prevent costly later problems. As this interest has grown, the Harvard Family Research Project, which has served as a resource for practitioners, researchers, evaluators, and policy makers since 1983, has been inundated with requests for information about family support and education policy. In an effort to make this information available in a timely fashion, and in the belief that the states can learn valuable lessons from one another, the HFRP has begun to synthesize its ongoing research on state-level policy into a series of booklets whose convenient format highlights the significant features of each initiative, and presents the reflections of a state-level contact on the lessons that state has learned. Each contact has reviewed the information on his or her state and has expressed a willingness to discuss the program with others. The first booklet in the series, *Pioneering States*, outlined the family support and education initiatives in Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, and Missouri.

The current booklet, *Innovative States*, covers Arkansas, Iowa, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington. These five initiatives are noteworthy because they represent an extraordinary degree of cooperation between state governments and grass-roots programs. For years, family support and education programs have sprung up at the grass-roots level in response to the needs of local communities. Although these programs can vary widely, they also share an ideology of service delivery:

- 1) based on evidence that demonstrates the influence of the family environment on children's behavior and cognitive development, they take an 'ecological' approach to human development, working with parents or whole families rather than exclusively with children;
- 2) they provide opportunities for parents to learn about children's social, psychological, and cognitive development;
- 3) they provide formal and informal support to families;
- 4) they emphasize family strengths rather than assuming family deficits;

- 5) they emphasize prevention and family maintenance rather than remediation; and
- 6) they consider the healthy development of children to be the shared responsibility of the family and the community.

All too often, these grass-roots programs have been limited by the financial resources of their local communities. In the five initiatives described here, grass-roots programs and state governments are cooperating to preserve and enhance the commitment of local communities to the well-being of families.

As these five states look to family support and education to respond to statewide needs, they are also looking to grass-roots programs to shape and implement these solutions at the local level. As one state-level contact observed, these family support and education initiatives are "more of a **process** for encouraging local communities to take action in the area of parent support and education than a **program** for providing services." In one state, the initiative actually began at the grass-roots level when eight separate local providers, facing cuts in federal funding, banded together and successfully lobbied the state legislature for an appropriation. In three of these states, rather than mandating the creation of new programs at the local level, the legislation provides for grants to a range of local programs, existing or new; one state mandates that existing programs must receive preference, if they meet the bill's guidelines.

In all five states, the setting of the program at the local level is left open. These state governments have indicated their understanding that a variety of types of organizations are capable of providing services, including K-12 schools, community action agencies, and community colleges, among others. Similarly, four out of the five states have left the program model up to the local provider; models may vary from site to site, as long as they meet the legislative guidelines. Only one of the five states calls for a uniform model statewide; however, it allows any non-sectarian agency to implement that model.

The states not only encourage a range of settings, they also encourage inter-agency networking, cooperation, and collaboration at the local level. In one case, programs must demonstrate this cooperation in order to be eligible for funding. All five of these initiatives also benefit from multiple sources of sponsorship at the state level. Their support and administration comes from some combination of the legislature; the governor's office; and

departments of health, education, human services, and human rights. Even the initiatives that are housed in a single state agency have advisory boards made up of representatives of other state agencies.

Over the past four years, the HFRP has tracked the development of the family support and education movement from grass-roots programs to state-level family support and education initiatives. Recently, as evinced by the five initiatives outlined here, the principles of family support and education have infused broader, statewide reforms of education, welfare, and human services.

In two states, the family support and education legislation was part of, or a companion to, a bill for early childhood or pre-kindergarten education, which reflects the growing recognition that early childhood education can be effective only if the parents participate. As the National Association for State Boards of Education's Task Force on Early Childhood Education reported in October, 1988, "Good early childhood education is much, much more than a school readiness program for four-year-olds. . . . [It is a] program that actively involves and supports parents as partners in the development of their children."

These initiatives seek not only to improve the academic prospects of young children but also the developmental and economic prospects of the entire family. One is part of a statewide welfare-reform package; another provides the adult education and literacy component of a separate welfare-reform initiative. A third works with welfare offices at the local level and receives federal Job Training Partnership Act funds.

These five initiatives incorporate the principles of family support and education into their approaches to problems as diverse as lowering the drop-out rate, preventing teen pregnancy, eradicating adult illiteracy, and eliminating long-term welfare dependency. These innovative states command our attention and respect; their experiments may one day improve the lives of families across the United States.

Heather Weiss
Director, Harvard Family Research Project
1989



Arkansas



The Home Instruction Program for Pre-School Youngsters (HIPPY) was designed in Israel in 1969 to improve the educational chances of the children of poor, largely illiterate immigrants. Arkansas' First Lady, Hillary Clinton, read about HIPPY in 1985, and in early 1986 brought the program to the attention of educators in Arkansas by organizing a statewide conference on pre-school programs, co-sponsored by the Departments of Education and Human Services. First Lady Clinton invited HIPPY's founder, Dr. Avima Lombard, to describe the program. Later that year, four HIPPY programs got off the ground in Arkansas: two in urban areas, operated by local school districts; and two in rural areas, operated by private, non-profit groups. Now, seventeen sites across Arkansas serve 1,450 children and their parents; the state projects 19 sites by the fall of 1989 and anticipates serving 2,000 children and their parents.

HIPPY uses trained para-professionals and the home as the primary site of instruction. This keeps costs low, but the program is nevertheless more costly than many of Arkansas' school districts can afford. Although HIPPY is not tied to any state legislation, the governor's office has helped local HIPPY programs to solicit private foundation monies and also to channel federal funds to support the HIPPY program.

The program's primary focus remains the training of four- and five-year-olds for a successful school experience, but Governor Clinton has recently begun to stress the program's two-generational effects, calling HIPPY part of a statewide effort to "halt the cycle of welfare dependency." Clinton has tied HIPPY to other pressing concerns in the state, including the dropout rate, unemployment, and adult illiteracy. Through HIPPY, he has said, parents become interested in improving their own literacy; find employment as para-professionals in the program; and learn to trust the para-professionals, and thereby to trust and use other community services. This growing emphasis on positive parental outcomes has enabled local programs to obtain funding from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and Vocational Education.

Key Events

- 1985** First Lady Hillary Clinton reads about HIPPIY in the *Miami Herald* and decides to investigate the prospect of bringing HIPPIY to Arkansas.
- 1986** Following five months of study and exploration, the governor's office, the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) sponsor a one-day conference to introduce HIPPIY to state educators and community leaders.
- Four women from Arkansas go to Israel to attend the HIPPIY International Workshop.
- The first four pilot programs began in Little Rock, Pulaski County, Russellville, and Pine Bluff.
- 1987** As the first year draws to a close, another conference is held to invite interested parties to see how the HIPPIY program is performing in Arkansas. Six more Arkansans go to Israel to attend the HIPPIY International Workshop; as a result six new programs begin in September.
- 1988** Four more Arkansans attend the HIPPIY conference in Israel as four more programs develop. As the 1988-89 school year ends, 14 sites are serving 23 counties across the state.
- 1989** The emergence of five new HIPPIY programs brings the total to 19.

Scope of Activities

Sponsors

The program's original advocates were Governor and Mrs. Clinton. In 1985-1986, the governor's office spent five months investigating and studying the HIPPIY program and its possible applications in Arkansas. In 1986, DHS and ADE facilitated the introduction of HIPPIY to state educators and community leaders through the organization of a one-day conference. The governor's office continues to promote HIPPIY; local HIPPIY programs receive state-level sponsorship from the support staff of the Governor's Early Childhood Program, who aid the coordination of each program's fundraising and service delivery.

Goals

HIPPY aims to prepare young children for their entrance into school by enhancing the parents' involvement and interest in their young child's academic success. Staff officials also observe that involvement in HIPPY can rekindle the parents' interest in their own academic prospects, creating new academic futures both for this generation and the next. Long-term goals of the program include reduced welfare dependency and higher employment among parents; increased parental involvement in the public schools; and reduced drop-out rates.

Funding

The HIPPY budget was \$960,000 for FY 1988, including \$10,000 from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation for evaluation, and \$60,000 for printing costs. Individual program budgets range from \$17,000 to \$140,000, to serve 20 and 300 families, respectively. Ninety percent of these funds come from federal sources, the rest from foundations and private contributions. Arkansas has taken a creative approach to soliciting funding for HIPPY. The program's focus on adult education and literacy has enabled HIPPY to secure Job Training Partnership Act funds. Through close work with the Arkansas Department of Education and local school districts, HIPPY has been able to utilize Chapter I and II funds and has received commitments from school boards for direct financial aid beyond their in-kind contributions. The program has also received money from the Altheimer, Ford, Edna McConnell Clark, and New World Foundations and the Save the Children Federation. HIPPY also receives support from the local business community, including ARCO, Southwestern Bell, and Scott Paper.

Participants

HIPPY provides services to parents over a two-year period, both the year before and during the child's kindergarten year. HIPPY targets the educationally disadvantaged population; in some cases, socio-economic criteria are also employed.

Staff

The implementation of the HIPPY model centers on the recruitment, training and professional development of parents from the immediate community as the para-professionals who provide the home instruction. These para-professionals must have a four-year-old child and come from the community they serve. Each para-professional works with 10-18 families, and each HIPPY program has one coordinator for every 12 para-professionals. Coordinators are expected to have strong management skills and early childhood backgrounds.

Services

Parents enrolled in HIPPPY meet with parent educators every other week for thirty weeks a year, over a two-year period. The parent educators bring the HIPPPY storybook and packet of materials to the home, and instruct the mothers in the use of these materials through role playing, which enables them to serve the non-reading population. The activity packets help to develop the child's pre-reading/language skills. The parent learns how to ask the child questions about details of content, vocabulary and concepts. Activities were carefully designed to concentrate on discrimination skills and problem solving. The degree of difficulty of the activities increases throughout the two-year period. These early childhood experiences are designed to stimulate children before they enter school, allowing them to take full advantage of the academic setting when they reach kindergarten.

On alternate weeks, mothers attend group meetings, sharing their experiences with their peers and participating in personal enrichment programs that cover a range of topics, including health, safety, and nutrition; child rearing; making toys and games; stress management; and job training and adult education.

Role of Parents

Parents involved in HIPPPY make a commitment to devote time each day for two successive years to becoming their child's first educators and actively preparing their children for school.

Although the highly structured curriculum precludes parental input into the program's design, the HIPPPY program seeks to empower parents in other ways: by bolstering their self-esteem as parents and educators; by training them as para-professionals; and by addressing their needs and interests in bi-weekly group meetings.

Evaluation

HIPPPY programs gather a wide range of data on their participants, including parent self-esteem inventories, JTPA literacy tests for parents, and a battery of achievement tests for the children. Tests are administered to HIPPPY parents both before and after the program is completed; the program also conducts pre- and post-tests of five-year-olds. Due to limited funds for research, HIPPPY is just beginning to establish initial results. The data are available to local sites for improvement and fundraising. All school districts that sponsor HIPPPY intend to track students through the third grade; JTPA will

track parents on adult literacy, vocational training and job placement.

Reflections on the Past and Future

*Ann Kamps,
Office of the Governor*

The major obstacle to developing a program such as HIPPY lies in its funding. With no state dollars initially available, offering a program without the promise of any money required dedication and commitment. We have been fortunate to work with creative and visionary people in JTPA and Chapter I to help finance HIPPY. Communities have developed their programs and solicited their funding in several unique ways. From the beginning, it was apparent that individual school districts would not have the large amounts of money necessary to administer and carry out this program. We have, therefore, chosen to look at HIPPY from many different angles. Initially, we hoped for foundation money, and we received money from the Ford, New World, Edna McConnell Clark, and Winthrop Rockefeller Foundations for a part of our first year of operations.

When HIPPY was introduced to Arkansas, the emphasis was on the child, but recently the focus has shifted toward the parent's growth. As we studied the program, we came to a greater appreciation of the inherent link between pre-kindergarten education and adult education, literacy and employable skills. We realized that when a parent was provided with a program to teach his or her child, the parent usually became interested in personal education and growth as well. The happy result of our more family-oriented focus was that the HIPPY programs secured economic support from JTPA and Chapter I and II funds.

We believe that HIPPY will have an overall positive impact on drop-out prevention and parent involvement in the public schools. We also believe that with the aid of HIPPY, Arkansas parents will develop employment skills and be able to take the first step toward financial independence. If given a chance, the Home Instruction Program may well be the motivation that is needed to break the cycle of poverty and dependence that enslaves so many. HIPPY offers a helping hand to those who dare to dream of a better life.

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Iowa



The Family Development Demonstration Grant (FDDG) program is designed to combine family support and education with long-term employment services to families on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) who are considered at risk of long-term welfare dependency or of family crises that might lead to foster placement. The FDDG Program, under Senate Bill 2225, is part of a welfare-reform package of five human-services programs adopted during the 1988 legislative session that includes the establishment of a state-administered comprehensive pre-school program for at-risk youth; and the provision of extended Medicaid benefits and transitional child-care support to families as they leave AFDC.

Both Iowa's Democratically controlled legislature and its Republican governor made welfare reform a priority for the 1987-1988 legislative biennium; the Iowa Business Council strengthened the government's resolve by making welfare reform a topic for its review during the same period. The legislation that emerged from this bipartisan, interdisciplinary approach went beyond the traditional combination of welfare reform with job training and placement: Iowa's package linked economic self-sufficiency to healthy child development and family stability.

The first step in the development of the FDDG program was the recognition that not all welfare families are alike. The statistics showed that one-quarter of all families entering the AFDC program in Iowa could be expected to stay on welfare for a decade or more. These families accounted for sixty percent of welfare costs; and although they represented only three percent of all families with children in Iowa, they were responsible for nearly half of Iowa's foster placements. These statistics, and the related long-term costs to the government, prompted Iowa's legislature to consider family outcomes other than employment of the head of household for their welfare-reform initiative. Where traditional "welfare-to-work" programs tended to address employment, the primary need of families

whose stays on AFDC were short-term, the new welfare-reform package addressed the broader needs of long-term AFDC recipients through comprehensive services that provided training in family-life skills even before employment training.

The General Assembly appropriated \$690,000 for the FDDG program in FY 1988, which currently funds seven different local programs. Six were new programs; one grant enabled a community action agency to expand its existing family development program for long-term welfare recipients.

Key Events

1987

The Iowa General Assembly makes welfare reform a priority and passes a number of funding enhancements, including a program for "family development grants." The governor vetoes these measures on budgetary grounds.

The governor signs legislation for a pilot family-preservation program, designed to reduce out-of-home placements through intensive, short-term home-based services.

At the conclusion of the 1987 session, the General Assembly establishes an interim committee to develop welfare-reform proposals. The governor simultaneously establishes a separate cross-agency task force to develop welfare-reform initiatives. Welfare reform is made a priority in both the executive and legislative branches of government for the 1988 session.

Prior to the start of the 1988 legislative session, thirty-two agencies publish a sourcebook on human needs, *Doesn't Anybody Care?*, that compares Iowa's commitment to human services over the preceding decade to the commitments of neighboring states.

The interim committee hears testimony from the staff and clients of a community action agency whose family development program works with long-term welfare families, providing basic support in setting goals and using services. This anecdotal evidence suggests the efficacy of targeting long-term welfare families and addressing the development of family-life skills prior to employment training.

1988

The interim committee reports to the General Assembly that welfare reform should focus on families

at risk of long-term welfare dependency. The report also links welfare dependency with family stress and child welfare, and recommends that the state's welfare reform focus on support services to families, with the goal of the healthy development of the children in AFDC families as well as on the employability of parents. It proposes using a family support program model.

The governor's task force, while focusing on inter-agency coordination in employment training, concurs with the interim committee's recommendations.

The Iowa Business Council, composed of business leaders from many of the state's largest corporations, finances a study of welfare reform, with a focus on the need for human-capital development and the need to concentrate on the educational and developmental needs of the children in AFDC families.

The Iowa General Assembly enacts, and the governor signs, a series of welfare-reform initiatives, including the FDDG legislation.

On the governor's suggestion, the Department of Human Services (DHS) seeks a federal waiver to obtain federal matching funds for the FDDG program under a "1115" AFDC waiver. The federal government gives positive support to the development of such a waiver.

1989

The seven grantees begin program operation. In February, an implementation workshop brings grantees, staff and legislators together to hear about program development and implementation from practitioners of family support and education programs around the country. Grantees agree to develop a network to provide ongoing training, networking and problem-solving for the implementation of the Iowa programs.

Scope of Activities

Sponsors

The enabling legislation divides administrative responsibility for the FDDG program between the Department of Human Services (DHS), which administers the AFDC program, and the Department of Human Rights (DHR), which oversees the community action agencies. It also establishes a Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council to make individual program grants. The Council

is structured to facilitate inter-agency coordination in developing and administering programs and to involve the state universities in program evaluation. Its membership includes representatives from a number of state agencies, including the DHS, the DHR, and the Department of Public Health; representatives from three state universities; and present and former AFDC recipients. Housed within the Department of Human Services, the Council contracts with the Department of Human Rights to staff and administer the grants. The Council is responsible for identifying the conditions that place AFDC families at risk either of long-term welfare dependency or of family instability that might later necessitate foster placement; and for seeking outside support both for demonstration grants and for the evaluation of grant-funded programs.

Goals

The FDDG program aims to help families achieve economic self-sufficiency and to improve the family skills and parenting abilities that will enable them to maintain a nurturing family environment. Long-term goals include reducing the demands on the foster-care system and improving the school performance of the children in AFDC families. Grantees are given considerable flexibility to define other, more specific program goals, and are encouraged to include child development and family cohesion as well as employment readiness and earnings.

Funding

Funding for the FDDG program is included in the appropriations bill for DHS on a three-year demonstration basis, with \$690,000 allocated for FY 1989, subject to annual renewal. Seven programs have been funded, including a community action agency, two multi-service youth service agencies, and a YWCA. Funding is expected to be increased in the second year, up to \$890,000, to allow for program expansion and for the funding of up to two additional programs. The DHS facilitated obtaining an AFDC "1115" waiver from the federal government to receive federal matching funds for the program.

Participants

The participants involved in the local program activities must be AFDC recipients, and all programs operate within a specific geographical area. The programs are responsible for identifying the type of AFDC families with whom they will work, based upon risk factors that correlate with long-term welfare dependency. Some of the risk factors used by the grantees are teenage parenting, limited educational background of the head of the household, long-

term use of AFDC or multiple AFDC episodes, and participation in the AFDC program or foster-care program when the current head of the household was a child. The DHS provides local programs with a list of AFDC families that are selected at random from a pool of recipients who meet the criteria identified by the grantee. The local programs are responsible for initial contact and follow-up. Participation by individual families is strictly voluntary.

Staff

The family advocate position is at the heart of all program staffing, but the state government gives latitude to the local programs to define the position, specifying only that the qualifications of these advocates must match the "family development and self-sufficiency goals of the families being served." Many of the programs rely upon staff training and development from the National Center for Home-Based Services, which has developed a training model based upon its work with a community action agency in Iowa.

Services

The testimony of local community action agencies and their clients convinced the legislature that the FDDG program's services would have to be as comprehensive as its goals. The legislation does not specify a program model, but requires that proposals state how the local program will provide the following services: assistance with job seeking and family budgeting; education about nutrition, self-esteem, health and hygiene, and child rearing; and help preparing children for education and setting family goals. Grant applications must also specify the support systems that will ease the transition from welfare to self-sufficiency and indicate how other needs of the family will be met, including day-care assistance; transportation; substance-abuse treatment; support-group counseling; and food, clothing and housing. The legislation does not mandate how local applicants should provide these services; however, as part of the application process, grantees are required to specify what other services are available in the community, and how they will be made available to the families in the program. Several of the programs currently funded by the FDDG Program are center-based, while others primarily involve home visits. Most programs plan to develop parent support groups.

Role of Parents

Two current or former AFDC recipients sit on the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency Council.

At the local level, parents work with the family advocate to identify their family's needs and set appropriate goals. Most programs plan eventually to involve parents in planning and program development.

Evaluation

Because each program is allowed substantial flexibility in goals and structure, the state legislators wanted to allay concerns about how money was being spent. They designed the legislation to ensure accountability by requiring evaluation of programs on outcome measures. As a base, all programs will be measured on their success in assisting families to achieve independence from welfare and avoid the foster-care system. Grantees were required to enumerate other outcome measures that would be pertinent to their program goals as part of the application process and were encouraged to employ outcome measures including school readiness, reduction in number of subsequent pregnancies, and family functioning. Each program will identify a comparison group selected from the pool of eligible participants who were not assigned to the program. The DHS will track the program participants and the comparison group on parental earnings, measures of child development and health, contacts with the child-welfare system, and on employment measures available through the AFDC program. The Council is charged with seeking outside financial support for broader cross-program evaluation.

Reflections on the Past and Future

*Charles Bruner,
State Senator*

The Iowa program is an effort to wed family support and education programs with welfare reform. The Request for Proposals for the FDDG programs stressed a great deal of flexibility in specific program design, but required that programs adhere to the general family support and education philosophy. Since most of the programs are new programs for the agencies administering them, a great deal of emphasis is being placed on training and development. It is expected that programs may change significantly as they evolve over time, as new ideas are tried, less promising approaches discarded, and more promising approaches built upon.

A state administrative structure had to be established to offer programs such flexibility, and thus represented one of the first challenges to program development. Fortunately, state administrators have been receptive

to providing this flexibility. Although the program was initiated legislatively, considerable legislative-agency interaction has given state agencies a substantial sense of program ownership and a stake in making the programs work.

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Oregon



Oregon's family support services have benefited from the state's emphasis on inter-agency collaboration. In 1986, the state's Board of Education, whose members are appointed by the governor, convened a State Early Childhood Initiatives Project (SECIP) that drew its members from several state education and social service agencies, including the Oregon Head Start Association; Early Intervention; community colleges; the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators; the Oregon School Boards Association; the Oregon Education Association; the Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children; and representatives from the Human Resources Department, the governor's office and the legislature.

The SECIP promoted two new early childhood initiatives. The first was an expansion of Head Start, both because of the positive effects reported in research and the press, and also because the limited federal funding for Head Start reached only a small percentage of Oregon's high-risk children. The second initiative, Together for Children (TFC), a one-year pilot program, was inspired by Minnesota's Early Childhood Family Education and Missouri's Parents as Teachers. SECIP designed TFC to focus on the parents of young children who were at risk of later school failure, using a definition of "at-risk" far broader than that used for Head Start. The two SECIP initiatives were proposed as part of the same legislation, and share a single advisory committee, but the programs remain separate.

The group decided that the Department of Education (ODE) should be the lead agency for TFC at the state level both because it is a prevention-oriented agency and because leadership at the state level could encourage local districts to become involved in these new areas of service. Unlike the Minnesota and Missouri programs, however, which are both administered through the schools, SECIP wanted local communities to decide which agency or organization should take the lead and which model of service delivery to use. Any public or nonsectarian

organization or consortium of organizations was eligible to apply for grants. The legislation provides funding for innovative programs that maintain a positive family focus and demonstrate the ability to collaborate with other agencies.

After a statewide Request for Proposals, the ODE selected three grant recipients from the twenty proposals it received. These three sites were selected for geographic diversity; they did not overlap with any of the eleven sites funded under the pre-kindergarten grants. In 1989, the funding for TFC was renewed for two years.

Key Events

- 1986* Oregon is one of four states nationally to receive a technical assistance grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education to establish the State Early Childhood Initiatives Project (SECIP) under the auspices of the State Board of Education.
- Legislation is drafted by the SECIP. Co-chief sponsors are Senator Frank Roberts and Speaker Vera Katz.
- 1987* S.B. 524 passes in the Oregon General Assembly, creating both the state pre-kindergarten program and Together for Children.
- 1988* In April, twenty proposals for TFC funding are submitted to the ODE; three are accepted.
- Implementation of the three local TFC pilot sites begins in September.
- 1989* Funding for TFC is renewed at \$566,000 for two years. The pre-kindergarten program is refunded at \$5 million.

Scope of Activities

Sponsors

SECIP, the group that originally promoted the statewide parent education program, was an inter-agency coalition. At the local level, the TFC initiative reflects a similar diversity of sponsorship. The request for proposals encouraged both community agencies and school districts to apply; proposals were solicited from existing programs and from newly created programs. Two of the three grant recipients are

community-based agencies, the third is a community college.

Goals

The TFC initiative seeks to address the need for parent education and support systems among the parents of children, birth to eight years of age, who are at risk of school failure. TFC services are predicated on the philosophy that in order to produce a long-term impact, parents must be integrally involved in pre-school programming for children. A parent education program, TFC focuses on the parents' needs and on building the parents' skills and self-esteem. The program's specific objectives are to: provide parents with information on child development, interpersonal communication, discipline and strategies to help their children succeed in school; create both formal and informal support systems that will help parents solve problems and respond to their family's needs; promote and build upon family strengths, and meet the needs of parents as they perceive them; provide parents with information about community resources to reduce family stress and isolation; and promote the networking of community agencies and the public schools to create successful environments for young children.

Funding

The legislature appropriated \$267,000 for the implementation of the TFC initiative in 1988-1989. The ODE received an additional appropriation of \$66,000 for the administration and training costs of both the TFC and pre-kindergarten initiatives. In 1989, TFC's funding was renewed at \$566,000 for two years. According to the TFC program requirements, it is the program's philosophy that the needs of eligible families will best be met if TFC services are integrated with services for non-eligible families. This is done to avoid any possible stigma for the eligible families. The TFC guidelines suggest that 60 percent of participating families should meet the eligibility criteria; the TFC monies will subsidize services for those parents. Forty percent of parents should be non-eligible; the funding for them should come from other sources, including fees, although no one should be denied access to services because of inability to pay.

Participants

Under the legislation for TFC, families are eligible to participate if they have a child under eight years of age who meets the legislation's definition of being at risk of school failure. Children are considered at risk if their parents or families fall into one of the following categories, among others: single parents,

step-parents, teen parents, low-income families, dual career families, migrant families, and families in which English is a second language. The State Board of Education adopted this broad definition of "at risk" in an effort to serve as wide a population as possible. TFC's focus is on parents; children participate only with their parents, and usually attend the program once a week. In the 1988-89 academic year, the three sites served 145 parents, 110 families, and 300 parents and 320 children, respectively.

Staff

TFC is directed by the early childhood specialist in the State Department of Education. Backgrounds of staff vary by program, but the Department of Education prefers staff members to have formal post-secondary education in child development or early childhood education and experience working with groups of young children and adults. The programs were required to specify a plan for staff development, and in most cases, the local programs hired new staff to provide TFC services.

Services

The Request for Proposals specified five required components: parent education/training; parent support; a positive family focus; community networking and referral services; and program advisory boards. The programs were free to choose how they would deliver services; as a result, three distinct programs have been funded. Of the three, two had previously provided parenting services, but all three programs changed and expanded their services with the TFC grants. All three sites offer parenting classes. Other services offered by one or more sites include: workshops, support groups, teen-parent classes, resource centers, phone call-in lines, crisis intervention, counseling, a monthly parenting tip sheet, family home visits, parent/child play groups, information and referral, community network enhancement, and parenting classes for migrant or Spanish-speaking mothers.

Role of Parents

TFC seeks to empower as well as educate parents. All grant applicants are required to demonstrate how they will establish a "positive family focus" that emphasizes parents' abilities, not their deficits. The parents are to take a major part in identifying the issues the program will address, rather than simply deferring to the "experts." This positive family focus can include, but is not limited to: actively involving parents in establishing the program's agenda and activities; surveying parents' needs continuously throughout the program's design; providing parents

with choices throughout the program offerings; and giving ownership to parents by creating advisory committees that are composed primarily of parents.

Evaluation

To date, the General Assembly has not appropriated funds to evaluate TFC, but ODE administrators have received private funding for evaluation. Additionally, the ODE is organizing academic sponsors from local colleges and universities to assist in the evaluation process. All applicants for TFC funding were required to develop a plan for assessing the effectiveness of their program in serving parents and families through a formative evaluation. Each site was asked to develop: 1) an annual process analysis to evaluate program implementation; 2) methods to describe participation and services using an intake form designed by the ODE and forms developed locally; 3) a proposal for participant evaluation of services; 4) plans for staff evaluation; and 5) a means to document human and fiscal resources used by that program. The ODE hopes to use this information for a summative evaluation, and to assess the cost per service.

Reflections on the Past and Future

*Randy Hitz
Specialist, Early
Childhood Education*

The State Early Childhood Initiatives Project provided a good foundation, because it enabled early childhood educators, parent educators and policy makers to meet together to form a consensus on what should be done in Oregon. One of the most important features of TFC is its provision for local decision-making. TFC is more of a *process* for encouraging local communities to take action in the area of parent education and support than a particular *program* for providing services. This characteristic of TFC encourages grass-roots efforts and strong collaboration in local communities. It also supported very diverse local programs.

The diversity of programs, while in many respects a strength of TFC, creates some difficulties. Each program must be evaluated to some extent on its own merits, and both the training of providers and technical-assistance needs vary greatly from one community to another.

At the local level, the role of the public schools is a major issue we need to deal with. Currently, funds flow through the ODE but can go to any non-sectarian agency capable of delivering services. All parties

seem to agree that no agency or group should try to provide the services alone. Strong collaboration among local providers of parent education and support is essential, regardless of which agency takes the lead with TFC.

TFC, like many parent education and support programs in other states, targets parents of at-risk children. The ultimate goal of the original designers of the TFC was to provide universal access because targeting inevitably leads to labeling and creates a stigma for the program. On the other hand, targeting of resources ensures that the most needy populations receive services. In Oregon we struggle to balance universal access with the need to reach the most needy populations.

Finally, program evaluation is a major concern. Legislators seem to be reluctant to fund anything but direct services for children and families. They are especially unlikely to fund program evaluation. In spite of this, program evaluation is the key to improving services and ultimately ensuring legislative support for the programs.

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Vermont



The Parent-Child Centers (PCCs) are characteristic of Vermont's tradition of strong community life and the values of local decision-making and accountability reflected in the town meeting and the school board. The PCC initiative began at the grass-roots level with eight independent, community-based family support programs. Each PCC had grown out of local needs and concerns, some as early as the mid-1960s, and many of them were developed under the auspices of community action agencies and funded largely with federal money.

Vermont's state government had been committed to community-based preventive programming for children and families since 1983, when the legislature established the Child and Family Council for Prevention Programs and the Children's Trust Fund (CTF), which is maintained by the Agency of Human Services. The legislation sought to "encourage community involvement in the development of primary prevention programs which promote the health and increase the self-reliance of Vermont's children and their families [and] . . . reduce the need for long-term and costly rehabilitation services." The CTF has been awarding grants on a competitive basis to local community agencies since 1987, including grants of \$10,000 to \$15,000 to individual PCCs for parent education.

In 1987, when the Addison Parent-Child Center, which had served as a model for family services in Vermont, was slated to lose its federal funding, its director rallied the directors of seven other centers in Vermont; together they formed the Parent-Child Association Network. Rather than competing for funds, as they had had to do with the CTF, the eight PCC directors joined forces and successfully lobbied the state legislature for a line item of \$360,000 in the FY 1988 budget to maintain and develop the eight PCCs. In the second year, the legislature funded two additional centers.

The PCCs, now thirteen in number, continue to be a critical piece of Vermont's preventive approach to problems that affect children and families. Since

1987, both the Governor's Task Force on Teen Pregnancy and the Governor's Team on Drop-out Prevention have cited the PCCs as an effective model of preventive services and recommended increased funding to make PCCs available in every community as part of a continuum of preventive services.

Legislation that would establish a statewide PCC program in Vermont, H.227, was sponsored by twenty-two legislators, and is yet to pass. State sponsors are hopeful that the bill will pass in FY 91 (January-April/May, 1990).

Key Events

1987

The Vermont Parent-Child Association Network is established under the leadership of Cheryl Mitchell, co-director of the Addison Parent-Child Center. The Network is designed to establish a broad base of support to approach the legislature for program funding.

The legislature approves a line item of \$360,000 for the PCCs and assigns responsibility for the appropriations to the Agency of Human Services.

The state supports the idea of having the fixed responsibility located with one agency that is responsible for developing services for everyone in the county.

1988

Twenty-two legislators sponsor H.227, which would establish PCCs statewide. *The bill does not pass in this session.*

Scope of Activities

Sponsors

The legislature assigned responsibility for administering the appropriations to the PCCs to the planning division of the Agency of Human Services (AHS). The AHS representative works with the Parent-Child Association Network to issue grant awards and monitor grants, develop comprehensive services, and evaluate the effectiveness of the centers.

Because the PCCs are a "new concept" in the delivery of human services, the AHS representative has also taken on the task of defining their role in the human-services system to community providers and to other state agencies.

Goals

Each of the eight original PCCs began with goals that stemmed from the needs of their local communities. These ranged from preventing child abuse, to serving adolescent parents, to addressing the problem of domestic violence. Over time, the centers have broadened their scope to encompass preventive services for all families. The goals of the state funding are to: provide prevention and individualized early intervention services; decrease the social, emotional and educational hardships associated with a lack of early intervention and support; and decrease the cost of later specialized services.

The PCCs focus on families with young children, pre-birth to three, in order to minimize the instances of family crises, including child abuse and neglect. The PCCs also work to strengthen the entire community, to create a strong broad-based network of support for all families.

Funding

Each PCC was allocated an annual base amount of \$12,500 in 1987. In 1988, each center was granted a minimum of \$25,000; the awards ranged from \$25,000 to \$151,950; two additional centers were funded at \$25,000 each. Supplemental funds above the \$25,000 minimum award are determined by the number of families served. The FY 90 budget includes a \$600,000 line item, almost twice the FY 88 budget of \$360,000, to fund thirteen PCCs that will serve all fourteen counties in the state. Ten thousand dollars of the appropriations may be used to provide training and technical assistance to the centers. The PCCs' funding comes not only from the appropriations but also from the federal government, contracts with state agencies for services, support from individual towns and private foundations, fundraising, in-kind contributions, and client fees. State agencies fund PCCs through grants earmarked for preventive programs; for example, several PCCs have received grants for specific projects from the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs. The PCCs have tried to create partnerships with other members of the human-services community, collaborating on grant writing and the development of mutually beneficial contracts.

Participants

PCCs are designed for universal eligibility. Program statistics for 1987 reveal that 79% of the adult service recipients are women, 48% are between 22-30 years of age, and 46% are unemployed. The annual income of 85.4% of the families served is \$15,000 or less. All local community-based agencies may refer clients

to the PCCs; acceptance depends upon the availability of space in the particular program. Some centers receive special state funding, entitled Intensive Family-based Services, that requires them to serve families who are at risk of abusing or neglecting their children.

Staff

One of the difficulties the PCCs have faced is the diversity of the training that staff members have received across the state, due largely to the fact that the programs were established on the local level, rather than preconceived on the state level and implemented uniformly in each county. In a 1988 report to the state legislature, the AHS proposed that a standard of minimum credentials be established for key staff positions to reduce variability among programs. Each center is governed by a board of directors, and the AHS also suggested working to standardize the roles of board members, which currently range from daily involvement in the center's operation to more removed advisory positions.

Services

All eight of the original PCCs offer behavior management workshops, nurturing parent programs, parenting skills workshops, and resource and referral about child-care options. Other services vary from site to site and fall into four categories: services for children, parents, families, and the community. The primary focus of services for children is developmental child care, including before-and after-school programs, infant care, and summer camps. Programming for parents includes three main services: parent education, designed to educate individuals about parenting skills, following a specific curriculum; parent support groups, which allow parents to interact in group discussions without a specific curriculum; and drop-in programs, which deliver a range of services, from the dissemination of information to crisis intervention. Services for families include play groups for children that incorporate parents. PCCs also offer home-based service to families, in which a parent educator comes to participants' homes to assist the family with conflict resolution, and work with the family on behavior issues. The family educators may also assist the parents in obtaining the resources they need within the community. Community-oriented services include community needs-assessment surveys and health promotion endeavors.

Role of Parents

The Agency of Human Services requires PCCs to have parents on their advisory boards. In some cases, the PCCs operate under the management structure

of a larger agency. In these cases, the centers are required to have an advisory committee that includes parents. The purpose of this requirement is to have parents' input on curriculum, agency operations and scheduling decisions.

Evaluation

The 1988 report by AHS to the state legislature on Parent-Child Centers in Vermont has proposed that the state go beyond its limited descriptive evaluation of what services the PCCs provide and establish a more extensive evaluation system. This would involve collecting standard information on both children and families across the state and evaluating the success of the PCC services. The report calls for a pre-and post-evaluation of the community served by the PCCs, not only to obtain cost-effectiveness information, but also to gather common impact data across all Parent-Child Centers.

Reflections on the Past and Future

*Ted Mable,
Director of Planning
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of Human Services*

As I reflect on what we have learned to date I feel the following issues are critical to the success of PCCs in the future. Programs that provide services, especially early in their development, need to be of the highest quality. It is better to offer one service of excellent quality than to try to offer several of low quality. If one center gets into trouble, it will weaken the total system. Public and political perception is a critical element if the PCCs are going to receive more funding in the future, and the PCCs will need an increase in resources if they are going to provide all of the core services in each of the counties in the state.

The emerging issues include the need to define the PCCs' mission and uniqueness in the service-delivery system. The legislature and foundations need to understand the role of the PCCs and why they are unique to the service community. We also need to define the state government's role and its relationship to the PCCs.

I would advise other states that they need to develop a political base in the local community first. If each center develops a strong local political base, the support in the legislature will follow. The bill to establish PCCs statewide has received wide sponsorship because many legislators have been favorably impressed with existing PCCs and would like to see PCC services delivered to all communities statewide.

Accountability is also extremely important. The Vermont Parent-Child Center Network wants to be held accountable to ensure quality services. This type of attitude makes it easier for state government to form a strong partnership with these community programs. Presently, state government has a very cooperative relationship with the directors of the centers. Both the state government and the PCC network want this program to be successful, so they are working very hard to maintain this relationship.

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Washington



Washington's Even Start program was established in 1987 to remedy the lack of literacy skills among parents whose children have trouble learning. The establishing legislation is a companion piece to Washington's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), which passed in 1986. ECEAP is based on the Head Start model and serves four-year-olds from families that are at or below the poverty level. Initially, ECEAP matched the level of parental involvement required by Head Start -- participating on advisory boards, serving as classroom volunteers, and planning parent-teacher conferences -- but the staff of ECEAP programs realized that parents of these children needed far more extensive training in parenting and basic skills. The Adult Education section of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) helped to write legislation to meet that need, and proposed expanding the services to the parents of children who were enrolled in other similar programs. At the same time, the Department of Health and Social Services launched a welfare-reform initiative, and envisioned Even Start as the appropriate literacy training for welfare recipients whose lack of basic skills kept them from being able to enter job-training programs.

Washington modeled the Even Start legislation on federal legislation proposed in 1987: the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, in amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The Washington legislation does not call for a specific program model, but instead selects and funds the local programs that best fulfill the parenting and family education needs of the community. The legislation specifies that "before developing and funding new adult literacy programs to carry out the purposes of Project Even Start," the OSPI must fund any existing adult literacy and parenting programs that meet the legislation's guidelines and are offered at community colleges, vocational-technical schools, and nonprofit, community-based organizations.

Even Start legislation passed in Washington in 1987. Seventeen regional Even Start programs, initially funded through June 30, 1989, and refunded through 1991, are run out of community colleges, local school buildings, churches and community centers.

Key Events

1986

The Washington State Legislature funds the ECEAP program, a comprehensive pre-school program for children at risk. A principal component of ECEAP is parental involvement. The staff in ECEAP programs become aware that many parents of children at risk are in need of parenting skills, literacy training and basic education skills. They envision Project Even Start as a legislative companion piece to ECEAP.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) staff in Adult Education are aware that parents of children enrolled in other programs for children at risk also need the services of Even Start. The proposed legislation is expanded to include these parents.

1987

The Department of Social and Health Services launches the Family Independence Program, a welfare-reform initiative and sees Even Start as appropriate education for AFDC recipients whose literacy level and limited basic skills prevent them from entering job-training programs. The parenting skills, child care, and transportation assistance are also attractive components.

Even Start legislation passes.

1988

Seventeen Even Start programs are funded and begin providing services.

1989

By the end of the first biennium, June 30, 1989, Even Start has served over 1,000 parents. The legislature reauthorizes funding at slightly below the current level. Local Even Start providers are enthusiastic about the effectiveness of the program. As word reaches them of the failure of requests for enhancements to the program for the 1989-1991 biennium, they began searching for other monies to expand Even Start services at the local level.

Scope of Activities

Sponsors

The Even Start program operates under the auspices of the Adult Education section, a division of OSPI. The Adult Education section worked with the Executive Service division of the OSPI to write the legislation, which was introduced by Senator Al Bower. An Even Start advisory committee has been established to make recommendations about program selection and implementation. The committee includes representatives from state colleges, social and health services, literacy and adult education services, school districts, early childhood and parent education, and community-based agencies.

Goals

Even Start's goal is to provide educational services to parents while their children are being served by programs for children who are at risk. The program recognizes that parents can be the most effective first educators of their children, and thus aims to provide illiterate and semi-literate parents with basic skills, including reading, writing and math, as well as an understanding of child development and parenting skills. The incorporation of the parent into the process of the child's education is designed to enhance both the parent's and child's interest in education, and to create a more positive home environment that will contribute to the child's motivation to learn.

Funding

Even Start services began in 1988, with an initial \$1.6 million allocated for the biennium under Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 456, as amended by the Senate. During the 1987-1989 biennium, a portion of Project Even Start's \$1.6 million allocation was used for state administration of the project, as well as on-site monitoring, technical-assistance, and three statewide technical assistance meetings for local programs. The superintendent and the governor proposed an expansion of Even Start for the 1989-1992 biennium. In reducing the allocation to \$1,519,000, the legislature reallocated funds for local Even Start programs at current levels, but did not provide funds for administration or technical assistance. After the federal Even Start legislation passed, several state-funded Even Start programs in Washington collaborated with local school districts in preparing applications for federal Even Start monies, which go directly to local education agencies.

Participants

To be eligible for Even Start funding, programs must target their services at one or more of the following at-risk groups: the parents of children in ECEAP,

Head Start, or state- or federally-funded elementary schools' basic-skills programs, or cooperative preschool programs at community colleges or vocational-technical institutes; parents of children with special needs; and parents of children in bilingual education. Programs are also eligible if they target single heads of household, recipients of public assistance, ethnic minorities, and parents who are below the eighth-grade level in their native language. Even Start programs give priority to services for parents of pre-school children or children in kindergarten through third grade. Even Start is also accepted as a training program for public assistance participants in the Department of Health and Social Services' Family Independence Program.

Staff

The staffing of Even Start programs varies with the size and complexity of the program. Most programs have a coordinator, a literacy/ basic skills instructor, and a parenting-skills instructor. In a few sites, a single instructor covers both literacy and the parenting skills. Where there are separate instructors for these components, the instructors coordinate their curricula so that parenting skills can be integrated into the literacy/basic skills component.

Services

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was sent out both to providers of adult education and services and to programs serving children at risk, like ECEAP and Head Start. Grants were awarded by the Superintendent of Public Instruction to local programs based upon proposed services.

Even Start grantees are required to offer services for adults, including literacy and parenting education, at least ten hours a week for a minimum of ten weeks and for at least thirty weeks within a fifty-two week period. Educational services for children are not funded under Even Start, but Even Start programs are directed to coordinate their services with the programs that serve the children of their participants. Support services may include child care, transportation, and any other services that remove barriers to participation.

Role of Parents

Parents' needs are surveyed by local program staff. Local programs are engaged in writing culturally appropriate parenting curricula.

Evaluation

Even Start proposals must include provisions for an annual evaluation report to be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Evaluation

reports must include statistics about the progress of adults, including standardized test scores, attendance, and records of instructional hours provided to individuals. Evaluations must also measure the effect of parents' participation on their children; currently, the programs are using self-reports by parents and teachers' reports of children's progress to measure this effect. Statutory requirements also call for evaluation of program models, evaluations of support services, data about the demands for services in the program's area compared to the actual number of parents enrolled, and recommendations for program improvements.

Reflections on the Past and Future

*Suzanne Griffin,
Director,
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The target population for Project Even Start is difficult to recruit. At a recent statewide workshop, local programs shared their strategies for identifying potential participants and enticing them into their programs. So far, very few truly illiterate parents have enrolled. The parents in the program have all had some schooling.

The standard parenting skills instructional materials and methods have been adapted considerably for the Even Start population. Participants have very different concepts of parenting than the authors of most parenting materials anticipated. Participants' views were affected by their past experiences with schooling, their socio-economic status, and their cultural differences. At a half-day meeting in January, 1989, parenting-skills instructors shared their experiences of adapting curricula to the needs of their students. The consensus was that a parenting curriculum must start with the parents articulating what *they* think good parenting is and setting their own goals.

All programs have found a need for more support services for participants. Counseling tops the list, including personal and career counseling, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, family counseling, and bilingual counseling. The participants' greatest first need is to build self-esteem.

In the absence of budgets for program-specific counselors, local programs have become acquainted with local community resources and have referred participants to the appropriate counseling programs. Most programs have developed support groups among the participants.

A summer intern from Washington State University is currently surveying each program to determine specific counseling needs of the parents enrolled. The survey results will be used to determine how Even Start program services might be expanded and what additional funds will be needed.

Local Even Start programs have also found that child-care needs of participants were greater than anticipated. Many found themselves under-budgeted for this service.

The inter-agency Advisory Committee has set program evaluation as a priority for the next biennium. We want to work more closely with the programs that serve children of Even Start participants to determine the effect of the parents' involvement on their behavior and academic performance in pre-school and school settings. We are also interested in determining the effect of parents' involvement in Even Start on the total family dynamic.

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