

**Social Innovation Fund Project-Impact Study and Final Report
Southwest Solutions-Detroit, MI
English Language Learners Program (ELLP)**

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| Evaluator(s) | <p>Dr. Jeri Levesque, President, Center of Effort, LLC, External Evaluator</p> <p>Dr. Margaret Scordias, Senior Associate, Center of Effort, LLC</p> |
| Location of Study | <p>A two-generation study took place in six elementary school sites in the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) over a five-year period of time. The project served two target neighborhoods in southwest Detroit-Springwells and Vernor/Junction and Chadsey Condon where there are approximately 71,000 residents and where 52% to 57% of residents are Hispanic. Approximately 10% of the residents in these areas are under three (3) years of age. The “study” was funded through the Metro United Way for Southeast Michigan and a sub-grant was awarded to Southwest Solutions in Detroit to implement the English Language Learner Program (ELLP) in the DPS.</p> |
| Type of Evaluation | <p>This research provides a study of the assumption that intervention at the root level creates a chain of changes that impacts the entire family and “carries through to the symptomatic social issue.” The report is a summative analysis of Hispanic Children’s literacy and language development in six Detroit elementary schools where four-component family literacy/learning programs were implemented. The study also measures parents’ educational gains and is based on the premise that when parents improve their ELL skills in a two-gen program, that they will become a better support for their children’s learning, when the parent is fully engaged. The analysis was based on a quasi-experimental design and included comparison groups of elementary students. The treatment plan involved preparing and engaging parents of Hispanic kindergarten through 3rd grade students to support their children’s learning. Student achievement, attendance, and academic mindsets were analyzed with the quasi-experimental design. Pre and post student data were obtained through the Teacher Report of Student Performance which included elementary student reading levels based on the standardized STAR Reading Assessments or NWEA-MAP Reading Assessments. A total of 241 “focus students” was compared to 342 comparison students, who were matched to the control group students regarding grade, ethnicity, and gender. Sample sizes varied each year based on the number of schools participating. Pre-and post-measurements of parent efficacy were obtained.</p> |
| Participants | <p>Approximately 41% of the adults in the study location did not graduate from high school. Only 28% of the adult residents of the location are employed. Almost all focus students (99%) live below the poverty guidelines in all program schools/sites/years of the study.</p> |

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| Length of Study | The ELLP was a five-year implementation project/study in six (6) DPS elementary schools over time-the first year being a pilot initiative. |
| Comparison Group | The control group students-children of the ELLP parents- were compared to a select group of students on the official school rosters based on grade level, teacher, ethnicity and gender. Two comparative students were selected for each focus child in the program in order to address attrition. |
| Model Characteristics | Each site selected implemented a four-component family literacy/learning program which included Adult Education, Children’s Education, Parent Time and PACT Time®. Additionally, each site implemented a minimum of two Family Service Learning projects over the course of a year of implementation. Each program could serve up to 25 adults each program year. |
| Adult Data | The Basic Essential Skills Test (BEST) was used to measure adult ELL gains and is aligned to the ESL descriptors of the National Reporting System (NRS) and Student Performance Levels. Reading and writing skills were assessed at enrollment and again after 100 hours of attendance to determine the NRS gains on skill levels. See Top Level Outcomes below. |
| Child Data | Schools assessed reading with the STAR Early Literacy, STAR Reading Assessment or NWEA MAP Test Scores. The Teacher Report of Student Performance was completed pre and post on each focus and comparison child. See Top Level Outcomes below. |
| Evaluation Tools | Pre and Post Family Surveys BEST Test for adult learners Teacher Report on Student Performance STAR Early Literacy STAR Reading Assessment or NWEA MAP Test Scores Program Benchmarks |
| Uniqueness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical data collected on children and parents over five years • Solid comparison group for K-3 students involved • ELLP designed specifically for Hispanic families • Funded through United Way • Researcher mandatory as part of the initiative • Interim/yearly progress reports mandatory • Rigid summative evaluation |

Top Level Outcomes

Adult and Family

- In all results, there was a significant effect of parents’ level of involvement in their children’s education
- There were solid increases from pre to post on the BEST

ELL gains are aligned to the ESL descriptors of the National Reporting System and Student Performance Levels. Reading and writing skills were assessed at enrollment and again after 100 hours of attendance to determine the NRS gains on skill levels. Some results:

- Pre to post BEST testing showed statistically significant gains

- Scores were compared to the NRS to determine the levels of functioning in English speaking and listening and reading and writing
- In general, there was a decrease in percentages of adults scoring at the three lower levels of the NRS and an increase in the top three (3) levels of the NRS scores-supporting gains in the projected outcomes.
- The parents who participated 150+ showed greater gains

Testing Parent Self-Efficacy/Self-Concept/Self-Esteem

- Twenty-three items were included in the Family Interviews both pre and post
- Efficacy questions were added to the survey in years three through five
- Data reflected that basic qualities associated with learning can be developed through effort
- Adults demonstrated self-efficacy in four areas: sense of belonging to a learning community; belief in their capacity to reach their own learning goals; a deep commitment to reach their own learning goals and to ensure their children's academic success; and that their work toward learning goals held value for their entire family.

Parental engagement tools developed by NCFL and used nationally were used in this study to evaluate family literacy and learning programs. A Data Collection System was created for this project and Benchmarks for Program Improvement (NCFL) were used to assess program quality.

- The data imply that staff must clarify for parents the importance of persistence and regular attendance in program components
- Replication of the ELLP can be framed by the tenet that a rigorous two-gen program is also designed to increase parents' language and literacy
- The program design impacts English language proficiency, work-force preparation, self-efficacy, and building social capital
- Childcare was provided for infants through toddlers

Child Outcomes

- The children of parents who were full participants exceeded the outcomes of students in the comparison group and even children of parents who were less than full-time
- There were positive/statistically significant reading outcomes for the focus children in the ELLP that exceeded the matched peers
- The ELLP focus children showed a **gain of 22.5%** of students' reading scores at or above grade level pre to post
- The comparison group of matched peers showed a **negative 2.0%** change in reading scores
- The focus group showed better attendance than the comparison group and had minimal evidence of chronic absenteeism
- The focus group had better attendance than the comparison group in all five (5) years of the initiative
- A secondary analysis concluded that parent participation as measured by the numbers of hours attending with their child was probably an impact on the focus child's reading achievement; the ANOVA showed there was a significant effect because of the participation of the parent(s)

Prepared by Brenda W. Logan