



photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14

ADAMS COUNTY
YOUTH INITIATIVE
cradleto**career**


Adams County Cradle to Career
Partnership Report 2013



LETTER TO PARTNERS

We are proud to introduce our first Adams County Cradle to Career Partnership Report! In the last year, we've witnessed many inspiring achievements and transformations that include creating collaborations that extend the reach of our partners' resources, sharing powerful research and data to strengthen our community, and watching our young people make healthier choices and embark upon successful lives. We are proud of the progress ACYI has made in establishing an organization that supports the children of Adams County.

Hard Work, Big Rewards

This is the baseline for greater achievements in our future. The positive outcomes thus far are encouraging, but the data in this report is, at times, sobering. We still have work to do, but it also allows us to acknowledge our successes and celebrate the results of our collective impact. The successes of similar organizations across the country keep us focused and push us to work even harder. Collaborating with our schools and community makes the impact even greater.

As community leaders, we need to continue to invest in the programs that help our children and youth excel...from birth to the day they land their first job. Working together, we improve their life potential through the most powerful tool we have—quality education.

Results and Revelations

This report shows how our partnership can help Adams County youth achieve great success in school and, as a result, in life. It shows how our action teams of experienced community leaders use robust data and research to guide their work. Finally, you are able to view our first Common Vision Scorecard,

which uses data from across Adams County to collectively frame our academic progress with transparency, while highlighting the areas where educators and children need more resources.

To those of you who are already working with us, thank you for your commitment! This baseline report allows you to see the difference you are making. To those of you learning about us for the first time, we hope you are inspired to join us in strengthening and improving the lives of young people in Adams County.

Achieving our goals requires hard work, but the rewards are great—a stronger, healthier community. These are our kids. They are our tomorrow. Thank you for being a part of ACYI.

Chris Gdowski

Chair, Board of Directors and Superintendent of Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Becky Hoffman

Executive Director, Adams County Youth Initiative

together we succeed



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INTRODUCTION

What is the Adams County Youth Initiative (ACYI)?

As a Collective Impact Initiative, ACYI connects vital community resources to improve achievement throughout infancy, childhood, and adolescence—cradle through career. Quite simply, it means a brighter future for children and youth in Adams County.

What is our objective?

Through the collaboration of community leaders and resources (also known as a “collective impact approach”), we strive to ensure that **EVERY CHILD AND YOUNG ADULT** in Adams County:

- is healthy and starts school ready to learn
- succeeds in school and community
- is college-and-career-ready

How do we achieve it?

Achieving the goals of our partnership requires all of us to work together...it’s a collective approach. Leaders from all sectors—educators, health and mental health, faith-based, law enforcement, healthcare and business professionals—magnify the impact we make on our children and youth.

How did we get started?

It started in 2005. Alarmed by high rates of delinquency and substance use among youth in Adams County, Don Quick, the 17th Juridical District Attorney, began a difficult conversation with county leaders. Working together, they could decrease the negative influences and focus on increasing graduation rates. Adams County was awarded a 5-year, \$8.4 million

Partnerships move at the speed of trust.

“There are no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.”

- Lyndon B. Johnson

During the years that ACYI was federally funded, our partner agencies worked together to establish a common vision for comprehensive services and support for Adams County children and youth.

ACYI achieved significant outcomes:

- Began the annual census-level data collection of the Adams County Student Survey to begin tracking county-wide outcomes
- Updated the Adams County School Emergency Plan, led by law enforcement and education leaders
- Implemented a wide range of evidence-based strategies and programs in violence prevention, substance use prevention/intervention, youth engagement, mental health, and early childhood education, including Adams County Camp

In 2011, two years before the end of the grant period, ACYI leadership and partners realized that for the work of ACYI to continue after federal funding ended, a separate organization would be needed to lead, manage, and support the work of the Initiative and its partners. As a result, ACYI established an independent 501(c)(3) status in November 2011.

federal grant through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) in 2007. The SS/HS grant project merged with ACYI in 2008.

Today, our vision remains the same—bring Adams County leaders together to improve the lives of our children and youth.

Who is involved?

People like you! A collective impact approach happens when the community comes together. No one organization or person working alone can achieve the results we need. Parents, schools, business leaders, local government officials, and the entire community all have important roles to play in achieving our ambitious, but attainable, goal.

Who are we helping?

We are committed to supporting the children and youth in Adams County.

Your neighbors. The families you see in church, the grocery store, or playing at the park.

Nearly a third of Adams County residents are under the age of 18 and almost 9 percent are under the age of 5, making preschool age children the most populous age group in our county. Compared to other counties in Colorado, a large proportion of Adams County families face difficult circumstances—lower household incomes, higher rates of single mothers and teen births, more uninsured children, and higher proportion of English Language Learner (ELL) students.

Can we make a difference?

The simple answer is yes! We see progress every day. Now, our job is to magnify that progress and extend its reach to more kids.

For questions on terms and language used in this report, please see our glossary of terms, called “Talking the Talk” at the back of this report!

“I’m all about getting all of us to work together and I think this is a step in the right direction!”

- Doris Ratsch, Community Partner

“The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith.”

- Franklin D. Roosevelt



photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14



WHO WE ARE

Adams County Youth Initiative Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, comprised of a cross-sector of leaders, is responsible for ACYI's overall accountability structure and high-level strategy using their influence to align and broker resources. The role of the Board of Directors is to:

- Define, protect, and advance the vision, mission, and goals
- Set goals and priorities and approve strategic planning
- Monitor outcomes of the partnership and approve policies
- Ensure adequate resources to carry out the mission and the approved budget
- Serve as ambassadors/champions on behalf of the organization to garner support from the community
- Supervise, support and evaluate the Executive Director
- Monitor outcomes of the partnership
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity



BOARD MEMBERS BY SECTOR:

Early Childhood:

Lisa Jansen Thompson, Director of the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Economic Development:

Emma Galvin, Director, Adams County Education Consortium

Education:

Andy Dorsey, President of Front Range Community College

Charlotte Ciano, Superintendent of Mapleton Public Schools

Chris Gdowski, Superintendent of Adams Twelve Five Star Schools

Chris Fiedler, Superintendent of School District 27J

Pamela Swanson, Superintendent of Adams County School District 50

Patrick Sanchez, Superintendent of Adams County School District 14

Law Enforcement:

Clint Blackhurst, Chief of Police, City of Brighton

Dave Young, District Attorney, 17th Judicial District

Doug Darr, Sheriff, Adams County

Jim May, Chief of Police, City of Northglenn

Lee Birk, Chief of Police, City of Westminster

Les Acker, Chief of Police, City of Federal Heights

Randy Nelson, Chief of Police, City of Thornton

Troy Smith, Chief of Police, City of Commerce City

Valorie Ladwig, The Link

Local Government:

Chaz Tedesco, Adams County Commissioner, Adams County Government

Chris Kline, Director of Adams County Human Services

Health & Mental Health:

Jeanne North, Director of Nursing, Tri-County Health Department

Rick Doucet, Chief Executive Officer, Community Reach Center

Community Members at-Large:

Don Cassata, Community Member (former Director of Adams County Human Services)

Don Quick, Community Member (former District Attorney of the 17th Judicial District)

Kim Skattum, Lead Pastor, Crossroads Church

Russ Van Houten, Community Member (former Chief of Police, City of Northglenn)

Advisory Board Members (Non-Voting):

Michael Goodbee, Judge, 17th Judicial District - Juvenile Court

Jenifer Morgen, Deputy Chief Probation Officer, 17th Judicial District - Probation

Joe Davis, Attorney



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”

- Helen Keller





ABOUT ADAMS COUNTY

Population and Demographics

Adams County has a total population of 441,603 residents (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2010*), and is Colorado's fifth largest county by population. Of those five most populous counties, Adams County has experienced the greatest population growth since 2000, with the total population increasing 21.4% in the last decade (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2010*).

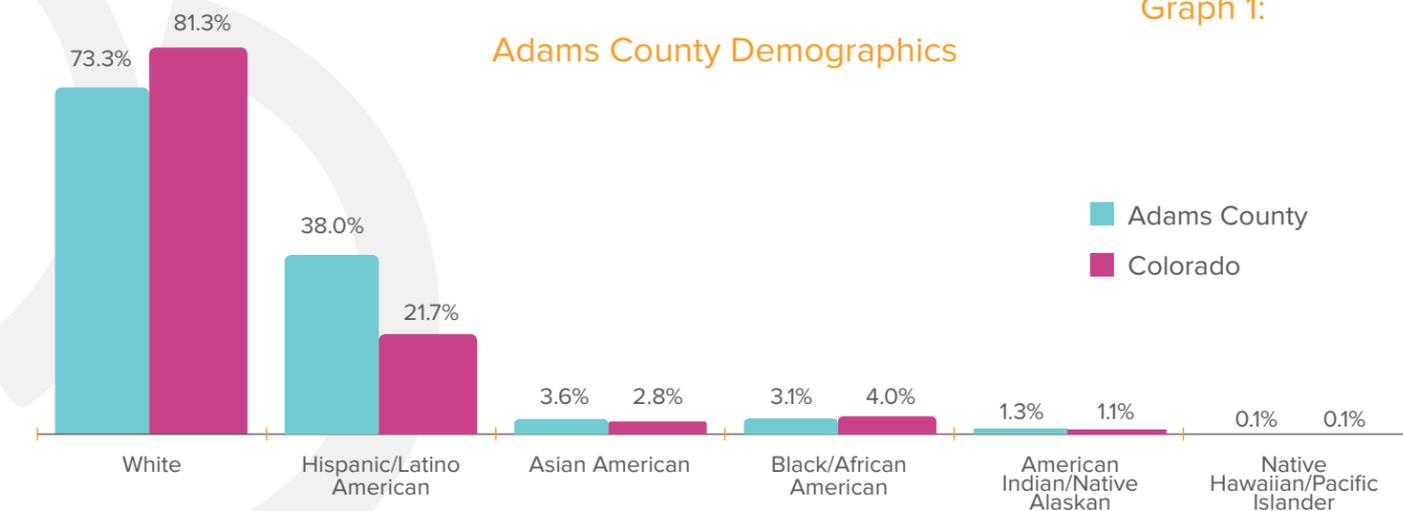
Of Colorado's 64 counties, Adams County has the second highest proportion of children to adults. In 2009, 128,059 out of 442,971 Adams County residents (29%) were children – nearly 9 percent higher than the state average. Along with a large proportion of children overall, Adams County has a very large number of young children - with 37,669 (8.5%) of residents under the age of 5 (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2010*), making preschoolers the largest age group of citizens in the county.

The total population of Adams County is also increasing rapidly; gaining 18,592 residents in the past two years alone. And along with population growth overall, Adams County has seen a drastic increase in the number of young children. In 2010 alone, there were 7,212 live births in Adams County - a rate of 82.8 births per 1,000 women (much higher than the Colorado average of 67.7).

Diversity

In addition to a higher-than-average proportion of children in Adams County, the area is more ethnically diverse than most other areas of the state. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Adams County's population is 38 percent Hispanic/Latino

8.5% of Adams County residents are under the age of 5



There are **378.2 people per square mile** in Adams County

Adams County is also among the most ethnically diverse areas in the state. While the population is predominantly White (73.3%), however thirty eight percent of persons are of Hispanic or Latino descent (much higher than the Colorado average of 20.7%), and people of one or more other races account for another 8% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

– nearly twice the statewide proportion. The proportions of American Indian, Asian, and Multi- Race people are also higher than that of Colorado as a whole. Also, more than one-fourth of Adams County children age 5 and older speak a language other than English at home – a proportion that is ten percent higher than the rest of the state (2005-2009 American Community Survey). County demographic breakdowns, compared to Colorado, are displayed in Graph 1.

Education

Adams County residents are, on average, characterized by lower levels of educational

attainment compared to other Colorado counties. In 2010, 25 percent of Adams County residents age 18-25 were non-high school graduates, compared with only 15 percent statewide. Among Adams County residents 25 years and older, nearly 9 percent had not finished ninth grade, and another 11.5 percent had finished some high school, but not graduated. Each of these rates is roughly twice the statewide average (2010 U.S. Census). Among Adams County adults who did not graduate from high school, 14 percent are unemployed, and nearly 20 percent live below the poverty line. These alarmingly low rates of graduation and high rates of poverty result in a high-risk environment for the children of Adams County; as family poverty has been called the “fundamental driver of low graduation rates” (Balfanz & Legters, 2006).

In 2009, **128,059 out of 442,971** Adams County residents (**29%**) were children

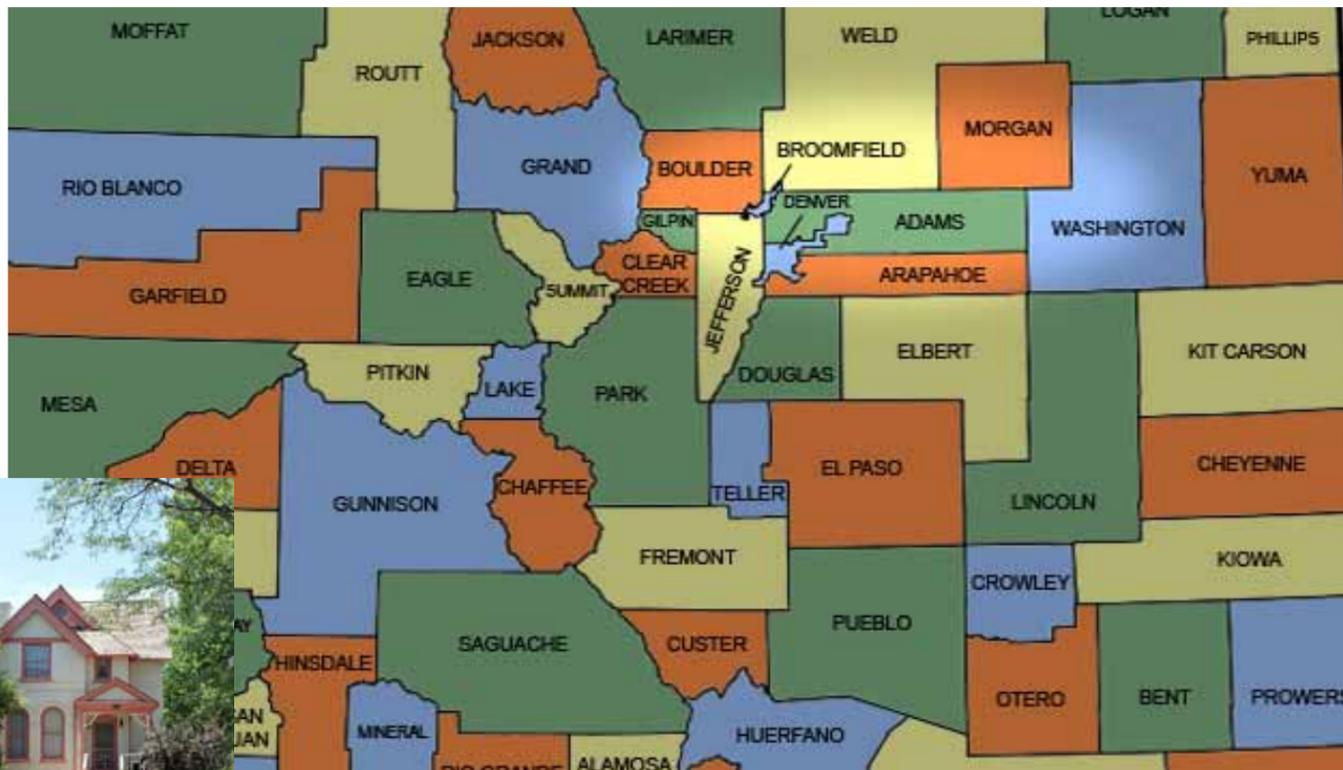


Graph 1:

Adams County
Colorado

GEOGRAPHY

Adams County contains six cities either partially (Arvada, Aurora, Broomfield) or fully (Thornton, Westminster, Commerce City, Brighton, Federal Heights, Northglenn) contained within its borders, as well as one town (Bennett) and seven Census- Designated Places (Berkley, Derby, Shaw Heights, Sherrelwood, Strasburg, Twin Lakes and Welby). The total land area is 1,167 miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) and there are 378.2 people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) in the county overall. Over 94% of all county residents live in one of the cities or census-designated places in these areas – a concentration of 2,884.1 persons per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).



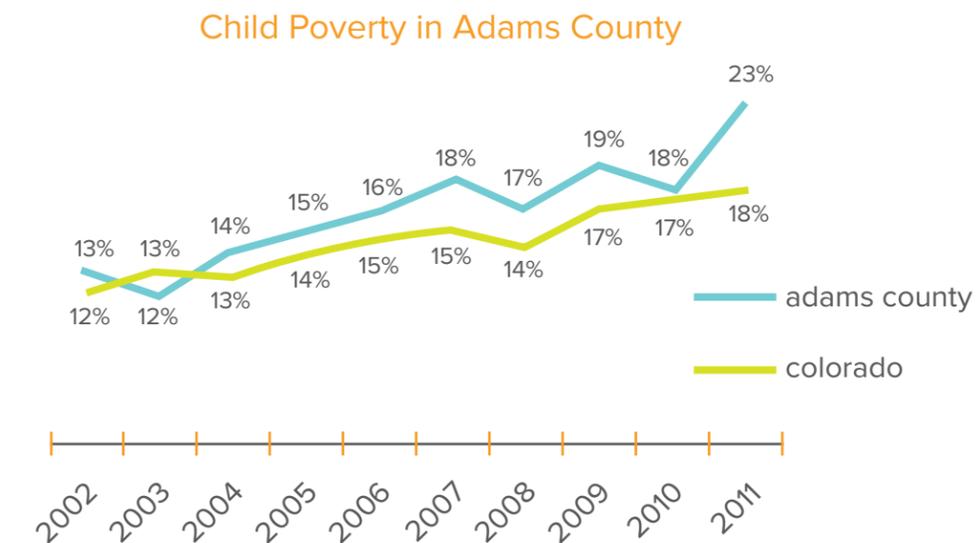
Adams County is located directly north of the City and County of Denver.



POVERTY AND NEED

Compared to other areas of Colorado, a large proportion of Adams County families face difficult circumstances. In 2009, the average per-capita income of residents was roughly 25 percent lower than the state average, and by 2012 nearly half of Adams County students (48.3%) qualified for free or reduced-price lunches; a proportion that has increased steadily in each of the past 5 years. Adams County also has a higher rate of births to single women (27% vs. 24% for the state), teen birth rate (43.5 vs. 27.8, per 1,000 births), and uninsured children (13.3 vs. 9.7%) (2013 Kids Count in Colorado Annual Report).

Graph 2:



EDUCATION

Adams County residents are, on average, characterized by lower levels of educational attainment compared to other Colorado counties. In 2010, 25 percent of Adams County residents age 18-25 were non-high school graduates, compared with only 15 percent statewide. Among Adams County residents 25 years and older, nearly 9 percent had not finished ninth grade, and another 11.5 percent had finished some high school, but not graduated. Each of these rates is roughly twice the statewide average (2010 U.S. Census). Among Adams County adults who did not graduate from high school, 14 percent are unemployed, and nearly 20 percent live below the poverty line.





Photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14

OUR APPROACH

ACYI's Role

ACYI plans, manages, and supports the shared vision for Cradle to Career success through facilitation, communication, data collection, and reporting. ACYI employs the nationally recognized, best-practice STRIVE model to get results through:

A Shared Vision.

Cultivates a rock-solid commitment to precise, shared goals:

- » Defines explicit goals with outcome-specific measurements with partners
- » Inspires leaders to align their work to specific measurements
- » Builds relationships to engage business, community and faith-based agencies, families and young people

Data-Driven Decision Making.

Uses best-practice strategies and community data to shape goals, measure outcomes and continually improve our work:

- » Champions data-driven decision making and advocate for results
- » Administers the Adams County Student Survey
- » Collects, analyzes and reports results annually

Collaborative Action.

Motivates partners to stay focused on strategies and improve on strategies and improve results:

- » Engages partners in cross-sector strategic planning and problem-solving
- » Mobilizes action teams to achieve results and coach in continuous improvement process
- » Communicates about county needs, resources and progress on an ongoing basis

Sustainability.

Builds relationships among partners, develops community leader champions and leverages financial resources to sustain positive change:

- » Builds capacity of each government and nonprofit partner and the project as a whole
- » Avoids duplication and maximize resources
- » Unifies and streamlines funding opportunities for Adams County child and youth programming

MISSION

WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE OUR YOUTH EXCEL FROM CRADLE THROUGH CAREER

outcomes

Every Child is Healthy and Starts School Ready to Learn

Every Child Succeeds in School and Community

Every Young Adult is College and Career Ready

priority indicators

% of children school "ready"

3rd grade reading proficiency

% of high school graduates who enroll in college

8th grade math proficiency

% of high school students who earn a post-secondary credential within 6 years of leaving high school

High school graduation

contributing indicators

% of children enrolled in high quality early learning program (Data TBA)

Kindergarten attendance*

% of high school students demonstrating mastery of 21st Century skills (DATA TBA)

% of children under age five read to more than three days in the last week

6th grade attendance*

11th grade Colorado ACT scores

% of children ages three – five assessed as proficient through Results Matter (Data TBA)

7th grade social emotional competence scale

% FAFSA completion

% of children who complete early intervention evaluation / services

8th grade caring relationship scale

% of post-secondary students that need remediation

% of children proficient on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (Data 2015)

9th grade attendance (and GPA)*

% of graduating students that are employed

11th grade healthy behaviors (substance use)

Juvenile crime rates



Adams County Cradle to Career Partnership Strategy

updated January 2014

“The essence of collaborative action: similar organizations collecting quality data for the same outcomes in a coordinated and collaborative approach.”

*PRIORITY CONTRIBUTING INDICATORS FOR 2014: Kindergarten; 6th Grade and 9th Grade Attendance



HOW WE USE DATA

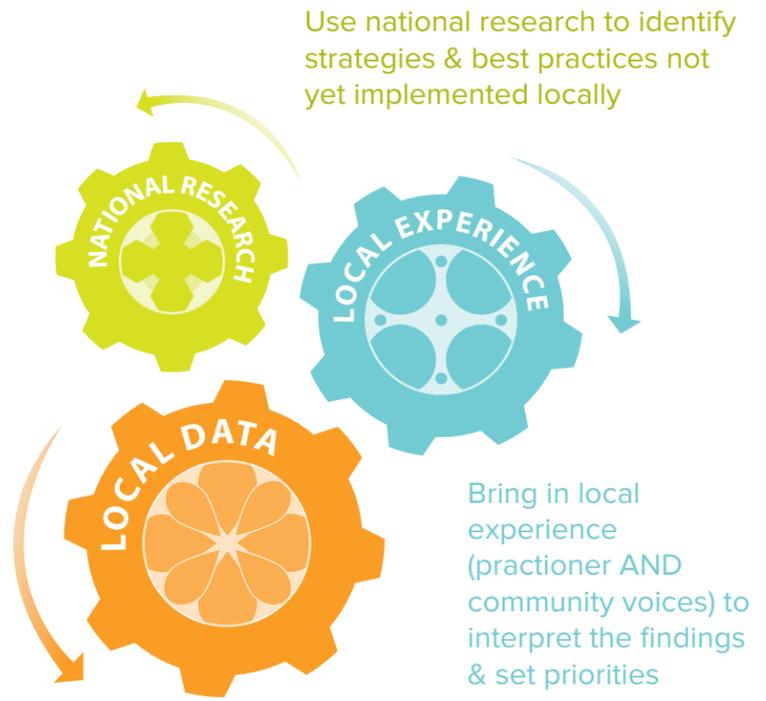


The essence of collaborative action: Similar organizations collecting quality data for the same outcomes in a coordinated and collaborative approach.

The use of data to track progress toward community-wide goals is integral to all we do. We begin by identifying a set of **outcomes** that are important to the success and well-being of children and youth. For each of these outcomes, we then choose a **priority indicator** - a specific data point that can be measured county-wide and monitored from year to year to track progress toward our goals. **Contributing indicators** are also measured in order to understand underlying causes for trends we see in priority indicators, and to directly evaluate the impact of specific programs and interventions. Based on the data, action teams set **goals** (short- and long-term) for the changes we hope to see as a result of the work; and then devise **strategies** for reaching those goals. The **outputs** of action team work are the set of activities completed in implementation of strategies. Finally, we circle back to **outcomes** and examine the data again. Did we see improvement in priority/contributing indicators?

The process of continuous improvement means cycling through each of these steps - measuring data, setting new/revised goals, adjusting strategies, taking action, and then measuring data again.

Use local data to understand unique challenges & strengths in your community

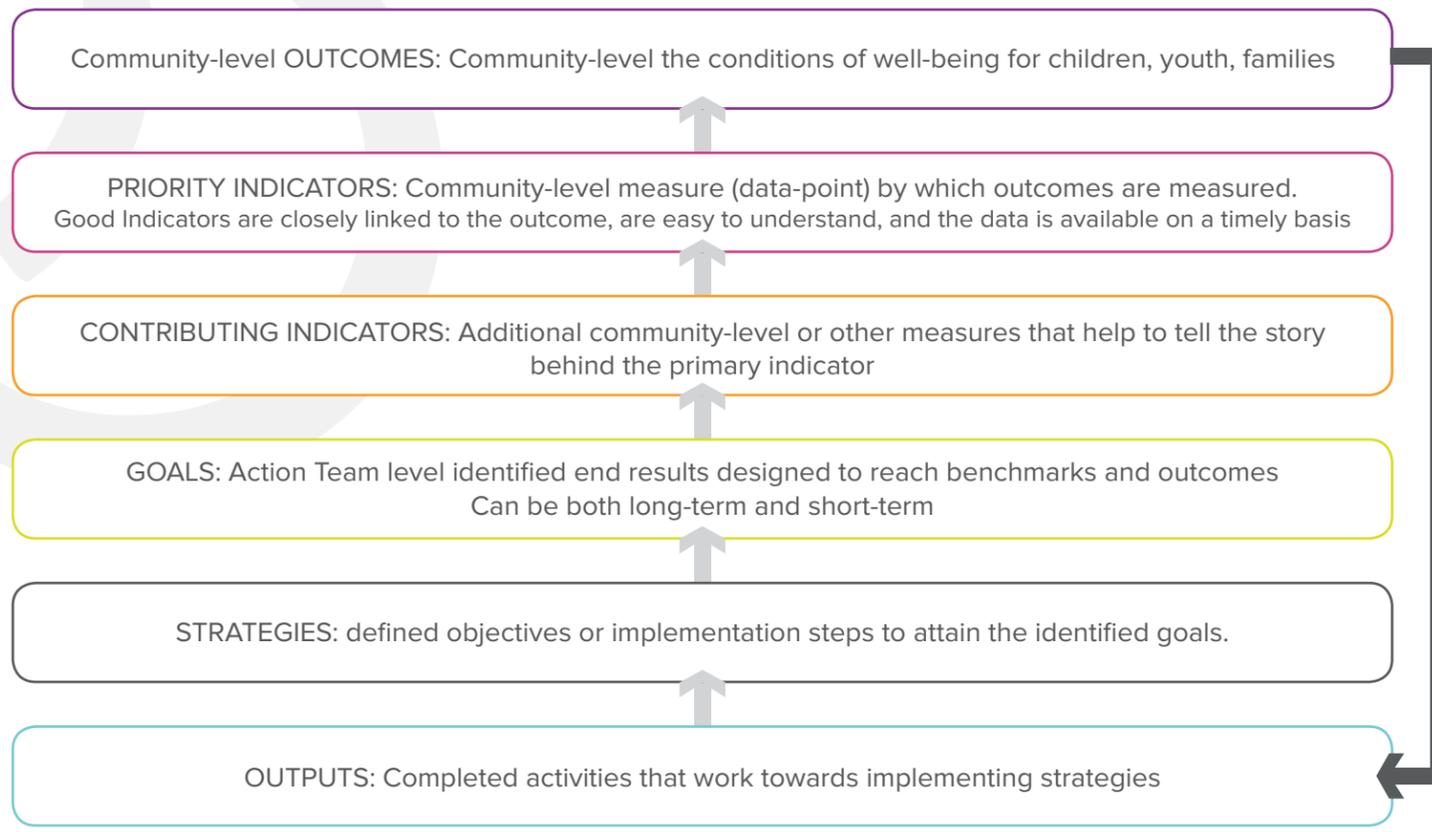


ACTION TEAMS

ACYI supports the work by facilitating Action teams who are made up of partners committed to moving one indicator at a time.

- Role of Action teams:
- Review local and national data, along with local experience to identify high potential strategies to work on collectively
 - Identify best practices within those strategies
 - Develop action plans to those practices which include: identification of resources (realigning and/or new); capacity building and training requirements; and interim measures to track success

ACYI EVALUATION PROCESS



ADAMS COUNTY COMMON VISION SCORECARD

BASELINE RESULTS

KEY:

CDE: Colorado Dept. of Education

CDHE: Colorado Division of Higher Education

ACSS: Adams County Student Survey

TBA: Indicator data not available for 2013 report

N/A: Breakdown not available

INDICATOR	COUNTY TOTAL	BY ETHNICITY	BY GENDER	BASELINE YEAR/SOURCE
School Readiness	TBA	TBA	TBA	2015
Kindergarten Attendance	TBA	TBA	TBA	2014
3rd Grade Reading Proficiency	65.5%	WHITE: 76.9% NON-WHITE: 56.0%	MALE: 61.0% FEMALE: 70.3%	2012: CDE
6th Grade Attendance	TBA	TBA	TBA	2014
8th Grade - % with caring adult outside of home/school	76.8%	WHITE: 81.1% NON-WHITE: 74.0%	MALE: 75.5% FEMALE: 77.6%	2012: ACSS
8th Grade Math Proficiency	41.7%	WHITE: 52.1% NON-WHITE: 32.7%	MALE: 42.6% FEMALE: 40.1%	2012: CDE
9th Grade Attendance	TBA	TBA	TBA	2014
11th Grade Healthy Choices Alcohol Marijuana Prescription Drugs	43.9% 29.7% 14.1%	W: 43.0% NW: 44.4% W: 27.3% NW: 31.3% W: 14.3% NW: 13.8%	M: 44.4% F: 43.4% M: 33.8% F: 26.7% M: 17.1% F: 11.6%	2012: ACSS
Juvenile Crime	587 Filings	N/A	N/A	2011 - Adams Co. DA Office
High School Graduation	65.7%	WHITE: 69.4% NON-WHITE: 62.6%	MALE: 70.8% FEMALE: 60.8%	Class of 2011-12: CDE
11th Grade Colorado ACT scores (average)	18.3	N/A	N/A	Class of 2012-13: CDE
FAFSA Completion	48.5%	N/A	N/A	Class of 2012-13: CDHE
College Enrollment	32.4%	N/A	N/A	Class of 2011-12: CDHE
Post-secondary students who need remediation	43.7%	N/A	N/A	Class of 2010-11: CDHE
High school graduates earning post-secondary credential within 6 years	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Graduation students who are employed	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA

EVERY CHILD IS HEALTHY AND STARTS SCHOOL READY TO LEARN



HEALTHY & READY

Healthy and Ready from the Start

Did you know that about 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs before the age of five? In fact, research shows that children are born learning, and that their first years of life impact the success they experience later in life.

It's during these first five years when they build the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school. On the first day of kindergarten, teachers expect children to follow directions, start and finish projects, and ask for help when they need it.

This early childhood period is the most critical time for learning. While it presents the greatest opportunities for positive development, it's also the period when children are most at risk.

Why is early education important?

Brain Development: Parents and other family members are the most important first teachers of young children. That impact begins even before birth, which is why good prenatal care is critical. Babies born prematurely (often as the result of poor prenatal care) have lower birth weights which can result in developmental delays.

Investing in quality early education programs is far less than the cost of interventions. Studies show a savings of \$1 to \$16 for every \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programs.

High-Quality Early Learning Experience:

Long-term studies show that high-quality early childhood education better prepares young children to succeed in elementary school. The learning that occurs later in life is built on the foundation of these early years. All young children, especially our most vulnerable, benefit from high-quality early learning experiences.

Better Outcomes, Better Citizens: Early education matters because of its demonstrated impact on good citizenship. Future adult citizens are better community members if they start with positive early experiences and high-quality education.

Long-term studies show that children in high-quality early learning programs are:

- Less likely to commit crimes or become chronic lawbreakers

- Less likely to need public and social supports
- More likely to be employed and earn more money
- More likely to delay parenting until adulthood
- More likely to own their own homes

Economics: Early education makes economic sense. The cost for investing in quality early education programs is far less than the cost of interventions. Studies show a savings of \$1 to \$16 for every \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programs. Business leaders remind us that good investments yield great results. Sometimes profit isn't all about money. Instead it can be measured in terms of success.



NATIONAL RESEARCH SHOWS

- At-risk children who attended quality early learning programs had improved childhood literacy and high school graduation rates, along with lower rates of juvenile/adult crime and teenage pregnancy (High/Scope Perry Preschool and Chicago Parent-Child Centers Studies)
- Disadvantaged children who don't participate in high-quality early education programs are:
 - » 50% more likely to be placed in special education
 - » 25% more likely to drop out of school
 - » 60% more likely to never attend college
 - » 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime
 - » 40% more likely to become a teen parent
- Leading economists say that early childhood education is a sound public investment, even during a recession—every dollar spent on early learning programs for at-risk children yields \$7 to \$9 in future savings on special education and the criminal justice system



WHY WE CARE

Prenatal Care: Adequate use of prenatal care has been associated with improved birth weights and the amelioration of the risk of preterm delivery (Poland, Ager, and Sokol, 1991). Inadequate use of prenatal care has been associated with increased risks of low-birth-weight births, premature births, neonatal mortality, infant mortality, and maternal mortality (Thompson, Walsh, & Merkatz, 1990; Gortmaker, 1979; Institute of Medicine, 1985).

Mother's Age: Adolescent mothers are at a high risk of obtaining late or no prenatal care, with the greatest risk being among mothers less than 15 years of age.

Mother's Education: In studies of mothers with live-born infants, timing of the first prenatal visit is strongly associated with educational attainment. In 1988, 92% of mothers with at least some college education began care early in pregnancy, compared with 53% of mothers who had less than a high school education (CDC, 1990). The probability that a pregnant woman will obtain care late or not at all decreases steadily as her educational level increases.

Marital Status: In 1988, among women with live-born infants, unmarried mothers were more than three times as likely as married mothers to obtain late or no prenatal care (13.2% vs. 3.7%) (CDC, 1991). Unmarried white mothers were almost four times as likely as married black mothers to obtain late or no care; and unmarried black mothers were twice as likely as married black mothers to obtain late or no care.

Research shows that about 90% of a child's brain development happens before the age of 5! It is critical that children receive a good foundation for learning when they enter school.



ADAMS COUNTY CHILD WELL BEING

Children's health and early learning is supported, at home and in the community:

- Percent of children under age 5 read to by a family member less than 3 days in the last week (CDPHE – CO Child Health Survey: (2008-2010) AC: 14.1%; CO:9.9%
- Percent of children with two or more immunizations in the CO Immunization System - (proxy for % children under age 5 attending well-child checks) (CDPHE): (2008) AC: 94.1%; CO: 80.9%

Children achieve age-appropriate developmental milestones:

- Percent of children ages 3-5 assessed through Results Matter (CDE, Census): (2010-11) AC: 14.8%; CO: Data not available
- Percent of parents reporting understanding developmental milestones (Data TBA)

Children enter school ready to learn:

- Percent of children classified as "ready" on PALS, DIBELS, OR DRA
- 1st Grade Literacy: Percent of 1st graders scoring "proficient" or better on CBLA literacy test
- % of children ages three to five assessed as proficient through Results Matter (Data TBA)
- % of children who complete early intervention evaluation/services

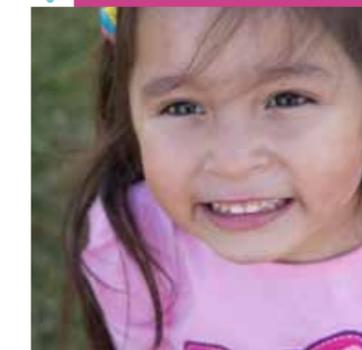
CHILD WELL BEING

Adams County's population has the highest proportion of young children (under 5) of anywhere in the state (8.3%). Unfortunately, Adams County is also ranked 2nd worst in the 2013 KIDS COUNT Colorado Child Well-being Index, based on the composite score of 12 key indicators. Among these indicators, Adams ranked in the bottom 5 counties for half of the measures, and within the bottom 10 counties for all but one indicator!

- 3rd Largest proportion of families relying on low cost food (44%)
- 3rd highest school dropout rate (4.4%)
- 3rd highest rate of teens not attending school or working (12%)
- 4th lowest rate of reading 4th graders reading proficiently (42% not proficient)
- 4th largest proportion of mothers with less than 12 years education (25%)
- 7th worst in 4 other categories: Children in poverty, children in single-parent families, uninsured children, and infant mortality.

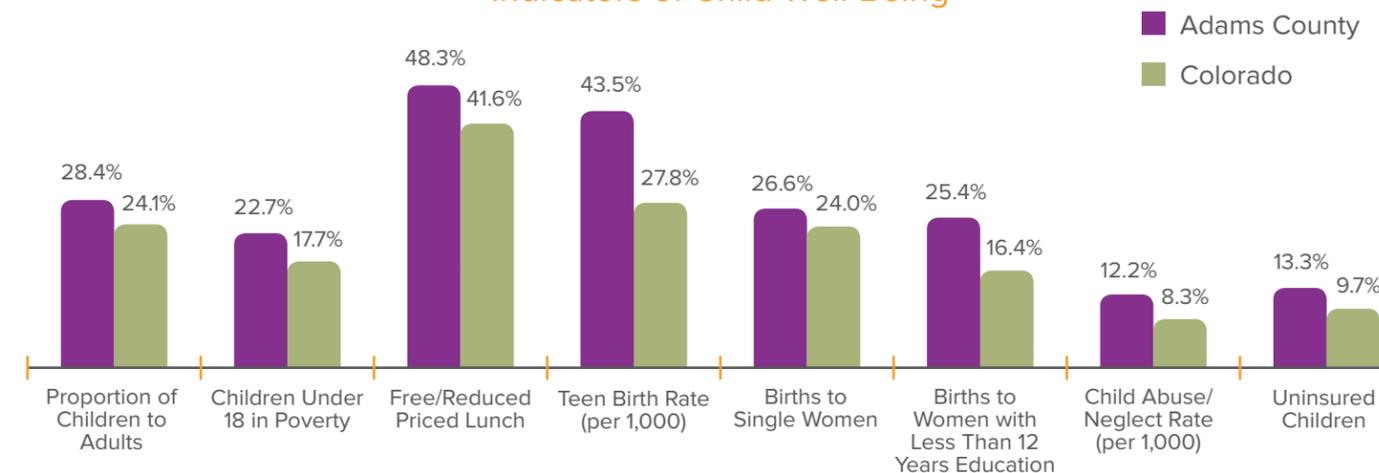
STRATEGIES

- Health Integration
- Home Visitation
- Accessible and Quality Preschool
- Kindergarten Readiness: District Estimates/ Strategies: Kindergarten Parent survey (times read to child per week)



Graph 3:

Indicators of Child Well-Being



Graph 3 shows Adams County's rates, compared to the state average, for several indicators known to strongly impact child well-being and youth success.*Source: 2013 KIDS COUNT in Colorado Report

photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14

SUPPORTING EARLY EDUCATION

How We Support Early Education

The following action teams are making huge strides in improving kindergarten readiness in Adams County.

Home Visitation: Early Childhood Action Team

ACYI works with the **Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC)** for home visitation programs. Mobilizing early childhood health/mental health providers, educators and parent groups, ECPAC ensures that every child is school-ready.

Home visitation helps Adams County reach families that need extra support and are harder to reach due to transportation issues. Through this action team, our visitation programs are working together to create a true continuum of care for families—prenatal to kindergarten. Because of the

work of this team, a critical gap for two-year-old children was identified and ECPAC was able to advocate for additional funding to increase services for this age group.

Community presentations for the home visitation programs have been well received. Now that more healthcare providers and others in the community are aware of these services, we look forward to seeing an increase in referrals in the next few years.

Our Accomplishments:

- Provided “Strengthening Families” training
- Completed Community Assessment Survey for current parent opportunities and resources
- Completed funding presentation for outreach to address gap in services for two-year-old children

- Continued implementation of communications plan
- Aligned efforts with Health Integration’s Coordinated Identification and Referral process
- Met with state-level teams to request data regarding home visitation in Adams County
- ECPAC received initial results of the completed online PARTNER tool to assess depth and breadth of partnerships to support home visitation and early childhood systems
- Identified additional measures common across the three home visitation programs (see below for more information on these programs)

Adams County Home Visitation Programs Include:

Nurse-Family Partnership:

This program begins during pregnancy and continues through the child’s second birthday. Nurses work with low-income mothers to improve the outcomes of pregnancy, infant health and development, and the mother’s physical and emotional health during home visits. These visits generally occur every other week and last 60-90 minutes. Specific objectives include improving prenatal nutrition and preparing parents for labor, delivery, and newborn care.

Parents as Teachers (PAT):

This home-based parent education and support program (prenatal to age 5) helps parents understand their child’s development, giving them the best social, emotional, physical and intellectual start. Certified educators help parents understand their child’s development and how to give their child the best social,

emotional, physical, and intellectual start. Located in Westminster, the program (Home Grown Kids) uses an award-winning curriculum that encourages children to build skills through play, reading and songs.

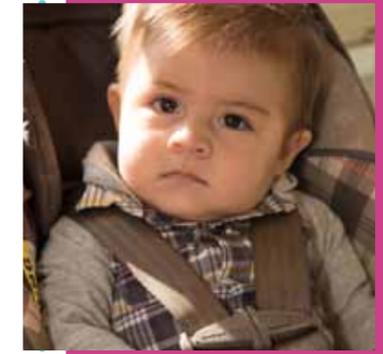
Head Start/Home Based Program:

This program uses the home instruction curriculum that helps parents prepare their children (ages 3-5) for success in school and beyond. Parents are provided with carefully developed curriculum, books, and materials designed to strengthen their child’s cognitive skills, early literacy skills, and social/emotional and physical development.

Early Health Support: Health Integration Action Team

Healthy children are more effective and successful learners. The goal of the Health Integration Action Team is to ensure that children have access to preventative health care, including medical, dental, developmental, and mental health. To do this, the team implements the following strategies:

- Expands comprehensive health/developmental screening and coordinated referral system
- Defines and executes a coordinated referral system with health clinics and community programs to increase communication between service providers and deliver coordinated support to families
- Uses effective messaging to provide parent information and supports that improves follow through with referrals, developmental evaluations, and health services

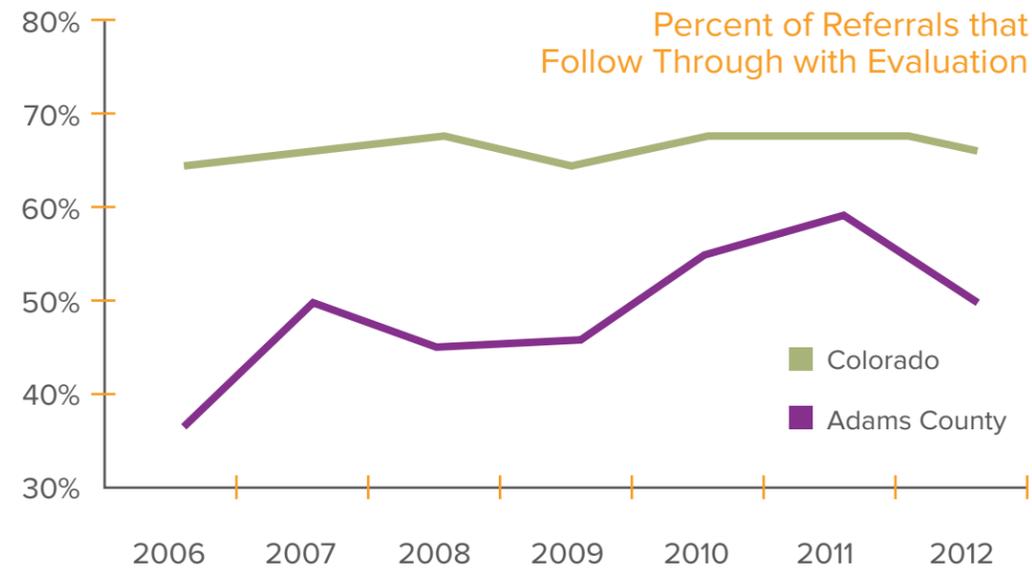




All children should be screened for developmental delays once a year. This typically happens at their annual well-child doctor visit. When the screening indicates that the child may be behind in one or more areas of development, the doctor refers them for further evaluation with a more specialized provider, depending on the identified issue. Unfortunately, many children who are referred for further evaluation never receive the attention they need for that potential problem. That is why the Health Integration Action Team partners with **Colorado's Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD)**, a project that works with communities, pediatric health and mental health care providers, child care providers, and families to help them identify children who may have potential developmental delays, including social-emotional, as early as possible.

Graph 4 shows the referral follow through rate for birth - 3-year olds (in Adams County and Colorado). Since 2006, the percentage of children in Adams County who received further evaluation after a referral was lower than the State average. There was evidence of this gap closing in 2010 and 2011, but the Adams County follow through rate decreased again in 2012. The Health Integration Action Team is implementing county-wide strategies to improve that rate with a specific focus on developing a "roadmap" to guide both providers and families through each step of the process after a referral has been made.

Graph 4:



Our Accomplishments:

- Created Identification and Referral Roadmap
- Added several new health clinics to improve referral process
- Continued the process for collecting and sharing data
- Identified gaps and barriers as part of Road-Mapping process
- Trained Action Team members in Strengthening Families— assessments provided
- Completed interviews with families regarding gaps and needs (20+ families surveyed)
- Identified gaps in care coordination
- Met with ABCD to develop Technical Assistance Plan
- Identified parent education and support needs
- Coordinated Healthy Steps Outreach to bring program to Adams County

By providing early Intervention in the areas of health, development, oral health, and mental health, Adams County children enter kindergarten on-track for a successful learning experience.

The work of this action team has brought together:

- Six major health clinics who serve the county's most at-risk children
- The mental health center
- The local health department, school districts, developmental services
- Head Start and other early learning programs
- Dental providers
- Parents of children who needed early intervention services

Together, we have developed and piloted a streamlined system to identify needs, extend referral for further evaluation and services, and provide family support. Community service providers who make referrals state that this system has helped ensure referrals are received and there is follow-up. In the next year, a system of support and communication for families regarding identification and referral will be completed. Additionally, more service providers will be contacted for training in the system and ongoing support. With these systems in place, we hope that more children will get the services they need to succeed.

TESTIMONIAL

“ACYI has helped ECPAC to utilize the collective impact framework to bring community partners together, use data-driven decision making, and strive towards a common vision. Additionally, aligning the work of early childhood with the work for older children and youth helps to ensure that families experience a seamless system of support.”

Lisa Jansen Thompson, LPC, ECPAC Director



In order to align work on school readiness county-wide, the Kindergarten Readiness Action Team developed the following statement as Adams County's definition of "School Readiness":

"School readiness" describes both the preparedness of a child to engage in and benefit from learning experiences, and the ability of schools, the community, and families to meet the needs of all children.

School readiness includes the domains of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language, literacy, and comprehension development, and cognition and general knowledge.

School readiness is enhanced when schools, families, and community service providers work collaboratively to ensure that every child is ready for higher levels of learning.

~ Adapted from CDE

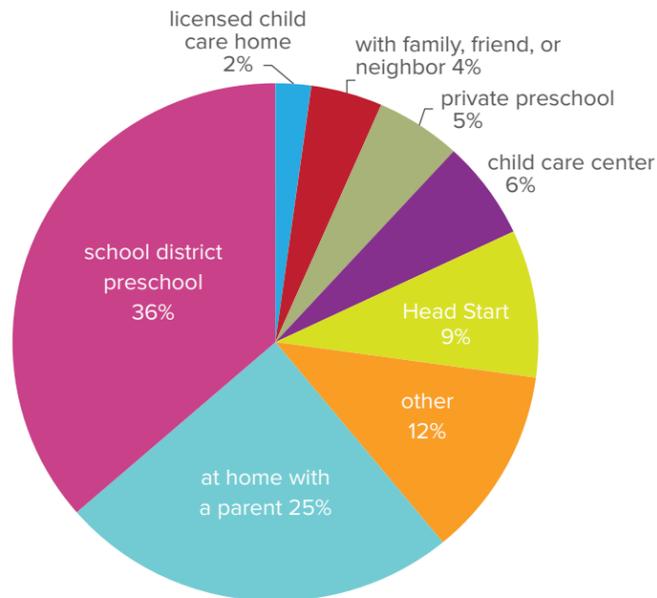
Ready Kids, Families, and Schools (Preschool): Kindergarten Readiness Action Team:

The State of Colorado recently passed legislation requiring that schools administer standard kindergarten readiness assessments to all entering students by the fall of 2014. After that time, our partnership will be able to monitor official countywide rates of school readiness. ACYI and Adams County Education Consortium (ACEC) are working closely with our school district to prepare for the roll-out of these assessments.

In lieu of readiness assessment data for the 2013/14 school year, we collected information from parents of newly-enrolled kindergarten students through a survey completed by some Adams County schools. Parents answered questions concerning their child's educational experiences before kindergarten, health and developmental services, and the parents' own background and education. Selected findings from this survey are displayed in graphs 5-7.

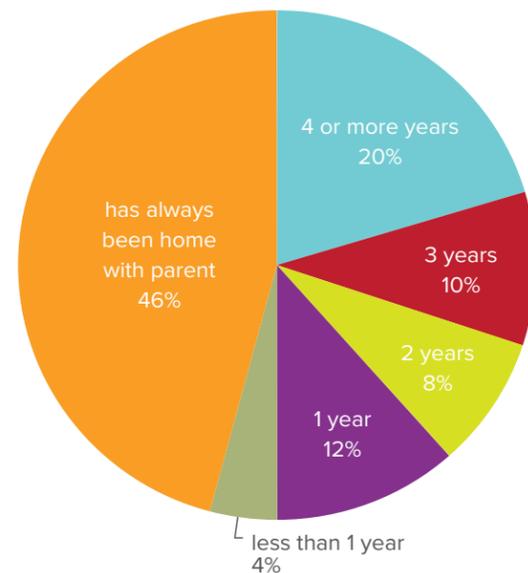
Graph 5:

Child's primary experience in the year before kindergarten



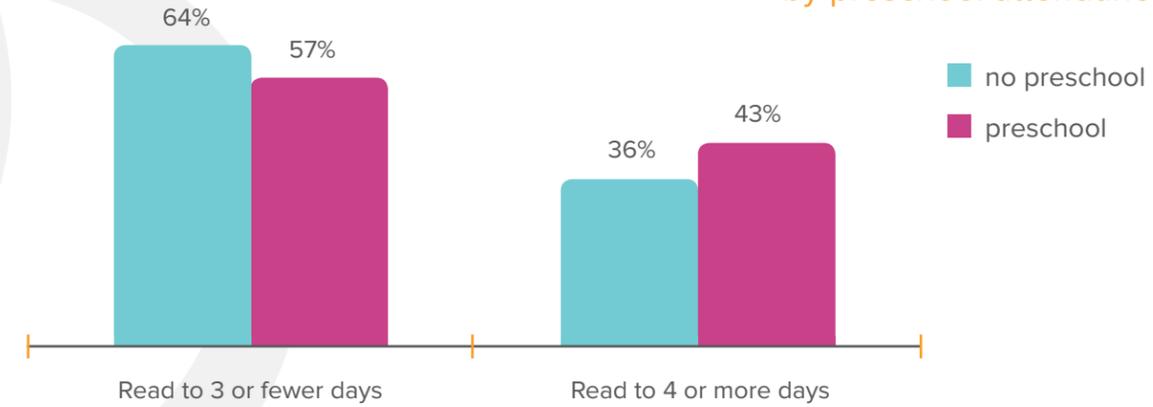
Graph 6:

Child's duration of preschool experience



Graph 7:

Number of days parent read to child at home, by preschool attendance



In order to accomplish our goals, we have implemented the following strategies:

- Provide common messaging to early learning professionals about components of kindergarten readiness
- Provide support in delivering quality early childhood learning services
- Develop and implement culturally relevant activities to help parents understand developmental milestones, school readiness, and feel supported during times of transition
- Identify Family, Friend, Neighbor (FFN) networks and provide information to promote the components of school readiness and provide needed support

Our Accomplishments:

- Completed two book drives with over 10 business and community partners participating (over 1,500 books collected for kindergartners whose parent complete the readiness survey)

- Benefited from the Race-to-the Top award which the State of Colorado was awarded
- Provided a presentation to several Action teams to begin planning and aligning efforts
- Delivered professional development workshops for providers and directors
- Awarded 105 college scholarship for the spring and summer 2013 semesters
- Drafted a Kindergarten Transition booklet for parents (finalization fall 2013)
- Engaged two school districts to participate in parent survey for kindergartners in Fall 2013 (230 participants); results to drive 2014 planning
- RTT to provide support for implementation and dissemination of the Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines
- ECPAC Family Initiatives Coordinator (FIC) has joined the statewide Family Friends and Neighbors Learning Collaborative
- Developed a Kindergarten Transition booklet for parents (to be distributed Spring 2014)

"I believe the first year of school can set a student up for academic and social success. If you start behind, it's much harder to catch up. We want kids in Adams County to start school on track!"

– Rebecca Wilson, Early Learning Initiatives Manager, ECPAC



together we succeed



photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14

EVERY CHILD SUCCEEDS
IN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

3RD GRADE READING

Why is 3rd grade reading proficiency important?

Learning to read early in elementary school is vital for a child's future success in school and in life. Typically, 3rd grade is when standardized reading assessments begin. A lack of proficiency at this age is considered an "early warning sign." The good news is that if we catch this lack of proficiency and intervene early on, we can make a tremendous difference throughout a child's academic life.

Because early literacy leads to the success of students in all subjects and grade levels, ACYI partnership is focused on supporting families and schools to teach young children to read.

Reading Indicators for Student Success

- National research shows that a student who can read on grade level by 3rd grade is four times more likely to graduate on time than a child who does not read proficiently by this critical time.
- A study by the National Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 88% of adults who did not receive a high school diploma had not been proficient in reading when they were in elementary school.
- Economically disadvantaged children are especially at-risk—3rd graders who live below the poverty line and are behind in reading are 13 times less likely to graduate on time. (Hernandez, 2011)

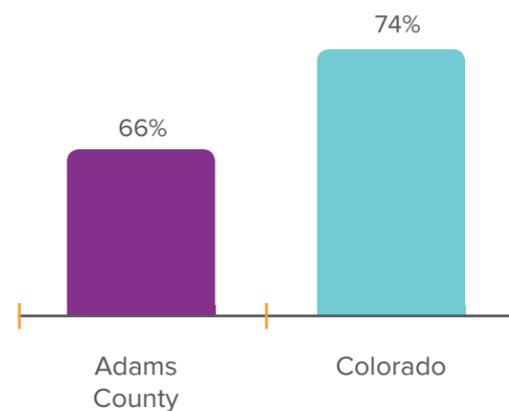


WHAT DOES THE BASELINE DATA TELL US?

- In Adams County, 65.5% of 3rd grade students scored proficient (or better) on the 2012 TCAP assessment
- This proficiency rate is about 8.5% lower than the state average (see graph 8)
- The data indicates that about 2 out of every 5 students (over 2,300 students) are not reading at a 3rd grade level

Graph 8:

3rd Grade - 2012 TCAP % Proficient or Advanced



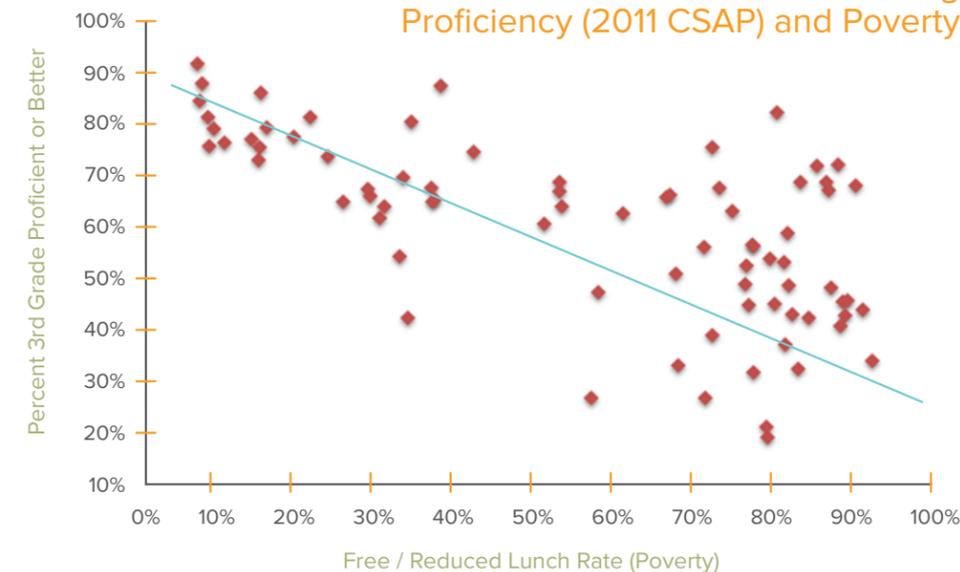
Poverty Impacts Reading

Similar to national trends, there is evidence in Adams County that early reading is impacted by poverty. Among low-income students, just about half (51.2%) read proficiently. Likewise, there is a strong correlation between Adams County elementary school students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and 3rd graders who read at grade-level (see graph 9).

These graphs show the percent of Adams County 3rd graders who scored proficient or better on the 2012 TCAP reading assessment, compared to all 3rd graders in the state. Adams County's proficiency rate is about **8.5% lower** than the Colorado average.

Graph 9:

3rd Grade Reading Proficiency (2011 CSAP) and Poverty

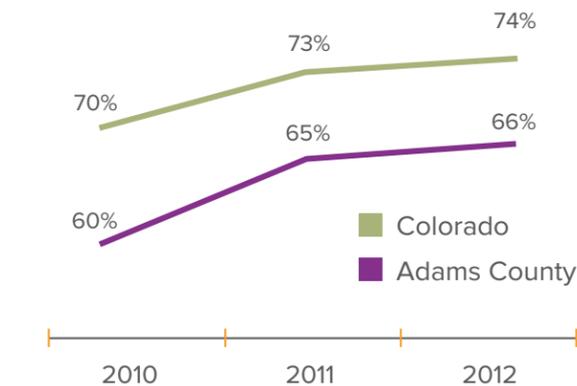


Graph 9 shows the correlation between poverty and reading proficiency among Adams County schools. Each of the points on the graph represents **one elementary school**, as a function of 3rd grade reading percent proficient and percent of 3rd graders who qualify for free/reduced meals. It is clear that schools with fewer low-income students have much higher rates of reading proficiency (top left of the graph); while schools with higher economic need have lower reading proficiency (bottom right of graph).

The good news is that progress has been made in the past two years—Adams County's 3rd grade reading proficiency is increasing at a greater rate than the state overall (see graph 10).

Graph 10:

3rd Grade CSAP/TCAP % Proficient or Advanced



SUCCESS IN ACTION

"I never remember having books, being into books," said Elaine Archambault. "Nobody read to me. I never had an authority figure to help me."

Elaine is an Adams County parent who wants a different future for her children. She's determined to help them have more opportunities in life than she had. She wants them to know they are cared for and can succeed. Reading with them is one way she fosters this idea.

So she created a space for her five-year-old son to read—a tent in the middle of their Federal Heights living room.

"It's his special place," she explained. "And I get in there to read with him for 20 minutes, and two hours later we're still there."

This success story is from a **Denver Post** article by Megan Mitchell entitled "Adams County parents and children bond through reading- Seminars promote childhood literacy". It is just one of many positive responses from the Childhood Literacy Seminars that were sponsored by ACYI and The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County. The successful parenting series was developed from a \$10,000 grant from America's Promise Alliance (sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation).

Additional funding can help ACYI reach more Adams County families.

"The ability to think and learn new information is part of the essential skills that accompany literacy. I look forward to working with families to change these bleak (county literacy) statistics." – Rebecca Zamora, Chair, The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County Third-Grade Action Team

Adams County Mentoring Collaborative
 “programs don’t save youth; relationships do”



What it is and why it is important

Children and young adults need support and guidance navigating life’s day-to-day challenges. Too often, Adams County youth are economically struggling or find their families separated by divorce or incarceration.

When young people are encouraged and inspired by positive adult role models outside of home or school, it has a profound impact on their self-esteem, motivation, academic success, and their ability to make confident and positive life choices.

Mentoring relationships with trusted adults help youth because it ensures that someone is by their side providing care, experience, advice, and unconditional support. Mentors are reliable friends through both the challenges and the joys.

The importance of mentor relationships

To see the need for adult mentors for youth, look no further than Adams County. Our young people are considered especially high risk and benefit from mentor relationships. These children and young adults live in poverty and face exposure to drugs and alcohol—this makes them extremely vulnerable to academic struggles,

“For our own success to be real, it must contribute to the success of others.”

-Eleanor Roosevelt

truancy, dropping out of school, and risky lifestyle choices.

- Adams County kids at risk:
- 16% of school-age children live in poverty and nearly half (47%) qualify for free- or reduced-lunch
 - 10% of 9th to 12th graders do not attend school on any given day (CDE, 2011/12)
 - 41% of high school students reported drinking alcohol, and 28% reported using marijuana (2011/12 Adams County Student Survey)

A large number of Adams County students report a lack of adult support outside of home or school. Based on results of the 2011/12

Adams County Student Survey, 12 percent of 6th graders say that they do not have an adult outside of their home or school who cares about them or who they trust. By 9th grade, this number doubles to 24 percent!

In Graph 1 we see the profound impact a lack of adult support has on youth. Among middle school students in Adams County, those who DO NOT have a caring adult outside of home or school are more likely to report substance use, truancy, fighting at school, and belonging to a gang. They are also less likely to believe that it’s important for them to finish high school.

INDICATORS OF MENTORING SUCCESS

According to national research, at-risk youth in a mentoring relationship (versus those who had no mentor) are:

- » 52% less likely to skip school
- » 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- » 27% less likely to begin using alcohol
- » 33% less likely to hit someone
- » Mentored youth are also more confident of their school performance and get along better with their families

(Tierney, Grossman, and Resch, 2000. Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters)

Another study, conducted through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, found that mentoring relationships provided substantial social and emotional benefits, along with improved academic success. Compared with a “control group” non-mentored youth, those who were provided with a trained mentor:

- » Had lower levels of depression (mentored youth reported fewer depressive symptoms after 10 months)
- » Reported feeling greater acceptance by their peers
- » Reported more positive beliefs about their ability to succeed in school
- » Received better grades in school

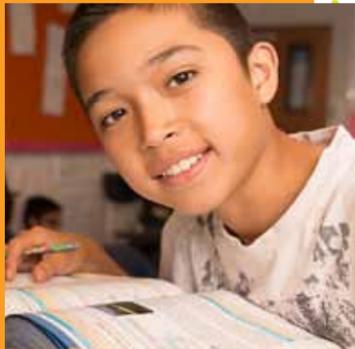
(Herrera, C., DuBois, D.L., and Baldwin Grossman, J., 2013. The Role of Risk: Mentoring)

TESTIMONIAL

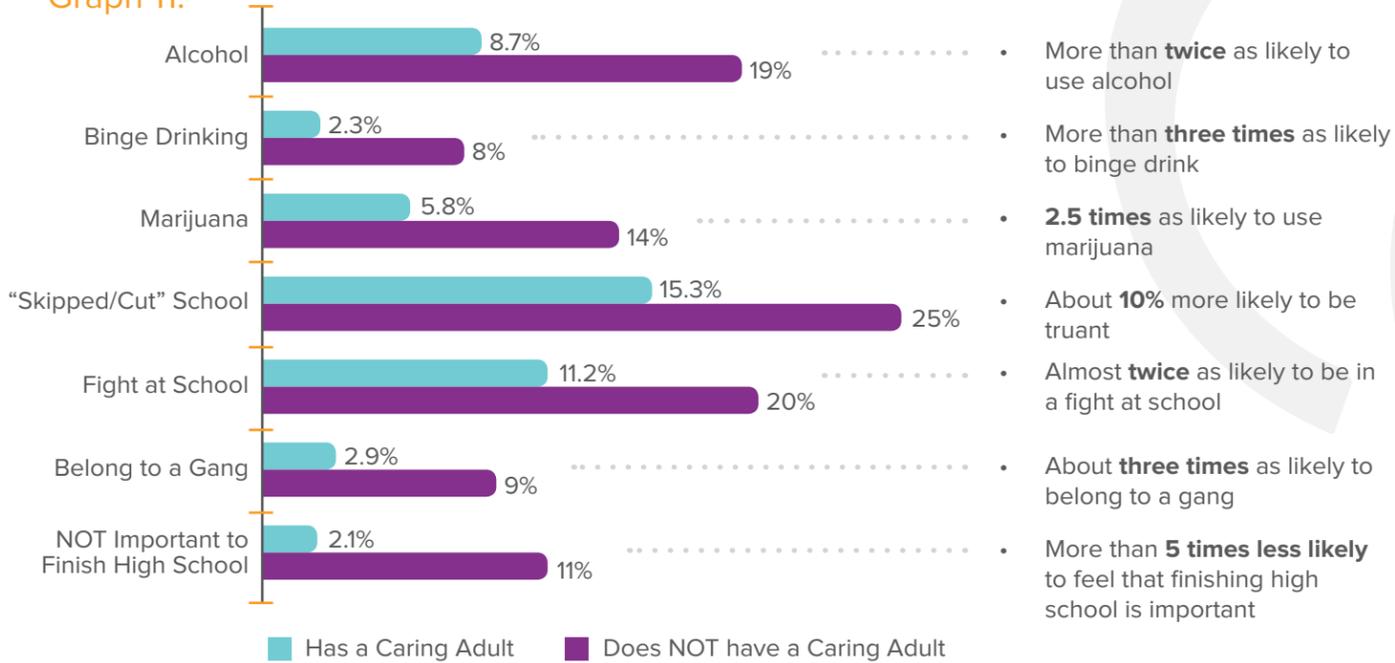
“ACYI has helped connect us to other mentoring organizations and has worked hard to help bring more volunteers into our organization. ACYI has been amazing at connecting us to possible grants and opportunities we would not have known about otherwise.”

- Zach Kreeger, Adams & Broomfield Young Life





Graph 11:



Differences between Adams County middle school students who have a caring adult outside of home or school (blue) versus those who do not have a caring adult (purple). 2012 Adams County Student Survey

Indicators data/ graph

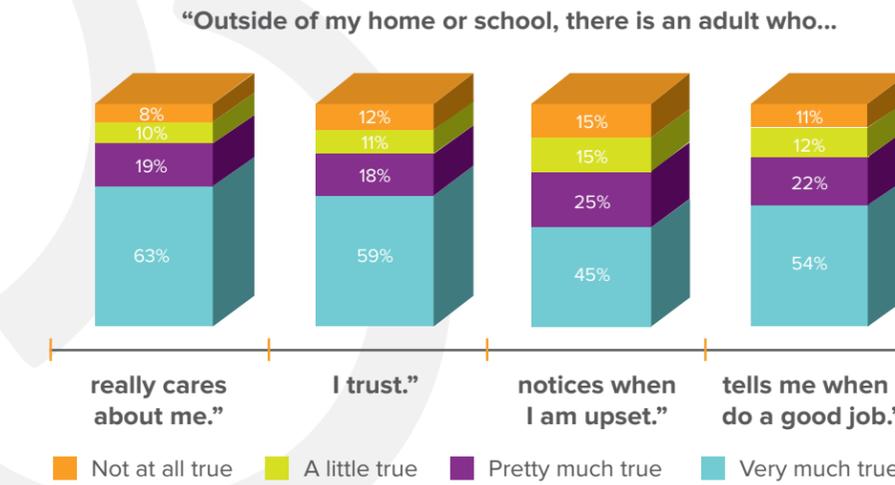
8th Grade Caring Relationships Scale (2011 & 2012 Adams County Student Survey)

Graph 12 shows Adams County 8th graders' responses when asked if they have a caring adult outside of their home or school. The blue and purple indicates those who felt that the statement was either "very much true" or "pretty much true" that they did have a caring adult in their life outside of home or school. The green and orange represents those who do not feel that they have such an adult in their life.

The Adams County Mentoring Collaborative Action Team

The goal of the Adams County Mentoring Collaborative Action Team is to increase the percentage of students reporting that outside of school or home that they do have a caring adult in their lives (according to the Adams County Student Survey).

Graph 12:



The following key strategies are being used:

- to increase the human, financial, and in-kind resources to establish an Adams County Collaborative
- to expand current Adams County mentor matches by 10 percent
- to identify new best practice mentoring organizations to serve in Adams County

SUCCESS IN ACTION

ACYI spearheaded a mentoring collaborative that helped effective mentoring organizations expand in Adams County. The conversation was started when **Save Our Youth, Denver Metro Partners, Senior Hub SWAT Program, The YESS Institute, and Young Life** all saw a growing need to find qualified adults to support kids who needed someone "cheering for them."

The spirit of this team is not to compete for mentors but to offer a mentor organization that fits all interests: one-on-one, faith-based, and elementary- and middle-school aged children.

They created shared marketing and promotional materials, held two FRIEND RAISERS, and started a county-wide conversation on mentoring. This is a solid approach to supporting our kids...from Cradle to Career!

As a result of their efforts, they increased interest about the need for mentors, amplified media attention, and improved fund raising efforts to expand mentoring in Adams County for the long term.

"This is a great example of how HUMAN resources (not money!) make a difference! It's about building relationships between funder and service providers. Most importantly, it allows kids to have a positive relationship with an adult who genuinely cares about them!"

Our Accomplishments

- Two FRIEND RAISERS gained over 60 new mentors and local press
- A promotional video, flyer, and increased web presence helped recruit mentors (www.glimpsemultimedia.com/Clients/ACYI/acyir4.html)
- YESS Institute awarded \$15,000 for planning grant to expand in Adams County
- Save Our Youth hired FTE dedicated to expand mentoring in Adams County; Crossroads Church holds first Adams County training with seven new mentors
- Young Life expansion planned in 2014; Young Lives (Teen Mom) program started

Adams County Mentoring Collaborative Partners





HEALTHY CHOICES

Healthy Choices, Healthy Futures

When teens are presented with opportunities to make healthy choices, they make healthier decisions. They are more likely to get good grades, graduate from high school, and have a successful future. This is the outcome we want for all youth in Adams County, and the reason why we are doing all we can to prevent substance use.

Research shows that substance use among youth predicts a lower grade point average, less satisfaction with school, negative attitudes toward school, school truancy, delinquent behavior, juvenile incarceration, and early parenthood (Lynskey & Hall, 2000).

With these issues, the negative consequences of adolescent substance use often extend into adulthood. For example, marijuana use during high school has been linked to lower income, greater welfare dependence, higher

unemployment, and lower relationship and life satisfaction (Fergusson, Boden, & Horwood, 2007).

Students who reported using marijuana in the past 30 days were nearly **five times** more likely to report using prescription drugs, compared to students who did not use marijuana. (Adams County Student Survey, 2011 – 2012). The use of prescription medication to get high is dangerous and often fatal. The vast majority of high school students abusing prescription drugs are getting them from the medicine cabinets of friends, family members, and acquaintances.

Why is it important?

Similar to national studies that link substance use to risky behavior and juvenile crime,

Adams County students who report using drugs and alcohol (2012-13 Adams County Student Survey) were also more likely to report a number of other negative attitudes and behaviors.

This graph (below) compares the responses of students who used prescription drugs (without a doctor's prescription) to those who did not use prescription drugs. Similar trends were seen among students who reported alcohol and/or marijuana use.

Indicators of Student Success

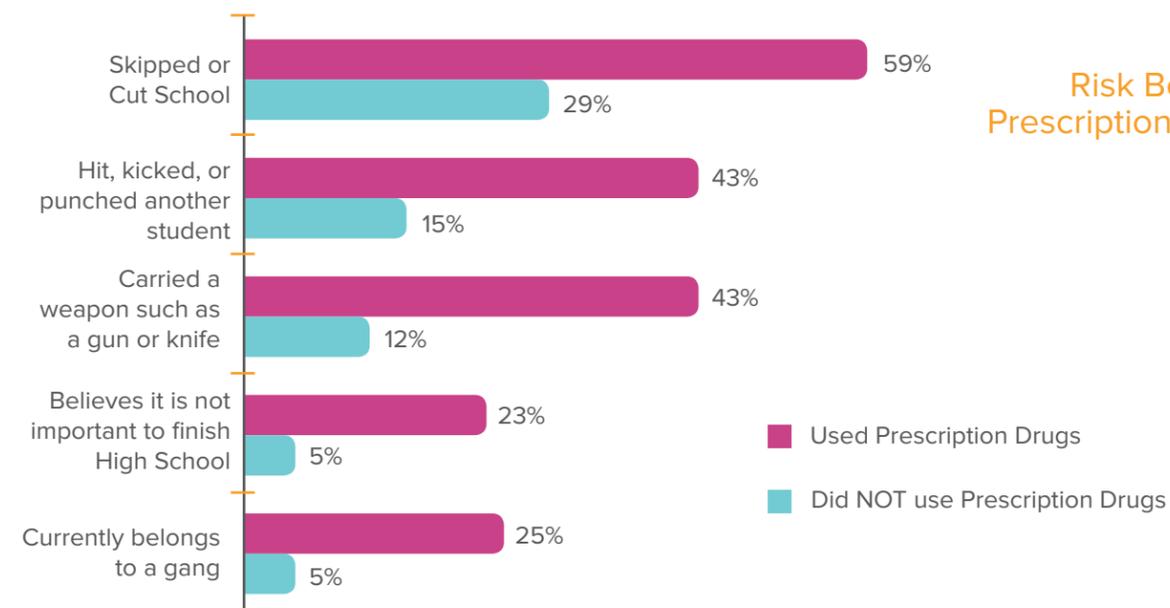
On the Adams County Student Survey, students report whether they have used tobacco, alcohol, and drugs within the past 30 days. They also report their perceptions of how many

other students at their school they believe have used alcohol and drugs.

In addition to substance use, students report other problem/risk behavior including bullying, bringing a weapon to school, and whether they belong to a gang. They also answer questions about positive self-beliefs and their goals for the future.

11th Grade Substance Use (2011-12 Adams County Student Survey - Graph 13)

- Tobacco: 20.2%
- Alcohol: 43.9%
- Binge Drinking (5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row): 27.0%
- Marijuana: 29.7%
- Prescription Drug (without a doctor's prescription): 14.1%



Graph 13:
Risk Behavior by Prescription Drug Use

BEHAVIOR/DRUG USE

Adams County students who report using drugs and alcohol (2012-13 Adams County Student Survey) were also more likely to report a number of other negative attitudes and behaviors.

The findings include:

- Drug users were more than twice as likely to report truancy
- Almost **3 times** as likely to perpetrate school violence
- More than **3 times** as likely to carry a weapon
- Almost **5 times** less likely to believe it is important to graduate
- **5 times** as likely to belong to a gang (2012-13 Adams County Student Survey)



Graph 14 shows the percentage of 11th graders who reported using each substance at least once within the past 30 days. Alcohol is the most commonly used, with almost 44 percent of students who report drinking. Nearly 30 percent used marijuana, and 14 percent used a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription.

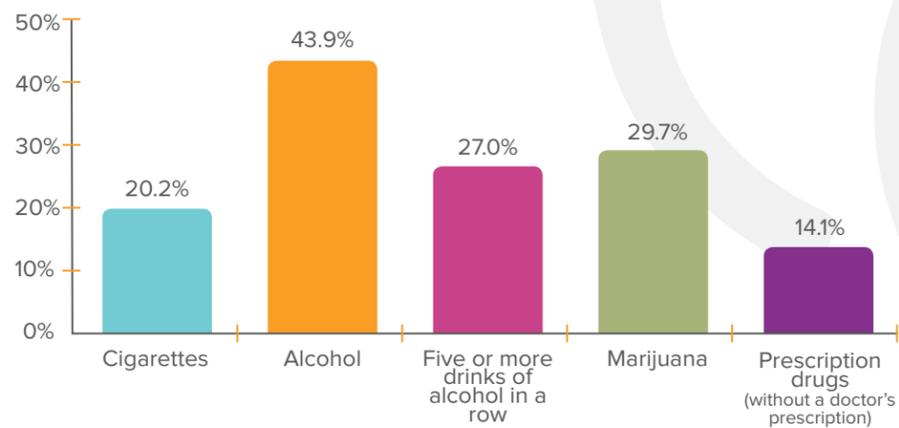


Graph 15 shows year-to-year trends for high school students' actual substance use (dotted lines), along with perceptions of peers' substance use (solid lines). It is notable that students drastically overestimate the substance use of their peers; as solid lines are much higher than dotted lines for both alcohol and marijuana. An encouraging finding is that we have seen countywide reductions in substance use rates in the past year. Note the downward trend in actual use (dotted lines) for both alcohol and marijuana between 2011 and 2012. Since last year, marijuana use decreased by 4.2 percent and alcohol use decreased by 8.7 percent. We have also seen reductions in students' estimates of their peers' use, suggesting that fewer students believe that using drugs and alcohol is the norm.



Graph 14:

11th Grade: Self-Reported Substance Use (in past 30 days)



Graph 15:

Youth Overestimate Their Peers' Substance Use



Gang involvement (High School) (2012-13 Adams County Student Survey)

- “Are there gangs at your school?”: 29.3%
- “I currently belong to a gang” : 7.7%
- “I have been pressured to join a gang” : 8.5%

Juvenile Crime (2012 - Adams County District Attorney's Office)

- Since 2005, Adams County has seen a large reduction in juvenile crime
- 42% reduction in Juvenile Filings
- 84% reduction in Direct Filings (very violent and/or repeat juvenile)

What we are doing about it?

Gang Prevention Action Team

Our Gang Prevention Action Team is working to decrease the number of students who reported that they were pressured to join a

gang by 10 percent. The team is using the following key strategies to reach that goal:

- Develop targeted outreach strategy focused on the school community
- Increase participation in the ENGAGE Program for most at-risk students
- Increase school attachment and academic success for ENGAGE participants

Gang Prevention Outcomes:

- Analyzed Adams County 2012 Student Survey data and identified the County's “hot spots” for gang activity to target their efforts
- Presented data to three school districts to establish engagement plan for 2013-14
- Identified the need to increase understanding of ENGAGE program for districts and community partners (ACYI supporting The Link in program evaluation)



Graph 16 & 17:

Juvenile Filings (Juvenile Court - 17th Judicial District)



Direct Filings (Adult Court - 17th Judicial District)



High school students think almost everyone uses marijuana, the truth: ...about 70% DO NOT use marijuana.



SUCCESS IN ACTION

Youth-Driven Drug Prevention Action Team

The goal of the Youth-Driven Action Team is working to decrease the number of students using all drugs (with a focus on prescription drug abuse) by the following key strategies:

- Partner with Arapahoe House /ACPP and county /state level efforts to establish countywide anti-drug social norming campaign(s). For more information on the anti-drug campaign work, please visit the ACCP website: www.imgoingplaces.org
- Challenge school and community based youth leadership groups to compete in a youth focused drug use prevention campaign using media and events
- Establish 2014 youth challenge competition
- Increase utilization, applicability, and communication of student survey to target most at risk population

Youth-Driven Drug Prevention Outcomes to date:

- Identified eight target schools for “social norming” campaign in four school districts for 2013-14
- Supplied in-depth student survey data analysis to ACCP for use with “social norming” campaigns and Parent Engagement kick-off events

“We know that kids listen to kids, and the Adams County Youth Drug Prevention Challenge gave students an opportunity (*in their words*) to share with their peers why being drug-free is worth it...”



In 2013, the North Metro Drug Task Force, in partnership with ACYI, held a contest for Adams County schools, youth groups, and cities to create a prescription drug abuse prevention campaign.

The submitted campaigns were required to:

- » Use the DLRIUFGES: The Two Don't Mix logo and theme
- » Create an effective message on the dangers of prescription drug abuse that is targeted to that community's high school and the students in that area's “feeder” middle schools
- » Educate parents and other adults on the proper methods of securing and disposing of their prescription medications

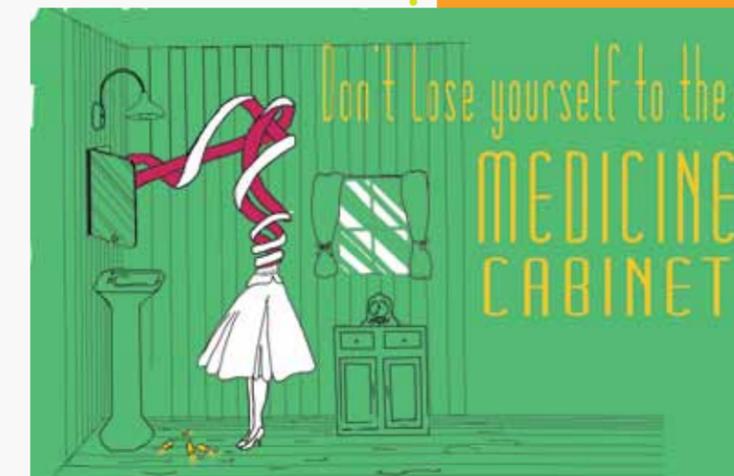
Each submission was evaluated in several different dimensions. These included:

- » Overall creativity of the school campaign
- » Overall participation by groups and/or clubs in that particular school
- » Number of students the message reached
- » Number of parents and/or parents groups the message reached
- » Use of surveys or other metrics to determine the potential effectiveness of the campaign

The results:

- » Eight schools submitted applications and presented to a community/youth panel with over 70 community and state leaders in attendance.
- » A rally was held and the keynote speaker was the Colorado attorney general. Fox News broadcasted the event on nightly news.
- » Legacy High School won the competition and their video is now in circulation with Adams 12 Five Star Schools

DLRIUFGES



Don't Get Trapped by Prescription Drugs



When prescription drugs are abused, they can be dangerous and addictive.

DLRIUFGES
The Two Don't Mix



Photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Graduating high school is one of the greatest milestones in a student's life. Earning a high school diploma sets young people on a path toward success, dramatically increasing their potential earnings, financial stability, and satisfaction with life.

On the other hand, not finishing high school can have a profound impact on an individual's chances of success, health, and happiness throughout life. Without a diploma, it's much more difficult to have a successful career.

Research has also demonstrated a relationship between graduating from high school and lifelong health. Having a higher education level is associated with lower death rates and a longer lifespan on average (Freudenberg & Ruglis, 2007). This is most likely due to the fact that less education is strongly predictive of risky health behaviors such as smoking, being overweight, and having a low level of physical activity.

NATIONAL RESEARCH SHOWS THAT DROPOUTS:

- Have a higher unemployment rate (23%, versus 12% of high school graduates)
- Have a lower income (\$17,299, versus \$26,933 for high school graduates) (*U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010; 2006*)
- Are more than twice as likely to be living in poverty or on public assistance

In addition to financial consequences, high school dropouts are also at greater risk for involvement in criminal activity. In fact, it's estimated that finishing high school reduces the chance of lifetime incarceration by about 50 percent (Lochner & Moretti, 2004).

Graduation, College Enrollment, and Career Success

The Facts

- According to the 2010 Census, Colorado adults (age 25-65) who did not graduate from high school are **33%** more likely to be unemployed, relative to those with a high school degree (graph 19)
- High school graduates who go on to finish a bachelor's degree are about **3 times** less likely to be unemployed than those with no college degree or certificate (graph 19)
- In Colorado, adults who have finished a bachelor's degree earn 70% more money, relative to those with no degree or certificate. Compared with those who did not graduate from high school, income of those with

Bachelor's degrees is nearly 2.5 times higher (graph 18)

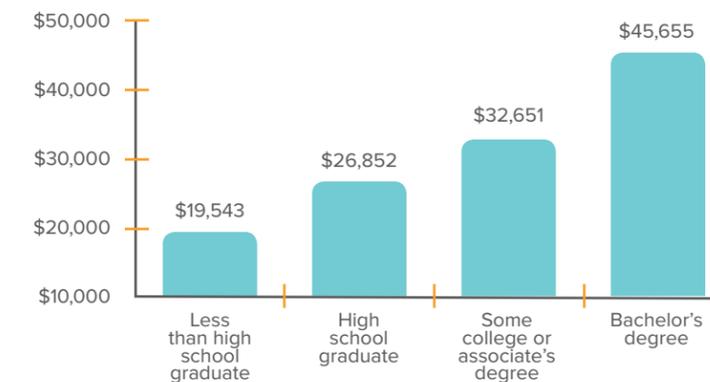
- Only 23% of students met 2011 ACT college readiness standards in all four core subjects
- Colorado is on pace to create **over 600,000** high-skill, high-wage jobs between 2008 and 2018, but over the same period, will only produce half the educated workers needed to fill them. (Georgetown U., Center on Education and Research, 2010)
- Annually, there are **22,000** new jobs in Colorado that only require a high school diploma. But with the **28%** high school dropout rate, the education system only produces **18,000** diploma-carrying candidates to fill these jobs



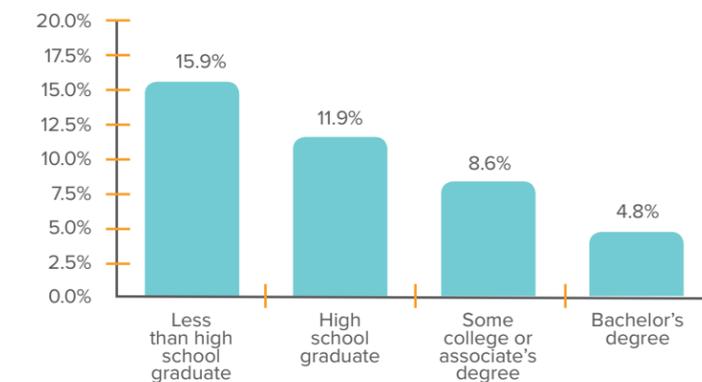
“According to the 2010 Census, Colorado adults (age 25-65) who did not graduate from high school are 33% more likely to be unemployed, relative to those with a high school degree.”

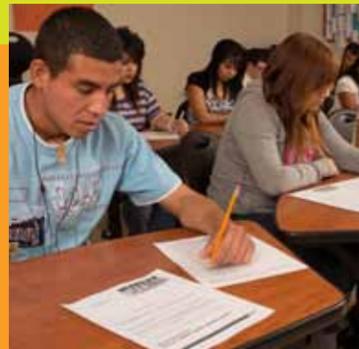
Graph 18 & 19:

Colorado (2010) Annual Income by Education Attainment



Colorado (2010) Unemployment by Education Attainment





What the Baseline Data Tells Us

Since 2008, the percentage of students who graduated from high school in four years is consistently lower than the state average.

Adams County graduation rates have improved in each of the last two years, with **nearly 66 percent** of the class of 2012 graduating on time. Since 2010, the proportion of graduates has increased by 3.7 percent, compared to an increase of 3 percent for Colorado as a whole (see graph 20).

Why a Cradle to Career Network will make a difference:

Schools, Parents, and Community Together: Supported Students Graduate!

Successfully navigating academic and life challenges depends on the combination of a student's experiences at home, at school, and in their larger community. Adult support in all three settings is essential for them to thrive academically, develop a positive self-concept, set goals for the future, create and maintain

healthy relationships, and eventually graduate from high school so that they can give back to that supportive community.

On the *Adams County Students Survey*, students report:

- whether they have at least one parent/guardian at home who they can talk to about problems, who listens to them, and who guides them through choices
- whether there is at least one teacher or another adult at their school who they trust and can talk to about problems
- whether there is at least one adult outside of home or school who cares about them and who they trust

The following were the percentage of all students who responded "yes" for the presence of all three of these supports, for only two of the three, only one of the three, or for none of the three types:

- All three supports: 45%
- Two of the supports: 31%
- One of the supports: 17%
- NONE: 7.3%

Graph 20: Graduation Rates



This means that approximately 2,500 of Adams County's middle and high school students may not feel supported and cared for by a single adult. That's where we are making a difference!

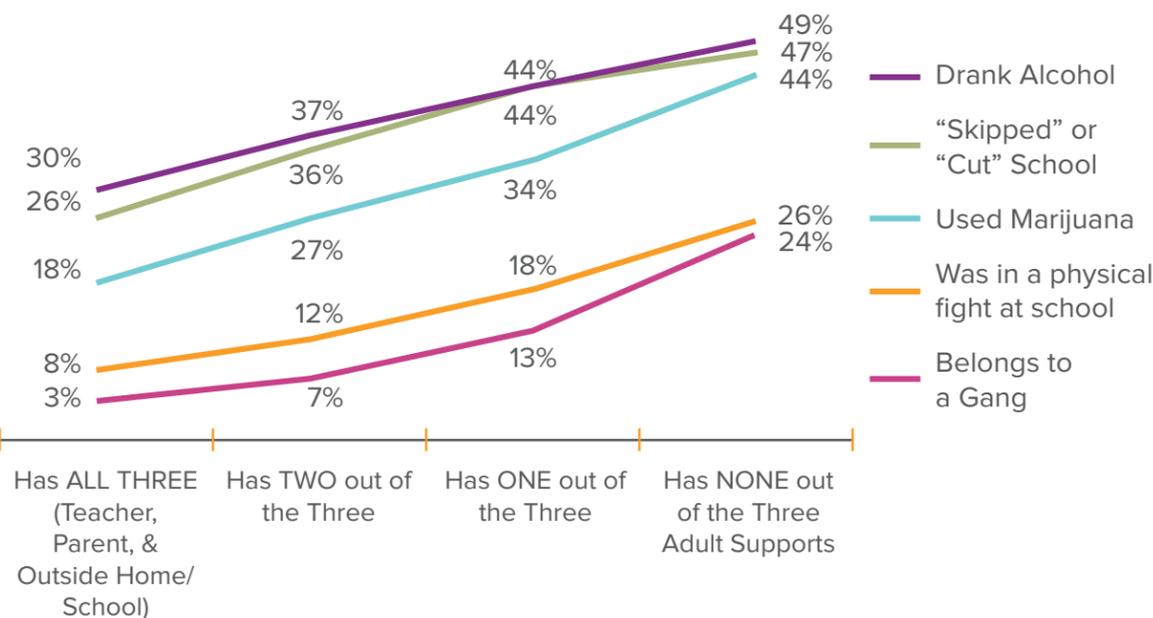
Why it's important

Students who feel connected and supported in all three settings make healthier choices and are more likely to have positive goals and beliefs about their future.

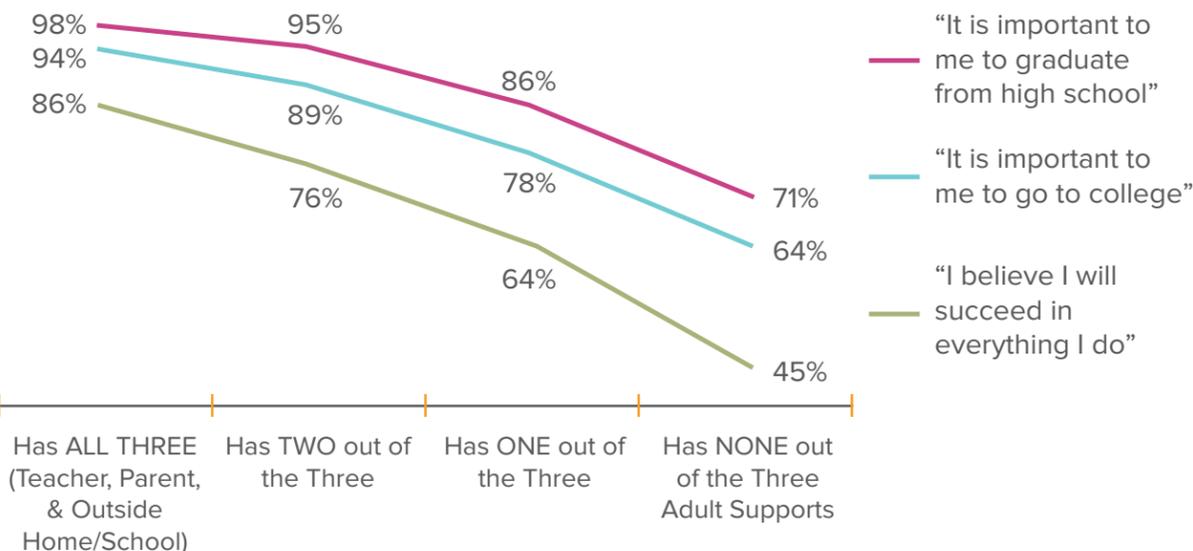
Graph 21 shows differences in the percentage of students who report substance use, school violence, and gang involvement as a function of the types of adult support systems they have. Students who are supported in all three settings (left) are much less likely to be involved in "high risk" behavior. The likelihood of substance use, truancy, fighting, and gang involvement increases rapidly when students have fewer or no adult support systems (right).

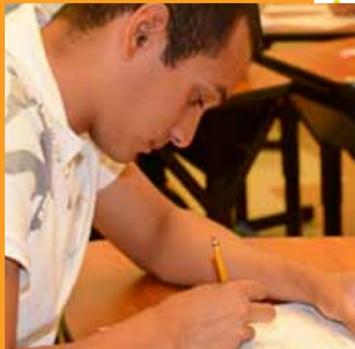
On the other hand, students who are supported in all three settings are much more likely to feel that it is important for them to finish high school and go to college, and to believe that they will be a success (graph 22).

Graph 21: Risky/Problem Behavior



Graph 22: Positive Goals and Beliefs



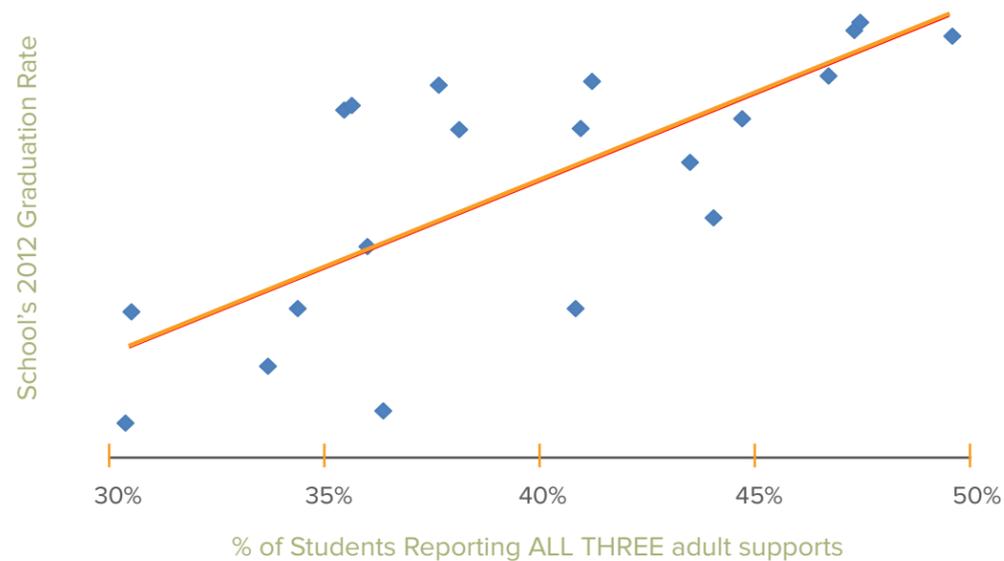


Impact on High School Graduation:

Students who feel supported by adults at home **and** at school **and** in their community have higher rates of on-time graduation.

In Graph 23, each high school in Adams County is represented by a data point, referencing its proportion of 12th graders who reported on the 2011/12 Adams County student survey having all three adult support systems. This data is shown along with the 2012 high school graduation rate for those same 12th graders. Schools with a larger proportion of students reporting all three adult support systems tend to have much higher graduation rates (top right), while schools with lower proportions of supported students have much lower graduation rates (bottom left).

Graph 23:



What We Are Doing About It—Our Strategies

Since ACYI was established in 2005, increasing high school graduation rates has been a KEY priority for all of our work and partnerships.

We believe when kids are prepared for school, attend school, have a caring adult, avoid alcohol and marijuana, and stay out of trouble with law enforcement, they are more likely to graduate!

“I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand; that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.”

-- John D. Rockefeller

EVERY YOUNG ADULT IS COLLEGE AND CAREER READY



photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14



FAFSA COMPLETION

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion

Going to college opens up an exciting world of endless possibility. However, for some students, getting accepted into college is only half the challenge—actually affording a college education is a bigger issue. Sadly, it's a factor that prevents far too many of our capable young people from achieving their dreams. The good news is that there is financial help available for many families.

Federal student aid is designed to create post-secondary opportunities for students. However, the current system, and particularly the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), is complex. Because of that, it poses an additional obstacle to low-income students who may otherwise pursue a college education.

According to the Commission on the Future of Higher Education, "Our financial aid system is confusing, complex, inefficient, duplicative, and frequently does not direct aid to students who truly need it."

Too often, parents and students are unaware about what financial aid is available, what they are eligible for, and when and how to apply. **The American Council on Education estimates that approximately one in five low-income students who are enrolled in college and would likely be eligible for Pell Grants never filed a FAFSA** (American Council on Education, "Missed Opportunities: Students Who Do Not Apply for Financial Aid," 2004).

FAFSA SUBMISSION

FAFSA submission is thought to be one of the major factors in whether qualified low-income students pursue a post-secondary education. Research shows that students who are accepted into a four-year college and have completed a FAFSA are almost **50 percent** more likely to enroll than students who do not complete a FAFSA. One study found that **84 percent** of students who completed a FAFSA by the end of high school went on to attend a four-year college in the fall, compared to only **55 percent** of students who did not file a FAFSA (De La Rosa, 2006).

Indicators of Student Success

In Adams County, more than 80 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 believe it's important to go to college (2011/12 Adams

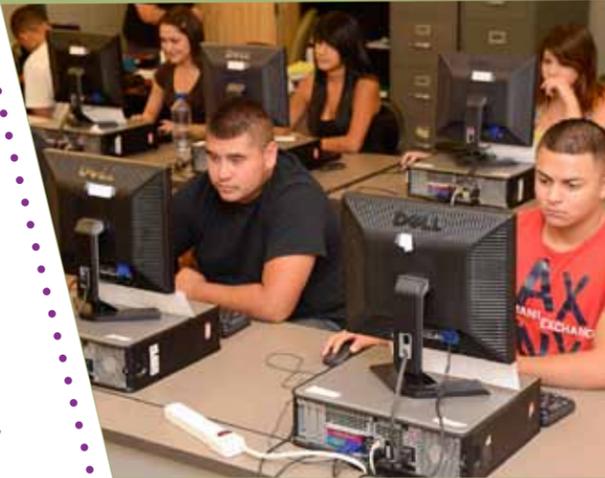
County Student Survey). However, only 55 percent of the Adams County class of 2012 actually enrolled in postsecondary education within one year.

Adams County FAFSA completion rates, versus Colorado average:

The proportion of seniors in 2012 who submitted a FAFSA application was 5.3 percent lower than the state average. Only 44.3 percent completed the application (Graph 24).

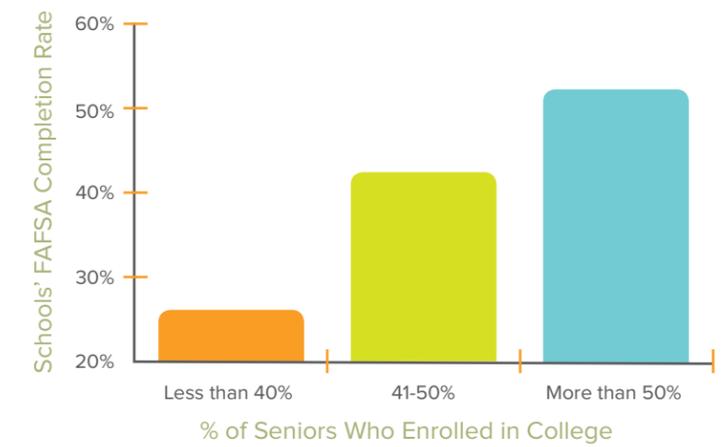
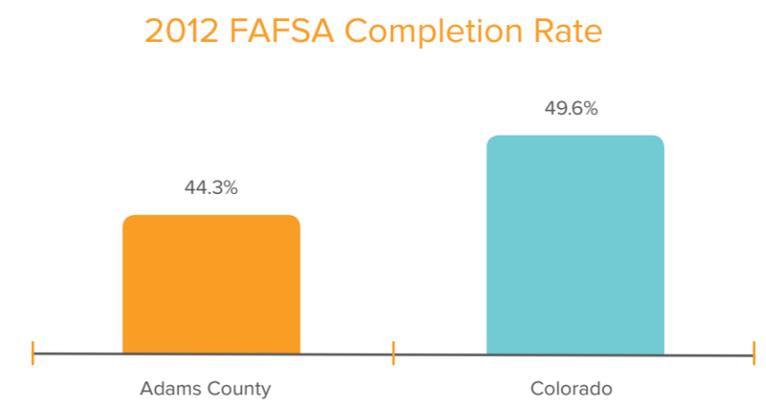
Why is FAFSA Important?

In Adams County, all schools with FAFSA completion rates higher than 50 percent saw more than half of their 2012 graduates enroll in college. On the other hand, all schools with FAFSA completion rates below 50 percent had fewer than half of their seniors go on to college (Graph 25).



"The American Council on Education estimates that approximately one in five low-income students who are enrolled in college and would likely be eligible for Pell Grants never filed a FAFSA"

Graph 24 & 25:



What We Are Doing About It

Local colleges and agencies have aligned resources to better support Adams County students. Through this partnership they hosted Adams County's first **EduExpo**, an education, information, and resource fair. This grassroots collaboration is a great example of committed partners who all share the same goal—supporting students!

“We wanted to host an event to support Adams County students in understanding and making the transition from high school to college. We are humbled that close to 80 percent of the attendees BEGAN to fill out the FAFSA application at the event! This is a big step in the right direction.”

— *EduExpo Coalition member*



1st Annual EduExpo at Adams City High School in Commerce City, March 9, 2013

EduExpo provided information about college careers, services, and resources available for the Adams County community, regardless of language, ethnicity, or socio-economic level. The EduExpo included presentations and workshops by colleges and community organizations about education, immigration, and other topics. The EduExpo was organized by volunteers of the recently formed CEARAC, Coalition for the Educational Advancement for Residents of Adams County, along with other supporting organizations.

Workshops were given to guide attendees through the process of applying for financial aid (student loans, scholarships, grants, etc.), where to find these sources of funding, and how the FAFSA process works. There were also sessions on resumé and interviewing skills.

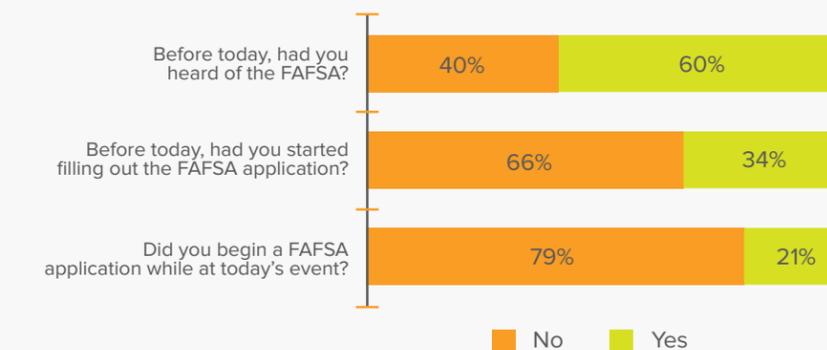
The target audience was Latino youth and their families. Up to 83% of these families live below the poverty level, according to school district statistics.

The Results

Last year's event brought in more than 300 participants, over 40 resource fair booths, thousands of dollars in prizes, and many informative bilingual workshops.

Parents and students attended financial aid sessions, and even had an opportunity to begin (or complete) their FAFSA application during the session. Attendees completed an evaluation of the session, and results are displayed in graph 26. Before the event, **66 percent** of attendees had not begun their application. **21 percent** of all attendees were able to do so that day! For more information, visit www.EduExpoColorado.org.

Graph 26:



“The collaboration between city and state government, community, education, and health organizations was essential in planning and carrying out the event. Without this collaboration, the services and opportunities geared at preparing and educating students and parents on the college going process would not have been possible.”

*Cynthia N. Armendriz,
Director of Excel Programs,
Metro State University*





COLLEGE AND CAREER READY

Not only do we strive to see Adams County students graduate from high school, we hope to set them up for future success in college and their careers. How do we do this? Through the combined efforts of the Adams County school districts, post-secondary education institutions, local governments, community-based organizations, and the business community, the **Adams County Education Consortium (ACEC)** is committed to this work. This countywide partnership takes responsibility for enhancing personalized academic skills development, professional exploration, and relevant work ready skills for all types of learners in Adams County.



These are ACEC objectives:

- Increase the overall successful completion rate, both secondary and post-secondary, for Adams County students and better prepare them for professions within the county
- Incorporate the family into the student learning solution
- Improve the support for teachers, guidance counselors, and administration as workplace mentors and resources

Strategy for Success

ACEC regularly organizes partners in business, education, legislation, and local government to meet the needs of countywide economic development. Together, they provide solutions for the lack of a skilled workforce within the county and the entire state of Colorado. Starting

in the 8th grade, ACEC works to provide students with sustained career exploration and professional development opportunities. These 21st century skills and experiences guide students towards future career pathways and continued education opportunities.

Career Exploration, Internships, Job Shadowing, and Professional Development

ACEC believes that it's important to recognize and discover each student's passions, skills, and assets. Giving students a vision of where they fit into the workplace market is essential to developing a career pathway. Since 2005, ACEC has developed opportunities for students to explore careers in the Denver Metro region. Starting in the 8th grade and extending through the college years, this work takes shape in the form of hands-on career exploration, internships, job shadows, and professional development events. Each student experiences a variety of diverse professions and exits our program with the ability to apply classroom instruction to careers and vocations. Ultimately, they develop competencies that allow them to excel in the workforce or higher education. Many students have even found immediate job opportunities.

Adams County Commissioners' Career Expo

The Adams County Commissioners' Career Expo is a unique career fair that prepares 8th graders to think about their



future education and career goals. This annual event is particularly remarkable since it's designed to accommodate the total population of Adams County 8th grade students and introduce them to professionals in a variety of industries. Leading up to the event, ACEC offers support to teachers and counselors to help prepare their students, including how to have meaningful conversations with professionals, wearing appropriate attire, having composure, a proper handshake, and eye contact, and providing career research. Career Expo vendors are comprised of business, nonprofit, government, and education members and represent the Colorado industry clusters. Students are required to speak with three businesses or organizations, and at least one higher education representation. Now replicated across the Front Range, the Expo just celebrated its 10th event, welcoming 105 business vendors and over 5,700 Adams County 8th graders.

Pilot Internship

ACEC has partnered with the Better Business Bureau to replicate and scale their SMARTS internship program and bring 21st century workforce opportunities to Adams County high school juniors and seniors. Students in this program enroll in a semester-long class that prepares them for experiences on the job. Concurrently, students are placed with local businesses, in the industry of their choice, for 10 weeks and 100 hours. Business partners serve as mentors throughout this process and challenge students to adapt and excel with the different facets of the industry.





Backpacks to Briefcases

Backpacks to Briefcases, also known as B2B, is a formal etiquette and networking event intended to help high school juniors and seniors gracefully transition from secondary school to the real world of work or post-secondary education. The formal luncheon is led by a professional cotillion speaker who guides students on how to best handle themselves in professional settings, network effectively, and prepare for their desired career. Local business professionals sponsor students and attend as mentors.



“I believe the work that ACEC does is essential for creating relationships between students and business professionals. Many students lack meaningful access to business owners and professional work opportunities and also lack the needed time spent in professional settings to learn the “hidden rules” that go with the territory. Every ACEC program is not just about imparting knowledge, but also about providing face-to-face introductions and meaningful relationship-building opportunities for students.”

- Kevin Root, Better Business Bureau Foundation, Internship Coordinator, ACEC Partner

SUCCESS IN ACTION

In late-May, Colorado passed the graduation guidelines and endorsed diploma requirements. These guidelines state that at the time of graduation each student must be able to demonstrate 21st century skills, demonstrations, and workplace competencies. ACEC programs were already meeting this need; however, there was room for improvement.

Through district and community partners and local organizations, ACEC, the Better Business Bureau, College in Colorado, and a local high school have implemented a curriculum-based internship pilot program that engages the business community, provides applied skills to students, and offers steps in a career pathway.

The tenants of this success came from partnership collaboration, clarity of vision and shared goals, meeting a community need, and scalable planning.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SCHOOL SAFETY



OTHER KEY EFFORTS

School Safety

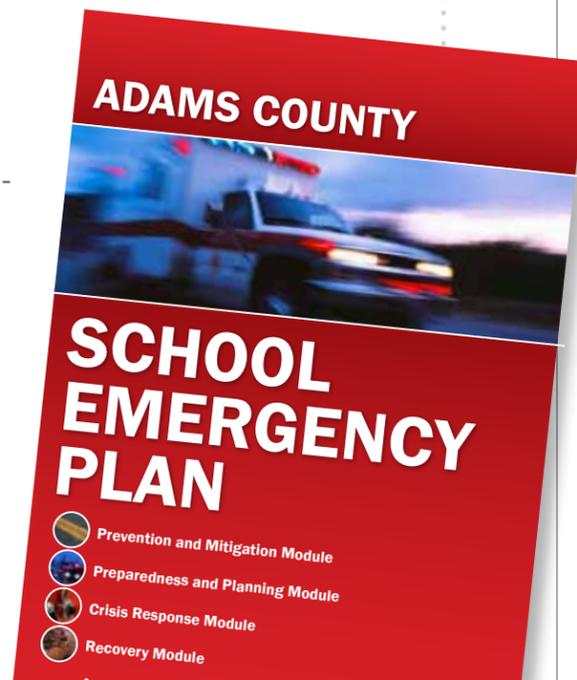
When kids feel safe at school and have their basic needs met, they are better learners and more likely to succeed. That is why ACYI continues to support the Adams County School Safety Committee and offers an online resource for schools called C2C Connect.

Adams County School Safety Efforts

ACYI has supported bringing Adams County school districts and law enforcement agencies together to prevent violence and intervene with high-risk youth. Over the last five years, a comprehensive countywide plan for crisis response and threat assessment has been developed. Staff trainings and conferences served hundreds of school and law enforcement staff throughout Adams County.

The crisis response and threat assessment plan has had a positive impact in keeping Adams County students safe. The entire plan is now recognized as a model for unified emergency response across all county agencies.

Overall, districts have provided positive feedback regarding the clarity and simplicity of the plan. District level personnel have increased expectations



regarding drills, tabletop exercises, and have improved Go-Kits and training for all school personnel.

In fact, one district reported a crisis being averted as a result of the new protocol and countywide partnership in crisis response. In December 2010, a loaded pistol magazine was found in a classroom at Adams City High School (ACHS) in Adams 14. The District and local law enforcement agencies had their first opportunity to enact the new Adams County Crisis Response Protocol. With 1,700 students in school, it was critical that the response was handled quickly and appropriately. The Commerce City Police Department (CCPD) was immediately notified of a potential threat to the school. As officers and District personnel arrived on scene to establish a joint command post, clear communication and collaboration were immediately recognized as essential elements of this joint response.

In the end, after a thorough search of the school, and a sweep of all students, CCPD was confident in clearing the school and ending the response. In fact, because of clear communication throughout the day, students went home on time and safely.

At an Adams 14 Board of Education meeting immediately following the crisis, CCPD Commanders explained the response protocol to the Board, and they were extremely clear in their message—the protocol works.

The protocol is intended to be flexible and adaptable to any possible emergency situation that arises. Trainings are now being conducted within each district, rather than at the county level, in order to discuss and plan for unique situations.

“I think this effort to create a school emergency plan is one of the best things we, as the public safety and educational community, have ever pursued or ever done...We talk a lot about making sure we have safe communities and a safe neighborhood, and schools are a great place to start.”

- Sheriff Doug Darr, Committee Chair

Cradle to Career – Connect (C2C Connect)



ACYI continues to offer C2C Connect, an online service that helps schools obtain more engagement with community organizations, faith-based organizations, and businesses in Adams County.

“ACYI has spearheaded Adams 12 engaging with the faith based community to meet the needs of the students in our schools. It has been an awesome partnership and I am excited to see where it will go from here.”

- Karina Delaney Adams 12 Five Star Schools

To enroll your agency or school in C2C Connect visit: www.ACYI.org

C2C CONNECT

The goal of C2C Connect is for schools to identify their needs and the community to offer resources for:

- Career readiness support
- Clothing Assistance
- Community Service and Volunteer opportunities
- Equipment; Food Assistance
- Housing/Rental Assistance
- Hygiene Assistance
- Mental Health/Case Management
- Mentoring
- School Supplies
- Service Learning opportunities
- Transportation
- Tutoring
- Volunteer opportunities



photo courtesy of Cameron Weise, Adams 14



YEAR IN REVIEW

Success In Action

After one full year as a nonprofit organization, ACYI's programs and operations have stabilized, enabling us to make significant progress on Adams County Cradle to Career goals. Major successes for the last year include:

- Securing funding from partner agencies and other supporters
- Receiving funding by two of its first grants from outside the Adams County community (**The Denver Foundation** and **Mile High United Way**)
- Aligning the work of the **Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County** and the **Adams County Education Consortium**, two important collaborative organizations in Adams County, with ACYI's Cradle to Career goals
- Holding "friend raisers" aimed at recruiting adult mentors in Adams County
- Holding an anti-drug rally aimed at our county's youth, which was attended by Colorado's attorney general and helped publicly recognize Adams County's efforts and collaboration
- Adding an Adams County Commissioner to the Board of Directors, thus creating an important link to one of Adams County's primary partners
- Gaining strong interest from more metro-area partners because of potential programmatic partnerships, learning opportunities, and funding relationships

ACYI THEORY OF ACTION:

IF THEN

- Key Leaders share common vision
- Baseline data on key outcomes is shared
- Data-driven management is core
- Action teams adopt continuous improvement
- Resources for core operations are in place
- Funding is aligned to evidence-based practices
- Effective practices are scaled
- Resource and policy change occurs in support of improved outcomes
- Students' outcomes trend in the right direction

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
- Nelson Mandela

The Work Ahead

We will be narrowing indicators and our programmatic focus in 2014. One key strategy is to create and implement a communitywide "SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS" campaign. Partners also continue to value the role ACYI plays in:

1. Putting like-minded and motivated people together in a room and addressing individual challenges
2. Coordinating and aligning funding opportunities
3. Collecting student data and tracking achievement

Other key strategies include:

- Investigate new ways to measure student progress
- Maximize the Board's role
- Develop a system for formal stakeholder input, assessment, and evaluation to guide strategic planning
- Utilize emerging research on identification and evaluation of non-cognitive/social emotional indicators
- Establishment of an school attendance action team

"ACYI has provided the development and continuation of collaborative relationships with other youth-serving organizations which has been invaluable, as has the annual survey data which helps guide our prevention and intervention efforts for youth and families."

- Kevin West, Director of Intervention Services, District 27J



Thank you to the investors who see the vision of what is possible through this work and invested in our work in 2013:

Foundations



Community Partner Investors:

Adams County Board of County Commissioners
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Crossroads Church
Adams County Sherriff's Office
School District 27J
Front Range Community College
Thornton City Council
Westminster City Council
Adams 14 School District
Adams County School District 50
Brighton City Council
Federal Heights City Council
Mapleton Public Schools

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Community Reach Center
Book Keeping Support
Adams 12 Five Star Schools,
Host Agency
Joe Davis, Legal Support

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Early Childhood:

Lisa Jansen Thompson
Rebecca Wilson
Lilianna V. Fresquez
Jane Harris

3rd Grade Reading:

Rebecca Zamora, Growing Home
Stephanie John, Community Reach
Teva Sienicki, Growing Home

Anti Drug:

Beckah Terlouw, Arapahoe House
Jim Gerhart, North Metro Task Force
Jerry Peters, North Metro Task Force

Mentoring:

Penny Reed, The Link

Gang Prevention:

Matt Bertschman, The Link
Jackie Henke, The Link

College & Career Ready:

Emma Galvin, Adams County Education Consortium

Adams County Youth Data and Epidemiological Workgroup:

Phil Corn, The Link Board of Directors & Diversion
Kathleen Shoaf, Arapahoe House

ACYI Executive Team:

Leading the work of ACYI's Core Business
Chair, Chris Gdowski, Superintendent of Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Vice Chair, Randy Nelson, Chief of Police, Thornton Police Department
Treasurer, Rick Doucet, CEO of Community Reach Center
Secretary, Valorie Ladwig, Executive Director, The Link
Dave Young, District Attorney, 17th Judicial District
Chris Kline, Adams County Human Services
Jan James, Advisory Board Chair, Adams County Human Services

ACYI Advisory Board:

Leading the work of the Action teams
Al Sharon, Brighton Police Department
Beckah Terlouw, Araphoe House / Adams County Prevention Partnership
Beth Carmosino, Northglenn Police Department
Sue-Lin Toussaint, Mapleton Public Schools
Cindy Vigil, Growing Home
Dante Carbone, Thornton Police Department
Diane Bahrenburg, Tri-County Health Department
Dmitri Medoff, 17th District - Judicial Probation
Don Vallero, Federal Heights Police Department
Emma Galvin, Adams County Education Consortium
James Duffy, Adams County School District 50
Jan James, Adams County Human Services
Janet Benavente, Colorado State University - Extension
Jeff Jones, Westminster Police Department
Kenlyn Newman, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Kevin West, School District 27J
Levon Hupfer, 17th Judicial District – Diversion Program
Lisa Jansen Thompson, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Lowell Richardson, Commerce City Police Department
Michael McIntosh, Adam's County Sheriffs Office
Michele Gerbrandt, Crossroads Church
Paul Targoff, 17th Judicial District - Senate Bill 94
Phil Corn, Community Member
Ruben Chacon, Adams County School District 14
Stephanie John, Community Reach Center
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Bethany Siegler, UniqueThink

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Dana Stillman, Inspire Graphic Design

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Photography:

Photos throughout the report were taken at partner locations including: Growing Home
Community Enterprise
Tri-County Health Department
Thornton Police Department
The Link

Adams County Sheriff's Office
Adam County School District 50
Mapleton Public Schools
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Adams County Government
We thank these partners for their valuable participation

Photos taken at Adams County School District 14 are an in-kind contribution for the 2013 Partnership Report. Graduation gowns were compliments of Jostens.

DATA:

Colorado Department of Education
Adams County Student Survey
U.S. Census Bureau (2010)

We hope if you use the content of this report to support your efforts you credit "Adams County Partnership Report 2013."



United States Census Bureau; 2010 Decennial census, 2005-2009 American Community Survey

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We want to hear from you...

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GET INVOLVED!

- **SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK** and let us know how our efforts can advance in Adams County
- **ALIGN** efforts by participating in an action team
- **INVEST** in the operations to ensure sustainability of our efforts or align investments to our goals/action teams.
- **SPREAD THE WORD** by hosting an information session at your agency and share this report with your networks
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These terms are drawn from several models and frameworks designed to advance the community goals described in this Baseline Report. These guiding models include the *Strive, Cradle to Career* framework, the *Results Based Accountability* system, and SAMHSA's *Communities that Care* community-based model.

Action Plan: A description of proposed actions intended to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

Anchor Organization: An anchor organization provides staffing and leadership, commits to engaging the partnership, and supports members through commitment of resources and convening partners. The anchor organization provides stability so the partnership will thrive over the long term.

Asset Mapping: The process of identifying and organizing assets and resources available.

Baseline: A visual display of the history and forecast(s) for a measure or indicator.

Baseline Data: Data describing how the system or process has operated before any interventions or improvements are made.

Capacity Building: A people-focused process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in the fast-changing world.

Continuous Improvement: The process by which a program is continually being evaluated and improvements are implemented based on relevant data.

Cradle to Career: A continuum of development from birth to early-adulthood during which steps are taken by an individual to prepare for success in education, work, and life.

Data Manager / Director: Supports the collection and management of information and data to assist knowledge management and data-driven decision making, and works with key partners to develop a comprehensive accountability system in the community incorporating reliable data.

Evidence-Based Decision Making: The integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction (and/or education services).

Focus Areas: Key areas to improve upon in your community, as identified using baseline data.

Framework: An adaptable structure of work that can and should be tailored and modified to an individual community, while keeping foundational concepts consistent.

Goal: A goal is a desired result which is a component of the *action plan* supporting and leading to realization of the *vision*. Example: "Increase

performance of middle school students on mathematics assessments." A point that must be achieved to realize the partnership's vision. Progress toward goals is measured by the *indicators*.

Indicators: Measures of achievement defining the important and useful information about the performance of a program or initiative. They may be expressed as a percentage, index, rate, ratio, or other numerical measure that permits comparison. Indicators are monitored at regular intervals and are usually compared to one or more criteria. Indicators are measures that quantify the achievement of results. A **priority indicator** is one of the three or four most important measures, the ones that rise to the top in the rating process. Headline indicators must have:
1) Proxy Power (the measure is linked closely to the outcome we are trying to achieve); 2) Communication Power (most partners and others will understand what is being measured); and, 3) Data Power (the data are available on a timely basis). A **contributing indicator** is any other measure for which there are good data. Contributing indicators are used in assessing the story behind the baselines, and in other parts of the process.

Mission: The defined purpose of the partnership and the role it plays in achieving success. The mission of the partnership provides direction and guidance for the strategic work and outlines the purpose of the partnership.

Needs Assessment: A systematic process in which gaps between current conditions and desired conditions in the community are identified and measured. A needs assessment is frequently the starting point in identifying focus areas which motivate a community-based program initiative, and is often followed by a *resource assessment* or *asset mapping* step.

Network/Collaborative: A Network or Collaborative is a group of like providers who work together to achieve a common goal. The network exists to review data, commit to common outcome measures, identify best practices within priority areas, and align, coordinate and leverage resources.

Objective: A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve within a time frame and with available resources. In general, objectives are more specific and easier to measure than goals, and are basic tools that underlie all planning and strategic activities. They serve as the basis for creating policy and evaluating performance. They should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound and may be further supported by component tasks. An example of an objective is: "By the end of the second quarter, match fifty middle school students with trained, volunteer math tutors." Goals and objectives are components of an action plan.

Outcome: The change in a program's participants or the conditions of well-being for children, adults, families and communities that is a result of program activities. This can be a change in knowledge, attitude,

behavior, skills, or condition. It may be immediate, short- or long-term.

Partnership: A group of cross-sector community leaders who come together to support a shared Cradle to Career education vision in their community. This should consist of representatives from key sectors contributing to education improvement such as early childhood education, K-12, higher education, government, business and philanthropy.

Performance accountability: In performance accountability a manager or group of managers takes responsibility for the performance of a program, agency or service system. **Performance measures** tell how well a program, agency or service system is working to serve its customers. RBA uses a simple three-part categorization scheme for performance measures: *How much did we do?* (e.g., number served), *How well did we do it?* (e.g., percent provided timely service), *Is anyone better off?* (e.g., percent showing improvement).

Population Accountability: In population accountability a group of partners takes on responsibility for the well-being of a population in a geographical area. Seven key population accountability questions are:
1) What are the quality of life conditions we want for the children, adults and families who live in our community? 2) What would these conditions look like if we could see them? 3) How can we measure these conditions using reliable and appropriate indicators? 4) How are we doing on the most important of these measures? 5) Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better? 6) What works to do better, including no-cost and low cost ideas? 7) What do we propose to do?

Program: A systematic, coherent set of actions intended to promote positive and healthy youth development in specific areas, or to prevent, reduce or eliminate specific youth problem behaviors.

Program Evaluation and Rating: The effectiveness of programs in meeting their stated purpose has been assessed and formally rated by various agencies. Such ratings are typically based on the rigor and reliability of the evaluation process, the design structure of the program, and the consistency, duration and effect size of the program's results. These ratings generally fall into the categories of evidence-based and research-based programs. An **evidence-based program** has been found to be effective via a rigorous, randomized control trial-type evaluation. Programs with evidence only from less-rigorous evaluations may be designated as "promising programs." A **research-based program** may incorporate a design and components shown or expected to be efficacious based on developmental research (for example, the use of established risk or protective factors), but may not have rigorous evidence of its effectiveness in practice. Ratings of established program effectiveness are provided by agencies such as the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence in its "Blueprint Programs." CSPV also lists a matrix of 500 prevention/intervention programs, most of which are rated as **effective/ineffective, promising** or **model programs** by one

or more of seven groups. This permits practitioners to judge program effectiveness based on the consistency of ratings across multiple agencies.

Report Card: An annual report to the community for a city, county, state or nation, which displays whether the community's quality of life is getting better or worse. The best ones use a structure based on results and indicators highlighting changes in child, youth, student and family outcomes for which the partnership collects data annually. An example is the *Kids Count* reports published annually by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and its state affiliates.

Resource Assessment: A resource assessment follows the needs assessment and is an asset-mapping process identifying the existing community resources which could be brought to bear on the gaps found in specific focus areas.

Results Based Accountability (RBA): A system or process for holding people in a geographical area responsible for the well-being of the total population or subpopulation.

Roadmap: A foundational document that organizes benchmarks of progress across the education continuum, and illustrates the Cradle to Career commitment to education, from birth and through college and career.

Story (behind the baseline): An analysis of the conditions, causes and forces at work that helps explain why a baseline looks the way it does. Trying to understand the story behind current conditions may lead to an information and research agenda involving local research agencies and universities, as a disciplined way of pursuing unanswered questions about causes. It may also involve a root cause analysis to trace a causal chain by using such techniques as "asking the 5 whys."

Strategy: A coherent set of actions that has a reasoned chance of turning the curve. A **priority strategy**, as defined in the context of the Cradle to Career civic infrastructure, is an area of work around which a network of providers is formed.

Strive/Strive Six Sigma: *Strive* is an organizational framework designed to foster collective social impact which brings about dramatic changes in education systems and structures from Cradle to Career. Strive Six Sigma is an adaptation of GE's Lean Six Sigma model to the social sector to assist service providers in developing evidence based action plans.

Turning the Curve: Turning the baseline or trend line in the right direction.

Vision: A portrait of a desired future, one that is hard, but possible to attain. A verbal picture of the desired condition which inspires and motivates community action, such as: "All children in Adams County are successful in school."

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cradleto**career**



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