



# Assessing Implementation Fidelity of a Universal Program of Family Health Promotion

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## Background

Prevention programs are critical to reduce child maltreatment.

Program effectiveness is determined by:

- Validity of underlying program theory.
- Fidelity of implementation.

Research has shown that:

- Fidelity varies across program sites using the same model.
- The implementation system influences fidelity.

The First Steps (FS) program:

Is a universal, primary prevention program targeted to parents of newborns.

Developed by Prevent Child Abuse Georgia in 1984.

Aims to strengthen family protective factors.

Service Content: Information about newborns, emotional support and referrals to community resources.

Service Delivery: Face-to-face visit by trained staff or volunteers at the time of birth and follow-up contacts by phone or mail for up to three months.

## Objectives

- Describe service fidelity across FS program sites.
- Describe each site's implementation system.
- Test association of service fidelity with the implementation system.

## Methods

**Design:**

Cross-sectional study of 21 FS program sites across Georgia.

**Service Fidelity**

**Sample:** Families enrolled from 1/2010 - 9/2010. (n=7525).

**Data Source:** FS Program MIS Data.

**Indicators:** Frequency of initial and follow-up contacts; Mode of contacts; Referrals to community resources.

**Implementation system**

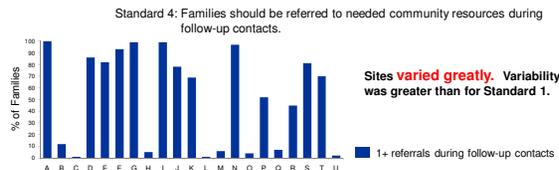
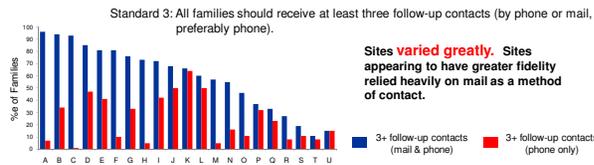
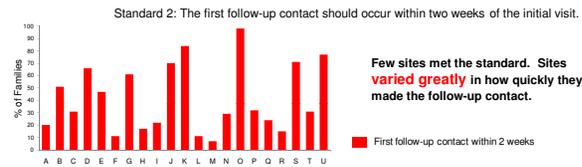
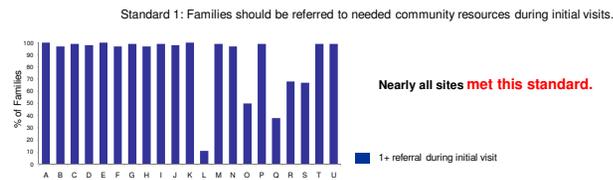
**Sample:** FS Site Leaders.

**Data Source:** Semi-structured interviews with site leaders.

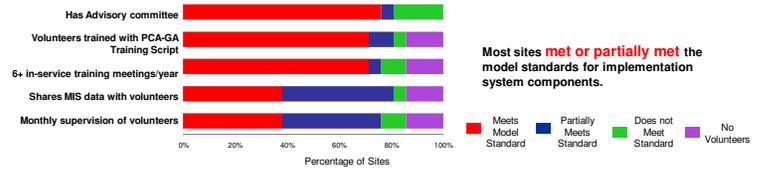
**Indicators:** Adherence to implementation system component standards for: supervision practices, program staffing, staff training, program evaluation, and community linkages.

## Results

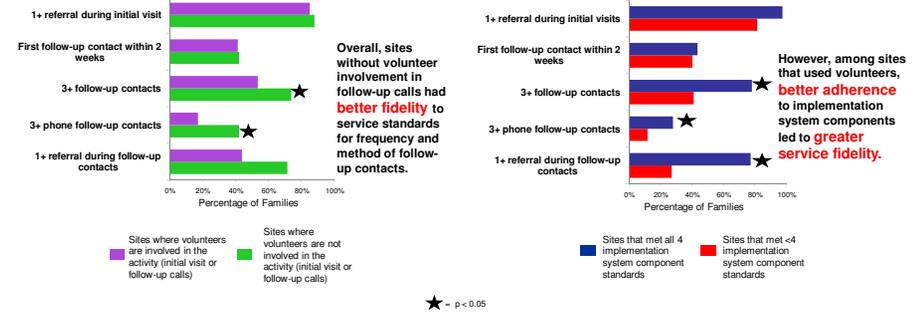
### Objective 1- Service Fidelity By Site



### Objective 2 - Implementation System



### Objective 3 - Association of Implementation System with Service Fidelity



## Conclusions and Implications

- Understanding the relationship between service fidelity and implementation systems is necessary to advance programs for child maltreatment prevention.
- Service fidelity varied across FS program sites.
- Adherence to implementation system component standards varied across FS program sites.
- Not using volunteers for follow-up calls appears to be associated with better fidelity, especially to indicators about frequency and mode of follow-up contacts.
- However, among sites with volunteers, fidelity to some indicators was greater when the site fully met implementation components standards.
- This project has implications for policy, practice and theory by:
  - Demonstrating the importance of the implementation system.
  - Determining how implementation system components could be strengthened to improve service delivery.

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