



ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OFFICE OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Family Strengthening Research

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Administration for Children and Families



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is responsible for Federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals and communities. ACF aims to foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership, and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services. The 2013 ACF strategic priorities include:

- Promote economic, health, and social well-being for individuals, families and communities;
- Promote healthy development and school readiness for children, especially for those in low-income families and other special populations;
- Promote safety and well-being of children, youth, and families;
- Support underserved and underrepresented populations; and
- Upgrade the capacity of the Administration for Children and Families to make a difference for families and communities.

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation



<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre>

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The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in ACF serves as principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families on increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of programs designed to improve the economic and social well-being of children and families. In collaboration with ACF program offices and others, OPRE is responsible for ACF performance management, conducting research and policy analyses and developing and overseeing research and evaluation projects to assess program performance and inform policy and practice. OPRE also provides guidance, analysis, technical assistance and oversight to ACF programs on strategic planning; performance measurement; research and evaluation methods; statistical, policy and program analysis and synthesis and dissemination of research and demonstration findings.

A central focus of OPRE's research and evaluation is developing reliable knowledge of the effectiveness of different programmatic strategies in order to inform programmatic and policy choices, with a particular focus on testing innovative approaches used by States, Tribes, communities and service organizations in major program areas, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start, child care and child welfare. Moving more families from welfare to work, persistence and progression in employment, marriage and family formation and the well-being and development of children are major focal areas. OPRE includes the Division of Economic Independence, the Division of Child and Family Development and the Division of Family Strengthening. A cross-cutting Performance Management Team leads ACF-wide efforts to plan, monitor and improve program performance.

OPRE's research and evaluation projects are conducted primarily through grants and contracts, and include collaboration with ACF program offices; HHS's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE); other Federal entities and State, Tribal and community partners.

Family Strengthening Research and Evaluation

OPRE's Division of Family Strengthening (DFS) has primary responsibility for research and evaluation related to strengthening relationships within families, supporting fatherhood, nurturing children through their families, reducing teen pregnancy and supporting youth in their transition to adulthood.

OPRE's research in the area of family strengthening includes mothers, fathers, couples, families, children, and youth.

Within these areas, OPRE funds experimental impact evaluations, process evaluations, and descriptive and theory-building research projects aimed at informing the design and implementation of programs and measure development to improve our ability to capture outcomes. OPRE also invests in building capacity in the research and evaluation field to answer policy-relevant questions.

DFS works in close partnership with a number of other offices, such as

- In ACF:
 - the Office of Family Assistance;
 - the Family and Youth Services Bureau;
 - the Office of Data Analysis, Research, and Evaluation in the Administration for Children, Youth and Families;
 - the Office of Child Support Enforcement; and
 - the Office of Head Start,
- In HHS:
 - the Maternal and Child Health Bureau in the Health Resources and Services Administration;
 - the Innovation Center at the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services; and
 - the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

DFS also invests in activities to disseminate rigorous research on family strengthening topics to a diverse range of stakeholders including federal and state policy-makers, program administrators, researchers, and intermediary organizations. DFS has particular strengths in areas related to building evaluation capacity and to strengthening research and evaluation for American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The following pages describe major OPRE/DFS projects related to family strengthening in Fiscal Year 2013.

Supporting Fatherhood

In recent decades efforts to support and promote responsible fatherhood have been spurred by research that shows a link between supportive fathering and positive child outcomes. Responsible fatherhood programs aim to provide resources and supports to men around healthy relationships, parenting, and economic stability. Much of the past research in the area of fatherhood has focused on middle-income fathers or divorced fathers. The field of research on responsible fatherhood with low-income men is growing. Though the field can draw from some of the past research, the unique circumstances of low-income men, particularly non-resident low-income fathers, necessitate a distinct line of inquiry.

NEW

The Fatherhood Research and Practice Network

The Fatherhood Research and Practice Network is a cooperative agreement awarded to Temple University. The Network will pursue three goals: 1) plan, initiate, and carry out a research agenda to build an evidence base for effective responsible fatherhood interventions and the development of appropriate measures; 2) develop capacity within the evaluator and practitioner communities to conduct and participate in high-quality evaluation studies; and 3) disseminate findings and best practices. The Network will primarily focus on economically disadvantaged, ethnic and racial minority, and other under-studied populations of fathers and families.

Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study

The Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study will describe the implementation and operational approaches and experiences of selected ACF grant programs specifically designed to provide responsible fatherhood and family strengthening services to soon-to-be or recently released fathers. An interim report is expected in 2014. The project is being carried out by the Urban Institute.

Catalog of Research: Programs for Low-Income Fathers

The Strengthening Families Evidence Review (SFER) catalogued studies of programs serving low-income fathers. The researchers documented the quality of studies assessing outcomes for fathers and provided descriptive details of all studies. The researchers produced a searchable database of the studies and evidence. The catalog and database are accessible through the OPRE website. The project was carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

NEW

Home Visiting: Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences

The Home Visiting: Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences Study is a qualitative project that will collect information about innovative approaches used by existing home visiting programs to actively engage and serve fathers, and gather fathers' perspectives on participating in such programs. The study will involve interviews with program staff, home visitors, fathers, and mothers to document 1) program operators' successes and challenges around engaging fathers, 2) the views and opinions of fathers who have been invited to and/or participated in home visiting programs, and 3) lessons for other programs interested in more fully engaging men in their programs. The project is being conducted by the Urban Institute.

NEW

Linking Low-Income Men to Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplace

This project, jointly funded by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) and OPRE, will provide states with early guidance and long-term strategies on how to enroll low-income men in Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplace. The project will focus on: (1) understanding the characteristics of newly eligible low-income men and their barriers for accessing and utilizing health insurance and services; (2) identifying promising outreach, enrollment, and messaging strategies for low-income men from both existing health and human service programs serving low-income men and emerging efforts under the Affordable Care Act; and (3) determining the feasibility of child support, responsible fatherhood, and other ACF programs as vehicles for enrollment. This project is being conducted by RTI International.

Our portfolio of studies on fatherhood include these projects and reports.

- **Parents and Children Together (PACT) Evaluation,**
- **Healthy Marriage/Relationship Education and Responsible Fatherhood Curricula Reviews, and**
- **Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation (FaMLE) and Cross-Site Project.**

Strengthening Relationships

A large body of research has shown that, on average, children raised in stable, two-parent families have better outcomes on a range of measures, even into adulthood. Research has identified dimensions of couples' relationship functioning (e.g., positive communication, effective conflict management, problem solving, etc.) that could be modified or enhanced through relationship-focused educational programming. Evaluations have found that such services can produce significant improvement in multiple dimensions of relationship quality and reductions in break-up/divorce. While past research has focused primarily on middle-class, white couples who were engaged or married, since the mid-1990s ACF has supported healthy marriage and relationship education for a more diverse population.

DFS oversees a research and evaluation agenda to provide needed information about the implementation and effectiveness of such services. The agenda includes a focus on learning the views and experiences of participants as well as other key research questions. This section contains descriptions of some of the completed and ongoing studies in this portfolio:

Building Strong Families

Building Strong Families is a large randomized study that examined the effectiveness of offering relationship education to low-income unmarried couples expecting a child. Key goals of the intervention were to provide skills and knowledge to unwed parents on entering into and sustaining healthy relationships and marriages, improving family functioning, and increasing child and family well-being. The study included approximately 5,100 couples across eight programs around the country. Reports on implementation and interim (15-month) and final (36-month) findings are available on the OPRE website. The project was carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

Supporting Healthy Marriages

Supporting Healthy Marriage is a large randomized study that examined the effectiveness of offering marriage and relationship education to low-income married couples with children. Key goals of the intervention were to provide skills and knowledge shown to be associated with increased marital quality and stability, improve family functioning and co-parenting, and increased child and adult well-being. The study included over 6,200 couples across eight programs around the country. A report on implementation and interim (12-month) impact findings is available on the OPRE website. A report on final (36-month) findings is expected to be posted to the website in early 2014. The project was carried out by MDRC.

The Community Healthy Marriage Initiatives (CHMI) Evaluation

The Community Healthy Marriage Initiative is a multiple component study that includes: (1) descriptive implementation evaluations of a set of family strengthening demonstrations authorized by the Office of Child Support Enforcement and (2) an impact and implementation evaluation of community healthy marriage and relationship education programs utilizing community partnerships to serve diverse segments of their populations (e.g., engaged couples, unmarried parents, married couples, etc.). The impact evaluation utilized a matched community pairs design and two rounds of data collection with over 2,900 adults to assess differences in changes on a range of family life outcomes at the community level. Study reports are available on the OPRE website. The project was carried out by RTI International.

Parents and Children Together (PACT) Evaluation

The Parents and Children Together Evaluation utilizes summative and formative evaluation methods to learn from and assess the effects of selected federally funded Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grant programs. Program impacts will be assessed based on a random assignment design. The study also includes multiple qualitative data collection strategies to document program implementation and operational approaches and to learn from participants about their lives and program experiences. The project is being carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

Catalog of Research: Programs for Low-Income Couples

The Strengthening Families Evidence Review (SFER) catalogued studies of programs serving low-income couples. The researchers documented the quality of studies assessing outcomes for couples and provided descriptive details of all studies. The researchers produced a searchable database of the studies and evidence. The catalog and database are accessible through the OPRE website. The project was carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

NEW

Healthy Marriage/ Relationship Education - Models and Measures

The purpose of the Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education: Models and Measures project is to bring together experts in the field to develop recommendations for “next-generation” marriage and relationship education models for diverse populations. The new models will build on previous implementation and impact evaluation evidence, the experience and views of program operators, and other key sources of information. The project will also refine existing measures and measurement methods related to healthy marriage and relationship education, as well as developing and validating alternative measures that better reflect the relationships of diverse couples and the interventions in which they participate.

Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation (FaMLE) and Cross-Site Project

The purpose of the Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation and Cross-Site Project is to support high quality data collection, strengthen local evaluations, and conduct cross-site analysis for Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grantees. The project will answer three main research questions:

- What strategies did grantees use to design well-conceived programs?
- What strategies did grantees use to successfully implement well-conceived programs?
- What were the reported outcomes for participants in the programs?

In the process of answering these questions, the project will support ACF and Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage grantees by compiling evaluation resources, reviewing implementation plans, and reviewing local evaluation plans. In addition, it will support the grantees in their research endeavors by promoting rigorous research design and high-quality data collection, and assisting in dissemination of results. Taken together, these activities will further ACF's understanding the design, implementation, and outcomes of Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage programs. The project is being conducted by Mathematica Policy Research.

Healthy Marriage/ Relationship Education and Responsible Fatherhood Curricula Reviews

The Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Curricula Review will develop a searchable tool that allows future grant applicants and others interested in information about commonly used healthy marriage and relationship education and responsible fatherhood curriculum to search for topical content, target populations, implementation parameters, and linkages with relevant research. The tool will be posted on the OPRE website to help organizations to align curriculum selection with programmatic goals, organizational infrastructure and capacity, and target populations. The project is being carried out by IMPAQ International.

National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 Project (NSFG)

The National Survey of Family Growth gathers information on family life, marriage, divorce, pregnancy, infertility, use of contraception, and men's and women's health. The survey results are a key source of information about teen births and family formation, and are used by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and others to plan health services, health education programs, and to do statistical studies of families, fertility, and health. OPRE contributes annually to the NSFG, which provides key information related to ACF's family strengthening programs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention oversee NSFG.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Throughout its research and evaluation portfolio, OPRE has a strong focus on building capacity of the field. This includes supporting new scholars to conduct applied, policy-relevant research as well as building the capacity of the policy and practice community to understand research and evaluation. Below are some highlights from these kinds of activities.

Design Options for Home Visiting Evaluation (DOHVE) project provides technical assistance to Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grantees around research and evaluation, performance management, data systems and continuous quality improvement. The project provides universal support through briefs and webinars and individualized support to grantees in states and territories. The **Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute** is the sister project to DOHVE that provides similar support to Tribal MIECHV grantees. TEI is noteworthy for its focus on community-based research and evaluation, focus on culturally appropriate data collection and emphasis on the ethical dissemination and translation of evaluation findings with AIAN families to external audiences. The **Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation (FaMLE) and Cross-Site Project** will be providing similar support to grantees in their performance management and research work by providing universal and individualized technical assistance on rigorous research design, high-quality data collection and dissemination of results.

Both the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network and the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families have as one of their primary goals to develop capacity within the research, evaluation and practitioner communities to conduct and participate in high-quality evaluation studies. This goal may be accomplished through post-doctoral or research fellowship opportunities or supporting new investigator work.

The Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC) has as one of its goals to build capacity for researchers to work in partnership with tribal communities to engage in research. However, the project team discovered that program administrators in tribal early childhood programs wanted to better understand research and evaluation. In response to this need, the first TRC Summer Institute was held at Johns Hopkins University. The two-credit graduate level course was entitled “Early Childhood Research with Tribal Communities.” Over 40 students registered for the week-long course taught by TRC faculty and partners. The course received strong reviews, and will be repeated again in July 2014.

The **Assessing the Evidence: Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness** project presented a pre-conference session at the annual meeting of the Association for Maternal and Child Health Providers on using evidence in decision-making. HomVEE is also developing briefs on methods critical to the conduct of evaluations that meet the HHS standards for evidence of effectiveness in home visiting.

Nurturing Children Through Families

Home visiting is a service delivery strategy. In the work described below, home visiting is used to provide services to pregnant women and families with children up to age five. Early childhood home visiting programs may affect a range of outcomes including maternal health, child health and development, child maltreatment prevention, and family economic self-sufficiency. The federal investment in home visiting -- and related research and evaluation -- has greatly expanded through the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program, established under the Affordable Care Act.

The Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation

The Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation (MIHOPE) is the national evaluation of the MIECHV program. It includes 12 states, 88 local sites, and approximately 5,100 families. Families are randomly assigned to receive one of four home visiting programs or referrals to other community resources. The study will look at the effectiveness of MIECHV overall, for certain population groups, by model and features of programs. It will also include an economic analysis. The first report is due in 2015 and impacts will be available in 2018. The project is being carried out by MDRC.

Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation – Strong Start (MIHOPE-Strong Start)

Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation – Strong Start (MIHOPE-SS) is a partnership between the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), ACF, and HRSA. MIHOPE-SS is designed to examine the impact of evidence-based home visiting to improve birth outcomes and maternal and infant health. The study will build on the MIHOPE study and expand it to include approximately 15,000 pregnant women randomly assigned to one of two different home visiting models. Women will be recruited across approximately 18 states and 110 local sites. Reports will be released annually beginning in early 2014 until 2016. The project is being carried out by MDRC.

Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness

In 2010 as part of implementing the MIECHV legislation, DHHS set criteria for determining which home visiting program models have evidence of effectiveness. The Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) project is an annual, systematic review of evidence of effectiveness, the results of which determine which models meet the DHHS criteria. To date 14 of 35 models reviewed have been found to meet the DHHS criteria. In addition, HomVEE reviews the evidence for home visiting programs in tribal communities and implementation lessons learned. The project is being carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

Tribal Research Center on Early Childhood under the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program and the Head Start Act's Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, Research Center

The Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC) seeks to address gaps in early childhood research with American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) through partnerships with tribal Head Start, Early Head Start, child care, and home visiting programs. The goals of the TRC are to engage in a participatory research process and help researchers to work effectively with early childhood programs in AI/AN communities. The grant was awarded to University of Colorado, Denver.

Design Options for Home Visiting Evaluation (DOHVE)

Design Options for Home Visiting Evaluation (DOHVE) project supports the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program by providing technical assistance to grantees on research and evaluation, benchmarks, data systems, and continuous quality improvement. The project also provided the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with design options for the Maternal and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation (MIHOPE). The project team has produced multiple TA briefs on topics such as building data management systems and using data for continuous quality improvement in home visiting programs (see: <http://www.mdrc.org/dohve-project-resources>). The project is being carried out by MDRC and James Bell Associates.

Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute

The Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute provides technical assistance, leadership, and support to promote excellence in community-based research and evaluation of MIECHV initiatives that serve American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) children and families through the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program. Examples of focal areas include developing and implementing a rigorous evaluation of home visiting; selecting, adapting, and developing culturally appropriate data collection tools and measures; tracking and measuring benchmarks; developing and modifying existing data systems; continuous quality improvement; data protection and privacy; and ethical dissemination and translation of evaluation findings derived from research with AIAN to external audiences. The project is being carried out by MDRC and James Bell Associates.

In addition to the projects and reports highlighted here, a few projects described in other sections may be of interest because of their focus on or inclusion of home visiting programs. Those projects include the:

- **Home Visiting - Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences project (described in the Responsible Fatherhood section) which seeks to describe innovative program practices around engaging fathers and fathers' experiences with home visiting;**
- **Building Strong Families evaluation (described above in the Healthy Relationships section) includes four sites that combined a home visiting program (Healthy Families America) with family strengthening services; and**
- **Personal Responsibility Education Program evaluation (described in the Teen Pregnancy Prevention section) is combining a home visiting program (Healthy Families America) with programming to avoid rapid repeat pregnancy.**

SPOTLIGHT ON FAMILY STRENGTHENING RESEARCH FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVES

Across OPRE, there is a growing portfolio of research on ACF programs and their effectiveness in serving American Indians and Alaska Natives. From Head Start and Home Visitation to Child Welfare and TANF, OPRE's research reflects ACF's commitment to developing and undertaking research in a manner that reflects the strengths, needs and cultural identities of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Currently, the Division of Family Strengthening has four major ongoing research efforts specifically focused on the self-sufficiency needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Tribal Research Center on Early Childhood under the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program and the Head Start Act's Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, Research Center seeks to address gaps in early childhood research with American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) through partnerships with tribal Head Start, Early Head Start, child care, and home visiting programs. The goals of the TRC are to engage in a participatory research process and help researchers to work effectively with early childhood programs in AI/AN communities.

HomVEE Tribal Evidence Review. The HomVEE systematic review identified a limited body of research and few rigorous studies of tribal home visiting programs. Given the lack of models that have evidence of effectiveness with tribal populations, the HomVEE team sought to identify lessons learned from the existing literature. HomVEE extracted descriptive information from each relevant study about the participant outcomes that were evaluated to gain a better understanding of the targeted domains that have and have not been studied. Finally, the team summarized lessons learned across studies on three topics: (1) the adaptation of existing models and the development of new models culturally relevant to AIAN families and children, (2) the implementation challenges programs faced and their strategies for overcoming them, and (3) the challenges evaluators faced conducting studies of the program models.

Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation

Institute provides technical assistance, leadership, and support to promote excellence in community-based research and evaluation of the federal home visiting program, Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) initiatives that serve AI/AN children and families through the Tribal MIECHV program. Examples of focal areas include developing and implementing a rigorous evaluation of home visiting; selecting, adapting, and developing culturally appropriate data collection tools and measures; tracking and measuring benchmarks; developing and modifying existing data systems; continuous quality improvement; data protection and privacy; and ethical dissemination and translation of evaluation findings derived from research with AIAN to external audiences.

Understanding Urban Indians' Interactions with ACF Programs and Services

project, being led by Westat, is conducting an exploratory research study to better understand the challenges and context for barriers to accessing ACF services among low-income American Indians and Alaska Natives in urban areas. The primary aims of this study include developing a better understanding for how Urban Indian Centers are working to meet the needs of this population, assessing the unmet service needs among low-income urban American Indians and Alaska Natives, and exploring how ACF services might be able to better meet these needs.

Supporting Positive Youth Development And Reducing Teen Pregnancy

Many ACF programs serve youth. Some directly target youth, such as the Personal Responsibility Education Program (which educates young people on both abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS) or the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program. In some cases youth are participants in broader ACF programs. The Division of Family Strengthening has a number of projects with a sole or large focus on youth. In addition to the projects below, it is anticipated the MIHOPE and MIHOPE-SS projects will include a significant proportion of young mothers in their study samples.

Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Multi-Component Evaluation

The PREP program is one of several federal programs to reduce teen pregnancy through the use of evidence-based approaches. OPRE, in partnership with the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, is overseeing a large-scale evaluation of the PREP program. The evaluation is documenting how state grantees have designed and implemented their PREP programs; collecting and analyzing performance measure data for PREP grantees; and conducting random assignment impact evaluations and in-depth implementation evaluations of four PREP-funded program models, with an eye to building the teen pregnancy prevention evidence base. The first report from the project, which documents key decisions made by states about the design of their PREP programs, was released in 2013. Additional reports will be released over the next few years, with impact findings available in 2017. The project is being carried out by Mathematica Policy Research.

NEW

Random Assignment Study of the Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

This evaluation will measure the impacts of the Transitional Living Program on runaway and homeless youth. The Transitional Living Program (TLP) provides supervised shelter and services to homeless youth – ages 16-21 – for up to 18 months. The shelter can take several forms, including group homes, host family homes, and supervised apartments. In addition, the program provides an array of services, such as basic life skills, parenting skills, educational advancement, job attainment skills, and mental and physical health care. Participants also are referred to services available from mainstream systems. The evaluation’s basic research question is: “How well do young people served by TLP fare after they leave the program, compared with youth who do not have access to the program?” Specifically, the study is examining outcomes for housing stability and homelessness, employment, educational attainment, development of positive attitudes and relationships, and engagement in risky behaviors. The study will also provide an in-depth exploration of how TLPs serve homeless youth. The program is administered by and the evaluation is being funded through the Family and Youth Services Bureau in the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. The evaluation is overseen by the Office of Data Analysis, Research, and Evaluation within the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. OPRE is contributing funding and collaborating with FYSB and ODARE. This project is being conducted by Abt Associates.

NEW

Implications of research on toxic stress and self-regulation for ACF programs

This project will explore the implications for ACF programs of research on toxic stress on development from early childhood through adolescence to young adulthood. A particular focus is being placed on the development of self-regulation and the effectiveness of interventions to promote self-regulation. The work is being conducted by Duke University.

Other and Cross-Cutting Research

In addition to research that falls clearly within the substantive areas of family strengthening, DFS is involved in OPRE projects whose focus spans the issues facing low-income children and families in a cross-cutting way. These cross-cutting projects may look at the populations served by multiple ACF programs, may include projects that may have multiple foci within the project goals of which family strengthening is one focus, or the project may focus on research methodology to support high-quality evaluations across OPRE work.

Research Development Project on Human Service Needs of LGBT Populations

This project is documenting what we know – and, more importantly, what we don’t know – about whether and how low-income and at-risk lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations need, take-up, and interface with the human services administered by ACF. It is conducting a needs assessment, focused on key areas for further research and evaluation. And it will create research-focused recommendations related to any data gaps and human service needs of LGBT populations to inform ACF’s research agenda. A sub-study in the project has sponsored site visits to selected Runaway and Homeless Youth programs to examine how these programs collect data and target services to homeless LGBT youth. Reports are expected to be available in 2014. This project is in collaboration with ASPE. This project is being carried out by Mathematica Policy Research, with their subcontractor, the Williams Institute.

NEW

Methods Inquiries

OPRE seeks to advance and disseminate knowledge about research and evaluation methods and tools for learning about program and policy effectiveness. The purpose of the Methods Inquiries project, awarded to RTI International, is to bring together expertise from varying disciplines and policy fields to explore innovations in research design, analytic techniques and data measurement. In addition, the contractor will disseminate information gathered during the contract period.

NEW

National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families will conduct research, as well as translate and provide research-based information, across three priority areas—poverty reduction and self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education—to inform ACF programs and policies supporting Hispanic families and children. The Center will have three primary goals: 1) advance a cutting-edge research agenda; 2) build research capacity; and 3) implement an innovative communication and dissemination approach. The project was awarded to Abt Associates and Child Trends, working in collaboration with researchers throughout the country.

Links to Projects and Reports

Supporting Fatherhood

The Fatherhood Research and Practice Network

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/the-fatherhood-research-and-practice-network>

Ex-Prisoner Reentry Strategies Study

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/ex-prisoner-reentry-strategies-study>

Catalog of Research: Programs for Low-Income Fathers

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/catalog-of-research-programs-for-low-income-fathers>

Home Visiting: Approaches to Father Engagement and Fathers' Experiences

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/home-visiting-approaches-to-father-engagement-and-fathers-experiences>

Strengthening Relationships

Building Strong Families

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/building-strong-families>

Supporting Healthy Marriages

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/supporting-healthy-marriages>

The Community Healthy Marriage Initiatives (CHMI) Evaluation

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/evaluation-of-community-healthy-marriage-initiatives-chmi>

Parents and Children Together (PACT) Evaluation

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/parents-and-children-together-pact-evaluation>

Catalog of Research: Programs for Low-Income Couples

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/catalog-of-research-programs-for-low-income-couples>

Healthy Marriage/Relationship Education - Models and Measures

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/healthy-marriage-relationship-education-models-and-measures>

Fatherhood and Marriage Local Evaluation (FaMLE) and Cross-Site Project

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/fatherhood-and-marriage-local-evaluation-famle-and-cross-site-project>

Healthy Marriage/Relationship Education and Responsible Fatherhood Curricula Reviews

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/healthy-marriage-relationship-education-and-responsible-fatherhood-curricula-reviews>

National Survey of Family Growth, Cycle 6 Project (NSFG)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-family-growth-cycle-6-project-nsfg-2002-2003>

Capacity Building

Assessing the Evidence: Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/assessing-the-evidence-home-visiting-evidence-of-effectiveness>

Nurturing Children Through Families

The Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/maternal-infant-and-early-childhood-home-visiting-evaluation>

Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation – Strong Start (MIHOPE-Strong Start)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/mother-and-infant-home-visiting-program-evaluation-strong-start-mihope-ss>

Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness

<http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov/>

Tribal Research Center on Early Childhood under the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program and the Head Start Act's Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, Research Center

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/tribal-research-center-on-early-childhood-under-the-affordable>

Design Options for Home Visiting Evaluation (DOHVE)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/design-options-for-home-visiting-evaluation-dohve-2010-2015>

Tribal Home Visiting Evaluation Institute

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/tribal-home-visiting-evaluation-institute-2011-2015>

Spotlight on Family Strengthening Research for American Indian and Alaska Natives

HomVEE Tribal Evidence Review

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/homvee-tribal-evidence-review>

Understanding Urban Indians' Interactions with ACF Programs and Services

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/understanding-urban-indians-interactions-with-acf-programs-and-services>

Supporting Positive Youth Development and Reducing Teen Pregnancy

Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) Multi-Component Evaluation

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/personal-responsibility-education-program-prep-multi-component>

Random Assignment Study of the Transitional Living Program for Homeless Youth

<http://www.abtassociates.com/Projects/2012/Gauging-the-Effectiveness-of-the-Transitional-Livi.aspx>

Other and Cross-Cutting Research

Research Development Project on Human Service Needs of LGBT Populations

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/research-development-project-on-human-service-needs-of-lgbt-populations>

Methods Inquiries

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/methods-inquiries>

Center For Research on Hispanic Children & Families

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/center-for-research-on-hispanic-children-families>

Family Strengthening Research

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