BIE Family and Child Education Program

2009 Study

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by:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1990, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) 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:

- 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 is implemented through a collaborative effort of the BIE, the Parents as Teachers National Center (PATNC), and the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). 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 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.

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2 Formerly the Bureau of Indian Affairs—BIA, Office of Indian Education Programs.
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 44 programs in Program Year 2009 (PY09, the period from July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009). During the 19-year history of FACE, the program has served an unduplicated count of approximately 31,500 American Indians, including almost 14,800 adults and 16,700 children from 12,600 families.

**Figure 1. Number of FACE Participants in Home-Based, Center-Based, and Overall (Unduplicated) by Program Year (With Number of Sites)**

- In PY09, FACE services were provided to 2,327 adults and 2,349 children (aged birth to 5 years) from 1,866 families. Seventy percent of adults and children participate in home-based services, 24% participate in center-based services, and 4% participate in both home-and center-based services.

- In the center-based component, adults participate in an average 129 hours of adult education and 41 hours of Parent Time (similar to participation in the previous two years and near the highest level of participation over a 13-year period). Children participate in an average 181 hours of FACE preschool (19 hours less than in the previous year). Adults and children interact in an average 43 hours of PACT Time (similar to the previous three years).

- Home-based families receive an average 13 personal visits—one more than the previous year and the highest yet attained. On average, home-based adults attend three FACE Family Circles.
Outcomes for FACE Children

The early detection of developmental delays is one of the critical components of the FACE program. The following are findings for PY09 FACE children:

♦ Eighty-eight percent of children—including 89% of home-based children and 84% of center-based children—receive some type of screening service.

♦ Of children who are screened, 24% are identified with developmental concerns, 12% are referred for service, 10% receive services to address identified concerns, and 11% continue to display ongoing concerns at the end of the year. Concerns are most frequently identified in the area of language/communication.

♦ A total of 166 children are identified with special needs or concerns—constituting 7% of FACE children, 20 children more than the previous year. Approximately 90 of these children have 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.

♦ Approximately 90% of FACE preschoolers demonstrate improvement in language and literacy, personal and social development, social studies, and mathematical thinking. About 85% improve in physical development and scientific thinking, while approximately 75% demonstrate improvement in the arts.

♦ More than half (53%) of FACE preschoolers with pre-and post-assessments demonstrate gains in all seven domains.

♦ In all domains except physical development and personal/social development, center-based children who have received home-based services make significantly greater gains than do children who have not received home-based services.

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

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

♦ Almost three-fourths of parents report that FACE participation has a large impact on increasing their child's interest in reading.

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Almost 70% of parents report that FACE participation has a large impact on their child’s verbal/communication skills, preparing their child for school, and increasing their child’s self-confidence.

Approximately 60% of parents indicate that participation in FACE has a large impact on helping their child get along with other children.

One parent summarizes the benefits of FACE participation for her child:

Our time in center-based has meant a jump start in school for [my daughter] and has provided an unshakable foundation on which to build her aspirations.

Outcomes for FACE Adults

FACE parents consistently identify 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-one percent of center-based adults set parenting goals, similar to the previous year. Almost 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 2009

Most parents (from 74% to 81%) indicate that FACE helps 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 70% report that FACE participation helps them a lot in increasing their ability to speak up for their child. Other parents generally report that FACE participation is somewhat helpful in these areas.
One parent comment about the impact FACE has on his parenting skills:

_The FACE program has helped me realize how important fathers are in a child’s life. I now understand that children need that male influence in their lives. I have learned that I am now molding a little life here, a very impressionable little mind, and I am my kid’s role model. Their hero!_

The academic achievement of adults is an important focus for the center-based component of FACE. In FACE adult education in PY09, educators assess academic achievement with the _Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System_ (CASAS).

- Of adults with both pretest and posttest reading scores, one-fifth of adults score at beginning levels (*beginning* or *beginning/intermediate basic skills*) at pretest; half score at the highest levels (*adult secondary* or *advanced secondary*). At posttest, 16% score at beginning levels and 57% score at the highest levels.

- Of adults with both pretest and posttest mathematics scores, 39% of adults score at beginning levels (*beginning* or *beginning/intermediate basic skills*) at pretest; 17% score at the highest levels (*adult secondary* or *advanced secondary*). At posttest, 30% score at beginning levels and 27% score at the highest levels.

- Approximately one-fourth of adults advance at least one level in reading and 30% advance at least one level in mathematics during the year. On average, adults demonstrate a statistically significant 2-point increase in reading (233 to 235) and a statistically significant 4-point increase in mathematics (222 to 226).

- Of center-based adults who report a goal of obtaining a GED or high school diploma, two-thirds either achieve the goal or make progress toward achieving it by passing one or more GED tests during the year.

- Eighty-five adult participants complete requirements for their GED or high school diploma. Since the inception of the FACE program, approximately 1,100 FACE adults have obtained their GED or high school diploma.

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

A parent writes in his essay about the impact of FACE on his academic development:

_I have been in the FACE program since 2001 to achieve my goal—getting my diploma. In 2008, I was thinking about giving up. One day I found the plaque that … gave me. He was the Executive Director who died suddenly very young. [He] always encouraged me to keep doing my best. He said he was proud of me. I started reading the words. So I took the test again. When … told me that I had passed the GED, I did not believe it until they sent my certificate and my scores. Now when my friends ask me if I passed, I am not ashamed any more._
Other outcomes for PY09 FACE adults include the following:

- A total of 260 adults (11% of FACE adults) complete job applications or attend job interviews and 310 participating adults (13%) gain employment. Forty-seven percent of center-based adults report that FACE helps them obtain a job or a better job. Throughout the history of FACE, approximately 4,200 adults gained employment during their FACE participation.

- Some FACE participants earn the required credentials to become employed in FACE. Of 238 FACE staff members, one-third are former FACE participants.

- Almost 95% of FACE adults report that FACE participation helps them feel better about themselves and improves their communication skills. Almost 90% report that participation increases the frequency of their interactions with other adults, and helps them become more self-directed and self-disciplined.

**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 4th grade readers 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) demonstrate 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 77% 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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These results are supported by findings in the 2004-05 FACE Impact Study in which two thirds of K-3 FACE parents report reading *daily or almost daily* to their child, significantly more than the one-half of non-FACE K-3 parents at the same schools who report this same frequency (*p* < .0001).

FACE parents read to their child significantly more frequently at the end of PY09 than they did early in their FACE participation. At the end of PY09, 80% of parents read to their child *daily or almost daily*, compared with 71% of parents who did so early in their FACE participation (see Figure 4).

FACE parents in the home-based component significantly increase 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 52% early in the year to 66% 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 increase the frequency that they listen to their child “read” by year’s end. Eighty-four percent of FACE parents report listening to their child “read” on a daily basis at the end of FACE participation, compared with 70% who do 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 PY09

The frequency that FACE parents tell stories to their child significantly increases during FACE participation. At the end of the year, 71% of parents compared with 64% of parents early in FACE report that they tell stories to their child daily or almost daily.

♦ FACE addresses the need to increase the number of books in homes by implementing special initiatives designed to distribute books to families. The BIE funds 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 are distributed to families.

♦ Findings indicate that households of home-based families have significantly more books for children and adults at year’s end. On average, FACE homes contain 50 children’s books at year’s end—15 books more than at program entry. The number of adult-level books also significantly increases from 26 at PY09 entry to 32 books at year’s end. With the FACE program’s emphasis on reading, home libraries consisting of more than 100 volumes increased by 7 percentage points from 9% of homes in PY08 to 16% of homes in PY09.
Parent Involvement in Children’s Education

The FACE program focus on increasing parent involvement in children’s education is supported by research. 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.9

The involvement of PY09 FACE parents in the education of their K-5 children is compared with nationally reported parent involvement data from the National Household Education Survey.10

- Almost all FACE parents who have K-5 children (93%) 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 75% 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.

- In approximately 60% of the programs, the culture teacher assists the staff in efforts to integrate native language and culture in the program. The culture teacher provides classroom instruction for FACE children in half of the programs and for FACE adults in 55% of the programs.

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The FACE program ensures the integration of native language and culture through the hiring of community members whenever possible. Almost 80% of all FACE staff are American Indian. Most parent educators (95%) and early childhood co-teachers (80%) are American Indian. One-half or more of early childhood teachers (74%), coordinators (62%), and adult educators (51%) are American Indian.

Almost two-thirds of adults indicate that participation in FACE helped increase their usage of their native language.

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.

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. Convert to NASIS student identification number.

Continue to focus on the intensity and quality of services received by families and provide site-level feedback reports that compare their data to FACE standards of implementation and to other FACE sites.

As the budget permits, conduct more trend analyses that connect types and quantity of FACE participation to school readiness and school age achievement.

Develop a plan for continuous sharing of site-level analysis and findings with technical assistance providers.
FACE Sites by First Year of Implementation
(PY09 Sites are noted with an asterisk.)

Program Year 91 (Spring 1991)
*Chief Leschi, Puyallup, WA
  Conehatta Elementary School, Conehatta, MS
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY04)
*Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Cloquet, MN
*Na'Neelziin Ji'Olta Day School (Torreon), Cuba, NM
  Takini School, Howes, SD
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY05)
*To'Hajiilee-He Community School (Canoncito—Laguna, NM

Program Year 92 (1991-92)
*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

Program Year 93 (1992-93)
*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 PY97)
*Tohaali Community School (Toadlena), Newcomb, NM

Program Year 94 (1993-94)
*Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc., Pine Hill, NM
*T'iis Nazbas Community School, Teec Nos Pos, AZ

Program Year 02 (2001-02)
Coeur’ d’Alene Tribal School, De Smet, ID
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY05)
Cottonwood Day School, Chinle, AZ
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY07)
*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
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY08)
Pascual Sherman Indian School, Omak, WA
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY06)
*Salt River Elementary School, Scottsdale, AZ

Program Year 04 (2003-04)
*Beclabito Day School, Shiprock, NM
Mescalero Apache School, Mescalero, NM
  (discontinued FACE implementation after PY07)
*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)

Program Year 05 (2004-05)
*Pearl River Elementary School, Philadelphia, MS

Program Year 06 (2005-06)
*John F. Kennedy Day School, White River, AZ
*Tate Topa Tribal Grant School, Fort Totten, ND

Program Year 07 (2006-07)
*Dzilth-Na-Dith-Hle, Bloomfield, NM
*Santa Clara, Espanola, NM

Program Year 08 (2007-08)
*Casa Blanca Community School, Bapchule, AZ
*Kayenta Community School, Kayenta, AZ
*Theodore Jamerson Elementary School, Bismark, ND

Program Year 09 (2008-09)
*American Horse School, Allen, SD
*Baca/Dlo’ay azhi Community School, Prewitt, NM
*Chilchinbeto Community School, Kayenta, AZ
*Lake Valley Navajo School, Crownpoint, NM
*Leupp Community School, Winslow, AZ
*Mariano Lake Community School, Crownpoint, NM