Evaluation of the Head Start Family Service Center Demonstration Projects

Volume II: Summary of Local Evaluation Reports

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Preface

This summary of the local evaluation reports for the Head Start Family Service Center Demonstration Projects would not have been possible without the dedicated efforts of the many local evaluators across the country whose studies are reported on here. A complete list of the local evaluators who comprise this report is included in Appendix A.

In addition, the evaluation has been guided by a team of local evaluation consultants who helped provide valuable input along the way. These consultants included David Beer, University of Illinois of Chicago; Sara Liebschutz, University of Rochester; Anita Lightburn, Smith College; and Colleen Mendel, Western Kentucky University. Judy Howard, University of California at Los Angeles, from the original advisory panel was also a member of the consultant team.

Various staff at the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) at the Department of Health and Human Services have also provided valuable input to the design of this evaluation. Henry Doan, the current Project Officer for the FSC evaluation, was instrumental in getting this project off the ground and keeping it on schedule. Other staff from ACYF and Head Start were also helpful in commenting on our work, including Jack Corrigan, Frankie Gibson, Marita Hopmann, and Michele Plutro.

Finally, this report is the product of a true team effort involving the efforts of several Abt Associates staff members, including Lawrence Bernstein, Ian Beckford, Marjorie Levin, Michael Puma, Jenny Schuetz, Janet Swartz, Debra Thebearge, and Alan Werner.

Executive Summary

This executive summary highlights the content and synthesizes some of the key findings from the local evaluations of the Head Start Family Service Center (FSC) Demonstration Projects. This report represents the second of two volumes. Volume I contains the report of the national evaluation, which described program services, participants and impacts across 25 FSC projects.

The summary begins with a brief description of the FSCs and the local evaluations, followed by a summary of the local evaluation content. The next two sections discuss the lessons learned and recommendations about the FSCs made by project staff and local evaluators, and the impacts of the FSC as reported by local evaluators. The final section deals with the role of local evaluations in national demonstration projects.

Family Service Center Demonstration Projects

The FSC demonstration projects were initiated in 1990 to enable Head Start programs to provide a more comprehensive set of services and enhance Head Start's capacity as a "two-generational program" that offers services to both parents and children. Two key features of an FSC project were (a) collaborative efforts with community organizations, and (b) intensive case management that included a needs assessment and integrated services for families.

The FSCs were three-year demonstration projects funded by grants from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. All Head Start grantees were eligible to apply for the funds. A total of 66 FSC projects were funded by ACYF over three fiscal years, with the average grant totaling $250,000 a year. Projects were located in 36 states throughout the country, including projects associated with Migrant Head Start and Head Start programs on Indian Reservations.

Description of Local Evaluations

Evaluation Context

The local evaluations were the responsibility of the individual FSC projects who hired an independent evaluator to conduct an evaluation responsive to the specific demonstration project. Wave I grantees were given considerable freedom in designing their local evaluations, and many focused on formative evaluations and collaborative feedback to program staff. The FSC grant announcements for Wave II projects listed a number of required components of their evaluation plan, including that the evaluation contain both formative and summative information about program activities and participant outcomes, and that the evaluation design should allow for a comparison group and repeated measurement of

child and family outcomes. The evaluation guidelines for the Wave III FSC projects were more prescriptive with the specific requirement that they be able to recruit 80 families to be randomly assigned to the FSC or regular Head Start. FSC project directors were required to submit quarterly, annual and final evaluation reports to their project officer at the Head Start Bureau within ACYF.

Most of the local evaluators chosen for the Wave I and Wave II grantees were affiliated with a local college or university; the rest were independent consultants or affiliated with a local consulting or research firm. Most of the Wave I and Wave II local evaluators had advanced degrees (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D.) in a variety of disciplines such as education, social work, public health, and psychology. Many had prior experience in evaluation work pertaining to community development, human services, and mental health.

Reviewing Local Evaluation Reports

In the fall of 1997, Abt Associates asked the local evaluators of all 65 FSCs to send copies of their final reports and any other pertinent reports from their evaluation of the FSC project. As a result of these letters and further follow-up efforts, 58 local evaluation reports (89 percent) were received, which were fairly evenly distributed across the three waves of projects.

In order to summarize the content of local evaluation reports, a list of categories was developed to capture the full range of possible evaluation domains.

- **Planning and Development**: Discussion of project start-up activities, implementation issues, problems in start-up, and program goals.

- **Community Context**: Description of the community (e.g., socio-economic level, ethnicity), description of services available in the community, results of community needs assessment.

- **Program Operations**: Program organization, program management, staffing, community collaborator arrangements, location of services, advisory boards, plan of "client flow" (e.g., recruitment, frequency of contact, etc.).

- **Description of Services**: Content of service components, description of actual services offered, program activities.

- **Participant Case Studies**: Individual accounts of participants or families in the program.

- **Participant Characteristics/Needs Assessment**: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of FSC participants (e.g., ethnicity, age, marital status, education level), description of needs of participants.

- **Participant Perceptions**: FSC participant's satisfaction with staff services or overall program.

- **Staff and Community Perceptions**: Opinions and assessment of issues affecting Head Start participants and the implementation of the FSC project.

- **Participation Patterns**: Service utilization, number of participants attending specific activities or classes (e.g., GED classes, employment workshops) and receiving services (e.g., substance abuse counseling, home visits).

- **Participant Outcomes/Goal Attainment**: Number of participants achieving their goals (e.g., getting employment, obtaining GEDs, cessation of smoking, decreasing alcohol use).

- **Local Evaluation Design**: Type of research design used to compare outcomes for FSC participants to a reference group: one sample pretest-posttest; quasi-experimental comparison group; random assignment separate from the national evaluation; or random assignment as part of the national evaluation design.

- **Lessons Learned/Recommendations**: Recommendations regarding project services, organization, staffing, policy, etc; why or how the project changed as a result of experience; things that worked well or poorly; barriers to services.

- **Other**: Description of the impact of the FSC on the Head Start program, description of participant tracking systems, analysis of sample attrition data.

Each local evaluation report was read by two senior-level Abt staff reviewers who read through and summarized the contents of the available reports. Any discrepancies in categorizing the content were discussed on a case-by-case basis and resolved.

Summary of Local Evaluations

The local evaluation reports displayed a great deal of variability in terms of both approach and content. For example, there are reports that presented details about the methodology of local evaluation activities and included multiple tables of participation and impact data but did not mention the type of neighborhood or community in which the FSC was located or the type of staff in the project. Other reports provided rich and detailed case studies and descriptions of community collaborations, services, and staffing but did not present results of any impact analyses. One-third of the local evaluators presented information in nine to eleven of our evaluation categories; 43 percent covered six to eight categories. None of the evaluators included information in all twelve categories (excluding "other"). Local evaluators were not given specific instructions by ACYF on what to include in their local evaluation reports.

Summary of FSC Local Evaluation Components	
Categories	Percent of Projects (N=58)
Planning and Development	47
Community Context	38
Program Operations	67
Description of Services	62
Participant Case Studies	36
Participant Characteristics/Needs Assessment	90
Participant Perceptions	66
Staff and Community Perceptions	21
Participation Patterns	88
Participant Outcomes/Goal Attainment	95
Local Evaluation Design to Measure Impacts	67
Lessons Learned/Recommendations	76
Other	17

Thus, each local evaluator chose to focus on the topics and categories that were of most interest to them and the FSC project staff. Following are some examples taken from local evaluators' reports that illustrate the different evaluation components.

Planning and Development: Program Goals

The second year local evaluation report for the *Browning, Montana* FSC lists the project's four major goals and the objectives needed to accomplish each goal as presented in the grantee's proposal. The evaluator also presented evidence of the progress made toward meeting each objective by the second year. For example, the program's first goal was "to increase parent involvement by improving communications and services to Head Start families in the community". Under this goal, the local evaluator listed the following six objectives:

1) Complete 100% of family needs assessments each fall to identify family needs;
2) Conduct a minimum of three home visits each year with all families of Head Start children;
3) Publicize services of project through local media, community and parent meetings;
4) Complete data on all Head Start parents to be entered in computer for access and retrieval;
5) Develop a management team to assist in improving services to Head Start families; and
6) Incorporate Blackfeet cultural elements into training, materials development and learning to promote self-concept and self-esteem building.

Under each objective, using information from program quarterly reports and questionnaires completed by Head Start, parents, and community collaborators, the local evaluator reported the progress being made on completing the necessary tasks and activities. In addition, the local evaluator described the issues faced by the project in trying to achieve their goals and identified ten major strengths of the project.

Community Context

The local evaluators for the *Lawndale FSC in Chicago, Illinois* prepared one of the more comprehensive community descriptions. They included five areas of information in their description: census tract data; housing; public health status; gang violence; and urban renewal. In addition, they provided rich historical data about the area including demographic structure and economic changes. They also wrote a graphic description of the building in which the FSC was located, with phrases such as "*on the second floor of a low-rise Chicago Housing Authority building...in desperate need of repair...blackened remains from tenement fires...many of the windows are covered with plywood...and the grounds, devoid of any vegetation, turn into a virtually impassable swamp every time it rains*." These descriptions certainly gave the reader a picture of the context in which the FSC operated and illustrated several possible barriers to participation.

Participant Perceptions: Comments about the FSC

Local evaluators from *Grand Rapids, Minnesota* prepared a separate section of their report for each of their four FSC sites. Information and quotations within each section were organized around four topics: project director comments; participant characteristics; participant comments; and success stories. For example, the participant comments in one site listed three to five quotations of varying lengths from participants such as:

- *"The Family Service Center helped me get my bus license, a place to live and just helped us out a lot when we needed help."*
- "*Cindy* (FSC staff member) *always has time for us."*
- *"I'm with the Family Service Center, I have three kids, am a single mother and they've helped me with grief counseling because I lost my spouse last year. I have a medical deficiency child and they helped me with medical supplies and diapers, food and transportation to get back and forth to school. I am doing the energy assistance program. It gets me a job and off of the Welfare line. I get day care services. I have two kids in Head Start. If it weren't for the Family Service Center, I would be in Northland Mental Health."*
- *"It's nice to have the kitchen and food here -- the computer too. This is my social life right here. I didn't get out much before the FSC."*

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Three-fourths (76 percent) of the local evaluators either discussed lessons learned in the FSC demonstration or presented at least one recommendation to improve the FSC project or overcome barriers to service implementation. These include changes and modifications in program services or operations implemented during the course of the demonstration as well as recommendations or suggestions made at the end of the demonstration to improve or enhance future projects. The recommendations reported by local evaluators came from multiple

sources; some were made by the local evaluators, while others were obtained through interviews, surveys, and focus groups with FSC project staff, participants, and community service providers.

Recommendations and lessons learned were grouped into five major categories according to common programmatic themes: project administration, location/facilities, staffing, service delivery, and community collaboration. These recommendations and lessons learned center around four common themes that cut across the programmatic categories.

Recommendations

- **Grantee Characteristics**

  Local evaluators discussed the role and resources of the FSC grantee and its effect on the areas of project administration and staffing. Three out of the four reported factors facilitating project implementation focused on aspects of the grantee, such as: being well connected to community service providers; providing some direct services independently of other community agencies; and being available to provide support and supervision to the project. Integrating permanent employees from the grantee agency into the FSC to reduce staff turnover among temporary demonstration staff was also a suggested function for the grantee.

- **Documentation**

  Local evaluators recommended increased or improved documentation in the areas of project administration, service delivery, and community collaboration. Specific areas for improving or implementing documentation policies were in: program procedures; participant files; staff roles and responsibilities; and community contact names and information.

- **Accessibility**

  Accessibility of FSC staff and services was discussed in the areas of location/facilities and service delivery. Local evaluators recommended that the FSC staff and services be readily accessible to FSC families through: physically locating the FSC in an area convenient to FSC families; providing on-site services at the FSC; and providing transportation to bring participants to services.

- **Communication**

  The necessity for clear and adequate communication among staff, between staff and FSC participants, and between staff and community collaborators was also identified by local evaluators as a factor in the areas of project administration, staffing, and community collaboration.

Locally Reported Program Impacts

Designs Used in Local Evaluations

Fifteen percent of the evaluators analyzed program impacts over time in a pretest-posttest design; these were most likely to be evaluators from Wave I projects. Thirty-six percent of evaluators (most often from Wave II projects) had a comparison group design. Forty-nine percent of evaluators reported impacts based on a randomized design, as part of either their local evaluation or for the national evaluation. This shift from pretest-posttest to a comparison group and then a randomized design mirrors the change in instructions and requirements in the FSC grant announcements from ACYF.

Measures Used to Assess Impacts

In the FSC evaluation, there was considerable comparability across sites in the range of data collection instruments used. This was due, in large part, to the national evaluation that was being conducted at the same time as the local evaluations. All of the Wave III projects and the subset of Wave II projects that implemented a randomized design were required to use the national evaluation parent interview and the CASAS literacy test. In addition, a number of other Wave II projects chose to use all or part of the national evaluation parent interview for their local evaluation.

Analytic Strategies Used to Assess Impacts

The FSC local evaluators used a variety of strategies to assess and present the statistical significance of program impacts. The reports ranged from computer-generated tables of statistical output on a large number of variables to narrative discussion of impacts without any reporting of statistical tests or significance levels.

There are several reasons why local evaluators might not have reported statistical information. One reason could have been the audience for their reports. Evaluators might have wanted to keep the report less technical and focus on a discussion of findings for the FSC and Head Start directors. Another reason might be that most of the local evaluations had small sample sizes where there was limited statistical power to detect program effects. For example, nearly half of the FSC local evaluations that reported impacts had sample sizes of 20 to 39 adults per group at the time of the follow-up data collection.

Summary of Locally Reported Impacts

Only 39 of the 58 local evaluation reports that were reviewed included any impact findings. In any one outcome area, information on program impacts was included in only a subset of the 39 reports. **The percentages presented in this summary are based on the number of local evaluations that reported findings in each particular area, which ranged from 19**

to 26 local evaluations. This was done to more accurately reflect the percentage of projects reporting positive, no, or negative impacts.

Of all the areas measured, participation in education services and employability skills showed the highest proportion of positive findings. In both areas, more than half of the local evaluations found increased activity either between pretest and posttest or for the FSC participants relative to a comparison or control group from Head Start.

Summary of Impacts in the FSC Local Evaluations

Area of Impact Reported in Local Evaluations	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Participation in Education Classes (n=21)	57	43	0
Employment			
Employability (n=20)	55	40	5
Employment (n=23)	9	74	17
Public Assistance or Income (n=24)	21	67	12
Literacy			
Education Level	32	63	5
Literacy Skills (n=25)	40	56	4
Substance Abuse (n=26)	28	54	20

The local evaluations point to modest positive impacts of the FSCs on education and literacy levels. In particular, FSC participants were more likely than adults in Head Start to obtain a GED or other educational certificate. Positive program effects on literacy skills were also reported by local evaluations, although these results were most often based on self-ratings of reading ability or progress towards personal goals rather than on standardized tests.

There were very few local evaluations that reported positive program impacts on employment, income, or receipt of public assistance. In the area of substance abuse, the results were mixed, with most local studies reporting no impact or negative findings. There were few local evaluations covering areas beyond these primary focal areas of the FSC; although some local evaluations did report on psychological well-being, there were few positive impacts in this area.

Direct comparisons between the local and national evaluations should be made cautiously because the local evaluations included different FSC projects and individuals than the national evaluation, a broader range of research designs, and different analytic techniques. Nevertheless, the impacts presented in the local evaluations are quite similar to those of the national evaluation based on the aggregated data for the Wave III projects. The areas of

greatest impact reported in the national evaluation were participation in education, employment, and substance abuse services as well as involvement in an educational degree or certificate program. There were no significant program impacts from the national evaluation on employment, income, or public assistance, which mirror the areas with the fewest positive impacts reported by local evaluators. This suggests that these indicators of self-sufficiency are difficult to improve in a relatively short time-frame. In addition, the national evaluation did not find a decrease in the use of drugs or alcohol, an area where the local evaluations also reported limited impacts.

Conclusion and Recommendations for the Future

Given the central role accorded the national evaluation in reporting program impacts, what role was there to play for the FSC local evaluators both at the national and local level? ACYF correctly anticipated that it was beyond the scope of the national evaluator to be able to capture the unique qualities of each individual FSC program. However, judging from the wide range in quality and content of the local evaluation reports, there did not seem to be a clear consensus as to the purpose or use of these studies.

What steps could be taken to ensure that local evaluation reports are better utilized in future evaluations of federal programs?

- **Require an Evaluation Plan** from each local evaluator containing a list of research questions; description of proposed sample and research methodology; data collection plan; and analysis plan.

- **Specify an Evaluation Report Structure** for each local evaluator to cover in their reports: context; program services, operations, and staff; program participants; study design and methodology; outcomes/impacts; and lessons learned/recommendations.

- **Develop Common Set of Research Questions and Expectations** that ACYF is interested in addressing, such as *"What barriers do parents report that prevent them from fully utilizing Head Start services?"* and "*Are programs successful in identifying families' needs and goals?*"

- **Promote Communication Among Evaluators** by organizing a series of meetings around common themes to enable local evaluators to gain some perspective on the issues they face in their individual sites.

- **Build Local Capacity** to strengthen local evaluations through activities such as: promoting public dissemination of local evaluations; establishing internet-based information exchange among local evaluators; commission papers dealing with research and evaluation issues; providing assistance in obtaining statistical software programs for data analysis; and involving local projects in evaluation process to facilitate using evaluation findings for program improvement.

These are some recommendations intended to enhance the utility of local evaluations in national demonstration initiatives. There will be benefits to ACYF and other government agencies which carefully plan how local evaluation information is to be used in order to guide the evaluation process in a direction that will satisfy both client and program needs.

Chapter One
Introduction

This document focuses on the local evaluations of the Head Start Family Service Center (FSC) Demonstration Projects. The report includes a description of the content and designs of the local evaluations, and synthesizes some of the key findings about lessons learned and reported program impacts. It complements an earlier report prepared by Abt Associates that summarized program services and impacts across all FSC projects.[1] This report focuses on locally designed evaluations conducted by researchers at individual FSC projects.

This chapter provides an overview of the FSCs, followed by a brief description of the national and local evaluations. The next section discusses the process used to obtain and review the local evaluations. The last section outlines the contents of the full report.

Family Service Center Demonstration Projects

The Family Service Center Demonstration Projects were initiated in 1990 to provide a more comprehensive set of services to address problems of low literacy, employability, and substance abuse among Head Start families. These complex and often interrelated problems are likely to interfere with a family's ability to nurture their children and provide a positive home environment. There was concern among the Head Start community that the traditional program services were inadequate to address these problems. (Please see the Final Report from the National Evaluation for further details on the FSC program).

The FSCs were three-year demonstration projects funded by grants from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). All Head Start grantees were eligible to apply for the funds. A total of 66 FSC projects were funded by ACYF over three fiscal years[2]. The first 13 FSC projects were funded in September 1990 and were known as Wave I projects. In September 1991, an additional 28 projects (Wave II) were funded. Twenty-five Wave III projects were funded in September of 1992. At the conclusion of the demonstration period for each wave of projects, ACYF provided funds to the Head Start grantee to integrate FSC services into their regular Head Start program.

1 Swartz, J., Bernstein, L., and Levin, M. (1998). *Evaluation of the Head Start Family Service Center Demonstration Projects: Volume I: Final Report from the National Evaluation*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates Inc.

2 One Wave I project did not receive funds to continue operation for the full three years, reducing the number of operational FSCs to 65.

The FSC grant announcement described the program goals as developing innovative approaches to: identify problems of Head Start families; train staff to recognize families' needs; motivate family members to seek necessary help and address their own problems; provide needed services directly or link families with appropriate services in the community; and support families as they work toward solving their problems. Two key features of an FSC project were (a) collaborative efforts with community organizations to strengthen and expand services to families, and (b) intensive case management that included a needs assessment and integrated services for participating Head Start families.

Evaluation of the FSCs

The initiation of the FSCs coincided with efforts within ACYF to focus more attention and funds on Head Start research and evaluation. As Head Start approached its twenty-fifth anniversary, there were a series of meetings and discussions to develop recommendations for the future of the program, including the need to support and strengthen new research efforts. Many of these recommendations helped guide the evaluation strategies put into place for the FSCs. Prominent among these were the research directions for future Head Start research outlined by the advisory panel for the Head Start Evaluation Design Project; these included encouraging studies that identify quality program components, building evaluation into all demonstration projects and innovative program strategies, and placing greater emphasis on special subpopulations within Head Start (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1990). To mark the program's silver anniversary, the National Head Start Association convened an advisory panel (known as the "Silver Ribbon Panel") to look at all aspects of the Head Start program. Regarding research and evaluation, the panel recommended that Head Start examine the effects of various services on particular types of families as well as explore the impact of Head Start on parents, the whole family, and the community (National Head Start Association, 1990).

Two types of evaluation activities were specified for the FSC projects: (a) local evaluations conducted by independent evaluators hired by individual FSCs; and (b) a national evaluation of all projects conducted by Abt Associates. A memo distributed by the Head Start Bureau to all FSC grantees in February 1993 emphasized the critical importance of both the local and national evaluations to the success of the FSC program. In particular, it noted that:

> *... the national evaluation cannot capture nor adequately describe the complexities and uniqueness of the individual programs. This richness must derive from the individual local evaluations. The purpose of the local evaluations is to provide more intensive evaluation of the uniqueness of each site's particular program and populations served, and should include research addressing questions and issues of local interest. ACYF remains very committed to the successful development of an*

appropriate range of locally developed studies that will capture the richness of the Family Service Center effort.

Local Evaluation

The local evaluations were the responsibility of the individual FSC projects who hired an independent evaluator to conduct an evaluation responsive to the specific demonstration project. Wave I grantees were given considerable freedom in designing their local evaluations, and many focused on formative evaluations and collaborative feedback to program staff. The FSC grant announcements for Wave II projects listed a number of required components of their evaluation plan:

- Include both formative and summative information about program activities and participant outcomes.
- Develop an evaluation plan to address how families would be identified to participate in the demonstration, how each family's progress toward specific objectives would be monitored and evaluated, and also how to track outcomes for families dropping out of the FSC program.
- Propose an evaluation design that would allow for a comparison group and repeated measurement of child and family outcomes.
- Link up with a third-party evaluator, preferably from a college or university, to design and implement the evaluation plan.

The evaluation guidelines for the Wave III FSC projects were more prescriptive, with the specific requirement that they be able to recruit 80 families to be randomly assigned to the FSC or regular Head Start. FSC project directors were required to submit quarterly, annual and final evaluation reports to their project officer at the Head Start Bureau within ACYF[3].

All of the Wave II grantees submitted some description of an evaluation plan, either as part of the grant application or as a separate document appended to the application. Although not required, several Wave I grantees also submitted a description of their planned evaluation activities as well. (For this report, the grantee applications for the Wave III projects were not available.) Most of the local evaluators chosen for the Wave I and Wave II grantees were affiliated with a local college or university; the rest were independent consultants or affiliated with a local consulting or research firm. Most of the Wave I and Wave II local evaluators had advanced degrees (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D.) in a variety of disciplines such as education, social

3 The FSC projects also were required to submit quarterly and annual progress reports of program activities. These are not included in the current review.

work, public health, and psychology. Many had prior experience in evaluation work pertaining to community development, human services, and mental health.

National Evaluation

The national evaluation, conducted by Abt Associates Inc., was intended to describe the services and activities of the FSCs as well as to assess the overall impact of the projects on participating families, with particular focus on employability, substance abuse and adult literacy. Staff from Abt Associates worked with a consortium of local evaluators from Wave I and II projects to decide on a common set of variables and data collection measures. The local evaluators also were the liaison between the program and the national evaluation.

All of the Wave III projects (n=25) and ten of the 41 Wave I and II projects implemented a randomized design for the national evaluation in which families were assigned either to the FSC or to regular Head Start. Local evaluators for these 35 projects hired independent data collectors who administered a parent interview and literacy test at baseline and two follow-up points. These data were then sent to Abt Associates for processing and preparation of national evaluation reports; each local evaluator received computer diskettes with site-level data at the completion of each data collection period. Overall program impact for the national evaluation was investigated primarily by analyzing data from parent interviews and literacy tests across the 25 Wave III projects[4].

Summary of Local Evaluations

The purpose of this review is to summarize the content of the local evaluations and make this information accessible to a wider audience of policy makers and practitioners. The intent is to describe the types of local evaluations that were undertaken, recommendations made by local evaluators and program staff, and the findings that were reported. This section briefly describes the process of obtaining and reviewing the FSC local evaluation reports.

Obtaining Local Evaluation Reports

In the fall of 1997, Abt Associates asked the local evaluators of all 65 FSCs to send copies of their final reports and any other pertinent reports from their evaluation of the FSC project. As a result of these letters and further follow-up efforts, we received 58 local evaluation reports (89 percent) fairly evenly distributed across the three waves of projects[5]. The 58 reports

4 Wave I and II projects were not included in these analyses because of methodological concerns (e.g., baseline data were not collected until several months after random assignment).

5 A list of the local evaluators from whom we received reports appears in Appendix A.

include 10 of the 12 Wave I projects (83 percent), 25 of the 28 Wave II projects (89 percent), and 23 of the 25 Wave III projects (92 percent). Either the local evaluator or project director in each of the seven projects from whom we did not receive a report were also contacted. In all cases, the reports were no longer available.[6]

The evaluation reports received were primarily final reports (76 percent) or reports from the third year of the demonstration project (14 percent). The remainder were quarterly evaluation reports or annual reports from the first or second year of the demonstration. The goal was to obtain the final local evaluation report for each FSC project; however, these were not always available. When there was no final report, any other evaluation report sent by the evaluator was reviewed. A drawback to this approach is that information and themes presented in reports from the first or second year of FSC operations might not contain program impacts or findings presented in the final report. These early reports generally used qualitative methods, such as participant case studies or service component descriptions, that may not have been included in subsequent reports. They do, however, provide examples of the evaluation methodologies used and the types of issues that local evaluators chose to focus on during the FSC's early years. When evaluators sent more than one evaluation report, all information was reviewed. However, as stated earlier, no program progress reports were included in this review[7].

Reviewing Local Evaluation Reports

In order to summarize the content of local evaluation reports, we developed a list of categories to capture the full range of possible evaluation domains. These are listed below and discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

- **Planning and Development**: Discussion of project start-up activities, implementation issues, problems in start-up, and program goals.

- **Community Context**: Description of the community (e.g., socio-economic level, ethnicity), description of services available in the community, results of community needs assessment.

- **Program Operations**: Program organization, program management, staffing, community collaborator arrangements, location of services, advisory boards, plan of "client flow" (e.g., recruitment, frequency of contact, etc.).

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6 The Wave I demonstration projects had ended more than four years ago, in October 1993. The Wave II demonstration projects ended in October of 1994 and the Wave III in October 1995. Although most FSC projects were integrated into the larger Head Start program, there were no longer funds to support local evaluators and most ended their association with the project.

7 Local evaluation reports that were a chapter in a final program progress report were considered to be the final evaluation report and these chapters were reviewed. A full list of the types of reports reviewed appears in Appendix B.

- **Description of Services**: Content of service components, description of actual services offered, program activities.

- **Participant Case Studies**: Individual accounts of participants or families in the program.

- **Participant Characteristics/Needs Assessment**: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of FSC participants (e.g., ethnicity, age, marital status, education level), description of needs of participants.

- **Participant Perceptions**: FSC participant's satisfaction with staff services or overall program.

- **Staff and Community Perceptions**: Opinions and assessment of issues affecting Head Start participants and the implementation of the FSC project.

- **Participation Patterns**: Service utilization, number of participants attending specific activities or classes (e.g., GED classes, employment workshops) and receiving services (e.g., substance abuse counseling, home visits).

- **Participant Outcomes/Goal Attainment**: Number of participants achieving their goals (e.g., getting employment, obtaining GEDs, cessation of smoking, decreasing alcohol use).

- **Local Evaluation Design**: Type of research design used to compare outcomes for FSC participants to a reference group: one sample pretest-posttest; quasi-experimental comparison group; random assignment separate from the national evaluation; or random assignment as part of the national evaluation design.

- **Lessons Learned/Recommendations**: Recommendations regarding project services, organization, staffing, policy, etc; why or how the project changed as a result of experience; things that worked well or poorly; barriers to services.

- **Other**: Description of the impact of the FSC on the Head Start program, description of participant tracking systems, analysis of sample attrition data.

The review process involved five senior-level Abt staff, all familiar with the FSC national evaluation and project activities. After reading through and summarizing the contents of the available reports, each reviewer filled out a form indicating the categories that were covered in the report, examples of each area and additional comments. Each local evaluation report was read by two staff reviewers. Any discrepancies in filling out the review form were discussed on a case-by-case basis and resolved.

Organization of this Report

Our review of the local evaluations is organized into four chapters. Chapter Two presents the inventory of local evaluation reports based on the forms completed by Abt reviewers, and provides examples of the content of local evaluations. Chapter Three discusses the lessons learned and recommendations about the FSCs made by project staff and local evaluators. Chapter Four summarizes the impacts of the FSC reported by local evaluators, and Chapter Five discusses the contribution of local evaluations to the evaluation of federal programs.

Chapter Two
Summary of Local Evaluations

This chapter summarizes the various approaches to program evaluation represented by the local evaluations of the FSCs. No attempt has been made to judge the evaluation reports in terms of format, quality of writing, or evaluation methodology. Instead, the goal is to provide examples of the different evaluation strategies undertaken by local evaluators, and the types of information contained in the FSC evaluation reports. The illustrative examples used in this chapter are not necessarily those with the highest quality commentary or the best methodology but rather were chosen to represent the different and alternative ways that local evaluators have reported on the FSC projects.

Exhibit 2.1 summarizes the themes and issues represented in the local evaluation reports (additional detail is provided in Appendix B). Within each category, the percentage of local evaluators who reported on at least one aspect of the topic is indicated. The information they provided ranged from minimal to detailed. For example, included in the 67 percent of reports that contain information about program operations are projects that described all aspects of program operations such as project management, staffing, arrangements with community collaborators, location of services, and advisory board function as well as reports that only listed the number or type of FSC staff.

There was much variability found among the local evaluation reports. For example, there are reports that presented details about the methodology of local evaluation activities and included multiple tables of participation and impact data but did not mention the type of neighborhood or community in which the FSC was located or the type of staff in the project. Other reports provided rich and detailed case studies and descriptions of community collaborations, services, and staffing but did not present results of any impact analyses. One-third of the local evaluators presented information in nine to eleven of our evaluation categories; 43 percent covered six to eight categories. None of the evaluators included information in all twelve categories (excluding “other”). Our understanding is that local evaluators were not given specific instructions by ACYF on what to include in their local evaluation reports. Thus, each local evaluator chose to focus on the topics and categories that were of most interest to them and the FSC project staff.

Exhibit 2.1

Summary of FSC Local Evaluation Components

Categories	Percent of Projects (N=58)
Planning and Development	47
Community Context	38
Program Operations	67
Description of Services	62
Participant Case Studies	36
Participant Characteristics/Needs Assessment	90
Participant Perceptions	66
Staff and Community Perceptions	21
Participation Patterns	88
Participant Outcomes/Goal Attainment	95
Local Evaluation Design to Measure Impacts[a]	67
One-Sample Pretest-Posttest	10
Quasi-Experimental Comparison Group	24
Random Assignment at Local Level	5
National Evaluation Random Assignment	33
Lessons Learned/Recommendations	76
Other	17

a Percentages for subcategories of each evaluation design add to greater than 67 percent because three reports included two types of research designs (national evaluation plus a local design).

The remainder of this chapter defines each of the categories presented in Exhibit 2.1 and provides examples taken from local evaluators' reports that illustrate the different evaluation components.

Planning and Development

Planning and development includes a description of project start-up activities and the issues or problems related to the projects' early development and implementation. Examples of topics contained in this category include:

- hiring and training staff;
- selecting and renovating offices;
- setting program goals;
- developing service components; and
- establishing contracts with community service providers.

This information often is useful in understanding start-up problems that might affect implementation of services. This is particularly true in relatively short grant programs such as the FSC where program services were expected to begin quickly after notification of the award.

Almost half (47 percent) of the local evaluators discussed some aspect of project planning and development in their reports. However, most were quite brief and may have mentioned only one issue, such as staff hiring or training. This issue may have been discussed more fully in reports from the first year of the project. (As discussed in Chapter One, very few of the reports that we received for review were from the first year of the project.)

Project Start-up

The local evaluators for the *Boston, Massachusetts* FSC discussed the early tasks associated with project start-up, such as recruiting staff, obtaining office space and supplies, developing relationships with the grantee agency and within the community, and identifying and recruiting participants. They also described specific administrative problems and confusion in the case management system and their effects on participation. For example, local evaluators explain that initially, the Boston FSC had two case managers, one of whom also acted as project director and had additional administrative responsibilities that limited his time available to complete needs assessments, conduct home visits, and initiate services with the families in his caseload. The project director eventually transferred most of his caseload to an FSC employment counselor but this occurred four to five months after the project had started and most of his families had already dropped out of the FSC, had never been located, or were inactive.

Program Goals

The second year local evaluation report for the *Browning, Montana* FSC lists the project's four major goals and the objectives needed to accomplish each goal as presented in the grantee's proposal. The evaluator also presented evidence of the progress made toward meeting each objective by the second year. For example, the program's first goal was "to increase parent involvement by improving communications and services to Head Start families in the community". Under this goal, the local evaluator listed the following six objectives:

1) Complete 100% of family needs assessments each fall to identify family needs;
2) Conduct a minimum of three home visits each year with all families of Head Start children;
3) Publicize services of project through local media, community and parent meetings;
4) Complete data on all Head Start parents to be entered in computer for access and retrieval;
5) Develop a management team to assist in improving services to Head Start families; and
6) Incorporate Blackfeet cultural elements into training, materials development and learning to promote self-concept and self-esteem building.

Under each objective, using information from program quarterly reports and questionnaires completed by Head Start, parents, and community collaborators, the local evaluator reported the progress being made on completing the necessary tasks and activities. In addition, the local evaluator described the issues faced by the project in trying to achieve their goals and identified ten major strengths of the project.

Barriers to Program Implementation

The *Lexington, Kentucky* local evaluators presented a list of several barriers that hindered a timely implementation and explained how each issue affected project start-up. They divided the barriers into four categories: administrative; program implementation; client access; and evaluation. Among the barriers and problems they felt affected the project directly were: notification of funding immediately preceding the project start date; difficulty locating appropriate facilities for case managers' offices; lack of community resources in rural areas; and extended illness and staff turnover among case managers.

Community Context

Community context includes a description of the neighborhood or community in which the FSC was located. This description typically included factors such as geography of the area: major industries or employers; population ethnicity, socio-economic status and education level; illegal drug use; and a description of services available in the community. It is useful to know about the community context because community characteristics could have created

barriers for the FSC if, for example, there were limited services available for collaboration or services that did not match the needs of participants. In addition, characteristics such as employment opportunities and availability of public transportation could have reduced the likelihood of positive program impacts.

Thirty-eight percent of the local evaluation reports included a description of the community in which the FSC was located. A few reports presented very brief sections with only a sentence or two about the urbanicity, ethnic diversity, or the economy of the community. Other evaluators provided a detailed description of the community and the population, as in the examples below.

Community Context

The local evaluators for the *Lawndale FSC in Chicago, Illinois* prepared one of the more comprehensive community descriptions. They included five areas of information in their description: census tract data; housing; public health status; gang violence; and urban renewal. In addition, they provided rich historical data about the area including demographic structure and economic changes. They also wrote a graphic description of the building in which the FSC was located, with phrases such as "*on the second floor of a low-rise Chicago Housing Authority building...in desperate need of repair...blackened remains from tenement fires...many of the windows are covered with plywood...and the grounds, devoid of any vegetation, turn into a virtually impassable swamp every time it rains*." These descriptions certainly gave the reader a picture of the context in which the FSC operated and illustrated several possible barriers to participation.

The evaluation report from *Bath, Maine* also provided a detailed description of the community, including factors such as population, ethnic composition, income level, unemployment rate, and major employers. In addition, this evaluation report contained the results of an assessment of human service needs in the Head Start project area conducted by a community task force. Priority problems and unmet needs in the service area that were reported included: child care; family crisis; health care; housing; substance abuse; employment; transportation; eligibility restrictions; fuel assistance; literacy education; and limited program vacancies.

Local evaluators from the *Minneapolis, Minnesota* project presented a concise but very comprehensive description of the neighborhood in which the FSC operated, including specific factors such as teenage pregnancy rate, number of public housing units, literacy rate, and incidence of utility shutoff. These evaluators also compared the site's population to the state on other issues such as high school graduation rate.

Program Operations

Program operations includes aspects of the project such as the program management, staffing pattern and functions, community collaboration arrangements, location of services, and the work of the advisory board. This category also includes the plan for the "client flow," which is how participants were recruited, enrolled, and assigned to FSC services.

Two-thirds (67 percent) of the local evaluators described some aspect of program operations. Typically, evaluations included information about the type or number of FSC staff, as well as the community collaborators and the services they provided. The staffing configuration of the FSC is a key ingredient in program operations and, although most local evaluators listed the FSC staff, only a few described the staffing pattern and management plan. Only a few local evaluation reports covered program operations in depth and described the specifics of how projects worked with families.

Program Operations

The *Aberdeen, Washington* local evaluation report provided a detailed section on program operations that included thorough descriptions of the grantee organization, staffing pattern and decision-making model, training needs, quality assurance processes, caseload management, referral and screening process, project completion criteria, relationship with Head Start core services, interagency collaboration, and a project budget analysis. Also included was a copy of the project's list of 26 "operational and service objectives." In addition, this report was one of the very few that provided a comprehensive description of the flow of services, beginning with the recruitment process and how participants were approached and continuing on to the participants' first contact with their outreach advocate and the development of their goals and initial service plan. The referral process to community resources also was discussed, along with the four-week process of termination. In addition to providing all of the details involved in the program's work with families, this report also included the program's philosophy, the reasons behind the advocates' actions, and the staff's struggle between empowering and enabling families.

Staffing

The *Ignacio, Colorado* report described project staffing from several angles, beginning with a list of the staff, including the education level of the management staff and whether they worked full- or part-time. Staffing in that project included a director who was also the Head Start director, an assistant director, a family advocate coordinator, a chemical health coordinator/administrative assistant, and six family advocates. The family advocates had dual roles and also were Head Start teachers. In addition to summarizing staff responsibilities, the report included a discussion of the needs and provision of inservice training and the changes in staffing made as a result of feedback from the local evaluation (e.g., increasing the number of full-time family advocates in the project's second year).

Community Collaboration

The local evaluator from *Bridgeport, Connecticut* provided a realistic account of the program's frustration in trying to develop a male involvement program in collaboration with other community agencies. The project brought together a group of community organizations involved with local and state public assistance, literacy, and employment services and asked a project officer for the federally-sponsored Job Opportunity and Basic Skills (JOBS) program in Washington, D.C. to run the meeting. The goal of the collaboration was to "find a way to support fathers in their efforts to gain education and employment so that the program could offer a full family program." Collaboration was necessary because the FSC had found that the rules and entitlement policies of some of these agencies discouraged and sometimes penalized fathers from being involved with their families when they were trying to gain education and employment skills. FSC staff had hoped that the federal project officer could influence the other agencies to make the necessary changes that would facilitate the FSC's development of a more comprehensive service delivery for families. Unfortunately, the other agencies could not be persuaded to "be creative" or do anything differently, and the FSC staff did not have the resources to follow through on subsequent suggestions by the consulting federal project officer. Although it was not successful, the program's attempt to establish a productive collaboration was described by the local evaluator in a way that could be informative to others seeking community collaborations.

Description of Services

A description of services provides information about the type and amount of activities that were offered in the FSC. This information also helps in interpreting program service utilization and participant impact data. For example, if minimal substance abuse services were available in a site, one would not expect to see high participation rates or a large program impact in this area. Local evaluators often are better positioned than national evaluators to provide this type of process data.

Almost all of the local evaluation reports noted that the FSC focused on services in the areas of literacy, employment, and substance abuse. However, only 62 percent of the reports included a description of the content of the services provided with less focus on the frequency of services offered. This could be due to the fact that the local evaluators focused more on program outcomes than on descriptions of services. Also, each project director prepared quarterly and annual progress reports of program processes, and local evaluators may have felt that this information was conveyed to ACYF through this mechanism. Several local evaluation reports described the services that case managers and on-site specialists provided at the FSC project and listed the classes, workshops, training, and other programs offered through collaborating agencies in each of the three FSC focus areas.

Substance Abuse Services

The *Lansing, Michigan* report specified the goals of each component and, in some cases, provided details about the activities conducted. For example, the report noted that the substance abuse component focused primarily on prevention activities and included a play performed several times and a series of six workshops, called "Healthy Lifestyles in a Substance Abusing World," that were offered twice each year. The report also provided a description of these activities, naming the themes in the play such as "substance abuse in the family" and "the negative impact on members of a family," and the method of teaching for the workshops (e.g., "didactic portion followed by discussion period").

Case Management Services

The *Lexington, Kentucky* local evaluation report provided detailed descriptions of the services provided on-site by staff and off-site at other community agencies. In particular, this report provided an in-depth view of case management services within the FSC. The description began with the case managers' initial activities, which included conducting family needs assessments and developing family service plans. The description also noted the project's initial focus for all case management activities -- family stabilization. They defined this as "the ability to avert crises" and obtain resources to meet the family's immediate needs (e.g., food, housing, transportation). The report also indicated the number of stabilization services and referrals initiated by the case managers each quarter and found that the number and hours were more numerous during the first two quarters, which also coincided with the family's first several months of enrollment in the FSC. The description of case management services included the more common activities of case managers, such as providing advocacy on behalf of families and providing many types of support. In addition, the description of case management discussed the importance of accessibility of case managers to the families.

Center-Based FSC Program

The local evaluator for the Bridgeport, Connecticut FSC described the center-based program that included support groups, literacy and employment services, counseling, and recreation. The FSC was co-located with Head Start and the grantee in a large community center that was well established within the community and offered a myriad of services and activities for children and adults. The FSC provided an intensive four-day a week program from November through May with a summer program during June and July. FSC parents participated in a wide range of services and activities each day which included: literacy activities such as GED and ESL classes, tutoring, and computer aided instruction; employment services such as training, job skills, and internships; substance abuse services such as education and prevention classes, counseling and aftercare; parenting activities, and health education. In addition, the FSC case managers were available in the building to meet with families and handle problems or issues as they arose. The local evaluator included several examples of weekly schedules for FSC parents attending the summer program. A typical day for one parent began at 9:00 a.m. with an English class, followed by a math class and then a meeting with a case manager. From 11:15 until 1:00, the parent worked as an employment intern and at 1:00 had lunch. The day ended with an hour-long family meeting.

Case Studies

Case studies can provide rich descriptions of individual families and bring to life the experiences of real FSC participants. These stories can range from very short vignettes describing an individual participant's experiences to detailed accounts of a family's background and progress through the program.

Thirty-six percent of the local evaluators presented some type of case study, a personal story, or a family vignette. Some of these were only a paragraph long and written to illustrate a particular family issue or FSC activity. Most of the case studies, however, were of a more detailed nature and included family background information, problems and issues during the family's FSC enrollment, and the way that the FSC affected the family's functioning through interaction and service provision.

Evaluators of Wave II projects were more likely to include case studies in their local evaluations (56 percent) than evaluators of Wave I (20 percent) or Wave III projects (22 percent). Evaluators obtained this information in a variety of ways, including interviews, record reviews, and staff interviews. For the most part, local evaluators presented case studies that centered on FSC participants who were successful in reaching their goals. The majority of case studies focused on individuals, but a few evaluators provided profiles of different groups of participants (e.g., single parents, welfare recipients, young parents) to illustrate the types of individuals who benefitted from the FSC.

Case Study Process

Six case studies were a major component of the *Lowell, Massachusetts* local evaluation. The case studies were very detailed, providing background histories and experiences with the FSC, and included quotations from the participants. In addition, the local evaluator presented the methodology for the case studies and described the process for recruiting and selecting participants, scheduling interviews, and audio recording the interviews. The evaluator also reported contextual information about each family, such as childhood poverty, alcoholism, sexual abuse, racial discrimination, teenage pregnancy, not completing school, and difficulty finding work. The case study section ended with a discussion of similarities and differences among the six cases comparing factors such as length of time in community, education level, unstable childhoods, etc.

FSC Experiences

The *Boston, Massachusetts* report provided case studies of three FSC participants. Each case study included a brief description of the family's background but mostly focused on the participants' experiences with the FSC. The case studies were designed to answer four questions:

- What factors brought the family into contact with Head Start and the FSC?
- What kind of help did the FSC provide?
- How would the participant characterize his/her relationships with FSC staff?
- Where does the participant want to go in his/her life?

Case studies were completed on three participants who were helped by the FSC: Sandra, a 29-year-old African-American mother of six children who obtained a high school diploma; Francoise, a 40-year-old mother of two children who completed two years of English-as-a-second language classes and a nursing assistant certificate course; and Michael, a 32-year-old African-American father of three children who enrolled in a job training program
.

Participant Summaries

The local evaluator from *Wheeling, West Virginia* took a less traditional approach to presenting case studies and included two to four very short summaries of participants within each section of the report describing literacy, employment, substance abuse, and health and wellness. For example, in the section of the report describing the FSC's employment program, very short personal stories were presented about the following three FSC participants: Patty, who received her Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate and hoped to open a family day care home; Joan, who discovered her secretarial skills while working at Head Start and applied for a job at a local bank; and Cindy, whose volunteer child care work at Head Start helped her secure a paid position at a local day care center.

Participant Characteristics/Needs Assessment

Nearly all of the local evaluations (90 percent) included descriptions of the FSC or Head Start participants' characteristics prior to enrolling in the FSC. In most cases, this information was presented as a backdrop for FSC services, to describe the level of need in employment, literacy and substance abuse. For evaluators using any type of comparison or control group design, this information was sometimes presented to show the comparability of the FSC and comparison group prior to services. In these discussions, most local evaluators included information about ethnicity, age, marital status, education level, employment status, and

income. Some local evaluators presented a description of participants based on a survey or needs assessment. Many of the Wave III local evaluators presented site-specific data on participant characteristics that Abt Associates had sent them from the national evaluation.

Detailed Participant Characteristics

The Bemidji, Minnesota local evaluation report contained 29 pie charts and accompanying text that described the FSC participants upon entry into the project. The majority of these variables were included in the national evaluation. Key characteristics of participants in this project included:

- ninety-five percent were female;
- about one third were 25 years old or less and another third were between the ages of 15 and 30;
- eighty-seven percent were Caucasian and almost 13 percent were American Indian;
- only 15 percent did not have a high school diploma or GED and over half had some post-secondary education;
- about one-third had full- or part-time employment in all of the 12 previous months and about one fourth of the participants had not worked at all in the previous year; and
- the median monthly income for the participants in the three months prior to the FSC was reported to be $995.

Other variables reported by the evaluators included: county of residence; marital status; availability of a car; household composition; educational activities in the past year; diplomas, certificates, or GEDs received in the past year; ownership of library card; number of books read in the past three months; hours spent reading in the past week; visits to the library in the past three months; job training in the past three months; weeks in job training in the past three months; and alcohol/drug treatment in past year.

Comparison of FSC and Comparison Families

The *Wave II Philadelphia, Pennsylvania* local evaluation report presented an exhibit comparing the FSC and comparison families on variables that were part of the national evaluation parent interview, such as: age; number of children; education level; marital status; income; receipt of AFDC; and cigarette smoking. The local evaluator also developed a social support scale that was administered to the same sample of parents. The scale indicated the frequency and sources of informal social support that Head Start parents received from family and friends, such as taking the child to school, taking the child to the doctor or dentist, attending teacher conferences, and taking the child on outings.

Summary Description of Participants

The local evaluation report for the *Glendale, California* FSC presented several pages of descriptive information about FSC participants. For most variables, the local evaluators compared participants in the first year of the project with participants in the second year of the project. For others, they only presented information from one year of the evaluation. The information was based on the results from family needs assessments and included considerable demographic, financial, and health data. In addition, the local evaluators also focussed on literacy, employment, substance abuse, family practices, individual emotional states, language skills, and housing. Examples of the type of information reported by local evaluators in two of these areas are presented below.

- **Language skills**. Spanish was the primary language for 53% of the Year 1 participants, Armenian for 33%, English for ten percent, and the remaining four percent spoke other languages. Year 2 participants were reported to be similar with regard to primary languages spoken and reported English being a secondary language in 37% of the homes. Sixty-five of Year 2 participants reported that limited English skills prevented their employment. In addition, over 80% of Year 2 participants reported that they would like to improve their English-speaking skills, 73% wanted to improve their English-reading skills, and 76% wanted to improve their English-writing skills.

- **Housing.** Sixty-five of Year 2 participants reported having adequate housing and nine percent reported being homeless. In addition, 89% considered their housing situation to be safe. About 20% had past difficulty paying for their housing and 38% reported interest in receiving housing assistance. About 21% were receiving public housing assistance.

Participant Perceptions

As a way of measuring program success and of improving the project, local evaluators reported FSC participants' satisfaction with and reactions to the FSC services and staff, including satisfaction with specific services, need for additional or improved services or project operations, knowledge about community resources, and their relationship with a case manager.

Two-thirds (66 percent) of the local evaluators reported participant perceptions. The majority described the methods used to obtain this information, including telephone surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups. Local evaluators indicated the results of these surveys in a variety of ways, such as presenting the individual responses of participants to each question, providing summaries of responses to each item in a survey, or displaying frequencies from a computer printout for each survey question.

Participants' Reactions to Substance Abuse Information

The *Los Molinos, California* report described the process and results of soliciting participants' reactions to a drug and alcohol information packet that was developed by the project. According to the evaluators, the information packet and a short questionnaire were given to each participant during a home visit by the drug and alcohol counselor. The questionnaire contained four questions asking participants about the helpfulness of the packet and the visit and asked for other suggestions to improve the distribution of this information to FSC families. The counselor returned for a follow-up visit to obtain the completed questionnaire and discuss any other issues that the participants might have had. The evaluators reported that through the questionnaire and follow-up visit, families requested information about more than a dozen issues, including self-esteem, a schedule of 12-step meetings, Alcoholics Anonymous local listings, nicotine addiction, HIV/AIDS information, domestic violence, and a drug/alcohol pamphlet for children. The project responded by ordering literature on a number of these topics and making them available at the FSC.

Participants' Satisfaction with FSC Services

The *Escanaba, Michigan* local evaluators measured participant satisfaction using anonymous questionnaires which were included with the year-end interviews conducted by case managers. Program participants were given a two-page, 40-item Service User Satisfaction Index and instructed to complete it independently and seal it in an envelope for the evaluator. Each item in the questionnaire had a five-point response scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Examples of items are as follows:

- The case manager took my problems very seriously.
- The Family Service Center staff could never understand anyone like me.
- Overall, the Family Service Center has been very helpful to me.
- Since I've been going to the FSC, my life is more messed up than ever.
- The child care provided by FSC was very important to me.
- Being involved with the Family Service Center was a waste of time.

The responses to each question were presented in the report via computer printouts of frequencies from a statistical program.

Participants' Comments about the FSC

Local evaluators from *Grand Rapids, Minnesota* prepared a separate section of their report for each of their four FSC sites. Information and quotations within each section were organized around four topics: project director comments; participant characteristics; participant comments; and success stories. For example, the participant comments in one site listed three to five quotations of varying lengths from participants such as:

- *"The Family Service Center helped me get my bus license, a place to live and just helped us out a lot when we needed help."*
- *"Cindy* (FSC staff member) *always has time for us."*
- *"I'm with the Family Service Center, I have three kids, am a single mother and they've helped me with grief counseling because I lost my spouse last year. I have a medical deficiency child and they helped me with medical supplies and diapers, food and transportation to get back and forth to school. I am doing the energy assistance program. It gets me a job and off of the Welfare line. I get day care services. I have two kids in Head Start. If it weren't for the Family Service Center, I would be in Northland Mental Health."*
- *"It's nice to have the kitchen and food here -- the computer too. This is my social life right here. I didn't get out much before the FSC."*

Staff and Community Perceptions

In addition to participant perceptions, local evaluators also conducted surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups with Head Start staff, FSC staff, staff from collaborating agencies, and community members to determine their perceptions and assessment of issues affecting Head Start participants and the implementation of the FSC project.

Employer Survey

To determine the employment opportunities of Head Start parents, the *San Marcos, Texas* local evaluators conducted a survey of 80 employers in the community who had the potential to hire Head Start parents. The sample included: small retail stores; large retail complexes; manufacturing companies; city, state, and federal agencies; and service providers such as fast food businesses, motels, and child care agencies. The survey focused on employers' attitudes toward hiring low-income workers and their hiring strategies. In addition to the survey, the evaluators convened a focus group of employers to discuss their hiring practices and patterns. The survey results suggested additional areas and issues that job training programs for Head Start parents should be emphasizing. The FSC staff used the survey results to work with parents on issues such as social interaction skills, appropriate dress for job interviews, hygiene, dependability and punctuality, time management, and customer service.

Staff Surveys

The *Springfield, Massachusetts* local evaluators gathered information about staff perceptions using several different methods. On a quarterly basis, beginning October 1993 and ending in June 1995, evaluators distributed staff survey forms, called the Staff Performance Inventory (SPI), to all FSC staff. The SPI included topics such as:

- Amount of time spent addressing each goal;
- Most time-consuming staff work;
- Most frequent people contacts;
- Greatest satisfactions; and
- Perceptions of project progress.

The evaluators summarized the results of the SPI for each program year and presented individual tables of quarterly results for four quarters between fiscal year 1994 and fiscal year 1995. Because several FSC staff left the program in June 1995 and several more staff were expected to leave before the final quarter of 1995, evaluators replaced the SPI for the last four months of the project with staff interviews which included a series of questions about FSC aspirations, job expectations, job satisfaction, and client services. In addition to FSC staff interviews, evaluators also presented the results of Head Start teacher surveys conducted at two data points during the final two years of the project. In these surveys, teachers were asked to provide descriptive information about individual FSC children and families, such as household composition, education and employment status of parents, frequency of family member contacts with Head Start staff, family functioning, and child's functioning.

Twenty-one percent of the local evaluators reported staff and community perceptions. Some evaluators collected this information during one or two significant time periods of the demonstration, such as after the first few months of project implementation or at the end of the final year of the demonstration. Others collected this information at multiple times or at regular intervals throughout the project (e.g., quarterly).

Participation Patterns

Participation patterns are a necessary link between services offered and impacts on employment, literacy, and substance abuse. Participation refers to service utilization, that is, the number of participants attending specific activities or receiving services such as GED classes, employment workshops, substance abuse counseling, or home visits. The data presented in some reports were not always specific to FSC activities and may have included participation by families in other Head Start and community services.

The majority of local evaluators (88 percent) devoted some discussion to this category, but the presentation of data and the amount of detail varied considerably. Many of the local evaluation reports included exhibits listing the number of parents who received various services; a few of the evaluation reports provided more comprehensive descriptions of service utilization. Participation information was obtained through a variety of sources, including program attendance records, staff surveys, and self-report by participants. In addition to presenting information about participation patterns, several local evaluators also discussed attrition and nonparticipation.

Attendance at FSC Activities

The local evaluation report for the *Ignacio, Colorado* FSC presented an exhibit showing the number of participants involved in 17 different types of services and activities during each year of the project. Among the services listed were case management, adult basic education, GED preparation, family literacy, job skills training, parent support groups, and "various workshops open to Head Start, FSC clients, and the local community." The service category with the highest number of participants was case management, with a total of 113 participants served over the project's three years. The category with the lowest number of participants was substance abuse treatment, with a total of four treatment referrals during the three-year demonstration.

The *Gainesville, Florida* local evaluation report summarized participation in three different ways. First, the evaluators presented exhibits indicating the number of FSC participants in 13 specific activities related to FSC services in literacy, employment, and substance abuse. Next, the evaluators presented average attendance at each of these activities as reported by the staff. The evaluators also asked the activity leaders and service providers to rate the participation of the enrolled parents on a five-point scale, with "1" meaning low participation and "5" meaning high participation. Average ratings of participants were presented for each of the 13 FSC activities.

The *Somerville, Massachusetts* local evaluators provided narrative descriptions of participation as reported by staff. At the end of the report, local evaluators summarized participation as follows: *"The FSC served an estimated 145 family members of Head Start children. More than half had received literacy services, although only three completed GEDs and four had completed ESL programs. Twelve people were reported to have obtained full- or part-time employment through FSC efforts... The program reported that 33 people had been involved in substance abuse treatment for their own substance abuse*." The local evaluators also presented information about participation patterns at different periods of the demonstration, as shown in the examples below.

- *"The case manager documented contacts with approximately 65 Head Start parents in the first 18 months of the project."*
- *"Fifteen families received substantial assistance with literacy, employment, or substance abuse problems during the 1991-1992 school year."*
- *"During the last half of the project period, referrals to GED and ESL classes increased, as did the number of parents completing courses. Many fewer parents signed up for and completed employment skills training programs, as was predicted..."*

Attrition

The *Boston, Massachusetts* local evaluation report suggested four factors that might have caused families initially enrolled in the project to drop out by the second year: lack of interest or lack of understanding about the project; enrollment at other Head Start centers where a few FSC families were on waiting lists; moving out of the area; and staff confusion over case assignment.

The *Escanaba, Michigan* local evaluation also provided anecdotal information about families who had dropped out, citing reasons such as conflicts with work schedule, poor health, transportation, misunderstanding about the FSC, and poor motivation.

Similarly, local evaluators for the *Ypsilanti, Michigan* presented a list of 11 reasons for missed service contacts (e.g., illness, problems with transportation, bad weather) and reported the number of participants who were unable to participate in an FSC activity for each reason.

Participant Outcomes/Goal Attainment

Participant outcomes refer to the status or achievements of program participants. Outcomes do not necessarily include measurement of program impacts, which are the difference between how participants did and how they *would have done* in the absence of the FSC. For example, outcomes might include information on the number of participants who achieved personal goals in the different FSC service areas, such as obtaining employment, receiving a GED, or decreasing alcohol consumption. Nearly all of the local evaluators (95 percent) presented outcome information, both quantitative and qualitative. Some included summary tables listing the number of participants who achieved goals in each of the three FSC service areas. Others presented individual charts of each service area and the number of clients achieving related goals. Local evaluators also reported outcome information for individual participants via goal achievement charts or personal stories.

Goal Attainment

The local evaluation report for the *Lancaster, Pennsylvania* FSC is an example of a report with detailed information about the progress and goal achievement of FSC participants. Included among the outcome exhibits were the following:

- Client outcomes in 15 different FSC service areas and the number of first-, second-, and third-year clients who achieved each outcome.
- Outcomes for 130 clients in the third year that listed 13 problem/need areas; corresponding goals; the number of clients who achieved the goal; whether the achievement was major, some, or none; and the percent that were "major/some."
- A list of 11 third-year clients who achieved success in two or more of the three FSC focus areas.
- A list of 13 problem/need areas, related client goals, and an operationalized definition of what would be considered "major achievement," "some achievement" and "no achievement."
- A series of three exhibits, one in each FSC service area, listing approximately 30 clients by initials along with factors such as goals, accomplishments, rating of outcome success, and attendance.

In addition, the local evaluator provided three examples of participants who had achieved all of their goals. Each case was presented in an exhibit that included the participant's problem/need area (e.g., "community employment"), the outcome for each problem/need area (e.g., "obtained employment at a hair salon"), and an evaluation rating for the outcome (e.g., "major achievement").

Local Evaluation Designs to Measure Impacts

This section presents various examples of how locally reported impacts were presented. We discuss impacts in further detail in Chapter Four of this report. Program impacts refer to differences in behavior, knowledge or status due to FSC services. Impacts are estimated in relation to some reference point, such as the client's situation before entering the program or the situation of a comparison group. Evaluations that reported posttest only data (i.e., status at the end of FSC or follow-up period) are not included in this impact category.

The three most common research designs used by the local evaluators to collect impact data were: one-sample pretest-posttest, quasi-experimental or nonequivalent comparison group, and random assignment. We treated these designs as hierarchical, so that if an evaluator presented some data (e.g., participation in literacy classes) only on changes over time in the program group and other data (e.g., percent employed) for both the FSC participants and a comparison group, we counted this as a comparison group design in our classification scheme.

Local evaluators who reported pretest-posttest data with a comparison group were classified under the comparison group category. Thirty-nine percent of local evaluators used one of these three designs for their local evaluations.

Outcomes for Subgroups of Participants

The local evaluators for the *San Jose, California* FSC project presented several exhibits of outcomes that compared the three ethnic groups served by the FSC: Cambodian, Latino, and Vietnamese. Information obtained during end-of-the-year parent interviews included variables such as: perceived changes in reading and writing skills in English; employment status; participation in community activities to reduce substance abuse; teaching children not to use drugs or alcohol; awareness of available services; gains in feelings of empowerment, problem-solving skills, and planning skills; and perceived changes in the FSC neighborhood.

Other local evaluation reports, such as the one from *Rochester, New York*, presented quantitative data on outcomes in literacy, employment and substance abuse. Local evaluators for that project classified outcomes in terms of the level of success in meeting goals either as "no success," "partial success," or "total success." The proportion of participants in each of these categories was presented in tabular form and in color graphics for a number of subgroups: by content area; program year; number of contacts, referrals and follow-ups with FSC staff; and age of participant at program entry.

One-third of the evaluators (33 percent) adopted the national evaluation design for their local evaluations and reported site-level data from the national evaluation sent to them by Abt Associates. Local evaluations that included only data from the national evaluation sample (even if they collected additional measures) are included only in the national evaluation data category, even though the national evaluation involved random assignment. Three local evaluators (5 percent) conducted their own design in addition to reporting site-specific results from the national evaluation.

Overall, two-thirds (67 percent) of the evaluators reported on some type of impacts, either from a local or the national evaluation design. The research design employed provides an important context for determining the validity of impact data, with random assignment ruling out more threats to validity than a comparison group design, and a pretest-posttest design being the most susceptible to other explanations for results. The remainder of this section presents examples of local evaluations using each research design.

Ten percent of the local evaluators presented impact data in their reports from a **one-sample pretest-posttest** design. These local evaluators reported baseline information about participants prior to receiving FSC services and at the completion of the program or some other specified time, such as after one year of participation.

Pretest-Posttest Design

The local evaluation for the *Barre, Vermont* FSC employed a pretest-posttest design and administered a participant survey with 47 questions regarding personal goals in the five areas of employment, literacy, substance abuse, parenting skills, and self-esteem. Within each area, respondents were asked to respond "yes," "somewhat" or "no" to a series of statements regarding attitudes and perceptions about the issue. For example, items in the area of employment included: "I feel ready to have job interviews;" " I feel comfortable in new work situations;" and "I am interested in getting a job." The survey was administered to all program applicants at the time of enrollment and then again upon the conclusion of the parent's participation in the Family Service Center. Evaluators reported that 21 participants in the study did not complete a posttest due to refusals or inability of FSC staff to obtain the completed posttest surveys. Evaluators compared the mean scores of 68 participants at the time of entry and exit from the project and presented the results in a series of exhibits.

One-fourth (24 percent) of the local evaluators used a quasi-experimental **comparison** group in their local evaluation to compare impacts of FSC participants to nonparticipants. Comparison groups developed by local evaluators typically consisted of non-FSC Head Start participants from the same Head Start center as the FSC participants or from different centers or communities.

Comparison Group Design

Evaluators working with the *Kalamazoo, Michigan* FSC used a comparison group for their local evaluation. Initially, the evaluators had planned to assign every other eligible FSC study volunteer to either a treatment or control group upon enrollment in the Head Start program. Criteria for study participation included "being a parent, a single head of a household and having a desire to make improvements in the areas of literacy, employability, or substance abuse." Project recruitment began in the spring of 1992 but when they had not filled the 50 program slots by the fall when services were to start, they began admitting every eligible FSC study participant to the treatment group until the FSC reached an enrollment of 50 participants by December, 1992. The evaluators reported that they filled the remaining control group slots by randomly selecting Head Start participants from the caseloads of staff who conducted the Head Start screenings. Evaluators replaced FSC participants who dropped out of Head Start with families on an FSC waiting list. Head Start dropouts from the comparison group were replaced by randomly selecting families from other Head Start caseloads.

Impact studies classified as **random assignment** include only the FSC local evaluations that conducted a random assignment independently of the project's participation in the national evaluation. For example, we do not include any of the Wave III FSC projects or the ten Wave I and II FSCs that conducted random assignment as part of their participation in the national evaluation, unless they conducted additional random assignment to increase the sample. Only

three local evaluation reports (five percent) indicated the use of random assignment outside of participation in the national evaluation, and two of these local evaluations were conducted by the same research team.

Random Assignment for the Local Evaluation

Local evaluators for the *Detroit Lakes, Minnesota* FSC conducted random assignment in the fall, 1992 as part of the national evaluation of the Wave III projects, and then conducted random assignment in the second year of the demonstration in the fall, 1993 to obtain a second cohort of families. Evaluators used the same instruments used in the national evaluation, the parent interview and the CASAS literacy test, for the second cohort of families. After preliminary analyses, local evaluators concluded that for both the treatment and control groups, the two cohorts were equivalent on the baseline measures and that there were no significant differences between the two cohorts. This enabled evaluators to combine data from the two cohorts in their impact analyses.

After each phase of data collection, all of the FSC local evaluators from Wave III projects and the ten evaluators from Wave I or II projects that implemented a randomized design received a diskette from Abt Associates that contained site-specific data collected for parents who were part of the national evaluation. One-third of the evaluators (33 percent) used these **national evaluation data** and some conducted additional analyses for their local evaluation reports.

National Evaluation Data

The local evaluators for the *Hiawatha, Kansas* FSC presented data at baseline and first and second follow-up for the FSC and control groups on approximately 30 items from the parent interview developed for the national evaluation. The evaluators presented a table for each item that compared the number and percentage of responses for the FSC and control groups at baseline, first follow-up, and second follow-up. The local evaluators also used a modified version of this interview for an additional 32 FSC participants who were not part of the national evaluation. The evaluators presented results for this group from the second follow-up in a separate section of the report.

Lessons Learned/Recommendations

Recommendations about the FSC services are an important contribution of the local evaluations. Included in this category are improvements that the local evaluators or staff suggested to enhance the FSC's services to families, as well as discussions about changes made to the FSC during the demonstration and the reasons for the changes. Some local evaluators included these issues in a separate section of his/her report typically entitled, "recommendations" or "conclusions," while others wove these comments into each section of

the report. Chapter Three of this report presents a summary and synthesis of the recommendations and lessons learned across all the local evaluation reports.

Three-fourths (76 percent) of the local evaluators included a discussion of lessons learned or made recommendations in their reports to improve FSC functioning. Lessons learned were included in a larger proportion of evaluation reports from Wave I projects (88 percent) and Wave II projects (90 percent) than from Wave III projects (57 percent). Two examples of these sections are described below.

Overall Recommendations

The final chapter in the local evaluation report for the *Cleveland, Ohio* FSC contains seven recommendations along with a detailed rationale for each. Local evaluators reported that these recommendations were based on responses to interviews conducted with parents, community stakeholders, and the FSC project director. The recommendations include:

- Developing an automated system to track FSC activities;
- Reassessing FSC recruitment strategies;
- Reconsidering goals in light of resources;
- Increasing collaboration with community service providers;
- Relocating FSC workers or the FSC to increase access;
- Resolving child care and transportation issues for unemployed parents; and
- Increasing private sector job training opportunities.

Recommendations by FSC Service Area

The local evaluator for the *Wheeling, West Virginia* FSC divided the report into major sections each dealing with a project service or issue such as literacy and education; employment; substance abuse prevention; health and wellness; staff supervision, support, and training; case management; and collaboration. Within each section is a subsection called "lessons learned and Head Start response to needs" that briefly presents three to five issues related to the topic which were identified during the demonstration. For example, the lessons learned within the "collaboration" section of the report include a short discussion of the following issues:

- Need for Head Start to continue to form new partnerships with community agencies to enhance services;
- Benefits for staff and program from involvement in community organizations; and
- Willingness of service providers to share their expertise with others.

Other

In addition to the examples within each category described above, 17 percent of the reports also presented issues or analyses that did not fit into one of the above categories such as: assessment of case manager skills and knowledge; descriptions of tracking systems designed by evaluators and used to record project information; accomplishing program goals; and analyses of project attrition information.

Assessment of Case Manager Skills

Local evaluators from *Reno, Nevada* conducted interviews with Head Start case managers, including FSC case managers, to assess their general skill and knowledge level of case management functions as well as specific community resources. The following are examples of questions asked of case managers:

- How do you go about problem-solving with families, and once problems are identified, how do you incorporate those into a case plan?
- Could you please define case management for me?
- Why is it important to document your contacts with clients?
- Do you feel you have learned enough about other agencies, and names of contact people within agencies to confidently refer families?
- What has been your response in handling the issues you feel are unclear within the framework of your job with (the grantee) and school placement?

The local evaluators discussed several major findings from the interviews, including that two-thirds of the case managers were not confident that they had learned enough about other agencies to which they were referring families. Although all case managers had a good understanding of the goals of self-reliance and self-sufficiency and client confidentiality, the majority of case managers did not have a clear understanding about intake procedures. In addition, less than half of the case managers discussed "identifying family strengths" as a step in the problem-solving process.

Attrition Analysis

The *Bemidji, Minnesota* local evaluators conducted an attrition analysis using demographic measures in which they determined if Head Start participants who were lost to the evaluation in each year of the evaluation were different from those who were retained. This Wave II project was one of the few that conducted random assignment for three separate cohorts. One component of the attrition analysis compared participants who left the study with participants retained within each cohort without distinguishing between adults in the treatment and control group. Based on this analysis, the local evaluators determined that participants lost to attrition were different from those retained on some demographic measures. For example, for one of the cohorts, participants lost to attrition were more likely than those who remained in the evaluation to be American Indian males, younger, less educated, unmarried, have fewer children, and be without a car.

Chapter Three
Lessons Learned and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the reported lessons learned and recommendations for FSC improvement. Three-fourths (76 percent) of the local evaluators either discussed lessons learned in the FSC demonstration or presented at least one recommendation to improve the FSC project or overcome barriers to service implementation.[1] These include changes and modifications in program services or operations implemented during the course of the demonstration as well as recommendations or suggestions made at the end of the demonstration to improve or enhance future projects. In total, local evaluators presented over 150 recommendations or lessons learned. The recommendations reported by local evaluators came from multiple sources; some were made by the local evaluators, while others were obtained through interviews, surveys, and focus groups with FSC project staff, participants, and community service providers.

When summarizing recommendations and lessons learned such as those reported in this chapter, selection criteria may include: professional standards, prior research findings, theoretical models, or multiple citations. Many local FSC evaluators discussed project processes or limitations when making recommendations, but fewer presented an accompanying explanation or rationale. Thus, it was decided to highlight the recommendations that were reported by multiple evaluators. However, recommendations made by only one local evaluator are also included if they seem especially innovative, or point to a particular area of weakness.

Certain recommendations made by local evaluators were common practices (e.g., producing a brochure that described the program) found to be successful within their own and other FSC projects. Other recommendations focused on project weaknesses or limitations and were reported in efforts to improve the FSC (e.g., providing space for FSC staff to meet with families in private). Both types of recommendations are included in this chapter because these practices and procedures were not routine in all FSC projects, and therefore, might be useful to some projects.

1 Wave I and II evaluations (90 and 88 percent, respectively) were more likely to include recommendations or lessons learned in their reports than their Wave III counterparts (57 percent). One possible explanation for this difference is that Wave III local evaluators focused their efforts less on project processes and observations and more on the impact evaluation because of their participation in data collection activities for the national evaluation.

The recommendations and lessons learned were grouped into five major categories according to common programmatic themes:

1) project administration;

2) location/facilities;

3) staffing;

4) service delivery; and

5) community collaboration.

Project Administration

The largest number of recommendations focused on the area of project administration. More than half of the local evaluators who reported recommendations included at least one pertaining to administrative issues. The following issues received the most attention: project implementation; procedural guidelines; intake and termination; case documentation; and project visibility.

Project Implementation

The primary administrative concern presented by local evaluators was the need for a longer planning phase before starting project operations. Many local evaluators reported that with only three years of funding, projects felt pressured to begin services as soon as possible, often when project components were not yet fully in place. Local evaluators reported not having adequate time to develop sites; recruit, hire, and train staff; establish collaborations with community agencies; operationalize all services; and establish general operating procedures. Several local evaluators reported that it took on average about two years for an FSC site to become fully operational which then left the final year of the demonstration to wind down to project close out. In addition to general recommendations for a longer planning phase, there was a specific suggestion that future demonstration projects be provided with at least a two-month pre-implementation phase.

Without more detailed information on implementation from all of the local evaluators, it is unclear why it took some Head Start programs longer than others to implement the FSC or what could have facilitated the start-up process. One local evaluator reported that the project's administrative staff were located in another county and "made few trips into the

FSC's county to implement, direct, or sustain the program." Another local evaluator whose FSC project took a year to become implemented reported that "time and supervision from the grantee" were critical to improving the FSC's operations in the second year of the demonstration.

From our review of the lessons learned by local evaluators, there seemed to be several factors that facilitated FSC project implementation:

- connections to a network of community providers which increased access to services and opportunities for FSC participants;
- prior experience in providing direct services in literacy, employment, and substance abuse, which expedited implementation of services;
- a supportive and accessible administrator or grantee, who was available to provide necessary supervision, guidance, and assistance; and
- access to an experienced labor pool either in the grantee's other programs or the community to enable the FSC to quickly recruit and hire key project staff.

Procedural Guidelines

Local evaluators also discussed the need for more documentation about program policies, procedures, objectives, and staff roles. Some local evaluators made general recommendations, suggesting that projects establish written guidelines about different types of procedures and protocols. Others recommended that the project have a "procedures manual" defining and explaining project services and staffing, and giving guidance on how to complete specific forms and procedures (e.g., making a referral to a collaborating agency). A few local evaluators also focused on specific topics or roles that needed clarification. For example, one project recommended that the project develop guidelines and procedures for case management, such as caseload size, intervention priorities, and reasons for case terminations. Another local evaluator recommended that priorities be defined for the FSC director with an equal distribution of time between management and planning responsibilities.

Intake and Termination Procedures

Several local evaluators discussed the FSC's intake and termination policies for participants and suggested ways to improve these procedures. For example, one local evaluator reported that it was difficult to determine a service plan without more specific information about the participant, and recommended that the intake process be expanded to include academic and vocational data. Another local evaluator expressed concerns that the FSC needed to develop

adequate screening techniques and procedures for prioritizing needs, especially when the FSC was to expand after the demonstration and become available to a larger number of families. To facilitate the assessment and intervention process, one local evaluator recommended establishing a time limit for the intake period and suggested that case managers view the intake process as a two-month period of time from their first contact with the family.

A few recommendations were made in regard to exit criteria or termination procedures for FSC participants. The biggest concern was the difficulties associated with participants being forced to leave the FSC project prior to completing needed services or achieving their goals due to Head Start ineligibility (i.e., their child reached the maximum age). In response, one local evaluator recommended that six months prior to ineligibility, the FSC develop a standard plan for phasing participants out of the FSC, developing new goals to achieve within the system, or arranging for the participant to continue working on unmet goals with another community provider. Another local evaluator suggested that the project take steps to reduce participants' frustration with a premature termination due to ineligibility by taking eligibility factors into account when developing individual service plans.

Case Documentation

Many local evaluators had concerns about inadequate documentation of participant files and several suggested ways to improve case documentation and tracking of individual participants' goals and activities within the FSC. One local evaluator discussed a lack of organization with regard to case records which resulted in unclear expectations about steps to be taken and families not receiving the help they needed. Specifically, he reported "there was insufficient attention paid to the process of documentation and its contribution to effective case management." According to the local evaluator, "the records must be clear as to what the next goal is, who is responsible, and by when." To improve the record keeping system in this FSC and ensure well-documented case records, the project hired a computer resource coordinator to develop and maintain a database system containing participants' files which would be used by the case managers to document their cases. Another local evaluator recommended that the FSC develop a management information system that would include client participation reports from providers and a monthly client status report that could be used during case conferences and supervisory meetings to strengthen communication and to help in supervision, service delivery, and project management. Other suggestions made to improve case file documentation were developing quality control procedures, establishing a peer review system, and implementing a monitoring plan.

Several local evaluators recommended that the FSC develop a tracking system that would automate client records and track participants' goals, progress, and outcomes. One evaluator reported that this type of tracking system would document the amount of contact that staff had with families and be useful in determining caseload size.

Project Visibility

Another topic of concern reported by local evaluators was the need for increased visibility and awareness about the FSC project within the community. Recommendations focused on actions that the project should take to increase their visibility in the community, attract more participants, and educate participants about the services offered. The most common recommendation was for the FSC to develop a brochure or information packet that could be easily distributed or mailed. Other recommendations included: 1) publicizing the work of the FSC in the community via the local media; 2) allowing staff to represent the FSC in the community and teaming the case manager with a parent to provide outreach; 3) producing a videotape showing the FSC services; and 4) going door-to-door in the community and leaving information packets about the FSC.

Location/Facilities

Many local evaluators reported that accessibility of the FSC, services, and staff was a key ingredient to the program's success. Regardless of the geographical location or urbanicity of the project site, local evaluators stressed the importance of locating the FSC in a site convenient to Head Start families. In addition to accessibility, local evaluators cited the need for larger or improved facilities in order to provide office space for staff to talk privately with families or have adequate space to provide on-site parent services such as workshops or classes.

Location

The primary recommendation concerning location of the FSC made by local evaluators was to co-locate the FSC with the Head Start center. One local evaluator reported that the "location of the FSC within Head Start, physically and administratively, benefitted both programs." One benefit noted by local evaluators of co-locating the FSC with the Head Start center was to alleviate fears parents may have had about putting their three- or four-year-old child alone on a bus. With co-location, parents and children can ride the bus together, increasing both Head Start and FSC participation. Another advantage of having the FSC and Head Start in the same site was the potential for further collaboration between FSC and Head Start staff.

In addition to co-location, other suggestions were to locate the FSC near a cluster of Head Start centers, or place an FSC case manager in each Head Start center to increase service and staff accessibility. One local evaluator recommended the optimal location for the FSC to be adjacent to the Head Start center and within the housing project being served by the Head Start project. Another local evaluator, whose project was close to the Head Start center, commented that Head Start parents found the FSC "a natural place to come in search of a phone or a favor." Other advantages in having the FSC accessible to Head Start families

included reducing transportation needs to another location and concerns about their safety in unfamiliar areas. It also facilitates the FSC intake and assessment process through the ability to meet with parents as they bring their children to Head Start.

Facilities

A general concern cited by local evaluators was the need for more space or improved facilities to provide (or increase) on-site services such as parent workshops and classes. While many FSC projects provided on-site services, few local evaluators provided a specific rationale for making this provision. As in locating the FSC close to the Head Start center, benefits to on-site services cited by local evaluators included reducing transportation and safety barriers. One local evaluator reported, "of all of the literacy programs offered to parents, those that were held on the FSC site were the most successful." Another benefit reported was having FSC staff available to keep track of participants' progress and attendance.

Another reason noted for needing more space and larger FSC facilities was to have space for FSC staff to meet privately with their families. One local evaluator offered a solution to obtaining more space by suggesting that the project share facilities with other local community agencies or schools.

Staffing

Numerous local evaluators had recommendations about staffing patterns and staff issues, particularly the high rate of staff turnover, and the need to provide adequate training and supervision.

Staff Turnover

According to local evaluators, high turnover among FSC staff was a major issue for many of the local FSC projects. Local evaluators reported staff turnover in all FSC staff positions, but especially among case managers. One local evaluator reported that three of the four original case managers left during the three-year demonstration. Local evaluators reported that staff turnover had a negative effect on staff morale, disrupted communication and project services, and increased the number of client dropouts. One local evaluator hypothesized that the high staff turnover was a result of "low pay, very few rewards, working with clients who have multiple difficulties, and a lack of social service training."

Local evaluators had a variety of suggestions to decrease staff turnover. Several suggested increasing staff retention by hiring "professionals," i.e., case managers with a degree or license in social work or human services. One local evaluator reported that a degree in social work ensures that staff are educated and trained in "coping with clients with multiple problems,

crisis intervention, stress management and hands-on experience through internships." Another local evaluator suggested that personnel be shifted within the sponsoring agency so that the FSC project have at least a few permanent staff to lessen disruptions when other temporary demonstration staff leave. Other local evaluators suggested ways to increase staff morale and support for case managers through training, supervision, periodic staff retreats, and administrative support.

Staff Development

In addition to decreasing staff turnover, training and supervision were both cited as additional ways to increase staff morale and staff skill levels while also improving project services. One local evaluator discussed the expense of training (i.e., staff time and expenditures) and recommended that "a training plan for each staff member and the project staff as a whole be in place to offer focus and direction to the time and expenditures." Another local evaluator reported that because so many of the project's case managers were paraprofessionals, the role of the supervisor was particularly important.

Some local evaluators recommended that projects provide more training in general for staff; others cited specific training needs. The most common area of need noted by local evaluators was substance abuse. Numerous local evaluators recommended that staff should have adequate training and consultation to enable them to be more comfortable addressing substance abuse issues and to be better able to recognize and confront FSC participants' problems in this area.

Other recommendations made by local evaluators in the area of staff development included:

- training case managers in client goal setting and writing specific, measurable client goals that included steps to be completed as well as distinct outcomes;
- providing ongoing supervision and feedback, especially for those staff who work great distances from each other and/or the main FSC site;
- offering informational workshops on community services used or needed by FSC families such as Head Start, public welfare, family counseling, medical/dental care and emergency services; and
- providing training in understanding cultural diversity and multi cultural service factors.

Service Delivery

Service delivery in the FSC was another common theme of local evaluators' recommendations. In addition to the FSC key services such as literacy, employment, substance abuse, and case management (which are reported separately below), local evaluators had many suggestions and comments about FSC services in general.

General Issues

The major service delivery issue that local evaluators focused on was the need for the FSC to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the FSC families. Local evaluators repeatedly stressed: (1) the need for the FSC to address the individual participant's needs even if these needs were not in the area of literacy, employment or substance abuse; and (2) the related need for the project to be flexible in terms of staffing and service delivery to meet the needs of local FSC participants.

Local evaluators reported that many FSC families had other more immediate needs in areas such as housing, food, and clothing that had to be addressed before they were ready to participate in literacy, employment, or substance abuse services. In addition to these basic needs, local evaluators reported that projects also had to address issues such as domestic violence, child abuse and/or neglect, stress reduction, health issues, and parenting skills.

Many local evaluators also stated that services should be driven by the participants' needs. They discussed staffing changes made by projects or specific services that were emphasized in response to the particular needs of local participants. For example, one local evaluator explained that the FSC participants' greatest needs were in education, and giving equal attention and resources to literacy, employment, and substance abuse "resulted in gross inequalities in staff work load and hampered program effectiveness." In the second year of operations, this project was redesigned to include two full-time education specialists, one employment specialist, and one social worker to coordinate social welfare services for families. According to the local evaluator, these changes resulted in increased project effectiveness and a significant reduction in the number of dropouts.

Another local evaluator discussed his project's emphasis on working with FSC participants to form a community advocacy group to address their major concerns such as neighborhood safety, drug trafficking, and absentee landlords. These issues were priorities for FSC participants living in this community and became a major focus area for staff and participants. The local evaluator reported that in addition to improving the neighborhood, individual participants in the advocacy group benefitted through improved communication skills, increased leadership skills, and the development of a sense of community.

Local evaluators also reported other general service delivery recommendations such as:

1) arranging universal vision testing for all clients;

2) purchasing high quality materials and resources for participants to use in FSC classes;

3) providing food for FSC participants during classes and workshops to reduce disruptions;

4) using culturally sensitive materials for FSC classes and parent meetings;

5) holding mandatory orientation meetings for participants; and

6) conducting participant focus groups to assess parents' needs, satisfaction, and concerns with future services.

Literacy

Most of the recommendations made about literacy and adult education were site-specific and included suggestions such as conducting evening GED classes or increasing the number of classes for Asian- and Spanish-speaking participants. Other more general discussions of lessons learned included:

- providing year-round literacy programs to maintain uninterrupted services;

- using computers to both teach computer skills and as a means of building confidence and increasing self-esteem; and

- providing continual feedback on participants' performance level in literacy and adult education classes.

Employment

There were several common themes that emerged in the area of employment. Several local evaluators discussed the advantages of: (1) working with community agencies to improve employment services; and (2) developing partnerships with community employers to provide job apprenticeships.

In the area of employment, local evaluators indicated that it was particularly important to collaborate with other community programs to expand employment services offered by the project. For example, one local evaluator reported that by working with the local Jobs Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program, the FSC could provide participants with

"more individualized and effective training" and use JOBS resources to pay for glasses or hearing aids that were found to be necessary for employment. Another local evaluator reported that the FSC project's collaboration with the local Jobs and Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program was critical to providing successful employment services.

Local evaluators also recommended using existing work sites and employers in the community to help expand employment experiences and opportunities for FSC participants.
One local evaluator noted the success of the FSC in implementing the Parent Assistant Teacher Training Program (PATT), a program to train FSC parents to be assistant teachers for early childhood classrooms throughout the community. Another local evaluator recommended that his project invest more time in "developing formal community partnerships in the area of jobs and employment" and cited the recent success of the project in arranging for two FSC participants to be apprentices at a local university.

Local evaluators also made project-specific recommendations and noted factors contributing to the success of the FSC's employment services, such as:

- developing career counseling and job placement services for support to FSC participants who complete individualized service plans within the employment component;

- providing certificates of accomplishment for completing training and classes as part of a competency-based program that emphasizes specific skills and steps;

- providing more attention and individual service options such as career aptitude or interest assessment for participants who may not need extensive group training services; and

- having telephones, typewriters, computers, and job listings available and easily accessible at the FSC for participants to use in seeking employment.

Substance Abuse

As indicated in the national evaluation of the FSC Demonstration Projects, many projects had difficulty in both recruiting families for substance abuse services and providing the services they need. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that a number of local evaluators recommended that the FSC should not focus on the area of substance abuse, and questioned whether substance abuse could be adequately addressed in the FSC setting.

There were several other recommendations made by local evaluators in the area of substance abuse, including the need to present substance abuse information to FSC participants in a non-threatening manner such as focusing on prevention services or providing related activities that

are not labeled as "substance abuse services." For example, one local evaluator suggested that it was easier for parents to develop the necessary trust in staff by participating in prevention activities or educational programs that focus on their children rather than themselves. Another local evaluator reported that the substance abuse component became successful when the project relabeled their substance abuse program, "Healthy Life Choices," to reduce the stigma of substance abuse. This same project also modified the FSC program to provide workshops on issues such as stress reduction techniques, parenting, and communication skills.

Other recommendations made by local evaluators were: (1) revising the substance abuse program to focus more on culturally-based family support rather than on the abuser; (2) advising participants at intake that they would not be excluded from the project due to substance abuse problems; and (3) administering a substance abuse screening instrument on a selective basis to FSC participants.

Support Services

Local evaluators stressed the need for, and importance of, providing support services such as transportation and child care to enable FSC participants to attend FSC activities. The need for these two support services were cited as primary barriers for FSC participants, and were viewed by many local evaluators as the keys to successful project participation. Most local evaluators made general recommendations that the FSC provide more child care or transportation or increase the hours and flexibility of these services. Others recommended different ways for projects to provide these services or increase their flexibility.

Reported recommendations and successful strategies in providing transportation included:

- collaborating with other community programs and agencies that provide transportation in the community such as schools, churches, or elderly services;
- car pooling among FSC participants to attend the same activities;
- obtaining travel reimbursements from the Department of Public Welfare; and
- renting additional vehicles for the project to transport participants during peak service times.

Reported recommendations and successful strategies in providing child care services included:

- Collaborating with other community programs and agencies that provide child care in the community such as schools or churches;

- obtaining child care reimbursement from the Department of Public Welfare; and
- establishing a child care training site in a local housing project and training FSC parents as child care workers.

In addition to transportation and child care, local evaluators suggested that the FSC provide other support services such as parenting classes, tuberculosis tests for parents at Head Start centers, and incentives such as refreshments, gifts, and door prizes at FSC activities to increase participation.

Case Management

Local evaluators had numerous recommendations concerning case management services. The most common themes and issues are presented below.

Case Manager Role. Several local evaluators made recommendations about the role of the case manager and the need to better define the role and responsibilities of the FSC case manager. One local evaluator recommended that the project develop a case manager policy and procedures manual that clearly defines the role of the case manager and explains the day-to-day procedures they are expected to perform. Another local evaluator discussed the need for case managers to be professional and respectful in their work with families, maintain confidentiality, and follow through on commitments made to families. A final suggestion was that case managers should be generalists and have knowledge of all areas of families' needs, as well as be "networkers and acquirers of resources," so that they can readily obtain needed services for families.

Developing Participant Service Plans. Successfully developing participants' goals and a plan to accomplish these goals was an important issue for several local evaluators. Most often, local evaluators reported that goals were most useful when they could be measured and defined with action steps that were achievable by participants. They also recommended using a reward system or offering incentives for taking small steps towards achieving the participant's ultimate goals. One local evaluator reported that his FSC's participants "are starved for recognition" and that rewards promote repeated successes. Another local evaluator found incentives and rewards to be a teaching tool and a way of giving permission to participants to celebrate achievements.

Caseload Size. The optimum number of families per worker varied among local evaluators but most recommended that caseload size be less than 30 families per worker. One local evaluator cited travel time in the sparsely populated region serviced by the FSC as a factor in recommending a caseload of less than 30 families. Another local evaluator suggested maintaining caseloads of 20 to 30 families per worker to have the time to develop trusting

relationships with participants and to perform the necessary community networking. In one FSC, where caseloads were approximately 35 families, the local evaluator noted that certain cases were priorities because these families were in crisis or generally required more contact than others and these cases should be limited to a maximum of 12 per worker within a total caseload size of about 24 families.

Follow-up Procedures. The need for FSC case managers to follow through on referrals and participants' progress in outside services was an important issue for several local evaluators. One local evaluator reported that several FSC participants were referred for employment but worked only a short time; reasons for job termination were unknown. He suggested that follow-up on referrals and participants' progress might have helped participants keep their jobs. To remedy this situation, he recommended that the FSC case managers contact participants and employers after referrals for employment had been made. Another local evaluator reported that follow-up consisted mostly of "talking with the family." Instead, she suggested that the case managers develop procedures for systematic follow-up with service providers. Other recommendations were for community agencies to provide written documentation of services provided to FSC participants.

Community Collaboration

Most local evaluators discussed the importance of the FSC establishing and increasing collaborative relationships with other community agencies and programs to provide enhanced services to FSC families. These collaborations were cited as essential to the FSC's success. One local evaluator reported that community collaboration can increase the resources available for Head Start participants and may allow Head Start "to influence other providers to adopt core concepts that have made Head Start a success." Successful types of community collaborations discussed by local evaluators included: (1) informal relationships with community providers through which FSC participants may or may not receive service priority; (2) formal relationships in which the FSC is guaranteed a number of service slots at another agency; and (3) agencies joining together to initiate a new service or program for FSC participants (e.g., using the Head Start center as a JTPA training site).

The most common strategy recommended by local evaluators to increase or improve community collaborations was to have FSC staff participate in community task forces and planning committees or other community provider advisory boards. Reported benefits to the FSC of participation in these groups were opportunities to: increase the FSC's visibility; increase access to existing services; identify and gain new resources; and screen for FSC advisory board members. Despite these benefits, one local evaluator indicated that collaboration implied substantial time commitment and cautioned that the FSC should be

careful to assess which community groups have the most relevance to the FSC participants and the amount of staff support that can be given.

Other general recommendations in the area of community collaboration included: (1) continuing to form new partnerships in the community; (2) formalizing relationships with community collaborators through written agreements; and (3) maintaining a list with the names of informal community contacts.

Common Themes

As discussed earlier, some of the recommendations reported in this chapter were common practices among FSC projects that were found to be successful while others were directed toward efforts to improve the FSC's functioning or correct ineffective practices. Regardless of the basis for the recommendations, they can provide a deeper understanding of the multiple approaches and processes that are important to consider in designing future programs for families.

The recommendations and lessons learned center around four common themes that are highlighted below.

- **Grantee Characteristics**

  Local evaluators discussed the role and resources of the FSC grantee and its effect on the areas of project administration and staffing. Three out of the four reported factors facilitating project implementation focused on aspects of the grantee, such as: being well connected to community service providers; providing some direct services independently of other community agencies; and being available to provide support and supervision to the project.

  Integrating permanent employees from the grantee agency into the FSC to reduce staff turnover among temporary demonstration staff was also a suggested function for the grantee.

- **Documentation**

  Local evaluators recommended increased or improved documentation in the areas of project administration, service delivery, and community collaboration. Specific areas for improving or implementing documentation policies were in: program procedures; participant files; staff roles and responsibilities; and community contact names and information.

- **Accessibility**

  Accessibility of FSC staff and services was discussed in the areas of location/facilities and service delivery. Local evaluators recommended that the FSC staff and services be readily accessible to FSC families through: physically locating the FSC in an area convenient to FSC families; providing on-site services at the FSC; and providing transportation to bring participants to services.

- **Communication**

  The need for clear and adequate communication among staff, between staff and FSC participants, and between staff and community collaborators was also identified by local evaluators as a factor in the areas of project administration, staffing, and community collaboration.

Chapter Four
Locally Reported Program Impacts

The intent of this chapter is to summarize the local evaluation findings to assess how the FSC affected the lives of families involved in the program[1]. As discussed in Chapter One, the national evaluation summarized overall program impacts across 25 Wave III projects using random assignment of adults to the FSC or regular Head Start. This chapter describes how local evaluators from all three waves of the FSC demonstration assessed program impacts on adults in each individual project. These locally reported program impacts are based on a variety of research designs and analytic strategies.

The chapter begins with a description of our approach to summarizing program impacts, followed by the findings from the local evaluations in the main focus areas of the FSC. At the conclusion of the chapter, local evaluation results are discussed in the context of those from the national evaluation.

Issues in Summarizing Impacts

It is often informative to examine the pattern of impacts across studies of the same program as a way of replicating findings from single-site reports. However, there are several issues to consider when undertaking this task and interpreting the results. These include:

- determining which studies to include in the summary;
- the comparability of designs used to measure impacts;
- the variety of measures used to assess impact;
- the analytic techniques to determine program impacts; and
- the generalizability of the findings in the summary.

Determining Which Reports to Summarize

The first step in the process of summarizing findings across sites is deciding which studies to include in the summary. With the FSC local evaluations, the goal was to be as inclusive as possible. The summary includes locally reported impacts on service utilization (e.g., attending education classes) and skill attainment or behaviors in any of the three main focus areas of the

1 We did not attempt to complete a formal meta-analysis of the local evaluation findings; this requires statistical information on each evaluation outcome, such as standard deviations associated with group means or significance levels of group differences (e.g., p values), which generally were not included in the local reports.

FSC: employment, literacy or education, and substance abuse. Case management was not included because that is generally viewed as a program implementation issue rather than a program outcome.

Program impacts refer to differences in behaviors or achievements for the FSC participants relative to some reference point, such as their behaviors or achievements before entering the program, or compared with those of a reference group who did not participate in the FSC. All of the local evaluations that reported at least one program impact based on comparisons over time (i.e., pretest-posttest) or to some comparison group (e.g., a comparison or control group from Head Start) are included in the summary.

As discussed in the next section, there are local evaluations from which only a subset of findings are included in the summary, or for which the type of design to assess impacts was reclassified. Only one project was excluded from the summary as a result of these reclassifications. In that case, the evaluator combined data from the FSC and control groups and reported only changes over time in the aggregated data; this report was excluded because changes in FSC participants were confounded with those of the control group.

As described in Chapter Two of this report, two-thirds of the local evaluators (67 percent) reported program impacts using either a pretest-posttest, comparison group, or randomized control group design. This translates into 39 local evaluations that could be used to summarize impacts. The other third of local evaluators either presented information on the FSC participants only at the end of the program without any reference group, or did not address program impacts in the reports that were reviewed.[2]

Designs Used in Local Evaluations

Exhibit 4.1 shows the types of research designs used to assess impacts in the local evaluations. This display expands upon the exhibit presented in Chapter Two by showing the different designs used by evaluators for Wave I, II and III projects. Fifteen percent of the evaluators analyzed program impacts over time in a pretest-posttest design; these were most likely to be evaluators from Wave I projects. Thirty-six percent of evaluators (most often from Wave II projects) had a comparison group design. Forty-nine percent of evaluators reported impacts based on a randomized design, as part of either their local evaluation or for the national evaluation. This shift from pretest-posttest to a comparison group and then a randomized design mirrors the change in instructions and requirements in the FSC grant announcements from ACYF.

2 It is possible that local evaluators reported on program impacts in other reports that they did not forward to us. One evaluator indicated in his third-year report that program impacts were discussed in the previous report, which he did not send to Abt Associates. It is not known how many other evaluators may have reported program impacts in the same way. However, this is unlikely because 90 percent of the reports reviewed were either final reports or reports from the third year of the demonstration, where program impacts would generally be reported.

Exhibit 4.1

Type of Research Design by Wave of FSC Project for Local Evaluations Reporting Impacts (n=39 out of 58 reports)

Design	Percent of Local Evaluations			
	Wave I	Wave II	Wave III	Overall
Pretest-Posttest	10	3	3	15%
Comparison Group	8	20	8	36%
National Evaluation Random Assignment	0	8	33	41%
Random Assignment for Local Evaluation	0	5	3	8%

For the most part, the array in Exhibit 4.1 reflects the designs that the local evaluators described in their reports. One exception is where the local evaluator discussed a comparison group design but indicated that the comparison group was used to replace dropouts from the program group; in this case, pretest-posttest analyses were included in the summary rather than the analyses based on FSC versus the comparison group. Other reports included multiple strategies for assessing outcomes and may have included posttest-only information (e.g., status at the conclusion of participation in the FSC) as well as pretest-posttest analyses; in these cases, only the latter are included in the summary.

Local Versus National Evaluation Designs

It is important to emphasize that this chapter focuses on the designs and impacts presented in the local evaluation reports. The use of a reference group and the reporting of program impacts was a decision of the local evaluators. For example, all of the Wave III projects and eight Wave II projects had a randomized control group in place and received data for the FSC and control group at baseline and two follow-ups as part of their participation in the national evaluation. However, not all of these evaluators chose to report this information as part of their local evaluation.

Local evaluation reports were received from 29 projects that implemented random assignment as part of the national evaluation (6 Wave II and 23 Wave III). Of these, 19 projects (66 percent) used the national evaluation data based on random assignment to examine program impacts in the FSC group relative to the control group in regular Head Start. Three projects changed either their local design or the way in which they conducted the analysis that resulted in contamination of the random assignment. Two of these projects added FSC families to the program group of the national sample to increase the sample sizes for their local evaluations; these designs were categorized as comparison group designs. The other project, discussed above, combined data from the program and control groups.

Evaluators from five random assignment projects did not report program impacts. There seem to be various reasons why the evaluators from these projects did not build on the randomized design from the national evaluation. At least one evaluator commented in the final report that the receipt of the national evaluation data did not fit with his reporting schedule for the local evaluation. From discussions with local evaluators during the course of the national evaluation, it is clear that a few evaluators did not analyze the national data because of a lack of resources or staff skilled in data analysis. For others, program impacts were not at the core of how they saw their role as local evaluator or not of primary interest to them. These evaluators focused on individual goal attainment for FSC families or the role of case management in the FSC.

Evaluators in two Wave III projects chose to implement a separate design for their local evaluation. The one evaluator who discussed the rationale for this strategy indicated that he wanted greater flexibility to collect more qualitative data and pursue several questions of interest to the local program.[3]

Comparability of Designs

The type of design used to measure program impacts is important to consider because different types of evaluation designs vary in the number of threats to the validity of results. For example, in a pretest-posttest design, there might be significant changes in employment from the pretest to the posttest. However, these results are not necessarily due to the program--they might have been caused by some other factor, such as a large employer moving into the area. By only looking at changes in one group, it is difficult to know how much of the observed changes in outcomes to attribute to the program under study.

In general, studies may be more likely to find significant differences in a pretest-posttest design than in designs with a comparison or control group. This is because there are often changes in people's behaviors over time, but these changes may also occur in the comparison group. For example, some subset of people who are unemployed will find work over a given period of time; if these changes are seen in the program group, they may be interpreted to be positive program effects. However, the same changes may also be seen among a comparison group. As a result, the evaluation with a pretest-posttest design might report significant program impacts where the evaluation with a comparison group design might report no significant differences. Thus, information about the research design is critical for judging the degree to which it is appropriate to draw conclusions from evaluation results. For this summary of the FSC local evaluations, the findings are categorized by the various research designs employed, as one way to gauge the relative strength of the results.

3 In order to reduce both the burden on individual families and the likelihood of jeopardizing the information collected for the national evaluation, local evaluators in Wave III projects were asked not to add measures or significant items to the national evaluation parent interview.

Measures Used to Assess Impacts

In many summaries of single-site evaluations, the use of a wide range of data collection instruments across sites makes it problematic to combine results. However, in the FSC evaluation, there was considerable comparability across sites. This is due, in large part, to the national evaluation that was being conducted at the same time as the local evaluations. All of the Wave III projects and the subset of Wave II projects that implemented a randomized design were required to use the national evaluation parent interview and the CASAS literacy test. In addition, a number of other Wave II projects chose to use all or part of the national evaluation parent interview for their local evaluation.

Even when the instruments differed from the national evaluation measures, many projects were gathering information about the same characteristics and behavioral outcomes (e.g., education level, income, employment) that were central to the FSC. In most cases, this information was obtained through in-person interviews with the adults in the local evaluation sample. All projects relied on respondents' self-report; none used other sources of information, such as employment records or wage reports. A few projects developed their own rating scales and asked respondents to rate their progress toward goals. In these cases, the information is likely to be much more subjective than information about specific behaviors or milestones. Overall, however, the types of measures included in this summary seem quite comparable.

Analytic Strategies Used to Assess Impacts

The FSC local evaluators used a variety of strategies to assess and present the statistical significance of program impacts. The reports ranged from computer-generated tables of statistical output on a large number of variables (sometimes with little discussion or interpretation) to narrative discussion of impacts without any reporting of statistical tests or significance levels.

There are several reasons why local evaluators might not have reported statistical information. One reason could have been the audience for their reports. Evaluators might have wanted to keep the report less technical and focus on a discussion of findings for the FSC and Head Start directors. Another reason might be that most of the local evaluations had small sample sizes. As Exhibit 4.2 shows, nearly half of the FSC local evaluations that reported impacts had sample sizes of 20 to 39 adults per group at the time of the follow-up data collection. Another 15 percent of evaluations had fewer than 20 respondents per group. Approximately 20 percent of the evaluations had sample sizes of 60 or more; these tended to be evaluations using a pretest-posttest design rather than those with a comparison or control group. Thus, overall, most evaluations were based on small sample sizes, where there was limited statistical power to detect program effects. A few evaluators discussed this as a rationale for limited use of statistical tests.

Exhibit 4.2

Sample Size at Posttest or Follow-up Among Local Evaluations Reporting Impacts (n=39 out of 58 reports)

Sample Size	Percent of Local Evaluations
Not specified, not clear	5%
Fewer than 20 per group	15%
20-39 per group	49%
40-59 per group	10%
60-80 per group	8%
More than 80 per group	13%

Note: If there was a different number of respondents in program and comparison/control group, the smaller group size was used to categorize sample. For pretest-posttest designs, the sample size at posttest was used.

There were not any reports excluded from the summary on the basis of local evaluators' analytic strategy. If they did not report results from statistical tests, information was gleaned from their discussion of program impacts; in several reports, it was clear that the evaluators had conducted statistical tests but chose not to include this information in their report to the project director. When possible, information about the magnitude of the differences over time or between groups was used to make inferences about the direction of impacts. For example, in a few reports it was possible to estimate standardized effect sizes from the means and standard deviations presented. In other cases, the magnitude of the difference suggested a significant impact (e.g., the average in the program group that was two to three times greater than that of the comparison or control group).

Although the goal was to be as inclusive as possible in this summary, it also was a concern that estimates of program impacts in the absence of statistical information might not be very accurate. For example, some of the positive findings without any statistical confirmation may have been of the same magnitude as findings of "no impacts" based on statistical tests. Thus, in the discussion that follows, the percentage of evaluations that did not report statistical information about program impacts is noted when this might affect the interpretation of the findings.

Generalizability of the Findings

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, only 39 of the 58 local evaluation reports that were reviewed included any impact findings. This represents just two-thirds of the local evaluation reports received, and only 60 percent of the total number of FSCs that were funded. In addition, this figure includes reports with *any* impacts. In any one area, information on program impacts was included in only a subset of the 39 reports. **The percentages presented**

in this summary are based on the number of local evaluations that reported findings in each particular area, which ranged from 19 to 26 local evaluations. This was done to more accurately reflect the percentage of local evaluations reporting positive impacts, no impacts, and negative impacts. However, as a result, there are program impacts in any one area for less than half of the FSCs in this review. In light of this, the summary that follows should be viewed only as suggestive, needing further replication, of the impact of the FSCs.

Summary of Locally Reported Program Impacts

This section presents the findings from the FSC local evaluations on participation in education and substance abuse services as well as program effects on employment, income, educational attainment, literacy levels, and use of drugs and alcohol. In addition, the section describes the program effects reported in other areas, such as psychological well-being. Program impacts are categorized as:

- **Positive impact**: FSC participants had higher scores or more positive levels of achievement than adults in the comparison/control group (or at posttest for a pretest-posttest design).

- **No impact**: FSC participants had similar scores or levels of achievement as adults in the comparison/control group (or at posttest for a pretest-posttest design).

- **Negative impact**: FSC participants had lower scores or levels of achievements than adults in the comparison/control group (or at posttest for a pretest-posttest design).

In cases where multiple indicators for the same domain were reported (e.g., literacy skills), the impacts are considered to be positive if any of the indicators favored the program group (or were higher at posttest for a pretest-posttest design). In this way, the summary is erring on the side of over-estimating the reported effects of the FSC rather than under-estimating program impacts. In addition, if the local reports included the probability levels of statistical tests (i.e., *p* values), an impact was considered to be significant if the probability level was .10 or less, rather than the more stringent .05, due to the small sample sizes in most projects.

Participation in Services

Information about participation in FSC services was more likely to be presented only for the FSC participants as part of a section on program implementation. Reporting this information at pretest and posttest or for a comparison or control group was much less frequent. Nearly half (46 percent) of the FSC local evaluations that included impacts did not report program effects on participation in education services or classes. The evaluators who presented this information tended to be associated with Wave III projects and reported data collected on the

program and control groups for the national evaluation; none of the evaluators from Wave I projects reported program effects on service utilization.

Among the evaluations reporting effects on participation, the majority (57 percent) reported greater participation in education services for FSC participants than for Head Start families (Exhibit 4.3). If evaluators reported results from the first and second follow-up, differences were most often reported at the first follow-up; by the second follow-up many of the FSC participants were no longer actively engaged in the program. The positive findings are seen in random assignment projects as well as evaluations with a comparison group design. About half of the local evaluations credited with positive findings did not present statistical tests. Nevertheless, this seems to be an area where a moderate proportion of local evaluations found positive impacts of the FSC.

Exhibit 4.3

Impacts on Participation in Education Classes Reported in Local Evaluations (n=21 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	5	0	0
Comparison group	19	14	0
Random assignment	33	29	0
Overall	57%	43%	0%

Forty-three percent of the local evaluations reported no impact on education services. None of the evaluators indicated that the FSC participants had lower participation in education services than adults in the comparison group (i.e., negative impacts).

Only nine local evaluations reported impact data on utilization of services for substance abuse. Of these, they were nearly evenly divided among those finding no impact and those indicating positive program effects.

Employability and Employment

Employability refers to the readiness and preparedness of individuals to hold jobs, in effect, a precursor of employment. In the FSC evaluation, this was measured by participants' self-report of activities such as writing a resume, filing out a job application, or being instructed in looking for a job, as well as ratings of work habits (e.g., punctuality, initiative) and progress

toward individual employment goals. About half of the local evaluations that reported impacts included outcome information on employability skills and activities.

More than half (55 percent) of the local evaluations that reported impacts on employability found an increase in skills or activities in this area after participation in the FSC or relative to the comparison group, including designs based on random assignment and those that used a comparison group (Exhibit 4.4). In most cases, several employability activities were assessed, and positive impacts were found in a subset. For example, in one project, out of a list of ten employability activities included in the national evaluation, there was only one activity--going on a job interview--where there was a higher proportion of FSC participants

Exhibit 4.4

Impacts on Employability Skills Reported in Local Evaluations (n=20 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	5	5	0
Comparison group	25	5	0
Random assignment	25	30	5
Overall	55%	40%	5%

Note: Employability includes self-report of activities such as going on job interviews and preparing a resume as well as self-ratings of job skills.

than adults in the control group. In another FSC, the local evaluators reported positive impacts in two areas of the national evaluation parent interview--having a clear idea of the job wanted and receiving instruction in looking for a job. Another evaluator that used a locally designed parent interview reported that FSC participants indicated significantly fewer obstacles to employment (e.g., transportation, not wanting to leave child, not knowing where to look for a job) and a greater number of job skills than adults in the comparison group. However, they reported no differences on adults' own ratings of their work habits.

Forty percent of local evaluators found no significant differences in employability skills for the FSC group relative to a comparison group or compared with their skills on entry to the project. Only one project (five percent) reported a negative impact, indicating that the control group had greater employability skills than the FSC group; however, this evaluator also reported that there were significant differences at baseline in work history favoring the control group, which could explain the observed posttest differences in employability skills.

Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of the local evaluations examining impacts on employment reported no differences for the FSC group relative to the comparison group or to their status at the beginning of the program (Exhibit 4.5). Employment included whether the respondent was currently working as well as the number of hours currently employed and the wages received.

Exhibit 4.5

Impacts on Employment Reported in Local Evaluations
(n=23 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	0	0	0
Comparison group	9	22	4
Random assignment	0	52	13
Overall	9%	74%	17%

Note: Employment includes measures of working, number of hours employed, and number of months employed.

Only two local evaluations (nine percent) reported a higher level of employment among the FSC participants than among adults in the comparison group. In one evaluation, 64 percent of the FSC participants were employed in the third year of the demonstration, compared with 53 percent of the control group (p=.10). In the other project, the proportion of FSC participants who were working nearly doubled between baseline and the second follow-up (from 41 percent to 93 percent), compared to a change from 59 percent to 86 percent in the Head Start comparison group[4]. None of the local evaluations with a randomized control group reported positive program impacts on employment.

Three local evaluations (17 percent) reported negative impacts, indicating that a higher proportion of the control group than the FSC group was employed. Although none of these reports presented the results of statistical tests to indicate whether these differences were statistically significant, the magnitude of the differences were large. For example, one evaluation reported that 27 percent of adults in the FSC were employed at the second follow-up compared with 47 percent of the adults in the Head Start control group. The evaluator did not offer any suggestions for why this finding might have occurred, although it is sometimes the case that while adults are in a training program they are less likely to work than

4 In this report, statistical analyses were conducted separately for the program and comparison groups on changes between baseline and the second follow-up; no direct statistical comparisons were made between the program and comparison group.

adults who are not involved in training, so that short-term results favor the control group. Another evaluation report cited employment rates of 75 percent for the control group and 50 percent for the FSC group. In this latter report, adults in the control group also had higher employment levels at baseline than adults in the FSC; although the proportion of adults in the FSC group who were working increased over the course of the study, the gains were not large enough to meet or surpass the employment rates among adults in the control group. Overall, at the end of the study, there were still more adults in the control group than among the FSC participants who were working.

Income and Public Assistance

Economic self-sufficiency was one of the overarching goals of the FSC, and a number of local evaluations reported information on income levels and the receipt of public assistance for families in the FSC and Head Start. However, two-thirds (67 percent) of the local evaluators found no program effects in these areas (Exhibit 4.6).

Twenty-one percent of the local evaluations (five projects) reported a lower receipt of some type of public assistance or higher incomes for adults in the FSC relative to adults in a Head Start comparison group. In one local evaluation, the quarterly earned income among the FSC group increased approximately $900 by the end of the project, while the quarterly income among a matched comparison group decreased about $275; this difference in the change scores was statistically significant (p=.001). In another evaluation, adults in the FSC earned almost $2,000 more in a three-month period than adults in the control group (p=.10); these differences were seen at the three-year follow-up but not before.

Exhibit 4.6

Impacts on Receipt of Public Assistance and Income Reported in Local Evaluations (n=24 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	0	4	0
Comparison group	17	29	4
Random assignment	4	33	8
Overall	21%	67%	12%

Note: Higher incomes and lower rates of public assistance were considered to be positive impacts.

The results for receipt of public assistance were less consistent. For example, one evaluation cited less reliance on AFDC, food stamps and Medicaid among the FSC participants than among adults in the comparison group, but no differences on Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Another evaluator described positive effects on SSI, but negative impacts on AFDC in the FSC group relative to the comparison group.

Twelve percent of the local evaluations found that the comparison or control group had higher incomes and/or less reliance on public assistance than the FSC group at the end of the program. In two projects (both Wave III sites with a randomized control group), there also were significant differences in employment at baseline favoring the control group, perhaps explaining these negative findings.

Educational Attainment

Approximately a third of the local evaluations (32 percent) reported positive impacts on adults' education level or attainment of an educational degree or certificate (Exhibit 4.7). Most of these differences were seen in the proportion of FSC participants who received a GED (General Educational Development) or other educational certificate. For example, in the second year of a Wave II project, 20 percent of the adults in the FSC compared with only four percent of the adults in the Head Start comparison group had GED certificates, and 17 percent of the FSC adults and none of the adults in the comparison group had trade certificates. In a Wave III project with a randomized control group, significantly more adults in the FSC than in Head Start had received diplomas or certificates during the second year of the project (22 percent versus 3 percent) and during the third year of the project (23 percent versus 0 percent).

Exhibit 4.7

Impacts on Education Level Reported in Local Evaluations (n=19 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	0	0	0
Comparison group	11	26	0
Random assignment	21	37	5
Overall	32%	63%	5%

Note: Education level includes educational attainment and degrees/certificates received but does not include working toward a degree.

Sixty-three percent of the local evaluations reported that education levels for adults in the FSC were the same as those in the comparison group (or the same level as at baseline for pretest-posttest designs).

Only one local evaluation that presented findings on educational attainment reported negative impacts. In that Wave III FSC, 57 percent of the FSC group compared with 72 percent of the control group had a high school diploma or GED certificate at the second follow-up. This evaluation calculated statistical significance for each group separately on the changes over time, and both groups made significant gains. However, since a higher proportion of the control group had these credentials at baseline, it is possible that if the follow-up results had controlled for baseline differences that the finding would have indicated "no impact" rather than the interpretation of "negative impact." These findings also point to the fact that with small samples, random assignment does not always create two groups that are equal on all measures at baseline.

Literacy Level

Literacy skills were measured by self-report of reading activities, self-rating of reading ability, and by scores on a standardized test such as the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) or TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education). More than half of the local evaluations (56 percent) found no significant impacts on literacy skills (Exhibit 4.8).

Forty percent of the local evaluations (including those based on pretest-posttest designs as well as comparison and control groups) reported positive program impacts on literacy skills. The positive impacts were more likely to be seen for self-ratings of progress toward literacy

Exhibit 4.8

Impacts on Literacy Skills Reported by Local Evaluations (n=25 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	12	0	0
Comparison group	16	16	4
Random assignment	12	40	0
Overall	40%	56%	4%

Note: Literacy skills include scores on literacy tests, reading activities and self-report of reading ability.

goals or self-rating of reading level than for standardized tests. For example, on a five-point scale of reading ability (where 1 was "very poor" and 5 was "very good"), adults in one Wave II FSC rated their ability to read significantly higher than adults in the Head Start comparison (4.8 versus 4.5). Similarly, in another Wave II project using a pretest-posttest design, FSC participants significantly increased their ratings of reading competence from 4.28 at the start of the FSC program year to 4.42 at the end of the year.

Three projects reported gains on standardized reading or literacy tests. In one Wave I project, adults in the FSC increased their TABE scores by more than a grade level between the pretest and posttest, compared with adults in a matched comparison who gained about half a grade level; this difference translated into almost a full standard deviation difference. In another Wave I project, FSC participants gained more than 2.5 grade levels on the TABE; because this result was based on a very small sample of adults (n= 8), the evaluator did not compute any statistical tests. Only one statistically significant difference was reported on the CASAS, the functional literacy test used in the national evaluation. In that site, the evaluator reported a 23 point gain for the FSC group between baseline and second follow-up, compared with a gain of less than one point for the control group.

Only one project (four percent) reported a higher literacy score for adults in a non-FSC Head Start than for adults in the FSC; however, no statistical analysis was conducted on this difference to determine whether it was likely to be due to chance.

Substance Abuse

The findings on the use of drugs and alcohol were mixed, with the majority of evaluators who presented impacts in this area reporting either no differences or differences favoring the comparison group. As Exhibit 4.9 shows, about half (54 percent) of the local evaluations reported no program impacts and another 20 percent reported negative effects.

Seven local evaluations (28 percent) reported positive program impacts on substance abuse. The measures included self-ratings of concerns about alcohol and drug use (e.g., "I am able to stop drinking when I want," "Sometimes I think I drink or use drugs too much"); staff ratings of progress toward goals (e.g., completed consultation, attended prevention education event); participants' acknowledgment of a substance abuse problem for someone in their family; and self-reported drug or alcohol use. Among these seven evaluations, five presented the results of statistical analyses. Local evaluators in one Wave III project that conducted random assignment for the local evaluation reported that in the third year of their study FSC participants had significantly fewer drug or alcohol problems (as measured by scores on a modified version of the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test) than adults in the control group. However, because a number of the nonsignificant comparisons on substance abuse favored the control group, these evaluators concluded that the evidence of positive effects on substance abuse were "weak, at best."

Exhibit 4.9

Impacts on Use of Drugs and Alcohol Reported in Local Evaluations (n=26 out of 58 reports)

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Type of Local Evaluation Design	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Pretest-Posttest	4	4	4
Comparison group	12	19	12
Random assignment	12	31	4
Overall	28%	54%	20%

Other Indicators of Program Impact

Twenty of the local evaluations presented program impacts in areas related to, but outside of, the three focal areas of the FSC. The vast majority of these were assessments of participants' psychological well-being, most commonly indicators of self-esteem and depression. Of the six local evaluations that analyzed adults' self-esteem, the three based on pretest-posttest comparisons reported significant improvements over the course of the project, while the three that compared results to a comparison or control group reported no significant differences. The findings on depression levels also were mixed, although there was little relation to the local evaluation design. Of the eight local evaluators who reported findings on depression levels, four reported no differences, two reported negative impacts, and two reported positive impacts.

Other psychological indices reported by one or two local evaluators include coping skills, locus of control, social support, and parenting stress levels. Among these, the results were equally likely to indicate no program impact as to indicate positive effects.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the FSCs may have had some small effects on participants' psychological well-being, but that this was not an area where the FSC had large impacts.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter described the findings from the FSC local evaluations that reported program impacts. Exhibit 4.10 summarizes the locally reported impacts across the main focus areas of the FSC. As discussed earlier, these results need to be interpreted with caution because of the small number of evaluations with findings in any one area.

Exhibit 4.10

Summary of Impacts in the FSC Local Evaluations

	Percent of Local Evaluation Reports		
Area of Impact Reported in Local Evaluations	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact
Participation in Education Classes (n=21)	57	43	0
Employment			
Employability (n=20)	55	40	5
Employment (n=23)	9	74	17
Public Assistance or Income (n=24)	21	67	12
Literacy			
Education Level (n=19)	32	63	5
Literacy Skills (n=25)	40	56	4
Substance Abuse (n=26)	28	54	20

Of all the areas measured, participation in education services and employability skills showed the highest proportion of positive findings in the local evaluations. In both areas, more than half of the local evaluations found increased activity either between pretest and posttest or for the FSC participants relative to a comparison or control group from Head Start.

The local evaluations point to modest positive impacts of the FSCs on education and literacy levels. In particular, FSC participants were more likely than adults in Head Start to obtain a GED or other educational certificate. Positive program effects on literacy levels were also reported by local evaluators, although these results were most often based on self-ratings of reading ability or progress towards personal goals rather than on standardized tests.

There were very few local evaluations that reported positive program impacts on employment, income, or receipt of public assistance. In the area of substance abuse, the results were mixed, with most local studies reporting no impact or negative findings. There were few local

evaluations covering areas beyond these primary focal areas of the FSC; although some local evaluations did report on psychological well-being, there were few positive impacts in this area.

Direct comparisons between the local and national evaluations should be made cautiously because the local evaluations included different FSC projects and individuals than the national evaluation, a broader range of research designs, and different analytic techniques. Nevertheless, it is interesting to see that the impacts presented in the local evaluations are similar to those of the national evaluation based on aggregated data for the Wave III projects. The areas of greatest impact reported in the national evaluation were participation in education, employment, and substance abuse services as well as involvement in an educational degree or certificate program. There were no significant program impacts from the national evaluation on employment, income, or public assistance, which mirror the areas with the fewest positive impacts reported by local evaluators. This suggests that these indicators of self-sufficiency are difficult to improve in a relatively short time-frame. In addition, the national evaluation did not find a decrease in the use of drugs or alcohol, an area where the local evaluations also reported limited impacts.

Chapter Five
The Role of Local Evaluations in a National Demonstration

The evaluation of the Head Start Family Service Center Demonstration Projects provided a valuable opportunity to combine site-specific information collected at the local level with a national assessment of the impact of the FSCs on participant families across all projects[1]. Specifically, ACYF recognized the need to capture the uniqueness of each site's individual program that would complement the overall assessment conducted by the national evaluator. To this end, ACYF mandated in the program instructions issued to interested Head Start grantees that the local demonstration site would be evaluated by a third party to "provide formative and summative information on the implementation of, and specific outcomes attributable to, the project."

This report has sought to document the local evaluation efforts mounted in 58 out of the 65 FSC grantees across all three waves of the demonstration. This final chapter summarizes the role of the local evaluator within the FSC national demonstration effort through discussion of the following topics:

- nature of collaborative model;
- usefulness of local evaluation data; and
- lessons learned from collaborative effort and recommendations for future work.

As discussed in previous chapters, the local evaluation reports reviewed represent a diversity of research designs and methods and have yielded an enormous amount of information concerning the workings of the individual FSC programs. Following is a discussion of the nature of the collaborative model that helped shape the direction of the local evaluations.

FSC Collaborative Approach and Context of Partnership

The National Advisory Panel for the Head Start Evaluation Design Project specified a set of research recommendations for Head Start that called for "using the consortium technique of conducting several small subsidiaries within the umbrella of one larger project" (U.S.

1 Similarly, other national demonstrations have employed this two-pronged approach to evaluation. The national evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the national evaluation of the Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are two examples of collaborative efforts between national and local evaluators.

Department of Health and Human Services, 1990). This approach was used as the basis for the FSC evaluation, with Abt Associates Inc. serving as the national evaluator and focusing on overall program impact.[2] The advantages of using a central evaluator to carry out this study were as follows:

- **Consistent measures.** A parent interview to assess program effects was developed for the national evaluation based on early discussions with evaluators in the Wave I and II projects. Draft instruments were reviewed by project staff and evaluators to capture the objectives of the FSC.

- **Uniform data collection.** Standard training procedures at a central location, detailed guidelines for data collection procedures, and continuous monitoring of data equality all enhanced the reliability of respondents' data.

- **Use of rigorous research design.** In order to derive valid impact estimates, random assignment designs were encouraged for Waves I and II, and required for Wave III. Abt Associates conducted the random assignment to ensure that it was carried out in an objective and standardized way. To facilitate this process, visits were made to all random assignment sites to discuss the random assignment process with both project staff and the local evaluator.

- **Uniform data analysis.** All data from individual FSC projects were centrally coded and analyzed for program effects by Abt Associates. Moreover, the ability to combine data from multiple sites overcame the problem of small sample size within sites and, thus, provided for a more powerful statistical analysis.

On the other hand, the national evaluator was not in an ideal position to capture the unique variations in program features and participant characteristics across sites. As a result of increased contact and communication, the local evaluators were in a much better position to accomplish the following objectives to complement the impact evaluation at the national level:

- **Capture the experiences of participants in local programs.** The local evaluators, because of their relative proximity to the programs, had the potential to track the individual progress of participants.

- **Document start-up issues, barriers to receiving services.** Knowledge of site-specific issues by local evaluators was crucial in the evaluation process, especially in terms of explaining impacts or the absence of impacts.

2 In addition, the national evaluation provided information about the implementation of a Family Service Center program model.

- **Provide recommendations to programs and lessons learned.** As ACYF requested, the local evaluator's role was envisioned to be formative as well as summative, and many were able to provide ongoing evaluative feedback to project staff.

To meet these objectives, ACYF instructed the local programs to contract with a local researcher to act as a third-party evaluator. These local evaluators, as noted in Chapter One, were recruited primarily from local universities or consulting agencies; many had prior experience in evaluation with human service programs. In addition to their formative roles, ACYF expected local evaluators to develop research designs that would permit an assessment of changes in participating families as a result of their involvement in the FSC program. As previously suggested by the Advisory Panel for the Head Start Evaluation Design Project (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1990), these designs should be targeted at a variety of subgroup populations and a diverse array of outcome measures.

Although the Wave I and II local evaluators had considerable flexibility in crafting their individual evaluation designs, the evaluators for the Wave III FSCs were tied more closely to the needs of the national evaluation. This involved both implementing the random assignment within each site, as well as overseeing the data collection effort for the national evaluation.

Usefulness of Local Evaluation Data

Each of the areas of our review can provide relevant examples of useful information found in the local evaluation reports. We discuss these areas specifically in terms of their utility for increasing our understanding of the local FSC projects.

Program Context

Local evaluators are often in a good position to document the local context. This information can improve our understanding of observed patterns of program and participant outcomes. Several FSC reports cited start-up issues in terms of staffing, space, and community collaborations that could have had a dampening effect on participant outcomes. For example, a program unable to establish successful collaborations with employment agencies would not be expected to produce positive impacts in this area (unless of course, alternative options could be developed that made it possible to overcome the problem). Similarly, a description of the community context can be useful for understanding any potential constraints on the local FSC program. A community, for example, with a very high unemployment rate due to plant closings would not present adequate opportunities for FSC participants to gain employment despite the best efforts of job training services.

Program Structure

A description of the program operations or administrative structure is critical for understanding, for example, variations in caseload size or community collaborative arrangements. Knowledge of program operations (e.g., staffing arrangements) and service configurations was also important in understanding the potential effectiveness of the FSC projects in helping families in employment, literacy, and substance abuse. There was a good number of reports that either did not document program operations (33 percent) or identify the services provided to families (38 percent). In addition, of the reports including a discussion of services, many provided only brief descriptions of the actual delivered services to families. While this information may have been included in project directors' progress reports to ACYF, it also is useful to include in local evaluation reports.

Program Participants

Local evaluators had opportunities to speak with program participants to explore their experiences with the FSC program. This information was often used to deduce lessons learned about the strengths or weaknesses of their program, and sometimes led to recommendations concerning potential improvements in program operations or provision of services. In light of the findings of no overall impact found in the national evaluation, it also was instructive to be able to probe more deeply into the actual experiences of participants as revealed by the various locally conducted case studies. Those local evaluators who presented the success stories generated by the activities of the FSC provided effective complements to the more limited aggregate findings from the national impact evaluation.

In addition, in some instances, anecdotal information from local evaluation reports was helpful in gaining insight into national evaluation findings. For example, a few local evaluators wrote about the difficulty of getting accurate information on substance abuse. In one instance, a local evaluator reported that although none of the FSC participants reported using drugs, three of the respondents were incarcerated on drug-related charges during the course of the study. Another local evaluation report talked about the number of people who were referred for treatment by FSC case managers even though interviews conducted for the national evaluation indicated very low usage. These examples demonstrate the value of local evaluation information in amplifying the findings from a centralized national evaluation.

Outcomes/Impacts

In terms of judging the usefulness of impact data, two important questions to consider are:

- *How rigorous was the implemented research design to allow for the drawing of causal inferences concerning the effectiveness of the local FSC program?*

- *Was the allotted sample size for the study and the accompanying statistical power available large enough to detect significance differences between the FSC and comparison groups?*

Although ACYF recommended the use of a comparison group design for Waves I and II, many local evaluators either used simple pre-post evaluation designs or did not report evaluation impacts at all. The focus in these evaluations was often geared toward program or participant descriptions rather than the estimation of program impacts. Those that did choose to recruit a comparison group opted primarily for the weaker quasi-experimental group design. A few Wave I and II evaluators, however, chose to implement random assignment, either in addition to or as part of the national evaluation design.

As a result of their data collection responsibilities for the national evaluation, Wave III evaluators often were unable to implement their own evaluation design. Thus, in Wave III, the pattern was primarily to use the national evaluation experimental design, although a handful of local evaluators chose a different approach in terms of reporting impact findings (e.g., through the addition of a supplemental quasi-experimental design.)

Most of the local evaluations were based on small samples of respondents. This was likely due to a combination of resource constraints on recruiting large samples, and the fact that many FSCs served a small number of families. Because many samples were not large enough to achieve reasonable levels of statistical power, local evaluations may be less useful in terms of assessing impacts.

An additional important consideration in writing up impacts at the local level is deciding who the audience is for the reported findings. Many local evaluation reports were less technical than the standard evaluation report, which is quite understandable given that the targeted audience was, for the most part, project staff as well as the Head Start Bureau. Many reports did not compute statistical tests or failed to report them if they did. In these cases, the reports would have benefited from including a technical appendix containing statistical tables for those interested readers[3].

Lessons Learned

One of the most positive features of the FSC local evaluation reports was the ability to draw lessons from the evaluator's experience with the project as well as the capacity to make recommendations regarding potential improvements in program operations, provision of services, overcoming barriers, more effective collaborations, etc. Many of these lessons learned and recommendations have already been documented in Chapter Four. Building on

3 In contrast, several reports contained pages of computer printouts in the main body of text with little or no accompanying discussion. This made it difficult to interpret the findings of the study

these recommendations, another role for the local evaluator would be to provide ongoing feedback to the FSC project. Although the ACYF grant announcements specifically delineated a formative role for the local evaluators, there was not much explicit discussion of this role in the FSC local evaluation reports. There were, however, some notable exceptions. One local evaluator provided regular feedback to the FSC project in the form of a family advocate handbook and video, which was also made available as a dissemination product to other Head Start programs. Another evaluator documented how findings from interviews with the FSC staff and clients were communicated to the Head Start staff at the end of the demonstration to assist in the integration of the FSC into Head Start.

Conclusion

Given the central role accorded the national evaluation in reporting program impacts, what role was there to play for the FSC local evaluators both at the national and local level? Clearly, the relative proximity of the local evaluators to the FSC program potentially offered them the opportunity to observe first-hand the workings of the program on a day-to-day basis. This relationship with the individual programs went far beyond the minimal contact that Abt staff had with the FSC projects. From our review of these reports, however, it was not apparent that all local evaluators took advantage of this opportunity.

ACYF correctly anticipated that it was beyond the scope of the national evaluator to be able to capture the unique qualities of each individual FSC program. However, judging from the wide range in quality and content of the local evaluation reports, there did not seem to be a clear consensus as to the purpose or use of these studies. For example, the grant announcements gave very general guidelines for designing the local evaluations, and it was not made entirely clear who the audience was for these reports. This lack of consistent focus eventually led to the wide variation in the reports that was observed.

Recommendations

What concrete steps could be taken to ensure that local evaluation reports are better utilized in future collaborative efforts? To address this issue, the following suggestions are offered.

Specify an Evaluation Plan

As part of the grant application, each local evaluator should be required to submit an evaluation plan containing the following information:

- list of research questions;
- description of proposed sample -- anticipated sample size, possible attrition rates, etc.;

- description of research methodology -- evaluators should provide details about how to assess outcomes (pre/post, comparison group or randomized design);

- data collection plan -- type and numbers of interviews, child tests, surveys, etc. to be conducted; and

- analysis plan -- brief description of how data will be analyzed and reported.

To assist program staff in thinking about evaluation issues, ACYF has made available a series of evaluation handbooks, including *The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation* and the accompanying *Head Start Evaluation Handbook* (Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 1997). Both of these guidebooks were written from the perspective of program directors and managers to help them in using evaluation effectively to improve programs. A useful companion piece in this regard would be a document directed at local evaluators in helping them prepare and conduct evaluations of Head Start programs. This would ensure that both program managers and local evaluators share the same set of expectations regarding evaluations of local programs.

In addition, the local evaluator should stipulate how evaluation findings will be presented: either through annual reports, a final report, or some combination. The evaluation plans should be reviewed by ACYF and Head Start staff knowledgeable in research design and evaluation, and sent back to the local evaluators with comments.

Specify Evaluation Report Structure

The evaluation reports in this review represent a broad range of research activities and information from multiple sources reflecting the varied perspectives of the local evaluators. However, the variability in the reports made it somewhat difficult to synthesize findings across reports. Moreover, lack of consistent standards for research design and reporting made the synthesis task even more difficult. An adherence to strict research standards such as conducting random assignment and reporting of requisite statistical information would greatly enhance the capability to aggregate results across studies. To obtain a consistent set of information across all projects, local evaluators could be instructed to cover at a minimum the following topics in their reports:

- description of context -- community profile and conditions, program start-up issues;

- description of program services, operations, and staff (staffing patterns, staff qualifications, staff development);

- description of program participants -- participant demographic characteristics and needs, and participation patterns;

- discussion of the study design and methodology;

- outcomes/impacts - outcomes listed for program and comparison group[4] with accompanying statistical test and means, standard deviations, and sample sizes for each group; and

- lessons learned/recommendations - lessons about the program that would be useful to both the program staff and the field in general.

In addition, each report would be enhanced by a one-page executive summary, capturing the main findings from the evaluation, as well as a table of contents listing the topics covered in the report and associated page numbers.

Develop Common Set of Research Questions and Expectations

In order to identify a common set of issues across all projects, ACYF should prepare a set of evaluation questions for all prospective evaluators, which can be used in a research synthesis. Examples of questions that might address policy concerns of Head Start include the following:

- What barriers do parents report that prevent them from fully utilizing Head Start services?

- What problems do staff identify as the most critical in families' struggle to achieve higher levels of employability and literacy?

- Are programs successful in identifying families' needs and goals?

Promote Communication Among Evaluators

A series of meetings could be organized around common themes to enable local evaluators to gain some perspective on the issues they face in their individual sites. In the FSC evaluation, there were annual grantee meetings conducted by ACYF in the early phases of the project and the consortium meetings of local evaluators organized by Abt Associates. Some of the evaluation topics discussed at these meetings in roundtable and poster sessions were:

- lessons learned for improving FSC program goals;

- making final reports useful for local programs;

- measurement issues and data analysis in local evaluations;

4 This would include, as well, the pre-post design where the same group of individuals serve as their own controls.

- assessing program impact with and without a comparison/control group;
- measuring community impact; and
- analyzing program impact by participant characteristics.

Build Local Capacity

Other ways that ACYF could assist in local capacity building to strengthen local evaluations are through the following activities:

- promote public dissemination (by ACYF) of local evaluations;
- establish internet based information exchange among local evaluators using ACYF's web page;
- sponsor national competition and awards for best local evaluations;
- commission papers dealing with research and evaluation issues;
- provide support for graduate students to work on local evaluations;
- provide assistance in obtaining statistical software programs for data analysis; and
- involve local projects in evaluation process to facilitate using evaluation findings for program improvement.

These are some recommendations intended to enhance the utility of local evaluations in national demonstration initiatives. There will be benefits to ACYF and other government agencies who carefully plan how local evaluation information is to be used in order to guide the evaluation process in a direction that will satisfy both client and program needs.

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Appendix A

LIST OF FSC PROJECTS WITH AUTHORS OF LOCAL EVALUATION REPORTS

APPENDIX A

List of FSC Projects with Authors of Local Evaluation Reports (n=58[1])

ABERDEEN, WA (Wave II)
Judy Seabert
Janet Thomas

AUBURN, AL (Wave II)
James Gundlach

BARRE, VT (Wave I)
Frederick Schmidt
Kevin Wiberg
Cathleen Gent

BATH, ME (Wave III)
Charles Bernacchio
John Hornstein
Tina St. Pierre

BEMIDJI, MN (Wave II)
Russell Bennett
James Rafferty

BETHLEHEM, PA (Wave III)
J. Dean Burkholder
Al Leo

BOSTON, MA (Wave II)
Andrew Hahn
Ted Murphy

BRIDGEPORT, CT (Wave I)
Anita Lightburn

1 This list excludes seven projects from which we did not receive any local evaluation reports.

BROWNING, MT (Wave I)
Gloria Gregg

BURLINGTON, VT (Wave II)
Lois Holbrook

CHICAGO, IL - OP (Wave III)
David Beer
Marlene Glassman

CHICAGO, IL -DHS (Wave III)
David Beer
Ronald Loewe

CLEVELAND, OH (Wave II)
Sharon Milligan
Linda Crowell

COMPTON, CA (Wave III)
Rehema Gray

DAYTON, OH (Wave III)
Betty Yung

DETROIT LAKES, MN (Wave III)
Russell Bennett
James Rafferty

DETROIT, MI (Wave II)
Kendra Wilkins

EAST ST. LOUIS, IL (Wave III)
Jack McKillip
Mary Sadler
Denise Truskosky

ESCANABA, MI (Wave III)
Cornell DeJong

FAIRMONT, WV (Wave III)
John M. Williams

FOND DU LAC, WI (Wave III)
Thomas Ebert

GAINESVILLE, FL (Wave II)
Gordon Greenwood

GERING, NE (Wave III)
Kathi Jordan Swanson

GLENDALE, CA (Wave II)
Eva Baker
Harold O'Neil, Jr.
Richard Brown
Kelly Donaldson

GRAND RAPIDS, MN (Wave II)
Tim McDonald

GRANDVIEW, WA (Wave III)
William Hansen

HIAWATHA, KS (Wave III)
Robert H. Poresky
Karen Clark

IGNACIO, CO (Wave II)
Michael Anziano

JEFFERSONVILLE, IN (Wave I)
Diane Wille

KALAMAZOO, MI (Wave II)
Lyndell R. Bleyer
Ed Pawlak

KLAMATH FALLS, OR (Wave III)
Richard Pohl

LANCASTER, PA (Wave II)
J. Dean Burkholder
Al Leo

LANSING, MI (Wave II)
David Harley

LEXINGTON, KY (Wave I)
Colleen Mendel
Raymond Mendel

LINCOLN, NE (Wave II)
Larry S. Johnson

LOGAN, UT (Wave II)
Lori Roggman

LORAIN, OH (Wave I)
Lynne Capretto
Jill Rudd

LOS MOLINOS, CA (Wave III)
Sal Gelardi

LOWELL, MA (Wave II)
Nancy B. Wyner

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (Wave I)
Robert Clyde
Vivian Nelson

NORTON, VA (Wave II)
Shirley Morgan
Monroe Morgan

OCALA, FL (Wave III)
Anita Zervigon-Hakes
Christine Chiricos

OSHKOSH, WI (Wave II)
William Powell

PHILADELPHIA, PA (Wave III)
Arthur J. Frankel

PHILADELPHIA, PA (Wave II)
Maureen Marcenko

RENO, NV (Wave II)
Deborah Anne Loesch-Griffin

RIO PIEDRAS, PR (Wave I)
Pedro Vales

ROCHESTER, NY (Wave II)
Sarah Liebschutz
Fred Halley

ROCKFORD, IL (Wave III)
Catherine Harned

SAN ANTONIO, TX (Wave II)
Keith Stewart

SAN MARCOS, TX (Wave III)
Harriett Romo

SAN JOSE, CA (Wave I)
Gretchen Wehrle
Larry Shirey

SOMERVILLE, MA (Wave I)
Charles Deutsch

SPRINGFIELD, MA (Wave III)
Elaine H. Anderson
W.C. Wolf, Jr.

STEVENS POINT, WI (Wave III)
Gary Itzkowitz
Kirby Throckmorton

UKIAH, CA (Wave III)
Mary Nistler

WHEELING, WV (Wave II)
Linda Holmstrand

YPSILANTI, MI (Wave II)
Ann Epstein

Appendix B

COMPONENTS OF INDIVIDUAL LOCAL EVALUATION REPORTS

APPENDIX B

Components of Individual Local Evaluation Reports

Project	Type of Report	Planning & Development	Community Context	Program Operation	Description of Services	Participant Case Studies	Participant Characteristic/ Needs Assessment	Participant Perceptions	Staff and Community Perceptions	Participation Patterns	Participant Outcomes	Local Eval. Impact Design*	Lessons Learned	Other
WAVE 1 (1990-93)														
1	Year 1, 3	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	P	X	X
2	Final		X	X	X		X			X	X	P	X	
3	Year 1, 2	X		X	X			X	X	X	X		X	
4	Year 3			X			X			X		C	X	
5	Final	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	C	X	
6	Year 1				X		X	X		X	X	P	X	
7	Final		X	X			X	X	X	X	X	C	X	
8	Final	X								X	X	P		
9	Year 3			X	X	X	X			X	X		X	
10	Final	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	
Wave I Total (%)	--	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	8 (80%)	7 (70%)	2 (20%)	8 (80%)	5 (50%)	4 (40%)	10 (100%)	9 (90%)	7 (70%)	9 (90%)	1 (10%)

*P = Pretest-posttest design; C = Comparison group design; R = Randomized design; N = National evaluation design

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Components of Individual Local Evaluation Reports

Project	Type of Report	Planning & Development	Community Context	Program Operation	Description of Services	Participant Case Studies	Participant Characteristic/ Needs Assessment	Participant Perceptions	Staff and Community Perceptions	Participation Patterns	Participant Outcomes	Local Eval. Impact Design*	Lessons Learned	Other
WAVE 2 (1991-94)														
1	Final	X	X	X			X	X		X	X		X	
2	Final, Qtrly	X	X	X	X		X				X		X	X
3	Final						X			X	X	R + N		X
4	Year 1, 2 Final	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	N	X	
5	Final					X	X	X			X		X	
6	Final		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	N	X	
7	Final, Qtrly						X	X		X	X		X	
8	Final						X			X	X	R + N	X	
9	Year 1, 2, Final	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
10	Final				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
11	Year 1, 2, 3	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	C	X	
12	Final			X	X		X	X		X	X	C		
13	Year 2, 3, Qtrly, Final	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
14	Final			X	X		X	X		X	X	C	X	X
15	Final				X		X			X	X	C	X	
16	Final		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	P	X	
17	Year 1	X	X	X	X	X							X	
18	Year 2		X		X	X	X			X	X	C		
19	Final	X				X	X	X		X			X	
20	Final						X	X		X	X	N	X	
21	Year 3, Qtrly			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	C	X	X
22	Final		X	X		X	X			X	X		X	
23	Final, Qtrly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
24	Year 2, Qtrly, Final	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	C	X	
25	Year 1, 2, 3			X	X		X	X		X	X	C	X	
Wave II Total (%)	--	10 (40%)	11 (44%)	16 (64%)	16 (64%)	14 (56%)	24 (96%)	17 (68%)	4 (16%)	22 (88%)	23 (92%)	14 (56%)	22 (88%)	4 (16%)

*P = Pretest-posttest design; C = Comparison group design; R = Randomized design; N = National evaluation design

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Components of Individual Local Evaluation Reports

Project	Type of Report	Planning & Development	Community Context	Program Operation	Description of Services	Participant Case Studies	Participant Characteristic/ Needs Assessment	Participant Perceptions	Staff and Community Perceptions	Participation Patterns	Participant Outcomes	Local Eval. Impact Design*	Lessons Learned	Other
WAVE 3 (1992-95)														
1	Final		X				X	X	X	X	X	N	X	
2	Final, Qtrly	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
3	Final	X	X					X		X	X	N	X	
4	Final	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	N	X	
5	Final	X		X	X		X				X	N	X	
6	Qtrly			X	X					X	X			
7	Final				X		X			X	X	R+ N		
8	Year 1, Final						X	X			X	N		
9	Year 1,2,3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	C	X	
10	Final, Qtrly	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X			X
11	Final			X	X		X	X		X	X	C		
12	Year 2, Final						X	X		X	X	N		
13	Final		X	X	X		X	X		X	X	N		
14	Final						X	X		X	X	N		
15	Final, Qtrly	X		X			X	X		X	X	N	X	X
16	Year 1,2,3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	C	X	
17	Qtrly										X	N		
18	Final			X			X			X	X			X
19	Final	X		X	X		X			X	X	N	X	X
20	Final	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	N	X	X
21	Final	X					X	X	X	X	X		X	
22	Final, Qtrly			X			X	X	X		X	N	X	
23	Final	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	P	X	
Wave III Total (%)	--	12 (52%)	7 (30%)	15 (65%)	13 (57%)	5 (22%)	20 (87%)	16 (70%)	4 (17%)	19 (83%)	23 (100%)	18 (82%)	13 (57%)	5 (22%)
OVERALL TOTAL (%)	--	27 (47%)	22 (38%)	39 (67%)	36 (62%)	21 (36%)	52 (90%)	38 (66%)	12 (21%)	51 (88%)	55 (95%)	39 (67%)	44 (76%)	10 (17%)

*P = Pretest-posttest design; C = Comparison group design; R = Randomized design; N = National evaluation design