



NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP

REFLECTIONS ON PROJECT PROGRESS

January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2011



NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP: REFLECTIONS ON PROJECT PROGRESS

January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2011

THANK YOU TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS:

Alameda Recreation and Park Department/Alameda Free Library

City of Berkeley Recreation Division

City of Union City Leisure Services

Hayward Public Library

Oakland Public Library

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Neighborhood Partnership grant project is a 3.5 year capacity-building partnership between First 5 Alameda County (F5AC) and six city libraries and park and recreation departments:

- Alameda Recreation and Park Department/Alameda Free Library
- City of Berkeley Recreation Division
- City of Union City Leisure Services
- Hayward Public Library
- Oakland Public Library



The project, which runs from January 1, 2010 through June 20, 2013, is designed to increase strength-based, family-centered, developmentally-specific school readiness programming for children ages 0-5 and their parents/caregivers at libraries and recreation centers.

Neighborhood Partnership grants enable funded partners to offer programming at two or more service sites located in high-need neighborhoods (e.g., presence of elementary schools with low Academic Performance Index scores). Services are available to all families regardless of their home language and ability to pay, and specifically seek to reach families whose children are not in licensed child care.

In addition to providing services, grantees engage in a process of program quality improvement and professional development to bring their school readiness services into alignment with best or promising practices. Grantees participate in a peer learning community which meets quarterly, regular on-site meetings with a coach/consultant, and reflective practice.

Grantees also engage in sustainability planning to position their organizations to sustain services, staff knowledge and skills, and new collaborations at the conclusion of the Neighborhood Partnership project.

This report covers the first 24 months of the First 5 Alameda County Neighborhood Partnership project (the period of January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011). It summarizes grantees' activities so far and presents reflections on progress made toward achieving project outcomes (listed on page 7).

FUNDING AND PARTNERS

The Neighborhood Partnership project spans two First 5 Alameda County Community Grants Initiative (CGI) grant terms. The 2009-2011 CGI grant term was 18 months (January 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011). The 2011-2013 CGI grant term is 24 months (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013).

In addition to grant funds, Neighborhood Partnership awards include extensive training, consultation, and technical assistance. Neighborhood Partnership grants also involve significant in-kind contributions of staff time and organizational resources from partner agencies which are not required by other grant types. (For more information about the Community Grants Initiative, please visit www.first5ecc.org.)

During the initial 18-month grant term, five Neighborhood Partnership grantees received a total of \$473,532. One of the five grant recipients was a collaborative project between the Alameda Recreation and Park Department and Alameda Free Library.

Four Neighborhood Partnership grantees received 24 month continuation grants totaling \$527,234. Our fifth partner, Oakland Public Library, chose not to reapply because the funding and consultation their program received during the 2009-2011 grant period sufficiently positioned the organization to sustain enhancements to their 0-5 programming. Because Oakland Public Library greatly valued the staff development opportunities provided by the Neighborhood Partnership, the library chose to continue as an unfunded partner.

Although Oakland Public Library will not report client or evaluation data during the 2011-2013 grant term, we will include enhancements made to 0-5 programming offered at Oakland Public Library's 17 branches as part of the cohort's progress toward achieving the capacity-building outcomes of the Neighborhood Partnership project.

Neighborhood Partnership Grant Award Amounts

Partner Organization	2009-11 NP Grant Award*	2011-13 NP Grant Award**
Alameda Recreation and Park Department (in collaboration with Alameda Free Library)	\$109,653	\$146,202
City of Berkeley Recreation Division	\$112,279	\$149,705
City of Union City Leisure Services	\$72,250	\$96,325
Hayward Public Library	\$101,750	\$135,002
Oakland Public Library	\$77,600	(training and consultation)
Total	\$473,532	\$527,234

*2009-2011 grant term was 18 months

**2011-2013 grant term is 24 months

FAMILIES SERVED

All of the programs funded by the Neighborhood Partnership offer free parent-child playgroups and parent education. In addition, two libraries offer drop-in storytimes, one parks and recreation department offers Pre-K children’s classes, and one parks and recreation department offers a parent-child playgroup for children with special needs and their parents/caregivers.

Depending on community demographics, services are offered in English, Spanish, or bilingual English/Spanish. Some programs offer language support for families who speak languages other than English or Spanish.

Each year the funded programs collectively serve over 1,000 families with children ages 0-5 years. Approximately 60% of the children served are not enrolled in licensed child care.



Neighborhood Partnership Summary

Project Details	2009-11 CGI Grant Term	2011-13 CGI Grant Term
Length of Term	18 months (January 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)	24 months (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013)
Total Amount Awarded	\$473,532	\$527,234
Total Partners	5 grantees (6 partners)	4 grantees, 1 unfunded partner (6 partners)
Total Service Sites	13	25
Cities Served	Alameda, Berkeley, Hayward, Oakland, Union City	Alameda, Berkeley, Hayward, Oakland, Union City
Total Children Served	1,238 (FY 2010-11) Under 3 yrs: 740 3 yrs: 285 4 yrs: 213	n/a
Total Parents Served	1,036 (FY 2010-11)	n/a

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL READINESS

Neighborhood Partnership programming supports the school readiness of children from birth to entrance to kindergarten. Guided by promising practices, programs offer developmentally-specific school readiness experiences for infants, toddler, and preschoolers. Grantees also support parents as children's first teachers and encourage families to do school readiness activities at home.

Grantees collect a variety of data related to the school readiness of the children and families they serve. Program staff complete a modified version of Applied Survey Research's Pre-Kindergarten Observation Form (Pre-KOF) for each four year old child whose parent has provided written consent. Parents/caregivers complete a Home Activity Survey (HAS) which asks how often families engage in activities which support school readiness and collects information about changes families have made due to participation in the program. Parents/caregivers also provide feedback about their satisfaction with F5AC-funded services using the First 5 Alameda County Client Survey.

Preliminary Pre-KOF, HAS, and Client Survey results are described on pages 10 to 15 of this report.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

The project has one primary child outcome and four organizational/capacity-building outcomes which support the child outcome:

1. **"Entering Kindergarteners Are Ready to Learn"** (2009-2013 First 5 Alameda County Strategic Plan Goal #4, Outcome 4C)
2. Increased **access** to school readiness services for children 0-5 and their families located at neighborhood public institutions
3. Increased **knowledge** and **use** of best practices in early childhood practice at public institutions
4. Increased **collaboration** between public institutions, school districts, and community based organizations
5. Increased **capacity** for and **commitment** to sustainable early childhood programming at public institutions

The remainder of this report discusses the Neighborhood Partnership project's progress toward meeting these outcomes.

For the purpose of this report, we have abbreviated the full name of each partner agency to the city in which the library or park and recreation department is located.

PROGRESS TOWARD NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP GOALS

PARTNERS IN SCHOOL READINESS

First 5 Alameda County sees libraries and park and recreation departments as important school readiness partners because they are natural gathering places for families with young children. They provide safe, fun environments where families can learn and grow together. They are open and welcoming to the public and have traditionally offered programming for young children. They can also function as information and activity “hubs” for families who may not have other connections to preschool or social service programs.

The Neighborhood Partnership project specifically sought to partner with libraries and parks and recreation departments because families tend to know and trust their neighborhood park, recreation center, or library branch. Also, city budgets continue to allocate funds for maintaining these important community investments even during challenging economic times.

The Neighborhood Partnership project has benefitted greatly from our partners’ organizational capacity to implement and manage large projects, their connections to city government and other city departments, and their ability to lead flexible, resourceful teams experienced at setting up and breaking down program environments in high-use, multipurpose rooms.

At the same time, grantees have reported benefits from participating in the Neighborhood Partnership project. With grant funds, training, and consultation provided by First 5 Alameda County, partners have reached underserved communities with new services, trained staff, enhanced their early childhood programming, and strengthened linkages with other organizations which serve children ages 0-5 years.

By pooling our mutual expertise and resources, First 5 Alameda County and the six Neighborhood Partnership partner agencies have already made an impact on the quantity and quality of school readiness experiences available to families at libraries, parks, and recreation centers in Alameda County.

Highlights of our progress so far toward meeting our common goals are described below.



PROJECT OUTCOME 1: ENTERING KINDERGARTENERS ARE READY TO LEARN

The 2009-2013 First 5 Alameda County Strategic Plan identifies four overall goals with eleven corresponding outcomes which guide the work of the agency and direct the use of First 5 funds in Alameda County. All services provided through the Neighborhood Partnership project support First 5 Alameda County Goal #4: “Improve and integrate health and early care and education services for children 0-5 so they enter school ready to learn” and, more specifically, Outcome 4C: “Entering Kindergarteners Are Ready to Learn.”

(Please visit www.first5ecc.org for a copy of the 2009-2013 First 5 Alameda County Strategic Plan.)

Neighborhood Partnership grantees collect a variety of data to assess the school readiness of the children and families they serve.

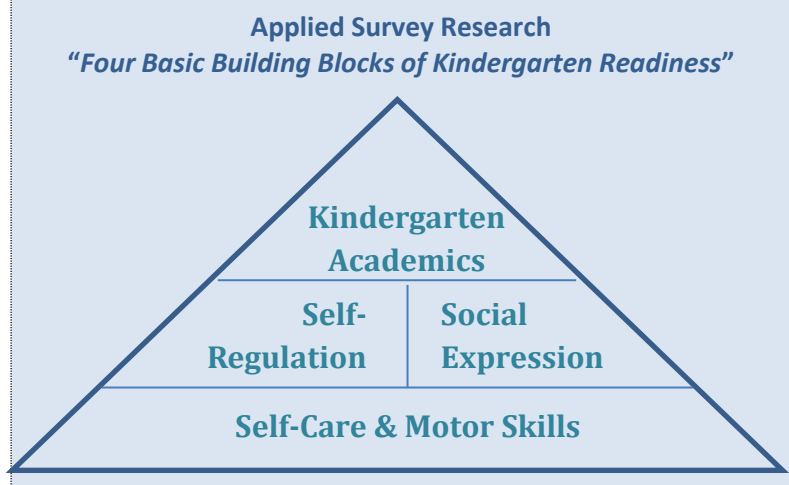
Evaluation and program planning tools include:

- **Modified Pre-Kindergarten Observation Forms** (Pre-KOF) for each 4 year old child whose parent/caregiver gave written consent for program staff to observe in class
- **Home Activity Surveys** (HAS) completed by parents/caregivers about school readiness activities that families do together at home
- First 5 Alameda County **Client Surveys** which gather information on parents/caregivers’ satisfaction with the services they received and their perceptions of the impact of services on their families

The KOF (for entering kindergarteners) and the Pre-KOF (for preschoolers) were developed by Applied Survey Research (ASR), a California-based non-profit social research firm, to provide a snapshot of children’s school readiness. The KOF is strongly correlated with third grade test scores. Since 2001, the KOF has been used in a number of Bay Area counties (see <http://appliedsurveyresearch.squarespace.com/sra>).

In Alameda County, First 5 Alameda County commissioned ASR to assess the school readiness levels of new kindergarten students in selected school districts (including 3 of the Neighborhood Partnership cities) in 2008, 2009 and 2010 (see <http://www.first5ecc.org>).

The Neighborhood Partnership has incorporated ASR’s “Four Basic Building Blocks of Kindergarten Readiness” and findings from ASR’s “School Readiness in Alameda County 2010” report into programmatic consultation and quarterly cohort trainings.



Pre-Kindergarten Observation Forms

With ASR’s permission, First 5 Alameda County developed a shorter, modified version of the Pre-KOF and trained Neighborhood Partnership program staff on its use. During the first full fiscal year of the project (7/1/10 – 6/30/11), staff from four grantee programs completed modified Pre-KOFs for 50 four year olds, 25 females and 25 males, based on in-class observations (Time 1). Because some children enrolled in a second program series, a second Pre-KOF was completed for 27 children approximately 2-3 months after the first Pre-KOF (Time 2). Oakland Public Library did not collect Pre-KOF data because their program was offered as a drop-in series. Pre-KOF data are limited at this point in the project.

Number of Pre-KOFs Completed by Grantee (7/1/10 – 6/30/11)

Grantee	Total Number of 4 Year Olds Served	Time 1 Pre-KOF	Time 2 Pre-KOF	Total Number of Pre-KOF
Alameda	10	4	0	4
Berkeley	66	22	16	38
Hayward	30	20	10	30
Oakland	35	--	--	--
Union City	72	4	1	5
Total	213	50	27	77

Time 1 Pre-KOF Results (Aggregated Across Grantees)

Proficiency was highest for:

- Performs basic self-help/self-care tasks (Self-Care and Motor Skills)
- Has general coordination (Self-Care and Motor Skills)
- Use of small manipulatives such as crayons, paintbrush, etc. (Self-Care and Motor Skills)
- Stays focused/pays attention during activities (Self-Regulation)

Proficiency was lowest for:

- Writes own first name (Kindergarten Academics)
- Expresses empathy or caring for others (Social Expression)
- Negotiates with peers to resolve social conflicts with adult guidance (Self-Regulation)
- Handles frustration well (Self-Regulation)

Time 1 Pre-KOF Results (Aggregated Across Grantees) ...continued...

Program staff reported the most improvement in:

- Participates successfully in circle time (Self-Regulation)
- Writes own first name (Kindergarten Academics)
- Works and plays cooperatively with peers (Self-Regulation)
- Stays focused/pays attention during activities (Self-Regulation)

Staff Comments:

“Very disruptive when first started during circle time, can sit during circle time without disruption.”

“He has gained alphabet knowledge and print awareness.”

“He is sharing space and materials more with peers.”

“N is a mature girl that has showed an improvement in her social skills.”

Time 2 Pre-KOF Results for 27 Children

Results from the second KOF trend in the direction of greater proficiency for most of the items (e.g., writes own first name, use of small manipulatives, has general coordination, engages with books).

“This is the 2nd time V has participated in [the program] and I have seen how her interest and attention span has increased. Now she can stay sitting down and do teacher directed activities (table).”

“She’s had a difficult time in the beginning of the session, most probably because of so many new and young children starting the program. We’ve worked with her on how to overcome anger, handle our frustration without hurting others. She’s doing better now...Ready for Kindergarten cognitively and emotionally.”

Home Activity Surveys

The Home Activity Survey (HAS) is a shorter, modified version of Applied Survey Research’s parent survey (the Parent Information Form), which First 5 Alameda County created for the Neighborhood Partnership with ASR’s permission. Program staff asked parents/caregivers to complete a HAS if they participated in a parent-child playgroup or enrolled in a parent education class series or if their child was enrolled in a Pre-K program series. Families participating in drop-in services were not given a HAS to complete.

During the first full fiscal year of the project (7/1/10 – 6/30/11), parents/caregivers for 101 children completed Home Activity Surveys (HAS) (Time 1). Because some children enrolled in a second program series, a second HAS was completed for 17 children a few months after the first HAS (Time 2). Oakland Public Library did not collect HAS data because their program was offered as a drop-in series. Findings from the HAS are preliminary. Some highlights are reported below. More details will be reported at the end of the project.

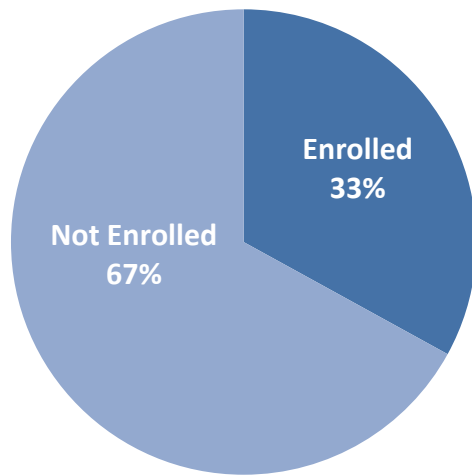
Number of Home Activity Surveys Submitted by Grantee (7/1/10 – 6/30/11)

Grantee	Total Parents/ Caregivers Served*	Time 1 HAS	Time 2 HAS	Total # of HAS
Alameda	62	4	0	4
Berkeley	395	52	15	67
Hayward	164	20	0	20
Oakland	168	--	--	--
Union City	247	25	2	27
Total	1,036*	101	17	118

**Includes parents/caregivers who participated in drop-in services with their child/ren*



Number of Children Enrolled in Licensed Child Care During the Past Year (n = 97)

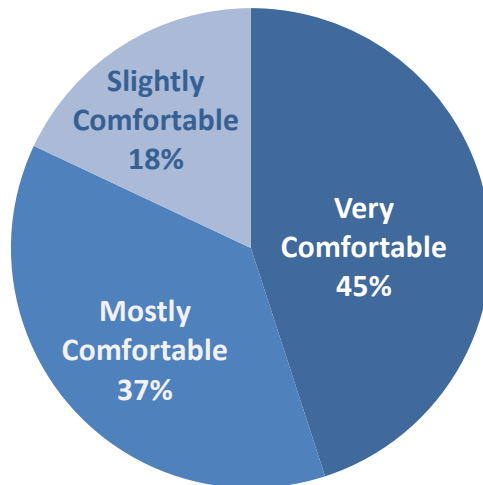


A majority of children whose parents completed surveys were not enrolled in licensed child care, suggesting that the programs are reaching the intended target audience.

Number of Children Enrolled in Licensed Child Care During the Past Year

- 65 out of 97 (67%) Not Enrolled
- 32 out of 97 (33%) Enrolled

Caregiver Comfort Level with Child Starting Kindergarten (Time 1 HAS) (n = 100)



Over 80% of parents who completed surveys felt comfortable about their child starting kindergarten.

Caregiver Comfort Level with Child Starting Kindergarten (Time 1 HAS)

- 45 out of 100 (45%) Very comfortable
- 37 out of 100 (37%) Mostly comfortable
- 18 out of 100 (18%) Slightly comfortable

Parents' comments about changes they have noticed in their child

"I feel that I know my kid better than before in terms of learning. My child picks up communication skills from school (the program). It makes him less frustrated when conflicts occur on the playground because he understand[s] the language better and learned to share from the program. The teachers are warm and loving and that builds strong trust between my child and his teachers."

"Every time she draws she wants me to write about what she drew. She also writes stories on paper. She likes to play at home and she makes different station[s] to play at. Every so often she switches stations by herself."

"Her language is a lot better, we have more interactive conversations, she is more polite. Our family...has learned to work as a team better through this...program."

Parents' comments about their comfort level with their child starting school

*"A shows interest and loves to learn!"
"He can't wait to start school."
"[The program] has really made a difference."*

One parent, on the first HAS, reported feeling "slightly comfortable" about his/her child starting school, commenting: "Very anti-social, shy, does not want to go to school." On the second HAS, the parent reported feeling "mostly comfortable," commenting: "He has developed a lot over the past four sessions."

Parents' comments about what they are doing differently since participating in the program

"Depending on what A...is learning about... I talk to him more about it and expand his knowledge on that subject: For example: The mail and the process of how mail travels. He now helps getting the mail when it comes."

"We are taking more responsibility as our son's first teacher to explore nature, games, parks and healthy eating. We are also putting ourselves in my son's shoes when we see he is unhappy and try to understand him better."

"We spend more family time together."

"We are now able to arrange more play dates for our son, enjoy the friendship of other families and schedule more activities together that take us to a park, museum or Lawrence Hall of Science, farmer's markets, etc."



Client Surveys

Four Neighborhood Partnership grantees administered a total of 124 Client Surveys during the first full fiscal year of the project (7/1/10 – 6/30/11).

- 80% (n=124) of caregivers were “very satisfied” with the program, and 15% were “mostly satisfied”
- 78% (n=119) felt the services were “very respectful” of their personal background, and 18% felt they were respectful
- 76% (n=122) were able to use what they learned from the program “a lot,” and 21% were able to use what they learned “some”
- 66% (n=123) felt the program made “a lot” of difference for them, and 28% felt the program made “some” difference

“I love this program. It has greatly improved my child’s learning, his social skills, his language skills, his bilingual skills. He is...happier, more confident and more capable of following directions.”

“Mis hijos esperan los viernes para venir a la biblioteca.”

English translation:

“My sons can’t wait for Fridays to go to the library.”

PROJECT OUTCOME #2: INCREASED ACCESS TO SCHOOL READINESS SERVICES FOR CHILDREN 0-5 AND THEIR FAMILIES LOCATED AT NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

During the period of January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2011, all five Neighborhood Partnership partners offered free school readiness services at community-based locations which were accessible to culturally and linguistically diverse, low-income families. Services included Pre-K children’s classes, parent-child playgroups, story times, and enhanced library collections (see table below).

Services were offered at 13 sites in high-need neighborhoods (e.g., presence of elementary schools with low Academic Performance Index scores) during the first 18 months of the project. Grant-funded services will continue at 9 of these sites during the 24 month continuation term.

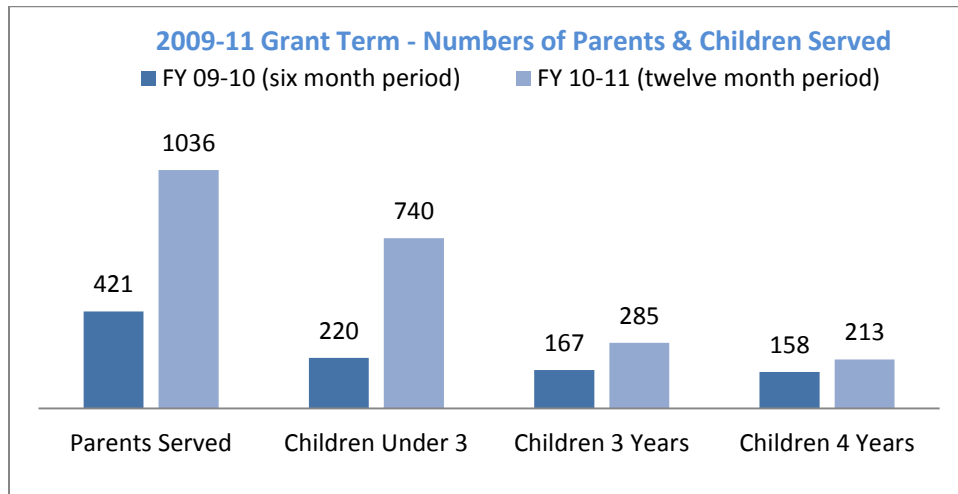
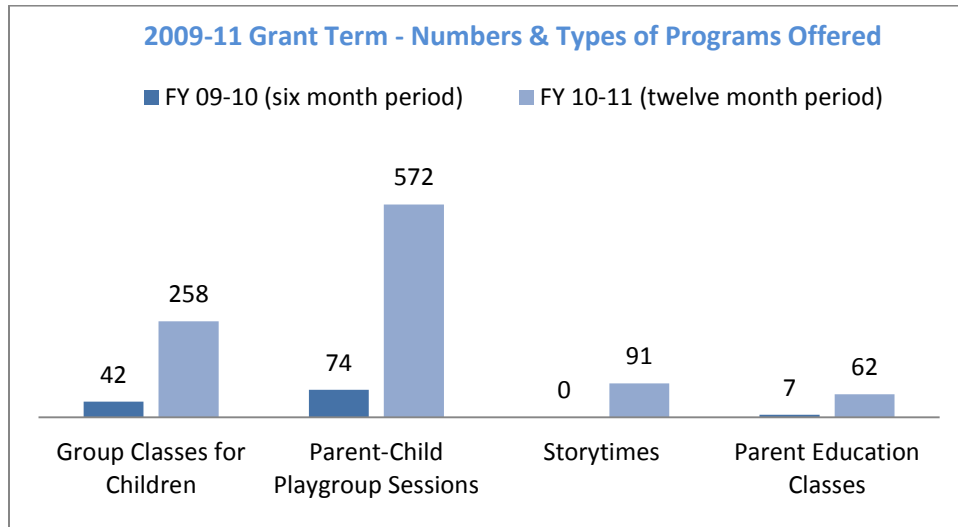
Oakland Public Library, which continued in the Neighborhood Partnership as an unfunded partner, has increased participation in programmatic consultation by library staff from four branches to all 17 branch locations where children’s services are held.

Summary of New & Enhanced Activities Provided by Neighborhood Partnership Agencies (1/1/10 – 12/31/11)

Activity	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Oakland	Union City
Enhanced city library collection of children’s books (Chinese)				✓	
Enhanced city library collection of children’s books (Spanish)			✓		
Enhanced collection of early literacy materials used by preschool teachers	✓				
Environments, materials, curriculum, and interactions made more culturally and linguistically appropriate for families served	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Interpretation/language support for families who speak languages other than English or Spanish				✓	✓
Parent education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parent-child playgroups (bilingual English-Spanish/Spanish)	✓		✓		✓
Parent-child playgroups (English)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Parent-child playgroups for families with children with special needs (English)	✓				
Pre-K children’s classes (English)		✓			
Story times (bilingual English-Spanish/Spanish)			✓		
Story times (English)				✓	

During the first 18 months of the project (1/1/10 – 6/30/11), the programs together offered a total of:

- 300 group classes for children
- 646 parent-child playgroup sessions (many included a parent education component)
- 91 story times
- 69 parent education classes



PROJECT OUTCOME #3: INCREASED KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF BEST PRACTICES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In addition to providing services, partner organizations engage in a process of program quality improvement and professional development to bring their program services into alignment with the Neighborhood Partnership Promising Practices, a set of evidence-based practices which support school readiness in four main areas:

- Children
- Parents/Caregivers
- Community and Family Linkages
- Organizational Capacity and Practice

In consultation with the Neighborhood Partnership coach/consultant, each partner selects a set Promising Practices which their program would like to focus on during the course of the project and develops a written plan with steps they will take to achieve specific goals. The coach/consultant supports each program team with on-site consultation and training as programs work toward integrating their selected practices. Grantees also participate in a quarterly peer learning community where they receive additional training and support for implementing promising practices in their work.

During the first two years of the project, all of the partners have focused on incorporating developmentally appropriate environments, materials, and interactions in their 0-5 programming. The coach/consultant helped grantees purchase much-needed books, toys, furniture, equipment, and other materials to make their environments welcoming to young children and their families. The coach/consultant also worked closely with grantees to develop programming which supports the specific developmental needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and responds to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families.

As we move into the later stages of the project, partners are beginning to focus more deeply on supporting children’s social-emotional development, strengthening parent-child relationships, and planning for the sustainability of their early childhood programming.



Promising Practices Grantees Are Working On (1/1/10 - 6/30/13)

Promising Practices	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Oakland	Union City
Children					
Build on child's strengths/interests	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Culturally and linguistically appropriate environment, materials, curriculum, interactions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Developmentally appropriate environment, materials, interactions (developmental/age groupings when appropriate)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environment, materials, curriculum and interaction that support mastery across all domains of readiness	✓	✓		✓	✓
Frequency, familiarity, consistency to develop trust		✓	✓	✓	✓
Good staff/child ratios				✓	✓
Hands on interactive learning					
Modeling and supporting positive adult/child interactions between caregivers and children		✓	✓	✓	✓
Positive teacher/child interactions					✓
Parent/Caregiver					
Diversity of all kinds respected and included			✓		
Focus on the parent/child relationship	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hands on interactive learning				✓	
Home extension activities reinforce school readiness and parent education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Linguistically and culturally appropriate practice in outreach, engagement, program delivery	✓	✓	✓		
Mutual respect of expertise between provider and parent					
Parent education is grounded in child development		✓	✓		
Parent education topics relevant to families' lives			✓		
Parents have opportunities to reflect, share observations, ask questions		✓			✓
Recognize and support parents as first teachers	✓				✓

Promising Practices	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Oakland	Union City
Parent/Caregiver					
Recognize that all parents have strengths and want to do well by their child(ren)	✓		✓		
Two way communication					
Community and Family Linkages					
Align with local school district – readiness expectations, information about registration and parent orientation/involvement, transfer of student information	✓				
Networks of support built – intentionally strengthen parent to parent connections	✓	✓		✓	✓
Refer families to additional services as needed (basic needs, mental health, ECE, substance use, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Organizational Capacity and Practice					
Active planning for sustainability of early childhood/family support programming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clear, well supported theory of change (why what we do leads to desired outcomes)					
Multi-disciplinary perspectives and strengths shared, integrated	✓	✓			
Multi-modal programming (needs of children and parents addressed)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Shared power and decision making (staff, parents)					✓
Staff communication/collaboration/training		✓			✓
Staff have opportunities to debrief, reflect, share observations, ask questions (reflective practice)	✓		✓		✓
Systems for sharing professional development from training and technical assistance with entire staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teacher/facilitator education and experience (both ECE and family support/parent education)					
Use feedback and data (family, staff, evaluation, community and USD needs) to adjust/modify program			✓		✓

PROJECT OUTCOME #4: INCREASED COLLABORATION BETWEEN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Neighborhood Partnership agency staff have found innovative ways to partner with other agencies to deliver services, conduct outreach to target communities, and collaborate on city-wide initiatives.

Examples of Increased Collaboration

Grantee	Activities
Alameda	Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) and Alameda Free Library (AFL) partnered to apply for their Neighborhood Partnership grant. AFL sends its Supervising Children’s Librarian to ARPD playgroups to provide parent education on early literacy and to encourage families to use library services. AFL also rotates a collection of early literacy materials in English, Spanish and Chinese through ARPD’s Tiny Tots preschool classrooms for teachers to use.
Berkeley	The City of Berkeley Recreation Division is working with UC Berkeley, Berkeley Unified School District, and other city departments, community partners and stakeholders on the city’s 2020 Vision, a plan to end the achievement gap in Berkeley by the year 2020. The 2020 Vision workgroup is looking at ways to expand the reach of the Recreation Division’s successful “Pre-K Power Play” program.
Hayward	Hayward Public Library included an update on their Spanish Learn and Play Groups in a library communication to the Hayward City Council to highlight the program’s contribution to school readiness in the City of Hayward.
Oakland	Oakland Public Library (OPL) partnered with a number of local organizations including Raising A Reader, WIC, and La Clinica de la Raza to outreach to families with young children living in low-income, multilingual communities, many of whom were not current library users. OPL created “a communication stream that was almost non-existent before” with WIC centers and clinics near branch locations where the library offered a new program for parents with children ages 0-12 months.
Union City	City of Union City Leisure Services (Leisure Services) quickly built a waiting list and then added another series of playgroups to meet demand after conducting community outreach through other city departments, the school district, public transportation, and local media. Leisure Services has also collaborated with the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB), enrolling children with speech and language delays who do not qualify for RCEB services and their parents/caregivers in Leisure Services’ literacy-focused playgroups.

PROJECT OUTCOME #5: INCREASED CAPACITY FOR AND COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Since the Neighborhood Partnership project began, partner agency staff have regularly participated in meetings, trainings, on-site consultation, and reflective practice to build their organization’s capacity to provide new/enhanced early childhood programming at sites in high-need neighborhoods.

One of the goals of the Neighborhood Partnership is for agencies to sustain organizational knowledge gains, changes in early childhood practice, and new/enhanced school readiness programming beyond the 3.5 year grant-funded project. In order to achieve these objectives, each partner agency has developed a “sustainability plan” to operationalize strategies which they have identified as key components of sustainability. Sustainability plans are works in progress and will be continually refined over the course of the project.

Organizational Sustainability Snapshot (December 2011)

Number of Staff Participating in NP Training, Consultation and Sustainability Planning


Participating Staff	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Oakland	Union City
Direct Service Staff	6	9	3	8	3
Supervisors	2	1	2	2	2
Directors	0	2	1	0	0
Total Staff	8	12	6	10	5



Summary of Neighborhood Partnership Sustainability Plans (7/1/11 – 6/30/13)

Activity	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Oakland	Union City
Cross-train grant-funded staff and non-grant-funded staff to deliver services which incorporate best/promising practices and lessons learned from NP project across 0-5 programs	✓	✓			
Cultivate internal and external funding sources to sustain grant-funded programming beyond the NP project			✓		
Develop fee-based program models which subsidize/cover costs and/or partner with other agencies to share costs/co-deliver services	✓	✓			
Develop free/low-cost program models based on parent-led programming					✓
Make environments, materials, curriculum, and interactions more strength-based, family-centered, and/or developmentally-specific across 0-5 programs		✓		✓	
Make environments, materials, curriculum, and/or interactions more culturally and linguistically responsive across 0-5 programs			✓		
Meet regularly to debrief and plan together (i.e., supervisors and direct service staff engage in reflective practice)		✓			
Outreach to high-need/underserved communities (i.e., continue to engage and serve low-income families and/or families who speak languages other than English)			✓		✓
Outreach to new partners and actively engage collaborators	✓	✓			
Share knowledge and build skills at regularly scheduled departmental/organizational meetings		✓	✓	✓	
Support staff in building specific skills through trainings, workshops, and professional development opportunities		✓	✓	✓	

Examples of Sustainable Activities Implemented to Date

Grantee	Activities
Alameda	Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) chose not to rehire a vacated grant-funded staff position from outside their organization, but instead assigned current part-time staff to coordinate and facilitate their parent-child playgroups. ARPD’s intention is for these staff to participate in Neighborhood Partnership training, consultation, and professional development opportunities so that they will be better positioned to continue playgroup services after the grant project ends.
Berkeley	Using F5AC-funded programs as a catalyst, the City of Berkeley (COB) Recreation Division has introduced a growing number of Tot and Pre-K programs and special events including “spin-off” classes such as “Pre-K Summer Fun,” “Pre-K Winter Fun,” and Pre-K classes in sports and games, science and nature, music exploration, and Spanish. In addition, COB supports a “Wee Play Together” drop-in program similar to the grant-funded program which allows the program to run 5 days per week in the low-income neighborhoods of South and West Berkeley.
Hayward	<p>Hayward Public Library (HPL) has made its services and outreach materials more “Spanish-centered” to more accurately reflect the demographic profile of their community. The library has increased its collection of Spanish materials including books, music, and educational DVDs and has recognized the need to provide Spanish versions of events calendars that are on par with those printed in English. HPL also worked with F5AC to produce a video about their new Spanish Learn and Play Group:</p> <p>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYVIJs98sZU</p> 
Oakland	Oakland Public Library (OPL) chose not to apply for a 2011-2013 grant because staff felt the funding and consultation their program received during the 2009-2011 grant period sufficiently positioned their organization to sustain enhancements to their 0-5 programming. OPL continues to benefit from on-site consultation, training, and peer learning as an unfunded partner during the 2011-2013 grant term. Staff who attended the December 2011 cohort meeting shared highlights from a school readiness presentation with the whole staff of Children’s Librarians. The staff then decided to recognize and acknowledge instances of children’s self-regulation in their regular daily interactions with families.
Union City	City of Union City Leisure Services has established a “Parent Ambassadors” volunteer program which recruits parent volunteers who have completed at least one session of the “Parent and Me Literacy Jamboree” playgroup program to serve as liaisons between families and the program coordinator. Parent Ambassadors receive training to support other parents and lead some playgroup activities. Staff is testing parent-led programming as a possible strategy to sustain services at the end of the grant term.

GRANTEE FEEDBACK ON NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP PARTICIPATION

A F5AC evaluation specialist spoke with supervisors at grantee agencies in the spring of 2011 about their experiences so far as a Neighborhood Partnership grantee. Several themes emerged from the interviews which have since influenced the F5AC Neighborhood Partnership grants team's approach and lessons learned on the project.

Grantee feedback (synthesized across programs) included the following observations and requests:

- One concrete benefit for many programs is the ability to purchase additional equipment and make modifications to their environments. Furniture and environments are now more family and young child friendly.
- Training is helpful and valued
- Scheduling regular meeting times for reflection and program planning tends to be a newer practice for most partners. It is one of the biggest challenges of participation. It's difficult to manage because of competing time constraints. At the same time, many supervisors and program staff experience it as having great benefit.
- Reporting is challenging
- F5AC needs to be mindful of demands on partners' time, both by making sure cohort time is useful and making on-site consultant time focused and on task
- For many partners, the amount of time that it took to get the programs up and running was more than expected. It was overwhelming.
- F5AC must respect that partners are working under their own organizational constraints and professional practices. Early childhood "best practices" are fitting into non-traditional contexts. Also park and recreation departments and public libraries are not non-profits (i.e., F5AC's usual partners) and are therefore different. Different opportunities and different challenges are presented.

F5AC staff have looked for ways to be more responsive to partners' needs and requests. Specifically F5AC staff have tried to:

- Incorporate more didactic training into program consultation and quarterly cohort meetings and link the training objectives more explicitly to the Promising Practices
- Be flexible and responsive during reporting times
- Be respectful of "pushback" when the Neighborhood Partnership goals and agenda bump up against unique organizational structures and practices. Work together to find another way or accept the reality of what can and cannot be accomplished within the timelines and constraints of this project.
- Provide validation for the process. It *is* challenging and we're all doing great work!

LOOKING AHEAD

Grantees will continue to provide grant-funded services and implement their program quality improvement and professional development plans until June 30, 2013 when the Neighborhood Partnership project concludes.

Active planning for the sustainability of early childhood programming is already underway. A “sustainability stakeholders” convening is planned for Fall 2012, with a second convening in Fall 2013. These convenings will highlight our partners’ achievements and identify opportunities for city governments, local school districts, funders, and community-based organizations to partner with libraries and park and recreation departments to support children’s school readiness.

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