



RESEARCH BRIEF

Summary of Findings from the Child Development Workforce Initiative Evaluation, FY 2012-13

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The Child Development Workforce Initiative (CDWFI), which began in 2007, is a partnership of high schools, community colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education. The CDWFI program provides an array of academic, financial, professional and social support services intended to increase students' achievement of educational and professional qualifications. The CDWFI program is funded by the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the program's progress towards the targeted long-term impacts of the Workforce Consortium. The following key findings emerged from the evaluation:

- The program addressed the targeted long-term impacts of the Workforce Consortium, including expanded ECE workforce, better qualified ECE workforce, greater retention and advancement of the ECE workforce, and increased quality of ECE practices and programs.
- Increased funding for enhanced high school components piloted in two projects enabled greater depth and breadth of services than possible at the standard level of funding.

Overview

Early care and education professionals have historically attained low levels of education and have experienced conditions disincentivizing them from seeking higher qualifications (GAO, 2012; Herzenberg, Price, & Bradley, 2005). In order to address the need for a more educated and professionally prepared workforce in the field of Early Care and Education (ECE), the CDWFI program offers dedicated services that are not readily available at the high school, community college, four-year and graduate school levels. The CDWFI program is a key project of the Los Angeles Early Care and Education Workforce Consortium, a larger effort that brings together organizations and leaders in the ECE field to improve the early care and education workforce development system in Los Angeles County. The services provided by the program in at least one project are listed in the table below.

- = High School Component
- = College Component

Academic	Professional	Financial	Social
Academic Counseling ●● Academic Workshops ●● College Counseling ● College Coursework Placement Assessment ● College CD Courses at HS (CDWFI funded) ● College CD Courses at HS (CDWFI secured) ● College Orientation ● College Tours ●● Computer Lab ● Content Workshops ●● Contextualized Courses ●● Education Plan ●● Resource Center/Lab ●● Technical Assistance with College Applications ●● Tutoring ●●	Career Counseling ● Career Interest Assessment ●● Career Workshops ●● Child Care Center Tour ●● Conferences ●● First Aid/CPR Certification ●● Internships ●● Job/Career Fairs ●● Job Shadowing ● NAEYC Membership ● Volunteering Events ●	Book Fees ● CD Permit Fees ● Financial Advisement ●● Financial Aid Workshops ●● Incentives ● Lending Library ●● Stipends ●● Technical Assistance with FAFSA ● Tuition Reimbursement ●	Afterschool Study Space ● Club Meetings ● Cohorts ● Dedicated Advisors ● Formal Mentors ● Informal Mentors ●● Networking ●● Online Hubs ●● Parent Orientation ● Social Events ●●

In FY 2012-13, there were seven grantee community colleges: East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles City

College, Los Angeles Valley College, Long Beach City College, Pierce College, Mount San Antonio College, and Santa Monica College. Each project was given flexibility to develop unique program models tailored to their context and needs, within the guidelines set in the overall program's logic model and scopes of work.

The program succeeded in recruiting students new to the field of Early Care and Education.

The CDWFI program served 1,412 students at the "core member" level: 396 high school members, 769 community college members, 221 four-year members and 26 graduate school members. In FY 2012-13, 62.0% of the membership was new to the program. The program was able to expand membership of high school students 2.5 fold over the previous year. The majority of high school members were 11th and 12th graders. The age of the majority of college members was 25 years or older (69.8%). The majority of members from both components were female (90.2%), Hispanic/Latino (63.6%), primarily English speaking (65.2%), multilingual (70.1%), and not currently employed in ECE at the time of application (61.4%).

CDWFI members often had background characteristics associated with risk of not succeeding in college without the types of supports provided by the CDWFI program.

CDWFI college members earned less than the self-sufficiency standard for a single-person household in Los Angeles County (69.6%). CDWFI college members were overwhelmingly non-traditional students (97.5%), a status strongly associated with high risk of college attrition (NCES, 2002). A substantial number of CDWFI members either are first-generation college students (43.7%) or would become the first generation to attend college (35.4% of high school members).

The program increased members' knowledge of ECE career options.

The majority of high school (87.8%) and college members (92.6%) surveyed agreed that the program increased their knowledge of career options. Similarly, the vast majority of high school (89.3%) and college members (93.5%) reported that through the program, they learned the steps to pursue an ECE career.

Members expressed intent to enter the ECE field at high rates.

At the time of the end-of-year survey, 87.2% of college members not working in ECE intended to work in the field in the next three years. One of the programmatic goals for CDWFI high school members is to successfully transition from high school into college in any field of study. On the end-of-year survey, 49.6% of high school members expressed a desire to work in ECE. A higher percent of high school members, 64.2%, expressed that they would like to continue involvement in a program like CDWFI in college.

The program increased members' knowledge of educational and career pathways.

Across the CDWFI program, 88.3% of college members developed a personalized education plan with a counselor. In comparison only 53.6% of students at large in the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) are estimated to have developed a formal education plan with a counselor, based on the most recent LACCD 2012 Student Survey results. The program provided a variety of means to assist high school members, and in some cases their parents, in understanding the procedures for applying to college. The CDWFI program increased high school members' knowledge of educational pathways, with 83.1% reporting they learned the steps they needed to pursue a college education after high school because of the program. The majority (76.8%) of high school members surveyed also agreed that they learned about ECE/CD college programs in the county through the program.

The CDWFI program both informed members about professional development opportunities and also directly provided professional growth activities. The majority of members in both the college and high school components attended at least one CDWFI workshop. One specific way in which projects advanced members' standing in the workforce and marketability for work was to assist members with achieving, renewing, and upgrading permits and certificates. Survey results showed that nearly all CDWFI college members learned of the permit requirements (94.1%) and how to apply for permits (91.5%) through the program. High school members also were made aware of the CD permit, with 74.0% agreeing that they learned about the permit requirements through the program.

The program supported members' attainment of academic and professional milestones.

The evaluation examined the percentages of members achieving key milestones. This year, 10.7% of college members achieved a degree, and 3.0% achieved transfer from a two-year to a four-year college. With a clear and defined educational pathway, and resources to help them surmount barriers to succeeding in their courses, these CDWFI community college members were able to transfer within 1.5 years and attain degrees within two years, on average, from their entry into the program. In a context where many community college members waste time taking units without a clear path of study, the speed at which the CDWFI projects are able to move students through to degree and transfers once they enter the program is remarkable. The 2012 Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC) report's indicators for transfer within six years determined that 58.3% of the cohort studied did not transfer within six years from intent to transfer. More research needs to be done to determine the total time taken for CDWFI members to reach transfers and degrees, and to determine the total time to transfer and degree for all CDWFI members with intent to reach those goals, not only for those students achieving transfer and degree.

CDWFI members experienced a pass rate of 82.6% of classes with a grade of C or better. This rate is higher than the reference indicators in the statewide 2012 ARCC Report, which indicated a pass rate of 62.0% for basic skills courses with a C or better, and a pass rate of 76.7% of vocational courses with a C or better. The evaluation found that, in the projects where high school members could take college-level CD courses, students passed their courses with a C or better at a high rate (88.3% of courses).

This year, 15.1% of CDWFI college members were documented as obtaining a state-issued Child Development Permit. The majority of these permits were awarded to first-time permit holders. Out of the members who did not earn a permit this year, 41.5% already possessed a permit. Additionally, 21.8% of community college members received at least one college-issued certificate.

There is some evidence that the program assists members with securing jobs.

Of those college members who were employed in ECE at the time of the end-of-year survey, 33.4% credited the program with helping them to secure jobs. Looking only at college members who gained a job in ECE after applying to the program, the majority (50.6%) felt that the CDWFI program helped them secure that position.

There is some evidence that the program supports increased quality of ECE practices and programs.

Since most CDWFI members were not employed in the ECE field, the impact area of increasing the quality of ECE practices and programs was assessed on the intermediary goal of increasing members' knowledge of quality ECE practices. Without a common definition and theoretical orientation to define quality ECE practices, the evaluation relied on the assessments of members' instructors in ECE and related degree programs, and on members' self-assessment, to judge growth in knowledge. As discussed earlier, college members passed 82.6% of their courses and high school members passed 88.3% of their college-level CD courses.

Furthermore, college members reported that they had increased their knowledge about quality ECE practices as a result of participating in the program.

Area of Quality ECE Practice	% College Respondents
Children's emotional and social development	91.3%
Teaching literacy skills	89.9%
Teaching numeracy skills	89.2%
Caring for and teaching English language learners	86.2%
Caring for and teaching children with special needs	87.5%
Working with parents and families	90.2%

Increased funding for enhanced high school components enabled greater depth and breadth of services than possible at the standard level of funding.

Although historically the program has focused resources on the community college component of the program, this year, two projects were given increased funding to pilot an enhanced high school component. Project leads and high school staff from LACC and LAVC were asked to identify services that have been made possible as a result of enhanced funding for their high school component. Without the additional staff hired with the enhanced funding, the project leads would have had to eliminate or reduce many of the student services offered this year. The enhanced funding was seen as enabling more frequent contact with students than when there were no designated CDWFI high school staff. These contacts were seen as essential for enabling more effective recruitment, and for gaining student trust and engagement in the program.

Recommendations

The CDWFI program staff implemented academic, professional, financial, and social supports which defined academic and professional pathways for advancement in the ECE workforce. CDWFI members found these services valuable for reaching key milestones, such as education plan completion, course completion, and achieving degrees, transfers, and permits. There is also some evidence suggesting that participation in the CDWFI program assisted some members with securing ECE jobs. The key recommendations and lessons learned for future implementation include:

- Continue to create partnerships with high school faculty to recruit interested and prepared students, and direct CDWFI staff to engage in face-to-face recruitment/outreach with high school students.
- Improve data collection through the implementation of a new on-line database for faster and more accurate reporting, and for expansion of student services tracked.
- Collect data on employment related outcomes on a sample of members who leave the program due to goal completion.

References

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Appendix

Evaluation Approach

The purpose of this evaluation was to understand the outcomes of the students involved in the CWDFI program and the progress the program has made toward the targeted long-term impacts of the Workforce Consortium logic model. This evaluation relied on multiple sources for the analyses, including: program applications; hard copies of certificates, permits, and transcripts; member surveys; tracking of members' use of services; staff surveys; staff focus groups; and document analysis quarterly reports submitted by project leads.

For more information about this evaluation please contact researchmail@laup.net.