EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BIA Family and Child Education Program

2007 Study

Report Prepared for:

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Education
In 1990, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Office of Indian Education Programs (now the Bureau of Indian Education—BIE) initiated the Family and Child Education (FACE) program, an integrated model for an American Indian early childhood/parental involvement program. The FACE program primarily serves families with children from prenatal to 5 years of age by providing early childhood education, adult education, and parenting services. The goals of the FACE program are to:¹

- Support parents/primary caregivers in their role as their child's first and most influential teacher.
- Strengthen family-school-community connections.
- Increase parent participation in their child's learning and expectations for academic achievement.
- Support and celebrate the unique cultural and linguistic diversity of each American Indian community served by the program.
- Promote lifelong learning.

**Program Design**

The FACE program design is implemented through a collaborative effort of the BIE, the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL), and the Parents as Teachers National Center (PATNC). Models from these programs have been adapted and integrated to achieve the FACE model. All FACE services integrate native language and culture.

PATNC provides the training and technical assistance for home-based services, which are delivered by parent educators to families with children ranging from prenatal to 3 years of age. The primary goal of home-based service providers is to support parents in their role as their child’s first and most influential teacher. Services are delivered through personal visits that are offered weekly or on alternating weeks, monthly FACE Family Circle meetings, periodic screening of overall development of the child, and referrals to school and community services.

NCFL provides training and technical assistance for implementation of center-based services, which are offered in school facilities to children aged 3 to 5 years and their parents. Services are offered four days a week through a four-component model. Adult education addresses the academic needs of the parents, enhances and supports parenting skills, and addresses employability skills of adults. Early education is provided for children in a developmentally appropriate preschool in which literacy development is emphasized. Parents and children are provided with daily opportunities to interact during Parent and Child Together Time (PACT Time). Parent Time gives parents the opportunity each day to address critical parenting/family issues in a supportive environment.

Participation in FACE

In 1991, FACE was implemented at six sites, serving almost 500 participants (see Figure 1). The program gradually expanded to 38 programs in Program Year 2007 (PY07, the period from July 1, 2006, to June 30, 2007) and served 4,086 participants, including 2,040 adults and 2,046 children (aged birth to 5 years) from 1,695 families. Seventy-one percent of PY07 participants received home-based services, 24% received center-based services, and 5% participated in both home- and center-based services.

Figure 1. FACE Participation in Program Years 1991–2007

During the 17-year history of FACE, the program has served an unduplicated count of more than 27,000 participants, including approximately 13,000 adults and 14,000 children from 11,000 families.

Detection of Potential Learning and Developmental Problems

The early detection of developmental delays is one of the critical components of the FACE program.

♦ During PY07, 86% of all FACE children—including 87% of home-based children and 84% of center-based children—received some type of screening service.

♦ Of children who were screened, 22% were identified with developmental concerns, 12% were referred for and received services to address identified concerns, and 7% continued to display ongoing concerns at the end of the year. Concerns were most frequently identified in the area of language/communication.

♦ A total of 131 children were identified with special needs—approximately 6% of PY07 children.
Home Literacy Practices

The importance of home literacy activities, a focus of the FACE program, is underscored by research findings. An international study found that better readers at the 4th grade had engaged in a high level of early literacy activities with their parents (or someone else in the home) before they started school. These activities included reading books and environmental print, playing with alphabet toys (e.g., blocks with letters of the alphabet), word games, singing, and telling stories. Studies also indicate that a high level of home literacy activities, such as shared reading, is positively and significantly related to oral language, phonological sensitivity, and word decoding ability in 4- and 5-year-olds. A special analysis of The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), found that children from a home environment rich in literacy (i.e., one in which children are frequently read to, sung to, and told stories to and one that has more children’s books and records/audiotapes/CDs) demonstrated higher levels of reading skills and knowledge and skills at kindergarten entry, during kindergarten, and in 1st grade.

Nationwide, one-third of parents read to their K-3 children on a daily basis, a considerably smaller percentage than the 82% of FACE parents who read to their K-3 children this frequently (see Figure 2). No FACE parents report that they rarely or never read to their K-3 children, compared with 10% of parents nationally.

Figure 2. Percentage Distribution of the Frequency That K-3 FACE Parents and K-3 Parents Nationwide Read to Their Child

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FACE parents with previous FACE experience read to their child significantly more frequently compared with parents with no previous FACE experience. At the end of PY07, 82% of parents with previous experience read to their child daily or almost daily at the end of PY07, compared with 76% of parents with no previous experience (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Percentage of New FACE Parents and Parents With Prior FACE Experience Reporting the Frequency That They Read to Their Child**

FACE parents in the home-based component significantly increased their use of techniques to support their child’s book/print concepts (such as pointing out pictures, left-to-right print on the page, and letter names) by year’s end. The use of these techniques at almost all readings increased almost 20 percentage points from 45% early in the year to 64% by the end of the year, and the percentage of parents reading to their child without using these techniques was reduced from 11% to 4%.

Eighty-two percent of parents with previous FACE experience reported listening to their child “read” on a daily basis at the end of FACE participation, compared with 68% of parents with no prior FACE experience (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Percentage of New FACE Parents and Parents With Prior FACE Experience Reporting the Frequency That They Listen to Their Child “Read”**
The frequency that FACE parents tell stories to their child significantly increases during FACE participation. Three-fourths of parents with past FACE experience compared with two-thirds of parents new to FACE reported that they tell stories to their child daily or almost daily.

Findings indicate that households of home-based families have significantly more books for children and adults at year’s end. On average, FACE homes contained 49 children’s books at year’s end—16 books more than at program entry. The number of adult-level books also significantly increased from 23 at PY07 entry to 30 books at year’s end.

FACE has addressed the need to increase the number of books in homes by implementing special initiatives designed to distribute books to families. The Dollywood Foundation’s Imagination Library program provides FACE children a new book each month. Through the RealeBooks project, in which small books are created by FACE staffs and families on the computer, approximately 30,000 books were distributed to families in PY07.

Research indicates that the frequency of adult conversation with children is a predictor of their success in language development. By year’s end, FACE parents significantly increased the frequency of conversations with their children in a native language and in English.

Assessment of Preschool Students

Early childhood educators assess developmental progress of FACE preschoolers using Meisels’ Work Sampling System (WSS). Children are rated on performance indicators in each of seven domains. Most FACE preschool children demonstrate improvement in WSS ratings.

More than 90% of FACE preschoolers demonstrated improvement in language and literacy and mathematical thinking. Almost 90% improved in personal and social development and social studies. Slightly more than 80% improved in physical development, the arts, and scientific thinking.

Fifty-five percent of PY07 children with pre-and post-assessments demonstrated gains in all seven domains.

Center-based staff and parents were trained to implement a strategy known as Dialogic Reading. Research indicates that this strategy increases the vocabulary and language comprehension of young children. This approach involves children and their parents in a shared reading experience. FACE preschool children who participated in Dialogic Reading were assessed with the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test, an instrument that measures expressive vocabulary—an important factor in reading readiness.

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The average pretest standard score of 81 increased by 11 points to a standard score of 92 at the end of PY07—a significant and meaningful gain (see Figure 5). The pretest score is equivalent to the 10th percentile nationally, and the posttest score is equivalent to the 30th percentile.

Figure 5. Average Matched Pre- and Post-Test Standardized Scores and National Percentile Equivalents from Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test in PY07

FACE preschool children with two years of Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary scores improved from an initial standard score of 80 (equivalent to the 9th national percentile) to a final assessment score of 100 (equivalent to the 50th national percentile) at the end of the second year, a significant and meaningfully large gain (see Figure 6). This is evidence of moving from a very low expressive vocabulary to an almost level playing field compared with national norms.

Figure 6. Average Matched Standardized Scores and National Percentile Equivalents From Four Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Tests in PY06 and PY07

Average posttest scores were at or greater than the 50th percentile at six FACE sites; at one of these sites, average posttest scores were at the 95th percentile.

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8 Scores are standardized to a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of 15. The average standardized score of 100 is equivalent to the 50th percentile.

9 For convenience, the scale of 0-100 is used to illustrate scores and percentiles; however, the scale for each differs. Standardized scores can range from approximately 55 to 145. Percentiles range from 1 to 99.
Research indicates that children who are socially and emotionally ready for school have better social and academic success in kindergarten and have a better chance for later school and vocational success.\(^{10}\) FACE parents believe that FACE is effective in preparing their child for school.

- Almost 80% of parents indicate that FACE participation had a *large* impact on increasing their child’s interest in learning.

- Three-fourths of parents report that FACE participation had a *large* impact on increasing their child’s interest in reading.

- Approximately 70% of parents report that FACE participation had a *large* impact on preparing their child for school, increasing their child’s self-confidence, increasing their child’s verbal/communication skills, and helping their child get along with other children.

**Parent Involvement in Children’s Education**

The involvement of FACE parents in the education of their K-5 children is compared with nationally reported parent involvement data from the National Household Education Survey.\(^{11}\)

- A sizable 76% of FACE parents report helping their K-5 child with homework three or more times a week, compared with only 53% of parents nationwide who report doing so (see Figure 7).

![Figure 7. Percentage of FACE and National Parents Reporting Involvement in Their K-5 Child’s Education](image)

- Almost all PY07 FACE parents with K-5 children (93%) attend classroom or school events, compared with 75% of parents nationally who do so.


\(^{11}\) Vaden-Kiernan & McManus, pp. 11-15.
Nationwide, only 52% of parents volunteer in the classroom or school or participate on school committees, compared with 78% of FACE parents who do so.

**Outcomes for Adults**

FACE parents have consistently identified their improved parenting skills and their increased understanding of their children to be the most important program outcomes for themselves and their families.

- Over 70% of PY07 parents reported that participation in FACE most helped by improving some aspect of their parenting skills.
- Most parents (from 70% to 81%) indicated that FACE helped them a lot in increasing the amount of time they spend with their child, in becoming more involved in their child’s education, in more effectively interacting with their child, in increasing their understanding of child development, in becoming a better parent, in encouraging their child to read, and in increasing their ability to speak up for their child. Other parents generally reported that FACE was somewhat helpful in these areas.

The academic achievement of adults is an important focus for the center-based component of FACE. In FACE adult education, educators assess academic achievement with the *Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System* (CASAS).

- Of adults with both pretest and posttest reading scores, 17% of adults scored at beginning levels (beginning literacy or beginning/intermediate basic skills) at pretest; 44% scored at the highest levels (adult secondary or advanced secondary). At posttest, 12% scored at beginning levels and 58% scored at the highest levels.
- Of adults with both pretest and posttest math scores, 36% of adults scored at beginning levels (beginning literacy or beginning/intermediate basic skills) at pretest; 18% scored at the highest levels (adult secondary or advanced secondary). At posttest, 30% scored at beginning levels and 32% scored at the highest levels.
- Approximately 30% of adults advanced a level in reading and 30% advanced a level in math during the year.
- On average, adults demonstrated statistically significant, 4-point increases (equivalent to a grade level increase) in both reading—from 233 to 237—and in math—from 223 to 227.
- Approximately one-half of PY07 center-based adults reported a goal of obtaining a GED or high school diploma. Of those with this goal, about 30% either achieved the goal or made progress toward achieving it by passing one or more GED tests during PY07.
- During PY07, 61 adult participants completed requirements for their GED or high school diploma. Since the inception of the FACE program, approximately 960 FACE adults have obtained their GED or high school diploma.
Two-thirds of center-based adults developed or improved their computer literacy skills.

Other outcomes for adults include the following:

- During PY07, 317 participating adults became employed and 422 adults completed job applications or attended job interviews during PY07. Almost 60% of center-based adults reported that FACE helped them obtain a job or a better job. Throughout the history of FACE, at least 3,700 adults gained employment during their FACE participation.

- Some FACE participants have earned the required credentials to become employed in FACE. Of 202 FACE staff members, one-fourth were former FACE participants.

- Approximately 90% of FACE adults report that FACE participation has helped them feel better about themselves, has increased the frequency of their interactions with other adults, has helped them become more self-directed and self-disciplined, and has improved their communication skills.

Integration of Culture

One important focus of the FACE program is to support and celebrate the unique cultural and linguistic diversity. Native language and culture is integrated throughout the FACE program.

- All programs integrate language and culture to at least some degree.

- Approximately 60% of the programs obtain the services of the school’s culture teacher. The culture teacher provides classroom instruction for FACE children at 61% of the programs and for FACE adults at 53% of the programs. At 58% of the programs, the culture teacher assists the staff in efforts to integrate native language and culture in the program.

- The FACE program ensures the integration of native language and culture through the hiring of community members whenever possible. Approximately two-thirds of all FACE staff positions are held by American Indians. Most parent educators (88%) and early childhood co-teachers (80%) are American Indians. One-half or fewer early childhood teachers (51%), coordinators (46%), and adult educators (43%) are American Indians.

- Almost two-thirds of adults indicated that participation in FACE helped increase their usage of their native language.
# FACE Sites by First Year of Implementation

(PY07 Sites are noted with an asterisk.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sites</th>
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| 1991 | *Chief Leschi, Puyallup, WA  
        Conehatta Elementary School, Conehatta, MS (discontinued FACE implementation after PY04)  
        *Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Cloquet, MN  
        *Na’Neeltzihin Ji’Olta Day School (Torreon), Cuba, NM  
        Takini School, Howes, SD (discontinued FACE implementation after PY05)  
        *To’Hajiilee-He Community School (Canoncito), Laguna, NM |
| 1992 | *Chi Chi’l Tah-Jones Ranch Community School, Vanderwagen, NM  
        *Ch’ooshgai Community School (Chuska), Tohatchi, NM  
        *Hannahville Indian School, Wilson, MI  
        *Little Singer Community School, Winslow, AZ  
        *Wingate Elementary School, Fort Wingate, NM |
| 1993 | *Alamo Navajo Community School, Magdalena, NM  
        *Atsa Biyaazh Alternative School (Shiprock), Shiprock, NM  
        *Blackwater Community School, Coolidge, AZ  
        *Chinle Boarding School, Many Farms, AZ  
        *Crownpoint Community School, Crownpoint, NM  
        *Kickapoo Nation School, Powhattan, KS  
        *Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe School, Hayward, WI  
        *Rough Rock Community School, Chinle, AZ  
        *Meskwaki (Sac & Fox) Settlement School, Tama, IA (discontinued FACE implementation after PY07)  
        *Tohaali Community School (Toadlena), Newcomb, NM |
| 1994 | *Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., Pine Hill, NM  
        *T’iis Nazbas Community School, Teec Nos Pos, AZ |
| 2001 | *Coeur d’Alene Tribal School, De Smet, ID (discontinued FACE implementation after PY05)  
        *Cottonwood Day School, Chinle, AZ  
        *Dunseith Indian Day School, Dunseith, ND  
        *Enemy Swim Day School, Waubay, SD  
        *Gila Crossing Community School, Laveen, AZ  
        *Jeehdeez’ a Academy (Low Mountain), Chinle, AZ (discontinued FACE implementation after PY04)  
        *Little Wound School, Kyle, SD  
        *Nenahnezad Community School, Fruitland, NM  
        *Paschal Sherman Indian School, Omak, WA (discontinued FACE implementation after PY06)  
        *Salt River Elementary School, Scottsdale, AZ |
| 2003 | *Beclabito Day School, Shiprock, NM  
        *Mescalero Apache School, Mescalero, NM  
        *Oneida Nation Elementary School, Oneida, WI  
        *Santa Rosa Boarding School, Sells, AZ  
        *Seba Dalkai Boarding School, Winslow, AZ  
        *St. Francis Indian School, St. Francis, SD  
        *Tiospa Zina Tribal School, Agency Village, SD (discontinued FACE implementation after PY06) |
| 2005 | *Pearl River Elementary School, Philadelphia, MS |
| 2006 | *John F. Kennedy Day School, White River, AZ  
        *Tate Topa Tribal Grant School, Fort Totten, ND |
| 2007 | *Dzilth-Na-O-Dith-Hle, Bloomfield, NM  
        *Santa Clara, Espanola, NM |