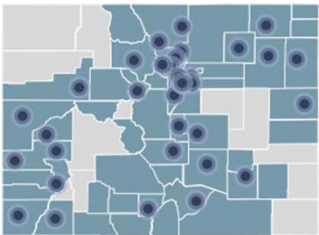


Colorado Family Resource Center Association 2019-2020 Evaluation Report Executive Summary

Background

The Colorado General Assembly established Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in 1993 to serve as a “single point of entry for providing comprehensive, intensive, integrated, and collaborative community-based services for vulnerable families, individuals, children, and youth” in local communities.

The Family Resource Center Association (FRCA) was established as a strategic statewide network for FRC advocacy and funding. Using a collective impact model, FRCA strengthens and expands Colorado FRCs through program fidelity standards; program quality monitoring; outcome measurement and reporting; state and national level advocacy; resource development; and organizational technical assistance and trainings, including capacity building for all its members. **This executive summary presents key findings from FRCA's 2019-20 annual evaluation, which includes 10.5 months of data (July 1, 2019-May 15, 2020).¹ This time period includes the outbreak of COVID-19, which has significantly disrupted every aspect of life.** Evaluations from prior years have included 12 months of data.



FRCA supports 32 member Family Resource Centers that collectively serve 52 Colorado counties, working towards a vision in which every family is thriving and self-sufficient.

Key Features of Family Resource Centers in CO

FRCs in Colorado adhere to the following standards and practices when delivering Family Development Services in Colorado.

Quality Standards

The Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support² ensures high-quality practices are aligned with the Principles of Family Support and the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework.³

Common Assessment

The CFSA 2.0 is a reliable index of family functioning that obtains an objective assessment of family strengths and areas for growth and change.⁴



Pathways Framework

The Colorado Family Resource Center Pathways Framework outlines three primary paths through which families receive services from FRCs, each with increasing intensity of service provision.

Fidelity Monitoring

The Family Pathways Essential Requirements Checklist and standard process assesses and improves fidelity implementation of Family Development core components.



FRCs have continued to serve as vital community hubs throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

This meant adjusting existing practices while maintaining fidelity and responding to meet the needs of their communities. To reflect the many repercussions of the pandemic and corresponding stay at home orders, in this year's evaluation:

Before COVID-19 includes data collected **prior to March 1, 2020**

During COVID-19 includes data collected **on or after March 1, 2020**

If no COVID-19 distinction is noted, data are collapsed across the full reporting period (July 1, 2019 - May 15, 2020).



Evaluation Findings: Families Served

FRCs provided 166,737 services to 27,800 individuals in 13,221 families.

This included more than:

94,360	29,350	9,640	11,560	15,160
services to help families meet basic needs	services to foster high quality parenting	services to support early childhood education	services to further adult education	services to cultivate healthy living



During COVID-19, FRCs continued to serve families in their communities. In an average month, **individuals received more services during COVID-19 than they did before COVID-19**, with increases in service delivery rates ranging from 30% to 255% across service types.

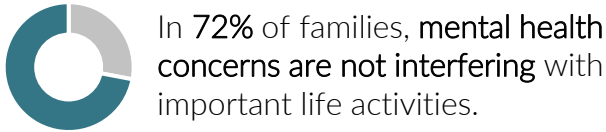
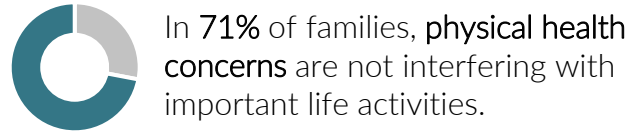
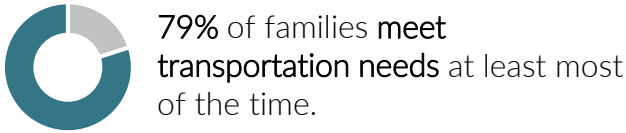
2,989 families (23% of families served by FRCs) received strengths-based **Family Development Services**, including CFSA 2.0 assessment, one-on-one family-driven goal-setting, and follow-up.

- ✓ 2,676 families (90% of families with a baseline CFSA 2.0) were administered readiness to change items and set goals
- ✓ 1,823 families (61%) completed at least one follow-up assessment
- ✓ 1,047 (35%) completed more than one follow-up



When families seek Family Development Services, they come equipped with many strengths.

At their CFSA 2.0 baseline assessment,



The above rates are for baseline assessments administered prior to COVID-19. Assessments during COVID-19 had similar rates (within four percentage points) for these domains.



Before and during COVID-19, families report **high levels of nurturing and attachment** with their children, **high levels of the use of praise** when children behave well, and **low levels of losing control** when disciplining their children.

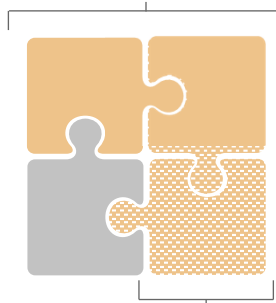
But families are also experiencing many barriers to economic security, and these have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

The median annual income of families served in 2019-20 was 24% of the median annual income in Colorado.

Among all families served the median income was: **\$16,800** The 2018 median income in Colorado was: **\$68,811**

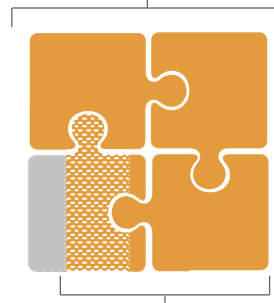
Many families have unmet needs, and these unmet needs⁵ are higher during COVID-19.

Before COVID-19, 44% of families screened with multiple unmet needs



and **75%** screened with at least one unmet need.

During COVID-19, 78% of families screened with multiple unmet needs



and **92%** screened with at least one unmet need.



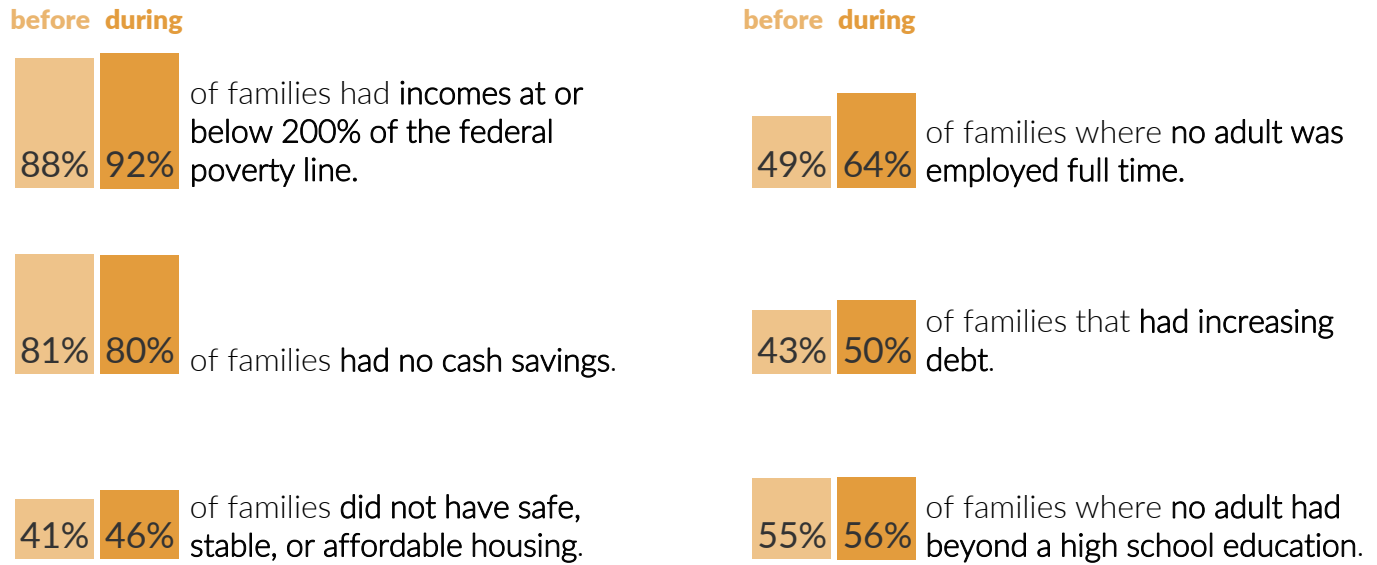
The largest increases in need were in **employment** and **health coverage**.



Families had needs in the same areas before and during COVID-19, but needs were greater during COVID-19.

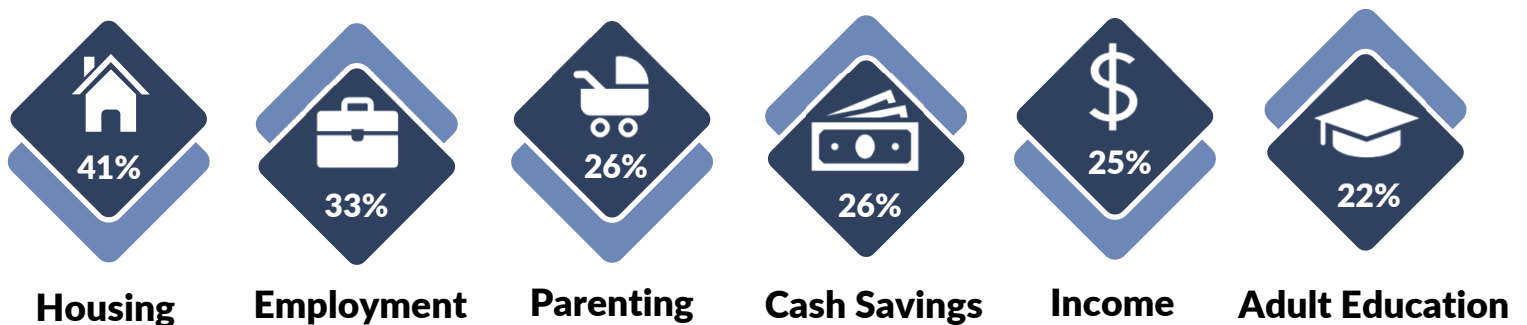
The top six areas of need were the same **before** and **during** COVID-19 for families participating in Family Development Services. In most domains, a higher percentage of families reported these needs during COVID-19.

Based on their CFSA 2.0 baseline assessment:



In the face of these barriers, many families are ready to make changes.

At their baseline assessment, families identified areas in which they were *most* ready to make changes. The most commonly identified areas for change were:



The above rates are for families that had their baseline prior to COVID-19. During COVID-19, Housing and Employment had similar rates of readiness to change, while Parenting, Income, and Adult Education all fell below 20%. There was an uptick in the percentage of families who chose 'Other' as an area for change during COVID-19, with the majority of these driven by the need to cover utilities.

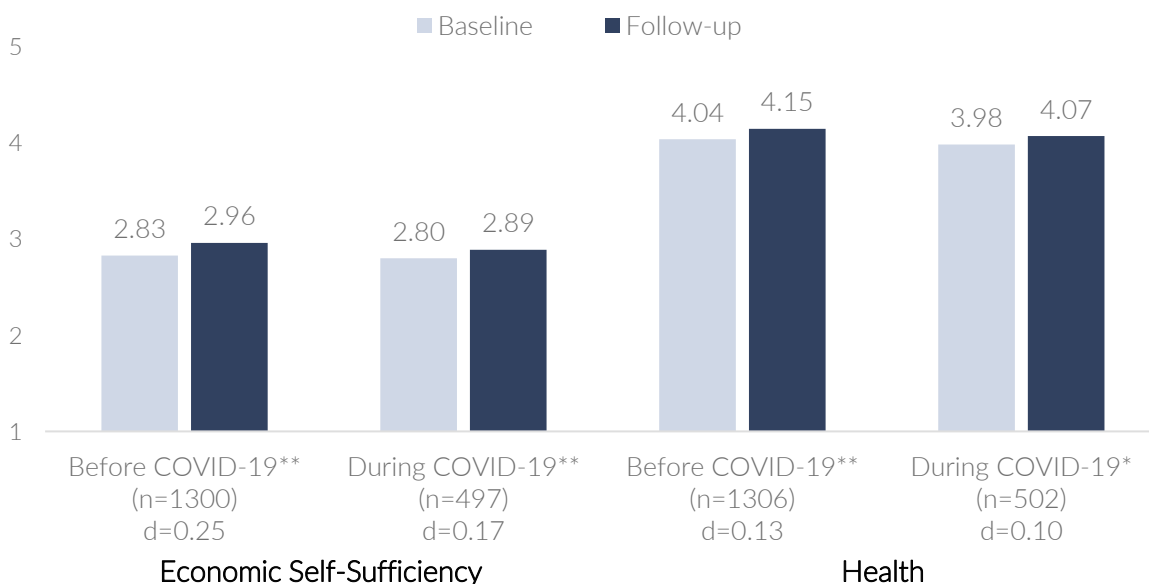
Evaluation Findings: Family Improvements

Families improved in economic security and health.

The Economic Self-Sufficiency scale of the CFSA 2.0 assesses family stability across the areas of income, employment, housing, transportation, food security, adult education, cash savings and health coverage.

The Health scale of the CFSA 2.0 assesses the degree to which family members' physical or mental health concerns are impacting important areas of life.

Families had significantly higher economic self-sufficiency and health scores at follow-up than at baseline, regardless of whether the follow-up occurred before or during COVID-19.



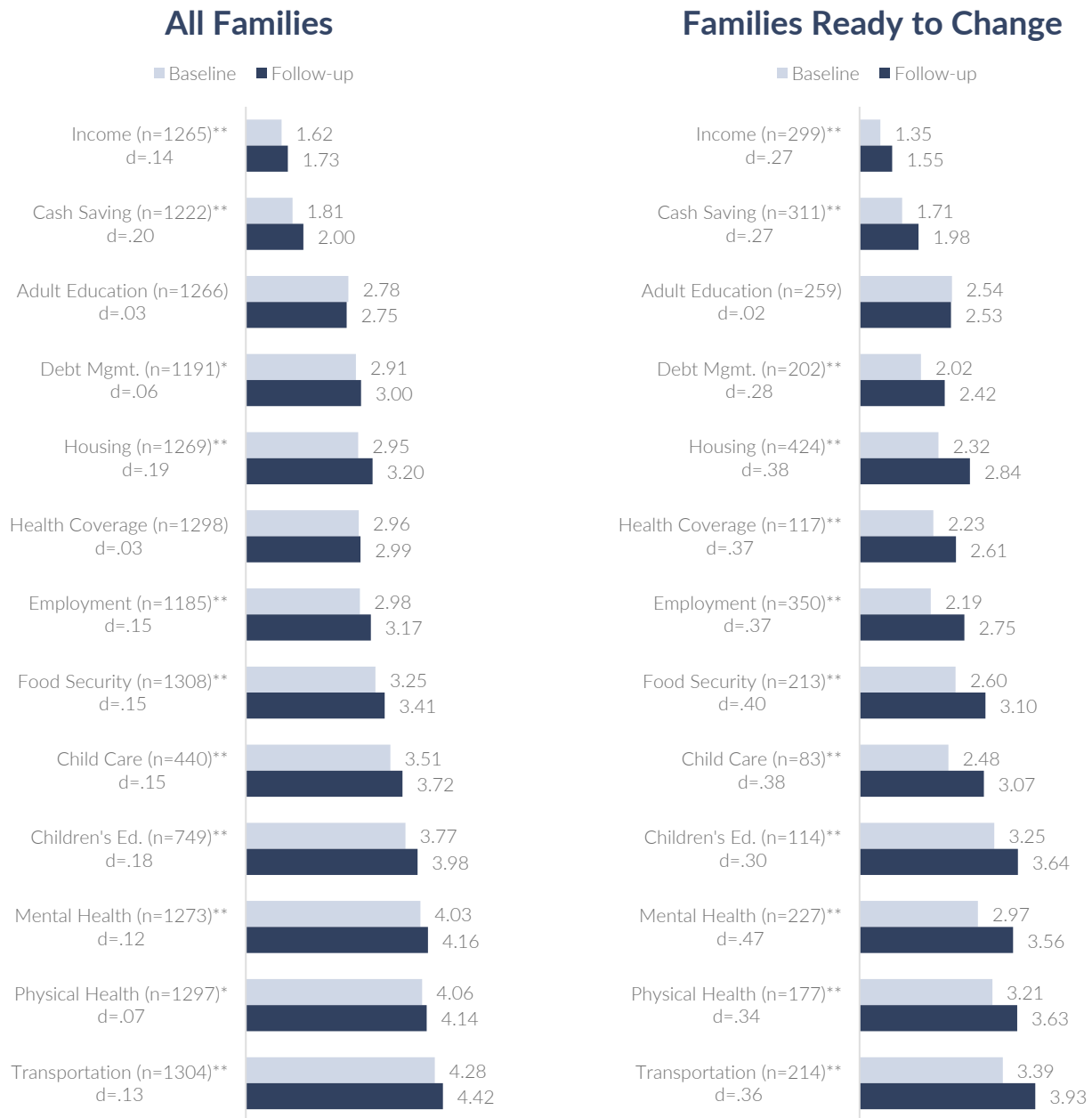
Spotlight on COVID-19 Impacts on Employment

COVID-19 has created a shock to the economy and employment rates nationwide. Unemployment in Colorado rose 321% from April 2019 (2.9%) to April 2020 (12.2%), and FRC's have been on the frontlines assisting families that are experiencing this crisis first-hand. During COVID-19, there was an uptick in employment needs among families that were visiting FRCs for the first time. What's more, families that had follow-up visits during COVID-19 had less stable employment, on average, than they did at their baseline visits; this is the only CFSA domain where this occurred. Nonetheless, families continued to make overall progress on economic self-sufficiency.



Families improved, and families who were ready to change in an area made the greatest improvements.

Prior to COVID-19, families made statistically significant gains in the areas of income, cash savings, debt management, housing, employment, food security, child care, children's education, mental and physical health, and transportation. In all domains, families who prioritized an area for change had lower scores at baseline, but showed greater growth over time than families who did not.



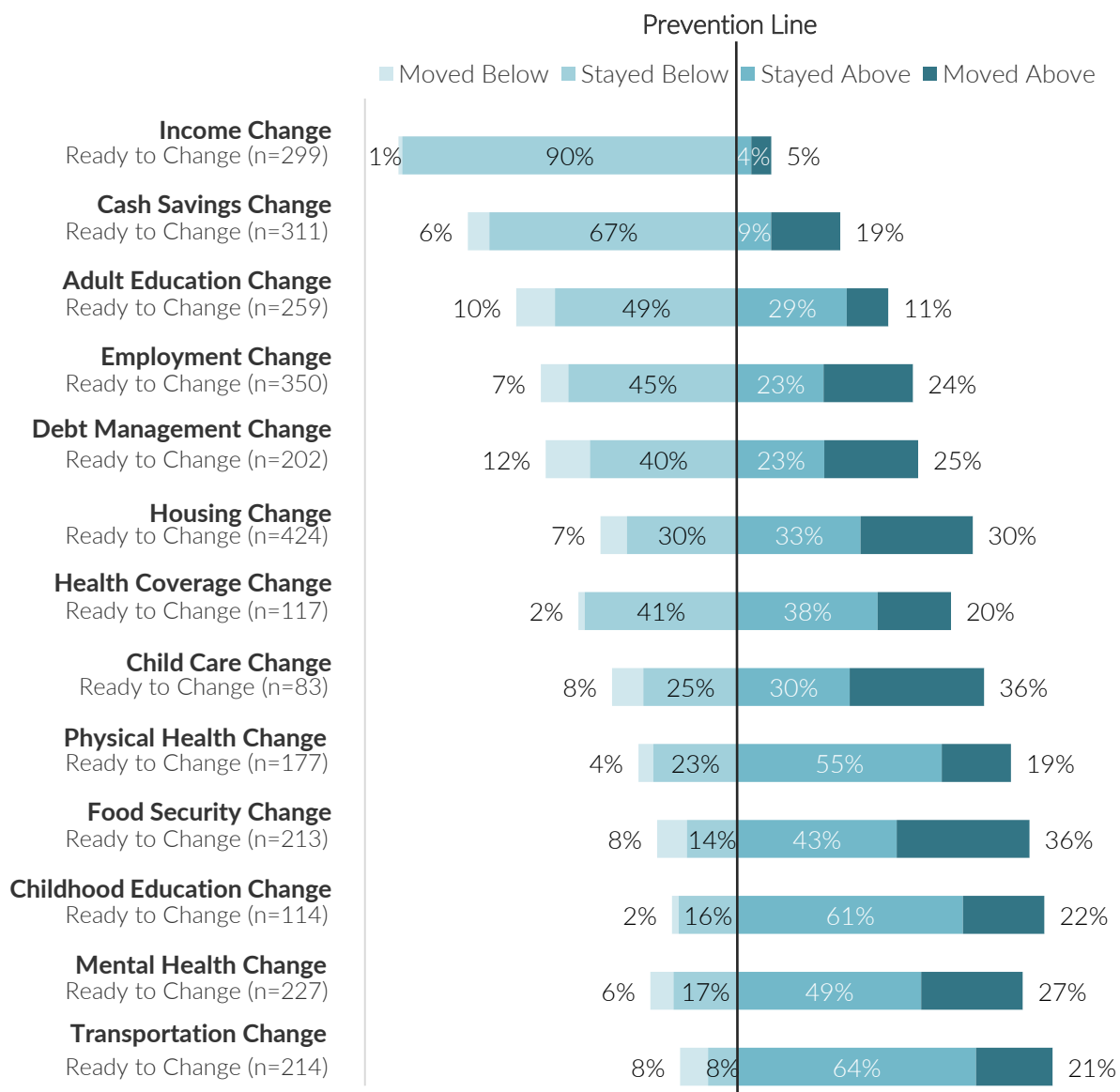
Outcomes were similar in all domains for families that had their follow-up CFSA 2.0 during COVID-19 except for employment and income, which did not show statistically significant gains during COVID-19. This may reflect rising unemployment during the pandemic. See *Spotlight on COVID-19 Impacts on Employment* (p. 5) for more information.

These improvements indicate that more families are safe, stable, or thriving.

On the CFSA 2.0, the prevention line is used to distinguish an in-crisis or vulnerable situation from one that is safe, stable, or thriving. For all families in the FD path, the greatest movement from below to above the prevention line both before and during COVID-19 was in housing (19-20%), debt management (16-17%), and food security (16-19%).

When examining families ready to change in an area, there was noticeably more movement from below to above the prevention line. As shown below, for families indicating readiness, the greatest movement from below to above the prevention line was in child care (36%), food security (36%), and housing (30%). Due to low sample sizes, analyses for families ready to change were only conducted for families that had their follow up assessment before COVID-19.

At the most recent follow-up before COVID-19, over 75% of families ready to change were above the prevention line in food security, children's education, mental health, and transportation.

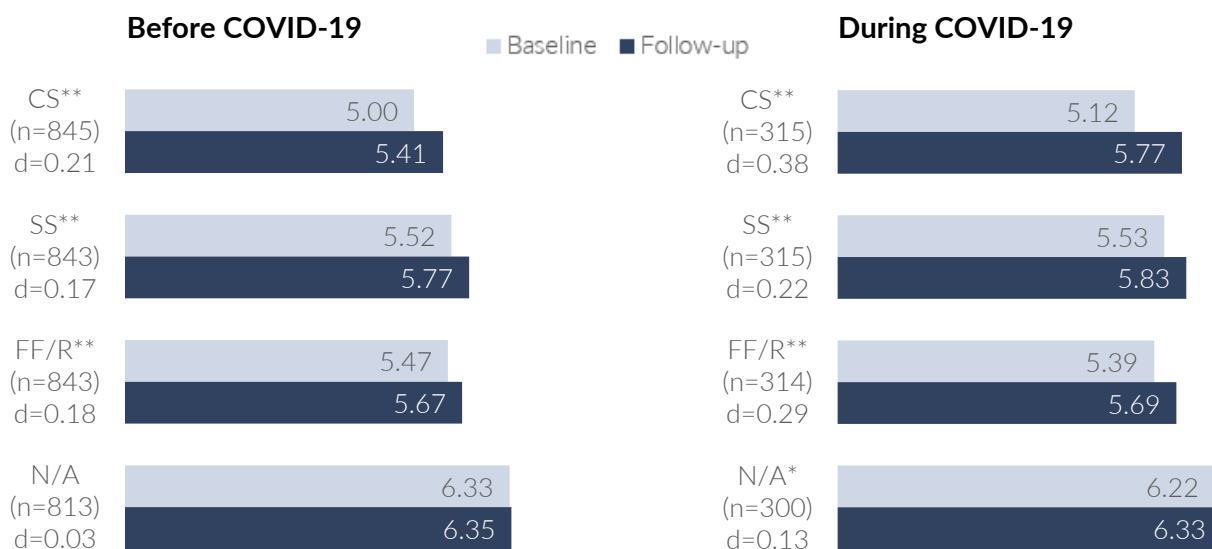


Families increased protective factors that can help cope with adverse situations.

Families improved in concrete support, family functioning & resiliency, nurturing & attachment, and social support.

Families reported an increase from baseline to the most recent follow-up on all four protective factor scales both before and during COVID-19 (except for Nurturing & Attachment before COVID-19, when baseline scores were already high).

CS = Concrete Support, SS = Social Support, FF/R = Family Functioning & Resiliency, N/A = Nurturing & Attachment



Families also improved in levels of understanding of child development and parenting practices.

Families reported an increase from baseline to the most recent follow-up in knowing how to help their children learn, both before and during COVID-19, as well as a decrease in not knowing what to do as a parent prior to COVID-19. Both before and during COVID-19, families reported high levels of praising their children when they behave well and maintaining control when disciplining children.



Conclusions

Between July 1, 2019 and May 15, 2020, FRCA-member FRCs served thousands of diverse families across Colorado, many of whom had very low incomes and were experiencing multiple barriers to economic security when they first entered the FRC. Centers played a key role in helping their communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic that began to affect Colorado in earnest in March 2020.

Family and individual needs rose with the onset of COVID-19. Before COVID-19, 75% of new families screened with at least one unmet need, and almost half (46%) had unmet needs to two or more areas. During COVID-19 almost all (92%) new families had at least one unmet need, and 78% had unmet needs in two or more areas.

Over the course of the year, FRCs provided over 166,000 services, most frequently in the areas of basic needs and parenting. Families demonstrated significant improvements in economic self sufficiency, health, concrete support in times of need, social support, and family functioning and resiliency both before and after the onset of COVID-19, suggesting that FRCs provided resources and support to buffer families through the hardships of the global pandemic.

Notably, 2,989 families (23% of families served) were in the Family Development path, which includes one-on-one, strengths-based assessment and goal-setting with a trained Family Development worker. The top six areas in which these families were ready for change were: housing, employment, parenting, cash savings, income, and adult education, with an increase in families identifying other areas for change during COVID-19. Families who indicated readiness to change in the areas of housing, health coverage, employment, food security, child care, children's education, mental health, and transportation showed notable improvements from baseline to follow-up (i.e., effect sizes of .30 or greater *and* 20% of more of families moved from below to above the prevention line), suggesting that these are particularly fruitful areas for goal-setting. Although the evaluation design does not allow us to attribute family changes directly to FRC services, findings are supportive of the benefits of Family Development Services on family health and wellbeing, and positive family outcomes have been observed in evaluations over the past several years.

Family Resource Centers serve thousands of families in Colorado with many strengths, diverse needs, and a readiness to change. Both before and during COVID-19, these families demonstrated significant improvements in economic self sufficiency, health, concrete support in times of need, social support, and family functioning and resiliency.

¹ Data are for families served from July 1, 2019 through May 15, 2020 due to system changes that required a period of down time for data migration.

² Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support <https://nationalfamilysupportnetwork.org/standards/>

³ The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengtheningfamilies>

⁴ The Protective Factors Survey is embedded within the CFSA 2.0 <https://friendsnrc.org/protective-factors-survey>

⁵ Needs are assessed with the common screening tool at center entry. It includes eight yes/no items that assess family need in: employment, housing, transportation, food security, adult education, health insurance, child care, and children's education.

Statistical significance is denoted by * $p < .05$ and ** $p < .01$. Effect size is denoted by d . In general, an effect size of $d = .2$ is a small effect, $d = .5$ is a medium effect, and $d = .8$ is a large effect. Small and medium effects are common in the social sciences.