EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BIE Family and Child Education Program

2008 Study

Report Prepared for:

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Indian Education
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1990, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)\(^2\) initiated the Family and Child Education (FACE) program, an integrated model for American Indian early childhood education/parental involvement. The FACE program primarily serves families with children prenatal to 5 years of age by providing early childhood education, adult education, and parenting services. The goals of the FACE program are to:\(^3\)

- 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 services is to support parents in their role as their child’s first and most influential teacher. Language development is emphasized. Services are delivered through personal visits that are offered weekly or on alternating weeks, monthly FACE Family Circles (parent group meetings), periodic screening of overall development of the child, and referrals to school and community services.

NCFL provides training and technical assistance for 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.

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\(^1\) This document summarizes the 2008 Study of the BIE Family and Child Education Program that was prepared for the Bureau of Indian Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior. Prepared by Research & Training Associates, Inc. (11030 Oakmont, Suite 200, Overland Park, KS 66210-1100) in June, 2009. Authors are: V. Yarnell, T. Lambson, and J. Pfannenstiel.

\(^2\) Formerly the Bureau of Indian Affairs—BIA, Office of Indian Education Programs.

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 offers daily opportunities 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 39 programs in Program Year 2008 (PY08, the period from July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2008). During the 18-year history of FACE, the program has served an unduplicated count of more than 29,000 participants, including approximately 13,700 adults and 15,400 children from 11,600 families. During PY08, FACE services were provided to 2,106 adults and 2,064 children (aged birth to 5 years) from 1,605 families. In PY08, 71% percent of participants received home-based services, 23% received center-based services, and 6% participated in both home- and center-based services.

![Figure 1. FACE Participation for Home-Based, Center-Based, and All Participants (Unduplicated) by Program Year (With Number of Sites)](image)

Intensity of service participation was higher than usual in PY08. On average, center-based adults attended 132 hours of adult education—the highest participation during the 12-year period for which data are available. Children attended 199 hours of FACE preschool—more than in the previous six years. Center-based adults participated in an average 45 hours of PACT Time and 43 hours of Parent Time. Home-based families received an average 12 personal visits—the highest ever attained. On average, home-based adults attended 3 FACE Family Circles.
Outcomes for FACE Children

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

♦ During PY08, 88% of all FACE children—including 90% 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 9% 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 146 children were identified with special needs or concerns—7% of PY08 FACE children. Approximately 100 of these children had an IEP or IFSP.

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.

♦ Almost all FACE preschoolers demonstrated improvement in language and literacy (92%) and social studies (90%). Almost 90% improved in personal and social development and mathematical thinking. Almost 80% improved in physical development, the arts, and scientific thinking.

♦ One-half of FACE preschoolers with pre-and post-assessments demonstrated gains in all seven domains.

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.4 FACE parents believe that FACE is effective in preparing their child for school.

♦ Eighty percent of parents indicate that FACE participation had a large impact on increasing their child’s interest in learning.

♦ Approximately three-fourths of parents report that FACE participation had a large impact on increasing their child’s interest in reading and increasing their child’s verbal/communication skills.

♦ Approximately 70% of parents report that FACE participation had a large impact on preparing their child for school and increasing their child’s self-confidence.

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Slightly more than 60% of parents indicate that participation in FACE had a large impact on helping their child get along with other children.

One parent summarized the benefits of FACE participation for her children:

The FACE program helped...[my child] so much, I enrolled my niece,..., who is three so she can have that transition and interact with other peers her age and get the developmental skills she will need.

**Outcomes for FACE 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.

Adults most frequently set goals for themselves as parents. Eighty-two percent of center-based adults set parenting goals, a six-point percentage increase from the prior year. Two-thirds of adults completed their parenting goals (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Percentage of Center-Based Adults Who Set and Completed Goals as Parents/Family Members in Program Years 2003 to 2008**

Most parents (from 70% to 80%) indicate 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, and in encouraging their child to read. Almost two-thirds report that FACE participation helped them a lot in increasing their ability to speak up for their child. Other parents generally report that FACE participation was somewhat helpful in these areas.

One parent commented about the impact FACE had on her parenting skills:

FACE has taught me to be patient with my children and to understand that I am a role model for them. They see what I do and when they get older they will know
how to act. FACE has taught me that parents are their children’s first teacher and I want to be the best teacher he has ever had.

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, 21% of adults scored at beginning levels (*beginning literacy* or *beginning/intermediate basic skills*) at pretest; 42% scored at the highest levels (*adult secondary* or *advanced secondary*). At posttest, 17% scored at beginning levels and more than half (51%) scored at the highest levels.

- Of adults with both pretest and posttest math scores, 44% of adults scored at beginning levels (*beginning literacy* or *beginning/intermediate basic skills*) at pretest; 16% scored at the highest levels (*adult secondary* or *advanced secondary*). At posttest, 34% scored at beginning levels and one-fourth (24%) scored at the highest levels.

- Approximately one-fourth of adults advanced at least one level in reading and almost 30% advanced at least one level in math during the year.

- On average, adults demonstrated a statistically significant 4-point increase in both reading—from 231 to 235—and in math—from 220 to 224.

- Of PY08 center-based adults who reported a goal of obtaining a GED or high school diploma, about 55% either achieved the goal or made progress toward achieving it by passing one or more GED tests during the year.

- Sixty-five adult participants completed requirements for their GED or high school diploma. Since the inception of the FACE program, more than 1,000 FACE adults have obtained their GED or high school diploma.

- Eighty-five percent of center-based adults improved their computer literacy skills through FACE participation.

A parent wrote about the impact of FACE on his academic development:

_In FACE I have found the determination I was lacking as well as allies, teachers, and friends. I passed the GED exam with eligibility for a full scholarship, and now I eagerly await what the future brings for me and my new family._
Other outcomes for adults include the following:

- During PY08, 360 adults completed job applications or attended job interviews and 300 participating adults became employed. Forty-seven percent of center-based adults report that FACE helped them obtain a job or a better job. Throughout the history of FACE, approximately 4,000 adults gained employment during their FACE participation.

- Some FACE participants have earned the required credentials to become employed in FACE. Of 211 FACE staff members, one-third 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.

**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 three-fourths of FACE parents who read to their K-3 children this frequently (see Figure 3). Almost no FACE parents report that they rarely or never read to their K-3 children, compared with 10% of parents nationally.

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FACE parents read to their child significantly more frequently at the end of PY08 than they did early in their FACE participation. At the end of PY08, 79% of parents read to their child daily or almost daily, compared with 69% of parents who did so early in their FACE participation (see Figure 4).

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 from 45% early in the year to 61% by the end of the year, and the percentage of parents reading to their child without using these techniques was reduced from 13% to 3%.

FACE parents significantly increased the frequency that they listen to their child “read” by year’s end. Eighty-three percent of FACE parents reported listening to their child “read” on a daily basis at the end of FACE participation, compared with 62% of parents who did so early in FACE participation (see Figure 5).
Figure 5. Percentage of Parents Reporting the Frequency That They Listen to Their Child “Read” Early in FACE Participation and at the End of PY08

- The frequency that FACE parents tell stories to their child significantly increased during FACE participation. At the end of the year, two-thirds of parents compared with 57% of parents early in 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 54 children’s books at year’s end—18 books more than at program entry. The number of adult-level books also significantly increased from 28 at PY08 entry to 35 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 BIE funded the Dollywood Foundation’s Imagination Library program to provide 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 45,000 books were distributed to families in PY08.

- 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.

One parent commented about the impact of FACE on home literacy:

*Besides the free books we receive all the time, the literacy program here has helped me become a much better reader to my children. My children love stories and being read to. Their vocabulary and grammar skills have improved greatly, and I know it’s because we read together so much.*

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Parent Involvement in Children’s Education

The FACE focus on increasing parent involvement in children’s education is supported by research. For example, recent parent involvement research indicates that increases in family involvement in the school predict increases in literacy achievement and that family involvement in school matters most for children at greatest risk.\(^\text{10}\)

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.\(^\text{11}\)

- Almost all PY08 FACE parents with K-5 children (89%) attend classroom or school events, compared with 81% of parents nationally who do so (see Figure 6).

- Nationwide, only 60% of parents volunteer in the classroom or school or participate on school committees, compared with 73% of FACE parents who do so.

Figure 6. Percentage of FACE and National Parents Reporting Involvement in Their K-5 Child’s Education

Integration of Culture

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

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

- Two-thirds of the programs obtain the services of the school’s culture teacher. The culture teacher provides classroom instruction for FACE children in almost 55% of the programs and for FACE adults in almost 60% of the programs. In approximately 60% of the


\(^{11}\) Vaden-Kiernan & McManus, pp. 11-15.
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 three-fourths of all FACE staff positions are American Indian. Most parent educators (95%) and early childhood co-teachers (84%) are American Indian. One-half or more of early childhood teachers (62%), coordinators (56%), and adult educators (49%) are American Indian.

♦ Sixty-two percent of adults indicate that participation in FACE helped increase their usage of their native language.

One parent wrote about the importance of the focus on culture and tradition in FACE:

*The FACE program respects and provides the opportunity for young children and adults to acknowledge who they are, creating a sense of personal respect and dignity. Recognizing aspects of traditions and cultures allows FACE to grow stronger.*

**Evaluator Recommendations**

Several recommendations for future evaluations are offered.

♦ Continue to meet at least annually with the BIE, NCFL, and PATNC staffs to review evaluation issues. Conduct an in-depth assessment of current data collection procedures to determine which data continue to be informative (and which do not) and to eliminate any duplicative efforts.

♦ Continue emphasis on keeping FACE sites accountable for providing complete and timely data; and continue to require administrators to attend FACE training to help them understand and support the program.

♦ Continue to collaborate with the BIE in sharing information in the development of a comprehensive database for school-aged children and integrating FACE reporting in NASIS. This database would include information about FACE participation and could provide data for evaluation studies on FACE outcomes (e.g., school readiness data, student achievement data, and information about special needs).

♦ Focus on updating the RTA longitudinal database and ensuring accuracy of information.

♦ Continue to focus on the intensity and quality of services received by families.

♦ As the budget permits, conduct more trend analyses.

♦ Develop a plan for sharing site-level analysis and findings with technical assistance providers.
FACE Sites by First Year of Implementation
(PY08 Sites are noted with an asterisk.)

1991
*Chief Leschi, Puyallup, WA
Conenhata Elementary School, Conenhata, MS
(discontinued FACE implementation after PY04)
*Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Cloquet, MN
*Na'Neelzhin 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 Biyaaz 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 PY97)
*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
Jehdeez’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
*Dzith-Na-O-Dith-Hle, Bloomfield, NM
*Santa Clara, Espanola, NM

2008
*Casa Blanca Community School, Bapchule, AZ
*Kayenta Community School, Kayenta, AZ
*Theodore Jamerson Elementary School, Bismarck, ND