GROWING

Early Childhood Education

Evaluating Orfalea Fund's Work in Santa Barbara County



EVALUATION SPECIALISTS

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About Evaluation Specialists

Evaluation Specialists is a woman-owned small business that specializes in evaluation of prevention, health promotion, education, and social service programs. Our experienced, highly skilled team provides methodological, substantive and clinical expertise that enables our clients to apply a wide range of cutting-edge methods to answer real world questions in community settings. We partner with our clients to design and implement research and evaluation plans that provide timely, accurate, actionable results that benefit the communities they serve.

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EVALUATION SPECIALISTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Orfalea Fund (TOF) set out to contribute to the well-being of Santa Barbara County's young children by improving the quality of early childhood education (ECE) centers over a 15 year period. The Fund has launched several initiatives under the focus area of building ECE quality over the years. Three initiatives within this area of investment include the Outdoor Classroom Project – Santa Barbara County (OCPSBC), the Preschool Food & Healthy Habits Initiative (PFI), and the Accreditation Support Program.

The ECE focus area is now drawing to a close, and the Foundation has taken a number of different steps toward understanding the value and impact of its investments and passing on lessons learned. One of these steps was contracting with an independent outside evaluator, Evaluation Specialists, to carry out a rigorous qualitative evaluation of its three above-referenced ECE initiatives.

This qualitative study set out to gather rich, nuanced data on staff perceptions of initiatives, outcomes of initiatives (particularly effects on children), initiative sustainability, and promising practices and key principles for replication. We gathered data in semi-structured interviews with 26 directors and 18 teachers at 27 ECE centers across Santa Barbara County.

The three initiatives were impactful and valued in ways that TOF hoped for. They were also synergistic and interwoven. This synergy is an important element in the successes of the ECE focus area.
Each initiative complemented the others. Initiatives were perceived as an integrated three-pronged approach to improve center quality, thereby improving child experiences and outcomes in systemic and layered ways that have the potential to inform life-long behavior.

TOF efforts to support Santa Barbara County's young children by supporting improvements in ECE quality and programming had substantial value and impact.
Identifying support elements that worked well, along with those could have been improved, positioned Evaluation Specialists to extract key principles and promising practices that can inform future ECE support efforts.

Our findings suggest that the impact of these initiatives are as relevant to children from lower SES families as they are to those from higher SES families.
TOF's ECE programming was offered to centers that serve children across the needs spectrum. These centers serve children from lower socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds as well as those from higher SES backgrounds. Upon disaggregating the results by center characteristics known to serve as proxies for child SES (such as region of the county that the center serves and funding source), we learned that the findings did not drastically differ across these characteristics. This encouraging finding indicates that future similar ECE support efforts have a strong likelihood of being valued and positively impacting intended stakeholders within a variety of contexts and settings. Future study is recommended to validate this inference.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Each of the three initiatives positively impacted intended stakeholders, and center staff deemed each of the program components valuable. The direct support offered to centers, across all three initiatives, was found to be the most valuable aspect of the program.

Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County:
The OCPSBC positively impacted centers, staff, children, and to a lesser degree, the families of the children who attended the centers, in a variety of ways including:

- solidifying related center policies,
- improving staff perception of their role,
- improving child behavior and self-regulation as well as increasing their appreciation for nature, and
- shifting some related at-home practices.

Preschool Food Initiative:
The PFI positively impacted centers, staff, children, and to a lesser degree, the families of the children who attended the centers in a variety of ways including:

- improving food-related policies,
- exposing children to new foods,
- improving the quality of foods offered at centers, and
- shifting some at-home related practices.

Accreditation Support:
The Accreditation Support positively impacted staff by:

- systematizing quality practices, and
- improving staff cohesion.



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The findings of the study indicate that the initiatives impacted stakeholders in many ways.



Systematized CENTER PRACTICES related to creating an environment of healthy eating, extending the learning environment beyond the classroom, and adhering to principles of quality practice. These practices and principles are now "practice as usual."

Validated PRACTITIONERS' implicit theories of practice and helped them to credibly articulate the purpose, principles, and potential impacts of the programs.



Helped CHILDREN in their physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development by positioning them to embrace nature, consume healthier foods, be more active, self- regulate their behavior, and learn by doing.

Assisted FAMILIES in gaining awareness and information related to healthy eating and the value of outdoor time, and, in some instances, in identifying ways to incorporate this new information into their at-home practices.

The study surfaced both barriers to initiative implementation, and ways in which to overcome these to continue and expand programming.



CHALLENGES

- Achieving buy-in from supervisors and staff.
- Gaining staff consensus.
- Changing ingrained habits.
- Finding funding to purchase materials and implement program-related changes.
- Managing center bureaucracy.
- Maintaining the requisite level of program knowledge and expertise in the face of regular staff turnover.



FACILITATORS

- Involving parents and the centers' communities to assist with program implementation and material acquisition.
- Embracing the notion of incremental change.
- Working to receive support from key decision-makers.
- Leaning on a personal belief system that was closely aligned to the programs' principles.

Our findings indicate that ECE Staff will remain committed to improving ECE quality through these initiatives beyond the Fund's involvement. ECE center staff recognize and understand that TOF will not be able to continue its support for the initiatives, and are relying on a number of mechanisms to help them sustain their initiatives beyond the Fund's support.



- Demonstration Site Network Steering Committee: A steering committee of committed practitioners will continue these efforts.
- Embedded Practices: Initiatives' principles are embedded in center staff's practice.
- Enthusiasm: Staff are enthusiastic about the initiatives because they have seen the results of their efforts.
- Center Trainings: Staff are exploring ways to embed initiative lessons into staff trainings.



The study surfaced several promising practices that ECE staff believe led to TOF's success in building these initiatives throughout the community.

We recommend that other funders and parties interested in building these initiatives in their respective communities incorporate these promising practices into their own programming.

Have a strong foundation of ECE expertise, and select initiatives with a strong research base behind them. High quality information rooted in scientific research was essential to gaining support and buy-in for the programs by stakeholders. Sharing this information through a combination of hands-on and didactic experiences in the training sessions was a particularly important practice for the successful transfer of knowledge.



Make a long-term and strategic commitment of resources, particularly financial resources and staff expertise. The free support in the form of staff trainings, onsite consultation, and program materials provided by TOF was essential given the financial and logistic challenges related to this workforce and their centers. Center staff felt respected and appreciated due to this commitment of resources; demonstrating this respect to an oft-undervalued population was essential to generating buy-in from these important program participants.



Maintain flexibility and adaptability in program support. Practices included being flexible in training schedules by offering trainings at multiple times, in multiple locations, and not requiring that attendees progress through the training sequentially. Collecting and using formative feedback to improve program support was also key. Providing center -specific support through onsite and phone/email consultation is another demonstration of this principle.

Build a community of believers in high quality ECE with emphasis on preschool food and outdoor learning. This can be accomplished by adhering to the first three principles. Identifying, engaging, and empowering staff whose personal belief systems were aligned with the programs' principles allowed these staff to credibly and persuasively communicate the initiatives' worth to others. Providing networking opportunities among centers further extended these communities. Cross-site visits and visits to model centers also played a key role in inspiring staff commitment.



Embrace the processes of change. One element of success was encouraging center staff to tailor the initiatives to the cultural context of the families they served and adapt them to their children's abilities as the programs evolved. A second key change process was encouraging "baby steps" and incremental change toward initiative goals, particularly given that changing hearts, minds, and habits takes time. A final change process was encouraging staff to be comfortable with the prospect that there will always be "more work to do," as this is an indication of program progress and commitment.



Consider program sustainability at program inception, and initiate and support a community-driven framework for sustainability. The Demonstration Site Network Steering Committee is made up of center staff whose mission was to plan for sustainability during and after supported OCPSBC and PFI initiative activities for Santa Barbara County. This, and positioning staff to engage and involve their children's parents, the centers' decision-makers, and the related community, can support initiative continuation over time.

Preemptively address regular staff turnover. Define methods by which trained staff can pass on lessons learned to new staff so that centers can carry on program activities and principles beyond initially-trained staff. These efforts might include "skill share" or cross-training activities where trained staff pass on what they have learned to other center personnel.



Offer support to all center staff simultaneously. This would increase the likelihood that center staff are all well-versed in program principles and are on the same page about the value and methods of implementation. This will increase the likelihood of progress and decrease the barriers to implementation related to staff buy-in.



Work with the organizations in control of the centers (such as churches or public school systems). This would ensure that they, too, understand the importance of and value in the initiative principles, making them more likely to support programs and empower center staff to make program-related changes.

Set aside additional funding. While staff appreciated the generosity of the Orfalea Fund, they recognized additional funding needs such as funds to cover substitutes to enable center staff to attend trainings, and to cover infrastructure costs related to program implementation.

ECE INITIATIVES WERE IMPACTFUL ACROSS KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Center Outcomes

Principles embedded in curriculum
Policy changes
Infrastructure and physical modifications*
Healthier food is served*



Staff Outcomes

Shift in role image
Improved professional practices
Improved personal practices
Increased proficiency with program concepts
Improved modeling of program-related behaviors*
Improved cohesion and practice reflection*





Child Outcomes

Improved behavior/self-regulation
Increased time outdoors and activity
Increased opportunities for learning
Appreciation for nature*
Increased independence*
Exposure to new foods*
Healthier food is consumed*





Family Outcomes

Changed at-home practices
Actively requested information
Exposed to program philosophies
Exposure to new foods*





**Note: some outcomes are program-specific and are included here as they are reflective of outcomes of the three programs collectively.*

BACKGROUND

The Orfalea Fund (TOF) is a nonprofit public-benefit corporation created to empower the Santa Barbara County community by providing education, training, and tools, and facilitating the establishment of cooperative community partnerships, to improve opportunities for those "most in need". The Fund has focused their efforts in the fields of early childhood education and youth development.

TOF's Early Childhood Education (ECE) focus area, as one of the Fund's signature efforts, is now drawing to a close after 15 years. This work has centered on enhancing ECE program quality through a "Whole Child Philosophy" that focuses on the physical, emotional, and social development of young children in addition to supporting their cognitive development.

The Fund has launched several major efforts under the umbrella of building ECE quality over the years. Three such initiatives within this focus area include the Outdoor Classroom Project – Santa Barbara County (OCPSBC), the Preschool Food & Healthy Habits Initiative (PFI), and the Accreditation Support Program, through which the Fund has partnered with First 5 Santa Barbara County.

These three initiatives were delivered through contracts with two organizations. The OCPSBC & PFI were delivered by the Consulting and Educational Services Division of the Child Educational Center, Caltech/JPL Community (CEC) in Southern California. The CEC developed the Outdoor Classroom Project® in 2003 and brought that program tailored to Santa Barbara County for the Orfalea Fund according to TOF objectives in 2009. Using a similar delivery structure, the CEC developed and delivered the PFI two years later, again according to objectives and guidance of TOF. The Accreditation Support Program was delivered by First 5 Santa Barbara County, an agency devoted to improving the lives of children birth through age five.

As Orfalea's ECE quality initiatives conclude, TOF sought to understand the value, impact, challenges, and opportunities of its work, and document the lessons it has learned over the years for other Foundations and like-minded organizations. They therefore chose to embark on a program evaluation, specifically a qualitative assessment of their efforts. This decision to rely on qualitative methods underscores their belief that nuance and context matter. Thus, the qualitative assessment presented below was designed specifically to unearth rich and contextual data related to initiative value, initiative impact, and lessons learned.





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ORFALEA FUND'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INITIATIVES

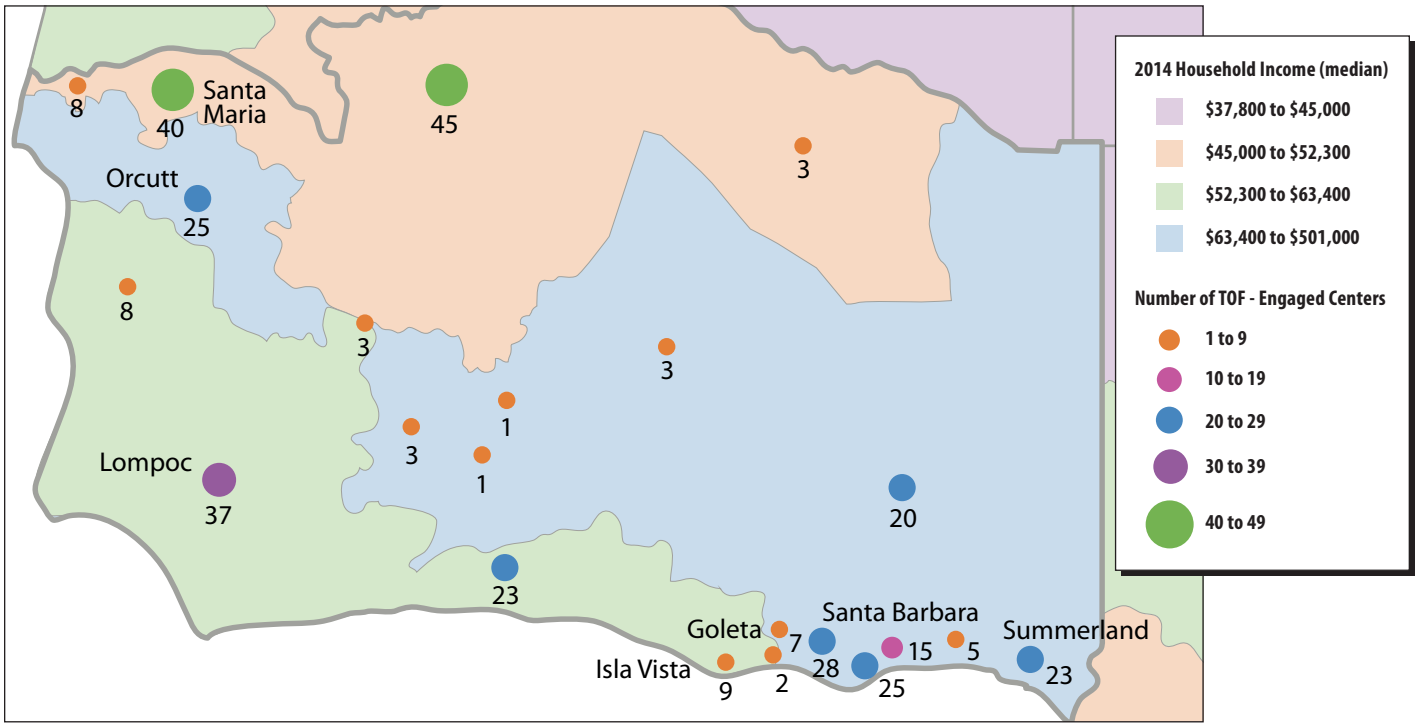
TOF supported numerous ECE efforts that are known to support the well-being of young children across the County and was interested in studying three initiatives in particular: Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County (OCPSBC), Preschool Food Initiative (PFI), and Accreditation Support.

The aim of OCPSBC is to "better the lives of young children in Santa Barbara County by increasing the quantity, quality and benefit of outdoor experiences" ("The Outdoor Classroom Project", 2012) by inspiring teachers to spend more time outdoors and teach through play and physical activity. The goals of this project were to be achieved through staff training, on-site consultation, and outdoor enhancements at early childhood education centers throughout the County.

The Fund worked with directors, teachers, kitchen staff, and parents to improve outcomes for children through PFI. Specifically, this initiative attempts to create ECE programs that are centers of wellness for children and families. Through PFI, directors and teachers 1) improve center food quality standards and systems, 2) educate children, staff, and parents about the value of healthy food practices and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) use year-around, pesticide-free center gardens to support healthy eating and physical activity ("Helping Young Children and Their Families Make Better Choices for Healthier Lives", 2011).

The Accreditation Support program was different from OCPSBC and PFI in that it was designed to support early childhood centers through the process of becoming accredited (or reaccredited) as high quality centers, rather than in carrying out specific activities directly with young children ("Quality of Centers", n.d.). The Fund funded this project through First 5 Santa Barbara County. First 5 Santa Barbara County has invested in preschool and child care quality since 2001, with an intense focus on national accreditation as a benchmark of quality in partnership with the Orfalea Fund. Accreditation is the designation of high quality earned from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The Orfalea Fund-First 5 Accreditation Project supports centers to progress from their current level of quality up the scale to the ultimate level of becoming nationally accredited. Support included trainings for center directors and regular technical assistance throughout the accreditation process. The First 5 support for accreditation and program quality will continue through the FY 2014-2017 strategic plan period. Ongoing investment is anticipated beyond that, contingent upon strong outcomes, community engagement in the work, and available funding.

TOF-engaged centers serve children & families across income groups in Santa Barbara County.

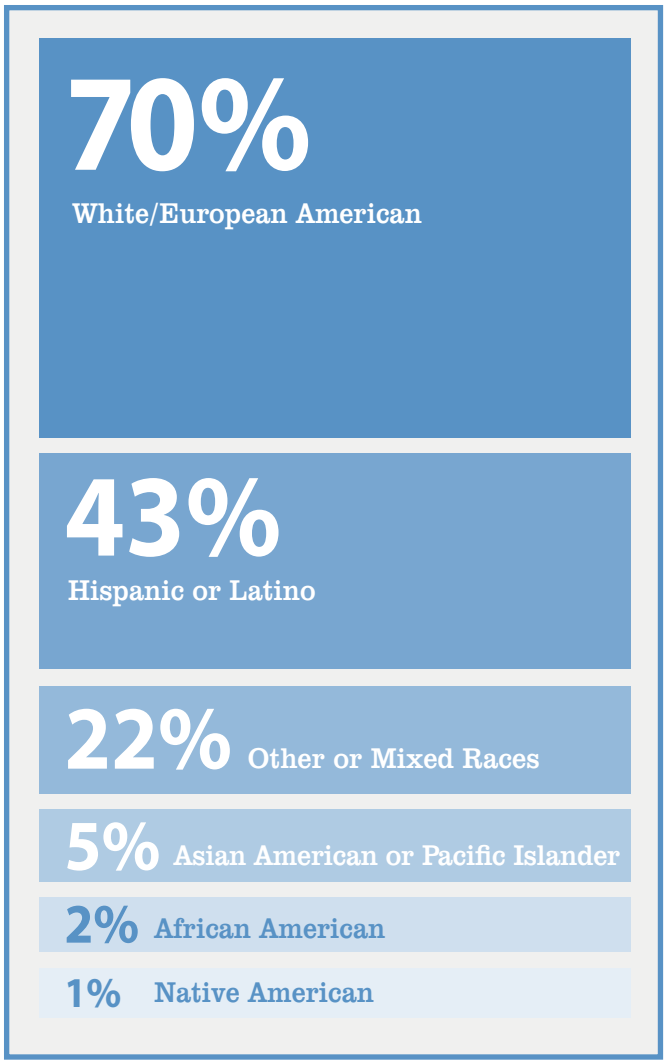


SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Santa Barbara County, located on the Central coast of California, has a population of about 425,000 and is diverse both racially and socio-economically. The county is approximately 70% white/ European American, 2% African American, 1% Native American, and 5% Asian American and Pacific Islander. About 22% of residents describe themselves as being of other races or mixed race. About 43% of residents are Hispanic or Latino, primarily of Mexican background but also including Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Puerto Ricans. Approximately 32% of the county's 140,000 households had children under the age of 18 living with them, and the average family size was 3.33. The median income for an SBC family is $54,000, and the per capita income for the county is $23,000. About 9% of families and 14% of the total population live below the poverty line, including 16% of children (US Census Bureau, 2010).

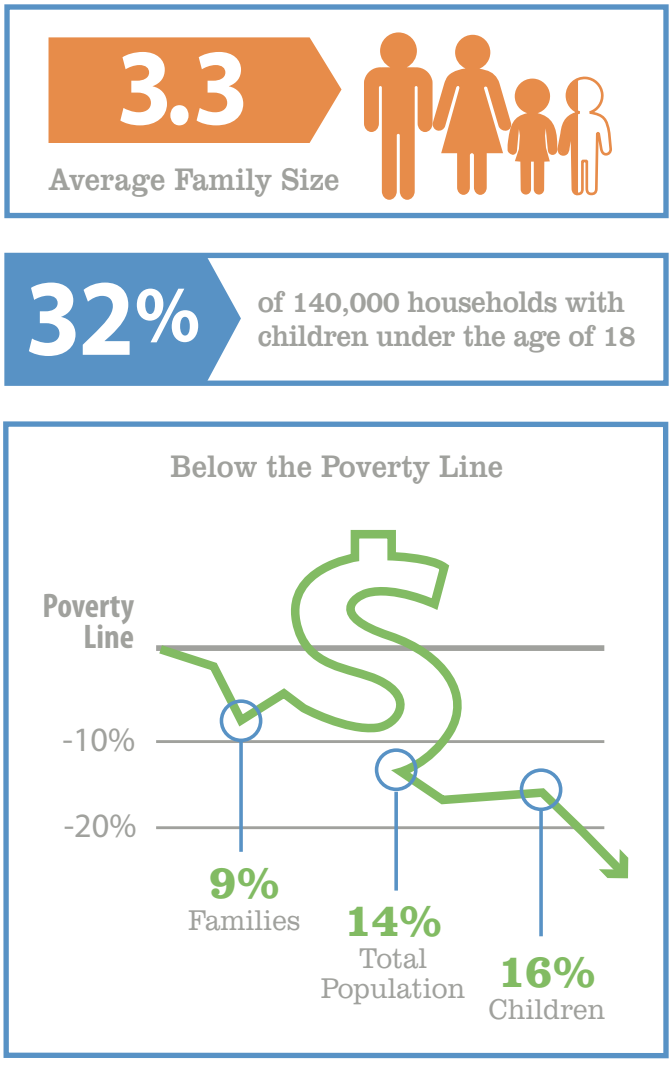
Santa Barbara County's 173 Early Childhood Education centers come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Their general mission is to care for young children and support healthy development, thereby positioning them for a high quality of life. They generally serve children from birth to five years old. They can be funded by parent-paid tuition, by the state or federal government, or by faith-based or other organizations, and can be run as for-profit businesses or as non-profits.

COUNTY'S RACIAL IDENTITY



Note: race categories are not mutually exclusive

COUNTY'S FAMILY STATISTICS



METHODS

Ongoing collaboration between ES and TOF supported the development and refinement of all the following stages of this evaluation.

1] Define evaluation goals and questions – Working collaboratively with TOF staff, Evaluation Specialists (ES) identified the goals for the evaluation and the specific questions it would be designed to answer. Through this process, we determined qualitative methods would best suit this evaluation. Qualitative methods enable evaluators and program audiences to understand initiatives in a deep and nuanced way. These methods are designed to gather rich, complex information from fewer individuals and can be used to assess program impacts (Mohr, 1999). This evaluation approach was a good fit with TOF's expressed desire to understand the value of its work to ECE staff, its impact on "the whole child," and to provide contextual information regarding program implementation to its audiences.

2] Develop qualitative interview questions and guide – The goal of the interviews was to be able to answer the evaluation questions from the perspectives and real-world experiences of center directors and teachers who were intimately involved in the implementation of these three ECE initiatives. We drafted and collected feedback on the interview questions and facilitation guide from TOF and TOF's ECE partners: First 5 Santa Barbara County and Child Educational Center (CEC). These interviews were semi-structured in nature. This interview method results in data that addresses what is most important or striking to study participants, one of the benefits of a qualitative study (Hollway & Jackson, 2000).

3] Conduct a pilot study – The pilot was conducted with seven centers and had three main goals. The first was to assess center willingness to participate and the possible need for incentives. The second was to test and improve recruitment, interview scheduling, informed consent, and other study procedures. The third was to further refine the interview instrument. The final interview instrument is included as Appendix A.

4] Identify a stratified sample – We identified center characteristics relevant to the evaluation questions and used this information to develop a stratified sampling frame to guide recruitment of the sample (Creswell, 1998). This method contributes to the evaluation's validity by ensuring that different perspectives regarding TOF initiative experiences were gathered. We sought to recruit centers that differed in:

- Size (small <50 students; large >50 students)
- Geography (North or South Santa Barbara County)
- Funding source (private, federal, state, faith-based, for-profit, non-profit)

TOF then identified 31 centers that maximized diversity across these dimensions, and invited them to participate in the evaluation. Centers were asked to invite their director and a TOF-initiative involved teacher for interviews. Given the evaluation aimed to collect stories of impact and value, only centers that received a high degree of support via these

The goals of this evaluation were to answer the following six evaluation questions:

1] What aspects of programming and support were most useful?

2] What were the barriers and facilitators to program implementation?

3] How have programs influenced centers, staff, children and their families?

4] What is needed to sustain the programs?

5] To what extent were the programs valuable and impactful?

6] What are the underlying principles of the programs' success?



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initiatives were included in this sample. Of the 31 centers identified, 27 participated in the evaluation. One center's director declined to have her center participate, and three centers could not be scheduled for interviews due to logistical challenges. However, since these centers were similar to those participating in terms of center characteristics, the sample remained sufficiently diverse in the characteristics identified as important.

5] Recruit interview participants – Following study introduction and recruitment by TOF, we sent teachers and directors a confirmation email and an information sheet. This document described the study's purpose and procedures, what participation entailed, and steps taken to protect their privacy. Before beginning an interview, ES staff confirmed that study participants had reviewed the information sheet and addressed any questions, ensuring that their participation was fully informed and voluntary.

6] Conduct interviews – We conducted a total of 44 interviews with 26 directors and 18 teachers at the 27 participating centers. Of the 44 interviews conducted, 43% (19) were at small centers and 57% (25) at large, and 39% (17) were in North Santa Barbara County and 61% (27) in South Santa Barbara County. Thirty-two percent of the study centers were supported through State funding (14), and 27% (12) of the sample were non-profit centers. Faith-based centers comprised 18% (8) of the sample, for-profit centers constituted 14% (6) of the sample, and the remaining 9% (4) of the sample was Federally-funded. All of the centers who contributed data to this report were involved in both OCPSBC and PFI initiatives, and three out of four centers whose personnel were interviewed also engaged in the Accreditation Support.

Interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed, and the interviewers took notes on key ideas during and immediately following each interview. One interview was not transcribed due to difficulties with the recording. However, key ideas captured via field notes taken immediately following this interview were represented in transcribed interviews with other study participants.

A DIVERSE GROUP OF CENTERS WERE REPRESENTED IN THE STUDY



57% Large Centers



43% Small Centers

26 Directors

18 Teachers

61% South Santa Barbara County

39% North Santa Barbara County

CENTERS SUPPORTED:

32% State Funded

27% Non-Profit

18% Faith-Based

14% For-Profit

9% Federal

7] Conduct data analyses – Having and documenting a concrete stepwise plan for data analysis is a key element of rigorous qualitative science (Patton, 2002). The data analysis was split into two phases. The first was a traditional thematic analysis to surface key themes. The second was an evaluative analysis designed to answer overarching questions of initiative value and impact.

To conduct the traditional thematic analysis, we first created a codebook to capture responses directly related to the overarching evaluation questions via line-by-line coding of three randomly-chosen transcripts. In an inductive thematic coding process, additional codes representing themes were created as they emerged from the data by independently coding three additional randomly-chosen transcripts.

A "theme" is an idea that both elucidates something significant about ECE and TOF in a particular director or teacher's account, and is common across multiple cases and thus likely to apply beyond this data set (Ayres, Kavanaugh, & Knafl, 2003). Each transcript was first coded for themes, then each theme was coded into sub-themes.

Thematic trends were identified across all participants, and also identified across subgroups of participants based on respondent characteristics, initiatives, and center characteristics, to enable between-group comparisons. Major themes were identified, as were contradictions and negative evidence. Field notes were reviewed to validate findings. Analyses were conducted with Dedoose Version 5.0.11 qualitative analysis software.

To conduct the second layer of analysis to evaluate value and impact, we worked closely with TOF to define the intended value and impacts of the three initiatives, and codify them in three initiative-specific evaluation rubrics, included as Appendix C. These rubrics were developed to provide the Orfalea Fund with a transparent understanding of how these evaluative assessments would be made, and communicates standards of program excellence to the Fund's audiences.

This stage of the analysis adds to the objectivity of the evaluation (King, McKegg, Oakden, and Wehipeihana, 2013) in that it can be used to improve initiatives and/or clearly communicate suggestions for program improvement to audiences looking to replicate their programs. Each interview was assessed against the criteria in each rubric. These assessments were then summarized into overall evaluative statements of initiative value and impact.









FINDINGS

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT

Overwhelmingly and spontaneously, center staff reported that they were grateful for TOF support, particularly because the support was offered free of cost. Out of the 43 study participants, 19 mentioned their appreciation without prompting when asked for general impressions of TOF initiatives. Center staff described what they saw as the most beneficial elements of the training and support, and also reported on ways it could be improved.

Key beneficial aspects of TOF support centered around both the content and format of the support, and interpersonal relationships.

In terms of content and format, study participants praised the quality of the information they received in trainings. They found it to be trustworthy, evidence-based and backed by science, and easily shared with parents and other staff. They also appreciated the flexibility of trainings, citing regular opportunities to attend, flexible scheduling options, flexible training entry points, and various training sites as key in getting and keeping them involved. They spoke well of the applied learning and hands-on exercises in the trainings. Staff also cited the center-specific technical assistance offered by initiative staff, describing how useful it was to have direct support from initiative team members at their respective centers. Center directors were more likely than teachers to mention these site visits, though both groups expressed appreciation for them.

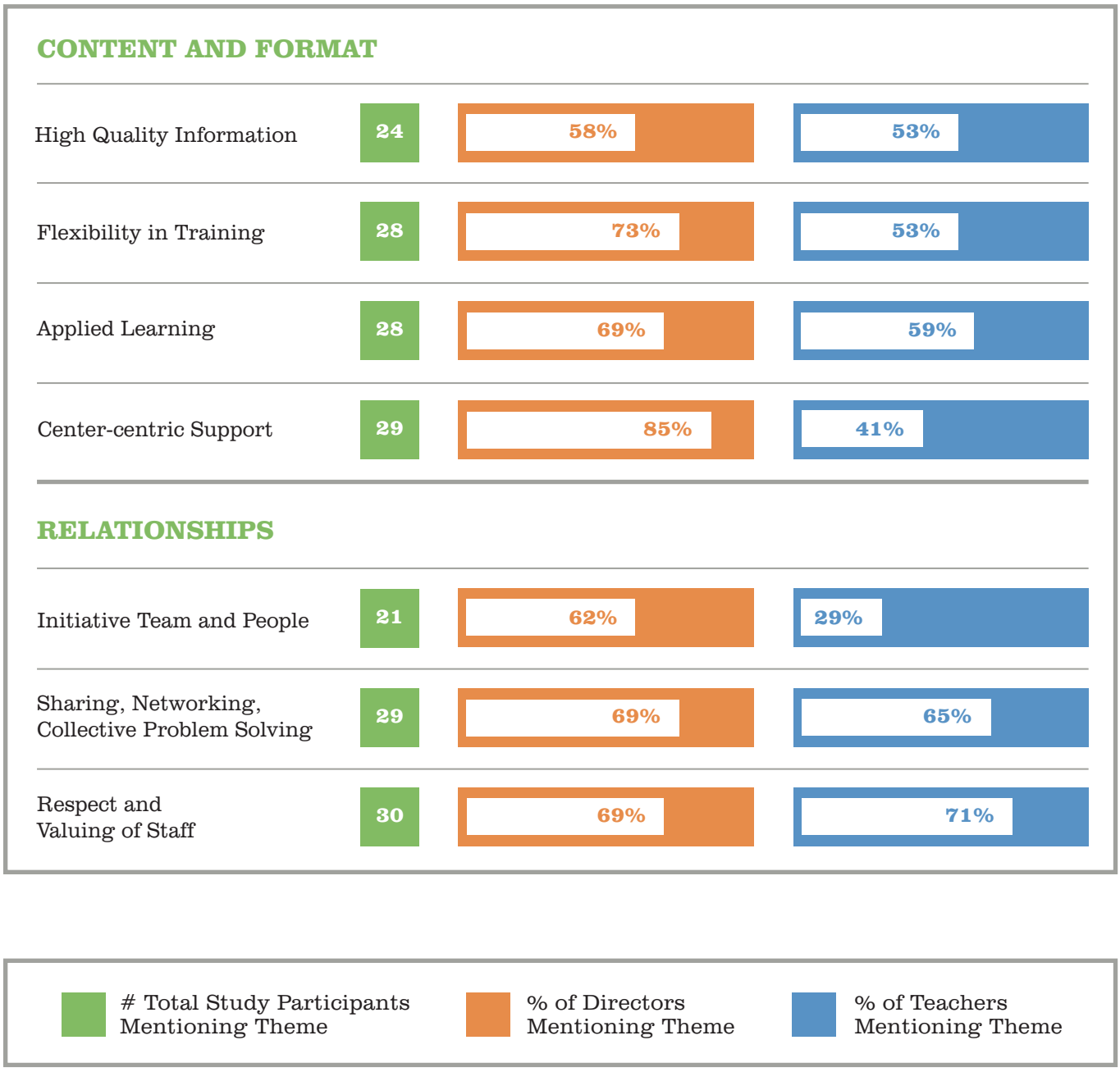
In terms of interpersonal relationships, study participants mentioned the energy, expertise, availability, charisma, and generosity of initiative team members as very beneficial to them. They also appreciated the way center staff and trainees were encouraged to share their experiences, network, and solve problems collectively. Finally, many center staff mentioned the positive regard they felt from initiative team members; they stated that these feelings of being respected and valued were a key part of the ECE programming. Staff at larger centers and at north county centers were particularly likely to bring up these feelings.

> *"Very few of us would have attended the trainings if we had to pay for it. I mean our salaries are so low and our school budget is already struggling. We're happy to be here, but it's not like we have a lot of extra money to pay for training and materials."*
>
> *– Teacher*



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Figure 1. Most beneficial elements of TOF ECE training and support.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.



SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

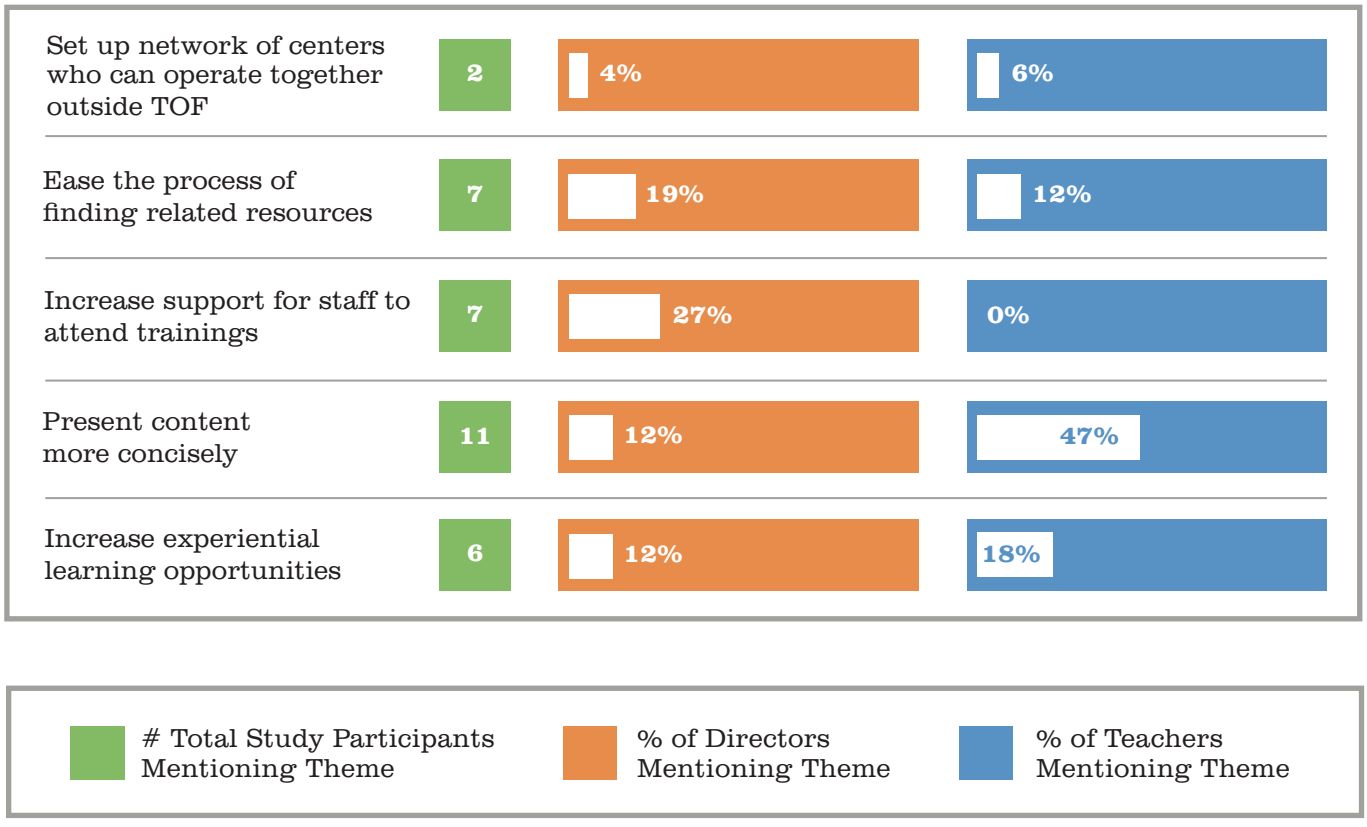
Study participants were asked specifically for suggestions on improving the training and support within these three ECE initiatives. Even with prompting, far fewer center staff produced this constructively critical feedback, demonstrating their predominantly positive perceptions of TOF's ECE work.

Suggestions to improve TOF support were related to program expansion rather than improvement itself.

One of these was supporting a network that would link centers beyond trainings, and position them to operate together as a collective and continue their cross-center learning. Another was to position staff to easily find materials and resources related to OCPSBC and PFI, such as setting up or directing a marketplace to facilitate this resource finding and sharing. Nonprofit and state funded centers in particular emphasized these needs. A third recommendation was to provide substitutes at the centers so that center staff could more easily attend ECE trainings. Directors, whose responsibility it is to organize staffing and cover absences, naturally mentioned this suggestion more frequently than teachers. Suggestions for program improvement included embedding more experiential learning into the trainings, and making the training more concise; this last suggestion was principally made by busy teachers.

> *I think they could've done a little better at connecting centers together. Perhaps they could have met with two similar centers simultaneously so that there could be sharing and support amongst the centers. They should have set up more opportunities for centers to mentor each other.*
>
> *– Director*

Figure 2. Suggestions for improvement.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.



BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Center staff noted barriers to implementation of TOF-supported initiatives as well as facilitators to program success.

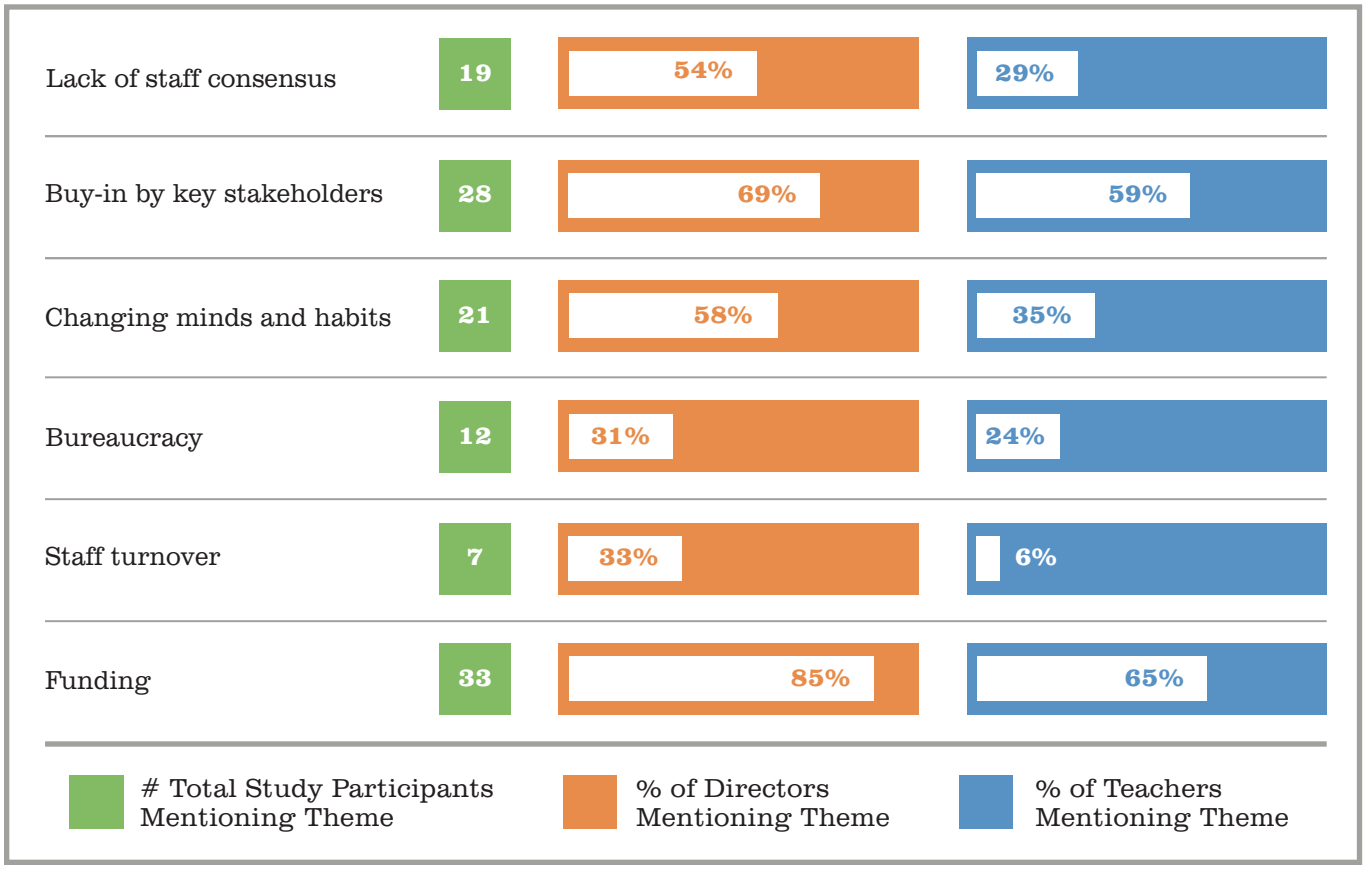
Person-related barriers: Some barriers mentioned were person-related, such as center staff not being aligned in ECE initiative goals or "on the same page" at the same time; difficulty getting "buy-in by key stakeholders" from staff, parents, and the community; and the difficulty inherent in changing peoples' minds and habits. Directors in particular noted these barriers.

System-related barriers: Other barriers were system-related, such as the existence of competing systems or bureaucracies and the perennial barrier of needed resources like funding and personnel effort. Specifically, study participants mentioned that though they had intentions of building and implementing outdoor learning environments and new food practices that actualized the OCPSBC and PFI principles, they were sometimes challenged by district leadership or higher -order entities that did not understand or value these principles and therefore did not offer the support needed to enact them. This finding was especially common at federally-funded centers.

One system-level barrier deserves special note: The need to train new staff as a result of trained-staff turnover. While no teachers and a fairly small number of directors mentioned this issue, it was extremely salient to study participants when it did arise, and they indicated it was a difficult barrier to overcome. This difficulty was especially pertinent for staff in north county centers, but was not mentioned by staff in for-profit centers, perhaps due to their access to more resources for teacher salaries.

> *I think our biggest challenge is just changing people's mindsets and winning them over. People really have their preconceived ideas of what they're comfortable with children eating and where they think children should be to learn and how they should act in an early childhood environment. And it's really hard to get to the root of those preconceptions and change them.*
>
> – Teacher

Figure 3. Barriers to implementation.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.

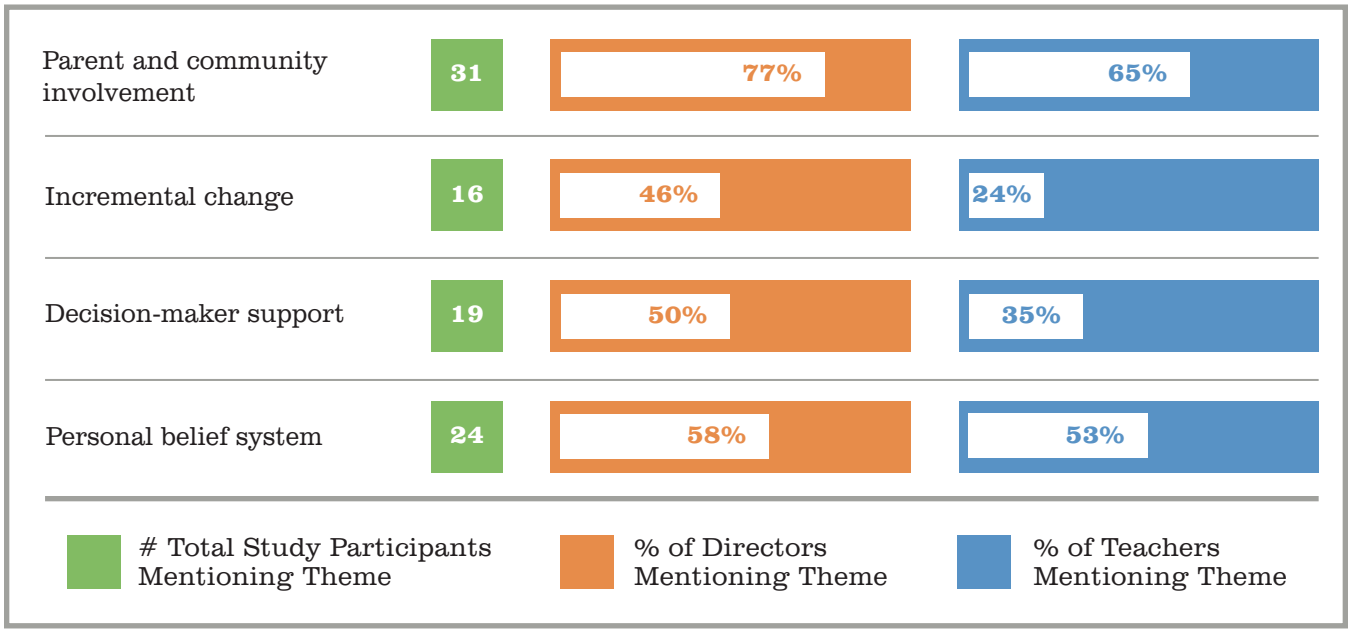


FACILITATORS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Involvement by parents and community was a powerful facilitator of TOF ECE initiative implementation. Other facilitating factors included willingness to take "baby steps" and make incremental changes (particularly noted by directors), support from decision-makers, and having personal beliefs that were in alignment with initiative principles prior to program implementation.

> *The whole general idea of the need for children to learn outside and eat healthy foods is something that I have always believed in personally. So it was a natural fit for me to incorporate the programs into the center practices.*
>
> *– Director*

Figure 4. Facilitating factors of implementation.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.







INITIATIVE OUTCOMES

Initiative outcomes were addressed in terms of effects on centers, on staff, on children, on families, and on others (e.g., communities).

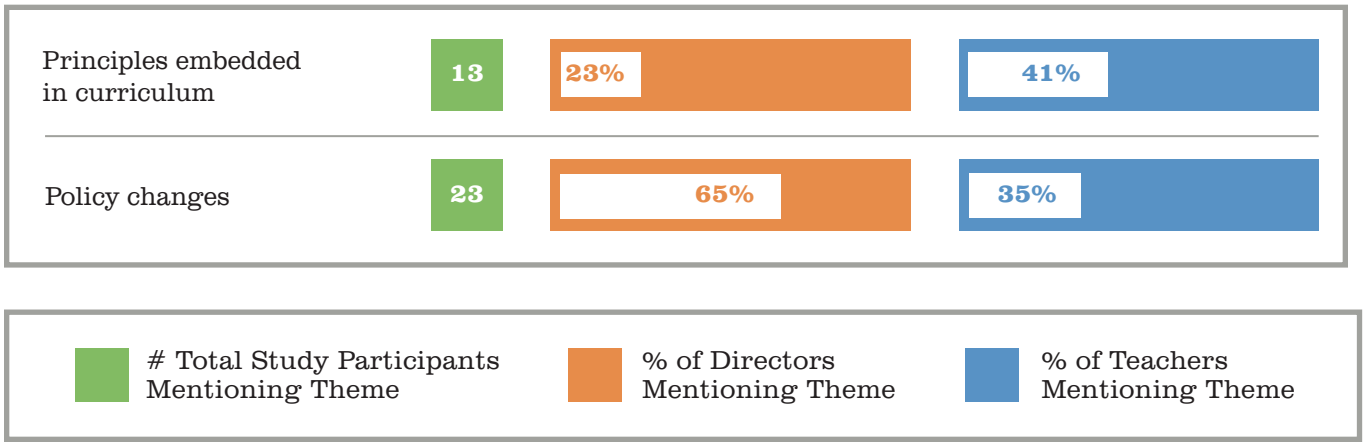
CENTER OUTCOMES

Attending the ECE trainings and implementing these initiatives helped center staff systematize center practices related to food, outdoor education, and quality practice. These important principles are "practice as usual" now. Changes made include centers embedding program principles into their curriculum and both formal and informal policy changes to integrate program principles. Informal policy changes included explicit shifts in parent handbooks that reflect program aims. Directors in particular commented on center-level effects such as policy changes, positioned as they are to view issues from this perspective.

> *"I've seen the benefits with my own eyes. It benefits children's ability to self-regulate, to make positive choices, to focus and attend, to have a higher self-esteem and have more confidence in general.."*
>
> *– Teacher*

Figure 5. Center outcomes.

See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.





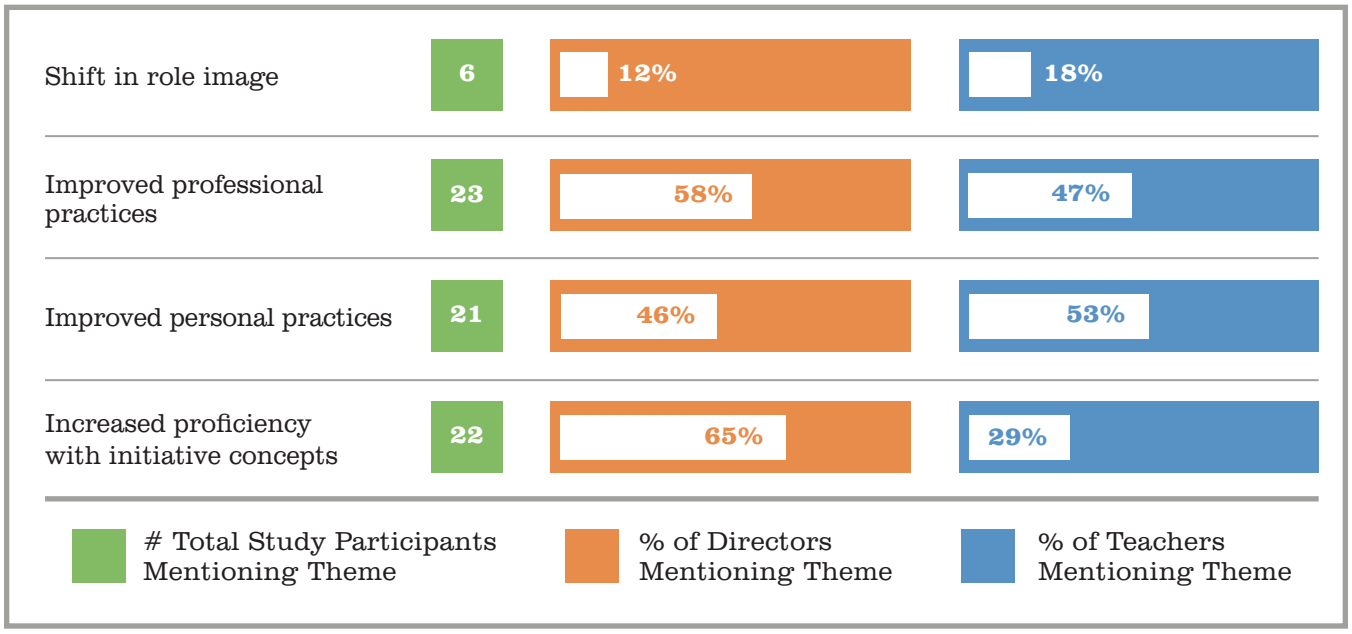
STAFF OUTCOMES

The training that ECE center staff received related to these initiatives improved their and others' image of their professional role. Staff described both feeling more professional, and being treated as more legitimate, powerful, and professional, after trainings and program implementation. Staff also described their professional practices as having been improved by efforts to align them with program practices. Further, staff took the lessons from these programs home with them and improved their personal initiative-related habits, such as improving their food and nutrition practices, and recognized the need to model these practices as appropriate, such as not drinking soda in front of children. Finally, staff felt their overall proficiency with program-related concepts and theories improved greatly. The trainings helped to validate the implicit theories regarding food, nutrition, and outdoor education that staff already had. This made them more confident in communicating about the principles and theories behind the initiatives. Their ability to credibly articulate the initiatives' purposes grew along with their knowledge.

> *"I'd say the programs influenced me personally, as well. I am more aware of what my own children are eating and how much time we spend outside freely exploring."*
>
> *– Director*

Figure 6. Staff outcomes.

See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.





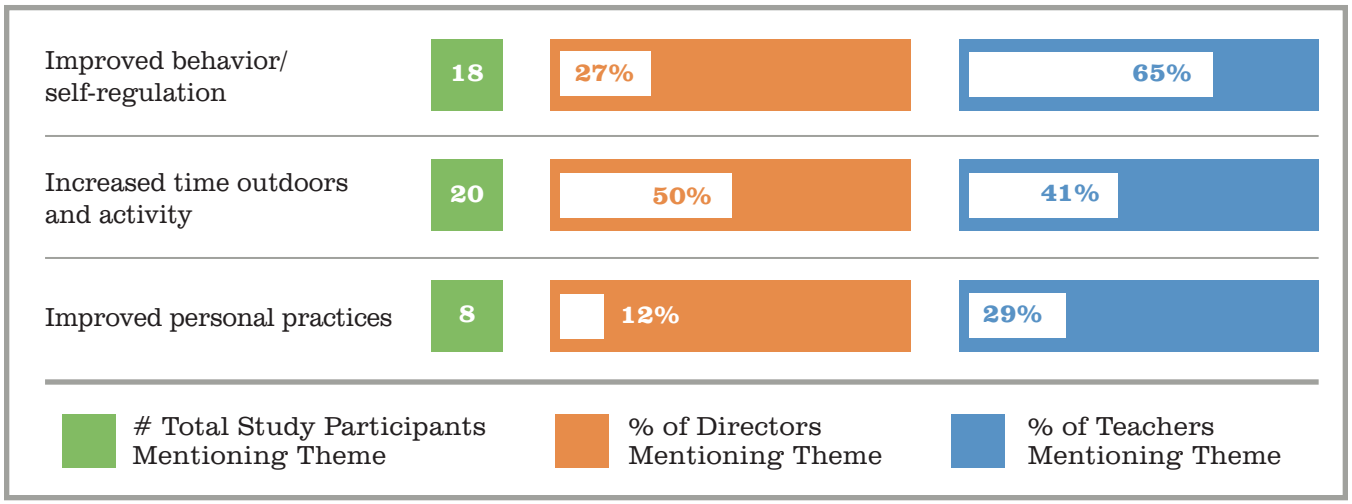


> *I think that the children know that all the activities that we do outside are good for their hearts. And they enjoy the snacks outdoors too. We serve their snacks outside and sometimes they pick their snacks right off of the plants in the garden.*
>
> *– Director*

CHILD OUTCOMES

Center staff believe that children were positively influenced in a variety of ways as a result of these three initiatives. Center staff reported positive influences on children stemming from these three TOF ECE initiatives. Teachers, from their on-the-ground position, were somewhat more likely than directors to provide information on student-level changes and outcomes. These positive outcomes included improved self-regulation and behavior (especially noted by teachers); increased time being outdoors and having opportunities to engage in physical activity; and improved and more diverse opportunities for learning. Center staff at small centers were more likely to note improved behavior from the children they served than staff at large centers.

Figure 7. Child outcomes.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.



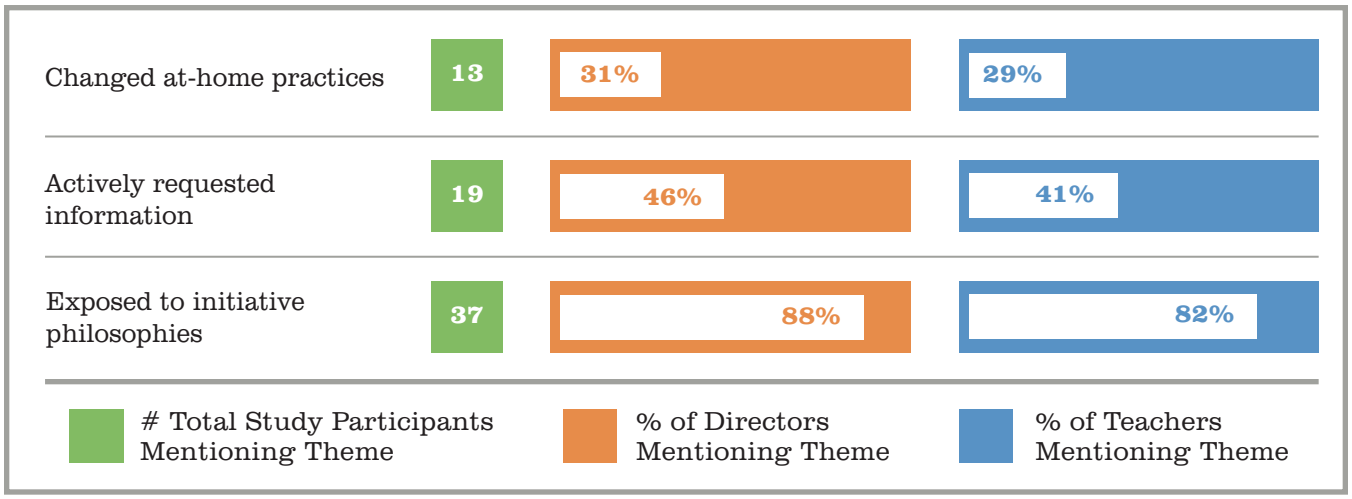


FAMILY OUTCOMES

In many cases, families were perceived by center staff as having changed their at-home practices due to these three ECE initiatives. This perception was especially common in staff from north county centers. Families actively requested program-related information and resources, and their attitudes toward the initiatives also changed over time. Even when not actively making such requests, staff saw families as having benefited from passive exposure to program practices and philosophies, such as reviewing the centers' policy handbooks that highlighted program principles and priorities, and receiving menus and materials aligned with the programs. Families also have begun to recognize the prestige of accreditation, though may not fully understand how this accreditation equates to quality practice.

> *I have heard from our families that our healthy foods policies, and what we do here at the center, has translated into them eating healthier at their houses. And they're cooking more, we don't see a lot of prepackaged foods in the students' lunches anymore.*
>
> *– Director*

Figure 8. Family outcomes.
See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.



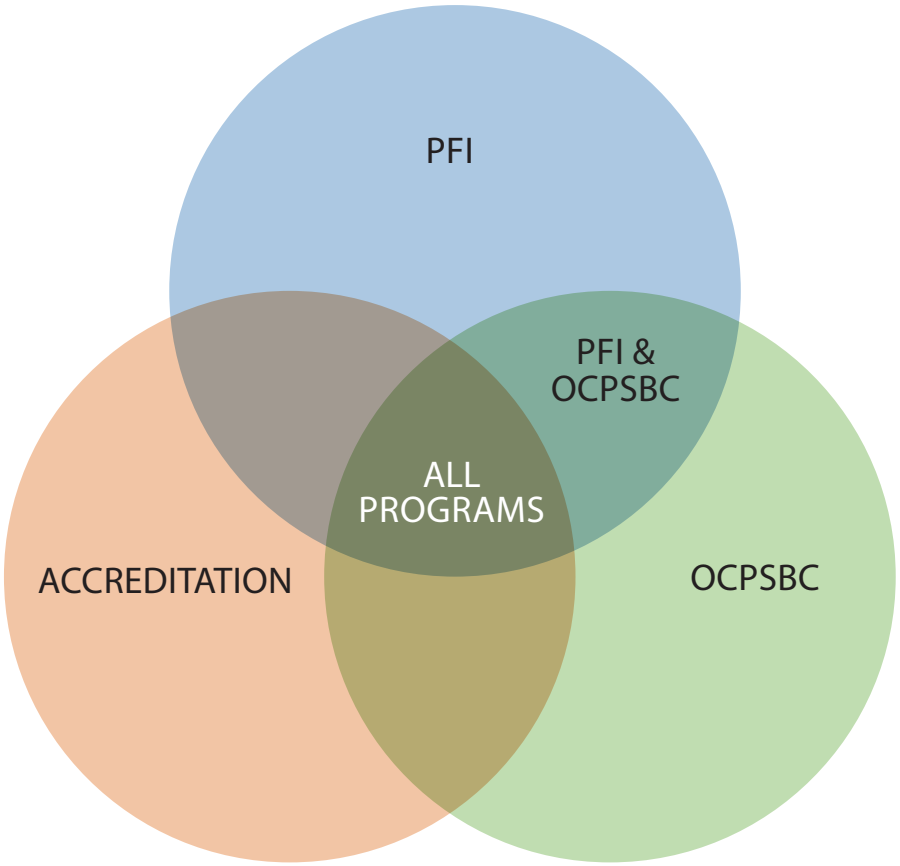
OTHER OUTCOMES

In addition to effects on centers, their staff, and the children and families served by them, these initiatives (perhaps inadvertently) also affected other groups. These included the church communities in which some centers were situated and also college students enrolled in teaching programs at the centers, some of whom were key advocates for initiative activities. Community outcomes such as these demonstrate how change can start in one location, such as an ECE center, and go on to have a wider positive impact. Even initiatives that do not explicitly target these wider communities can plant seeds that eventually grow beyond programs and into communities.



Four study participants reported that the initiatives did not impact centers at all, eight reported that the initiatives did not impact staff at all, one reported that the initiatives did not impact children at all, and, two reported that the initiatives did not impact families at all. Of those who spoke of a lack of impact, many suggested that their centers were already enacting practices related to these initiatives prior to their involvement in the related TOF support, and therefore the support itself did not influence their stakeholder groups.

ECE INITIATIVES WORKED IN SYNERGY TO EFFECT CHANGE



ALL PROGRAMS

Principles embedded in curriculum

Policy changes

Shift in staff image of role

Improved staff professional practices

Improved staff personal practices

Increased staff proficiency with program concepts

Improved child behavior/self-regulation

Increased child time outdoors and activity

Increased child opportunities for learning

Changed family at-home practices

Families actively requested information

Families exposed to program philosophies

PFI

Improved staff modeling of good food-related behaviors

Children and their families are exposed to new foods

OCPSBC

Infrastructure/physical modifications

Increase children's sense of independence

PFI & OCPSBC

Children learn to appreciate nature

Healthier food is consumed by children

Healthier food is offered at Center

ACCREDITATION

Staff are more cohesive and self-reflective

INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY

TOF planned for initiative sustainability from the very start, strategically planting "seedlings" that they expected would grow into key elements of centers' sustainability efforts. One of these seedlings that was mentioned by study participants was the Demonstration Site Network Steering Committe set up by initiative staff to support centers interested in growing or initiating the higher quality programming reflective of the OCPSBC, PFI, and Accreditation Support initiatives.

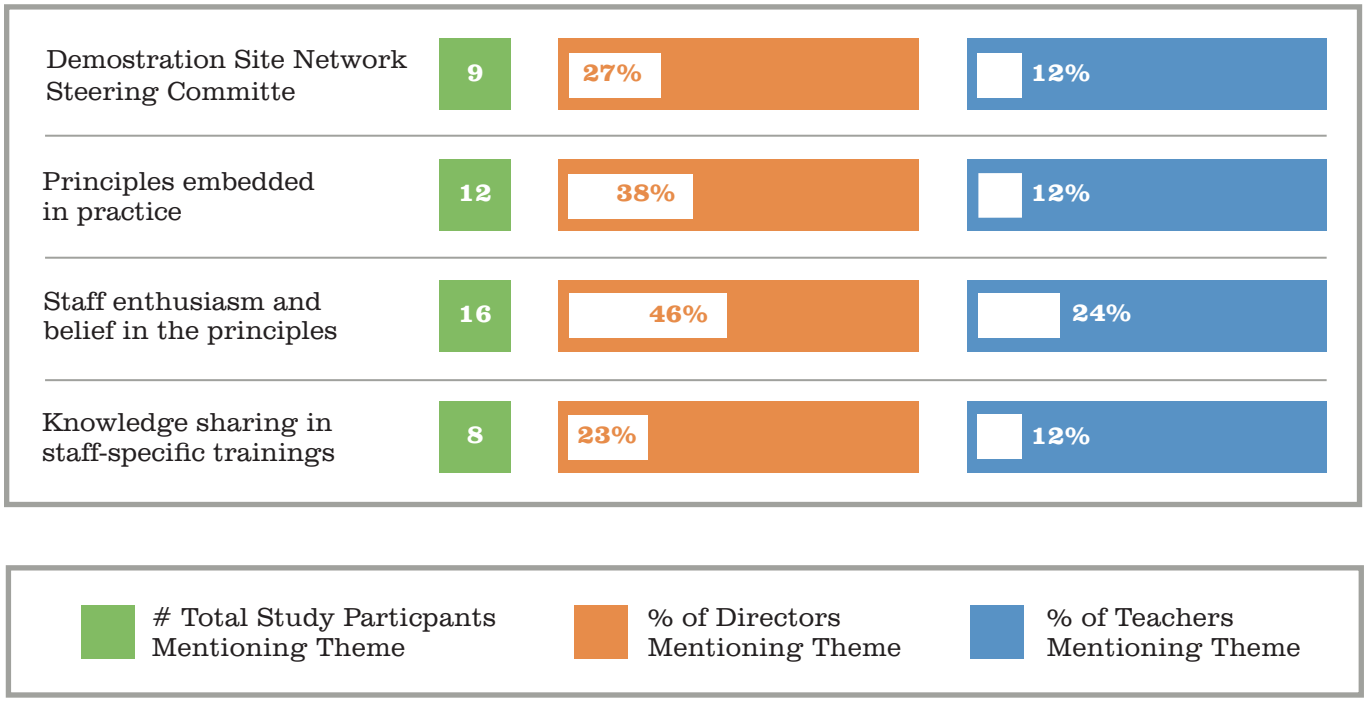
Center staff mentioned several other factors they saw as being contributors to the sustainability of these initiatives. Center directors in particular stated that program-related concepts and principles are now embedded in their practices and policies in a way that supports program continuation. Another factor in center staff confidence related to program sustainability was the high level of staff and community enthusiasm for the initiatives as well as belief in the principles behind them.

Many study participants expressed the sentiment that although a lot of work had been done, there was still more they wanted to do. The centers' staff commitment to supporting the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of young children – along with the expertise and practices they have developed with TOF's support – indicates that they will remain committed to improving ECE quality through these initiatives beyond the Fund's involvement. A demonstration of this commitment and enthusiasm is the intention expressed by some center staff to use the resources and knowledge provided by TOF to incorporate content on the programs/principles into their regular staff trainings.

> *"The committee that I'm on in Santa Barbara has discussed how to sustain the programs in the county. What we're hoping to do is rally together a group of 8 to 10 different centers that can offer workshops for other centers and be demonstration sites. Staff can go to those sites to see how the programs work in action"*
>
> *– Director*

Figure 9. Initiative sustainability.

See Appendix B for respondent quotes illustrating these trends.



OVERALL VALUE AND IMPACT

In addition to the thematic analysis that produced the findings described above, this evaluation was designed to answer the following questions of initiative value and impact.

1. To what extent did OCPSBC, PFI, and the Accreditation Support positively impact ECE centers, staff, children, and families?

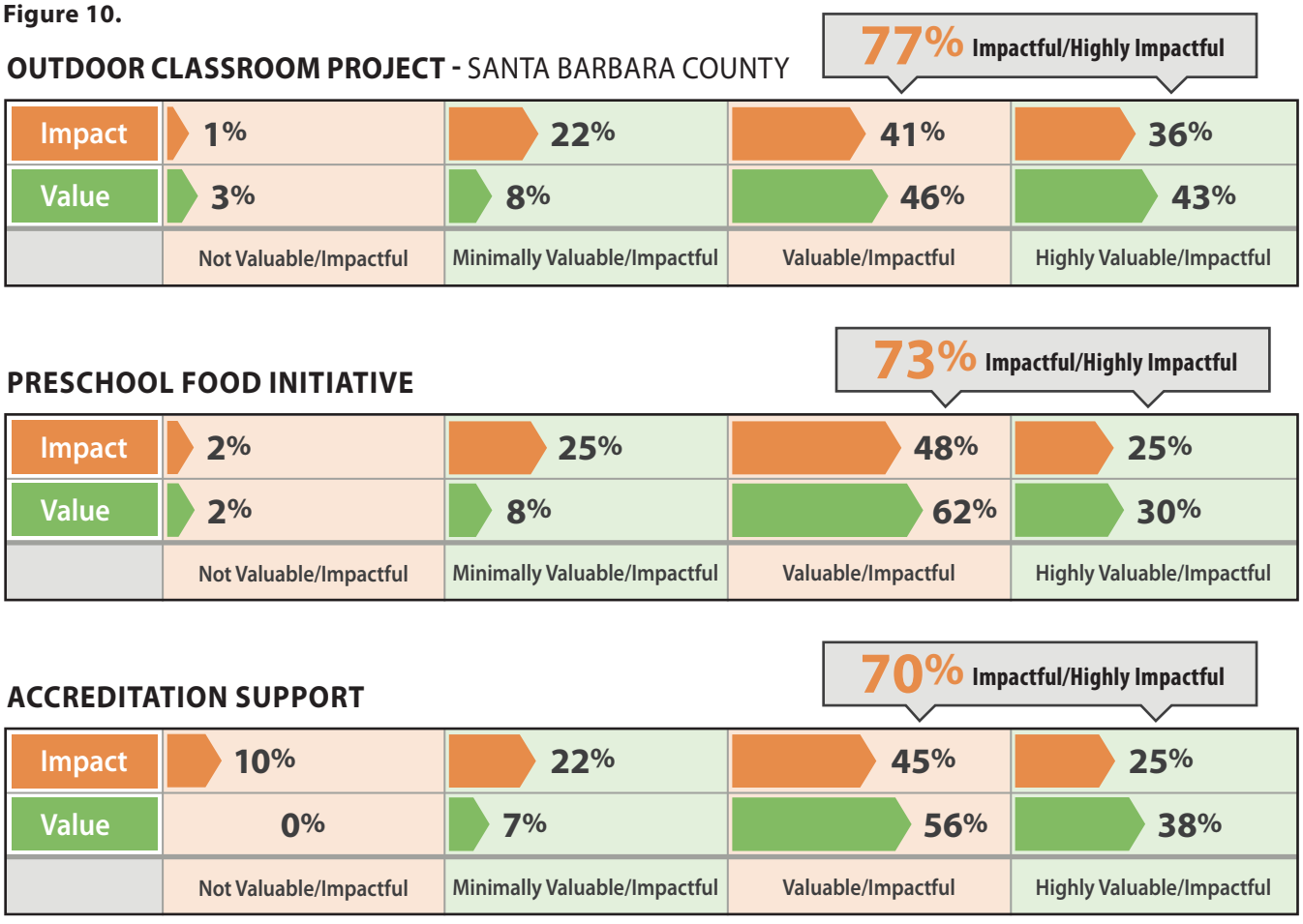
2. Which initiative elements were of most and least value to ECE center staff?

Evaluative rubrics were developed and applied to conduct these assessments. Evaluative rubrics are a powerful though often overlooked component of program evaluation. Rubrics (1) offer transparency to TOF and audiences regarding the judgments of impact and value, (2) provide audiences with a clear picture of the programs' goals, and (3) provide audiences with a framework from which to build their own related programs. Complete rubrics are in Appendix C, and capture value and impact on a four -point scale ranging from no value/impact to highly valuable/impactful[1].

Each of the three initiatives positively impacted intended stakeholders, and the components of each of the initiatives were deemed valuable.

Figure 10 below depicts the average proportion of study participants reporting each level of value and impact for each initiative. For example, on average, 43% of study participants reported that the OCPSBC was highly valuable, the highest rating on the rubric's 4-point value scale. Importantly, very few study participants reported that program elements were not at all valuable or had no positive impact on stakeholders. Center staff endorsing "no impact/ value" or "minimal impact/value" explained that they felt their centers were already exhibiting the initiatives' principles and practices even prior to their involvement, and that therefore the initiatives themselves had less impact.

Figure 10.



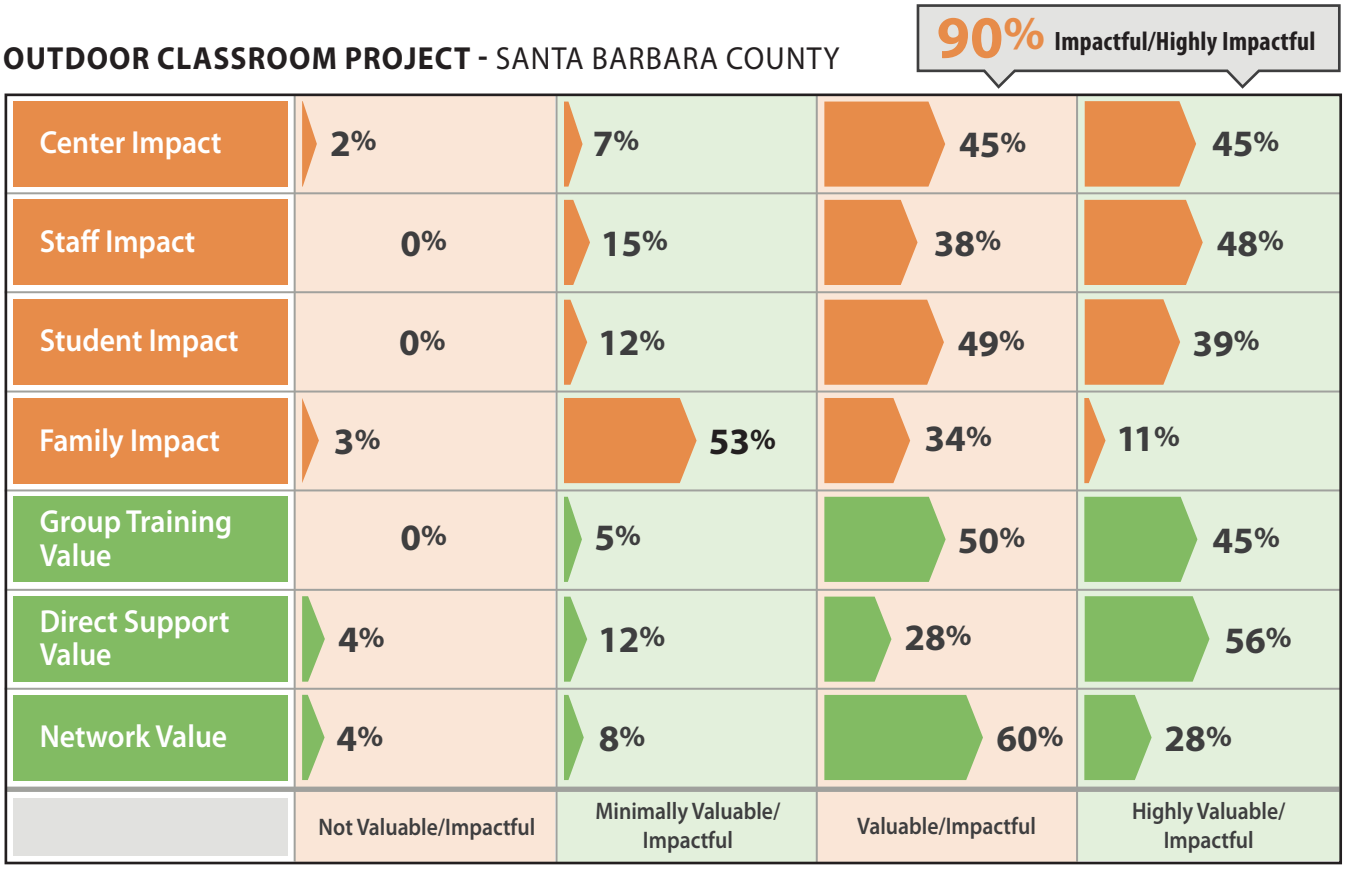
[1] A limitation of this evaluative rubric approach is that we can only assess study participants' articulation of impact and value, rather than being able to measure objective assessments of impact and value. However, these articulations were rich, thoughtful, and nuanced, and qualitative articulations of impact are accepted as valid. The Fund has collected additional data from which assessments of value and impact can also be made; these data are presented elsewhere.

Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County: Each overarching element of support of the OCPSBC was found to be valuable, with the direct support offered to centers being highly valuable. The OCPSBC positively impacted centers, staff, children, and to a lesser degree, the families of the children who attended the centers.

Figure 11 depicts the proportion of study participants that reported each level of value for each element of the OCPSBC, and each level of impact on OCPSBC stakeholder groups. For example, we see that 45% of the study participants found the OCPSBC group trainings to be highly valuable, while 8% found the OCPSBC networking opportunities to be minimally valuable.

Figure 11.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM PROJECT - SANTA BARBARA COUNTY



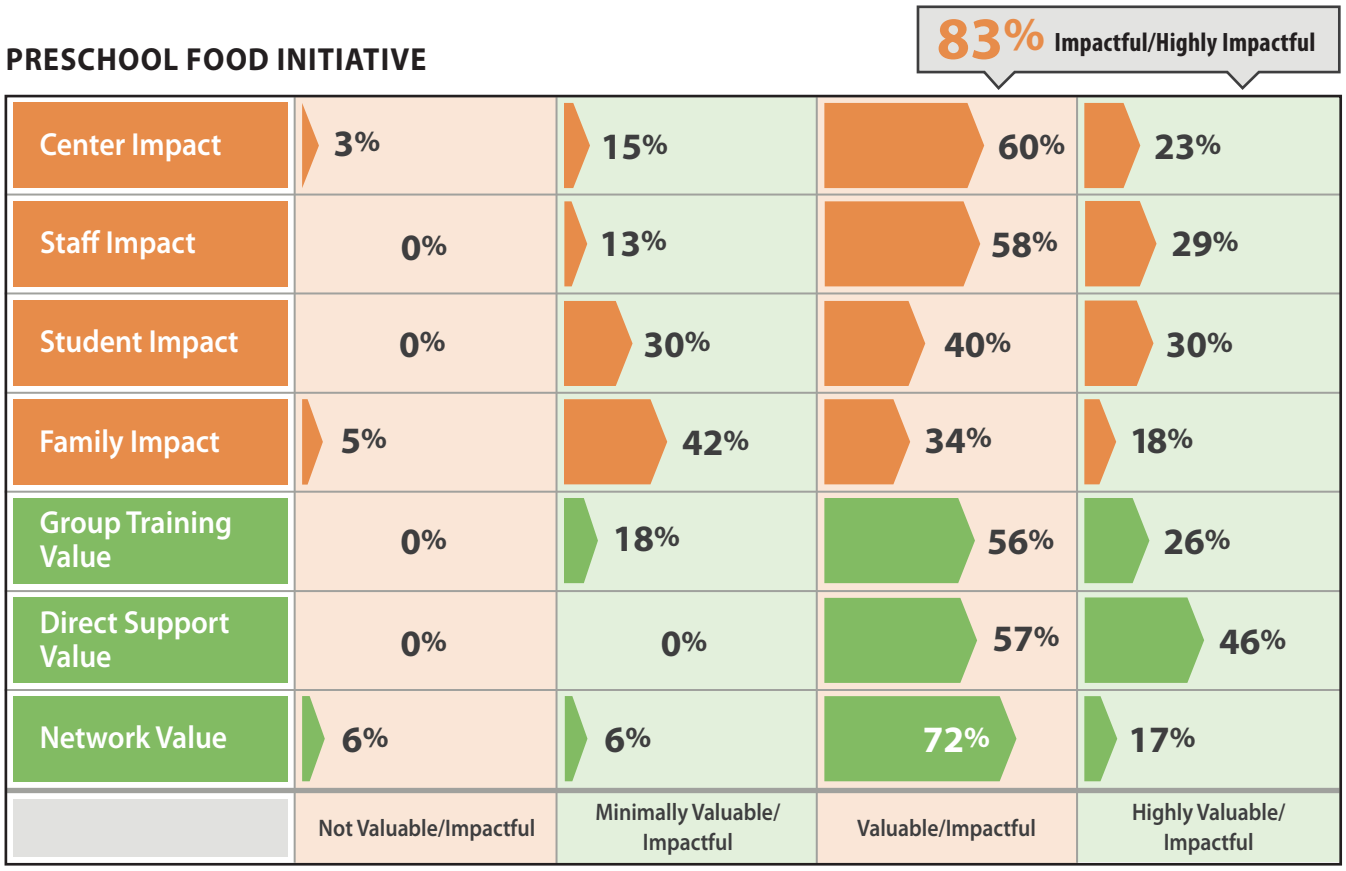




Preschool Food Initiative: Each overarching element of support of the PFI was found to be valuable, with the direct support offered to centers being highly valuable. The PFI positively impacted centers, staff, children, and to a lesser degree, the families of the children who attended the centers.

Figure 12 presents the proportion of study participants that reported each level of value for each element of the PFI, and each level of impact on PFI stakeholder groups. For example, we see that 46% of the study participants found the PFI direct support to be highly valuable.

Figure 12.







Accreditation Support: Each overarching element of support of the Accreditation Support was found to be valuable, with the direct support offered to centers being highly valuable. The Accreditation Support positively impacted staff and to a lesser degree the centers. We were unable to assess the impact of this support on children and the families of the children who attended the centers. Some centers felt that the practices aligned to accreditation were already in place prior to going through the formal process of accreditation, and therefore achieving accreditation did not appear to influence center practices, policies, or priorities. In general, study participants were not able to articulate ways in which the accreditation support directly influenced the children and their families.

Figure 13 illustrates the proportion of study participants that reported each level of value for each element of the Accreditation Support, and each level of impact on key stakeholder groups. For example, we see that 40% of study participants reported that the Accreditation Support was highly impactful for center staff.

Figure 13.

ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

60% Impactful/Highly Impactful

	Not Valuable/Impactful	Minimally Valuable/ Impactful	Valuable/Impactful	Highly Valuable/ Impactful
Center Impact	10%	15%	50%	10%
Staff Impact	10%	10%	40%	40%
Student Impact				
Family Impact				
Group Training Value	0%	20%	50%	30%
Direct Support Value	0%	0%	47%	53%
Network Value	0%	0%	70%	30%



PERCEPTIONS OF VALUE AND IMPACT COMPARED ACROSS CENTER TYPES AND RESPONDENT ROLES



On the whole, ECE center staff perceived initiative value and impact similarly despite varying center characteristics and center staff role.

Small differences across center characteristics and staff role surfaced. Specifically:

Center Size

Staff from smaller centers were more likely to report that the accreditation support impacted staff practices than staff from larger centers.

Center Region

Staff from north county centers were less likely to report that the large group accreditation training was valuable and more likely to report that the accreditation support impacted staff practices than staff from south county centers.

Center Funding Source (by Program)

OCPSBC

- Staff from for-profit centers found more value in the large group training than those from centers funded by other sources, and found less value in the networking component of the initiative than staff from centers funded by other sources. They also reported a lower degree of impact on their children than staff from other centers.
- Staff from federally-funded centers reported a higher degree of positive impact on their children's families than staff from other centers.

PFI

- Staff from state-funded centers found less value in the large group training than staff from centers funded by other sources.
- Staff from for-profit centers found less value in the networking component of the initiative than staff from centers funded by other sources, and reported a lower degree of impact on their children than staff from other centers.
- Staff from federally-funded centers reported a higher degree of positive impact on their children's families than staff from other centers.

ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

- Staff from large centers reported a lower degree of positive impact on the children's families than staff from small centers.
- Staff from north county centers found less value in the large group trainings, but reported a higher degree of impact on the children's families than staff from south county centers.
- Staff from faith-based centers found less value in the large group trainings than staff from centers funded from other sources.
- Staff from for -profit centers reported a higher degree of positive impact on the staff than staff from centers funded from other sources.
- Staff from nonprofit centers reported a lower degree of positive impact on the centers than staff from other centers.

[Data tables and aligned figures are presented in Appendix D].

[2] These comparisons were carried out to enhance the qualitative analysis. However, they are purely descriptive. With the small sample size appropriate for these in-depth qualitative analyses, statistical difference testing is not scientifically valid.

INITIATIVE PROFILES

ECE center staff experienced these three TOF ECE initiatives in an integrated manner. Their accounts most often treated the initiatives as one holistic unit; in particular, they reacted to the commonalities shared by PFI and OCPSBC.

This finding, that initiatives were synergistic and interwoven, is an important element in the successes of the ECE focus area.

However, study participants also spoke about aspects of individual initiatives. These initiative-specific findings are part of the Initiative Profiles, which also draw on the data presented in the above narrative in order to provide complete results for each individual initiative.







OUTDOOR CLASSROOM PROJECT - SANTA BARBARA COUNTY



INITIATIVE PURPOSE

The aim of OCPSBC is to "better the lives of young children in Santa Barbara County by increasing the quantity, quality and benefit of outdoor experiences" by inspiring teachers to spend more time outdoors and teach through play and physical activity. The goals of this project were to be achieved through staff training, on-site consultation and outdoor enhancements at early childhood education centers throughout the County.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT

The Orfalea Fund's Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County directly touched 143 centers, serving more than 7,000 children. These centers varied in size, funding type, and county region. Many of these centers serve high-needs children, those who are from low-income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT

- High quality information
- Flexibility in training
- Applied learning
- Center-centric support
- Cross-center site visits
- Relationships
- TOF team and people
- Sharing, networking, collective problem solving
- Respect and valuing of staff

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offerings
- Train staff to find related resources
- Increase support for staff to attend trainings
- Present content more concisely
- Increase experiential learning opportunities

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- Lack of staff consensus
- Buy-in by key stakeholders
- Changing minds and habits
- Bureaucracy
- Staff turnover
- Funding

INITIATIVE OUTCOMES

Center Outcomes

- Principles embedded in curriculum
- Policy changes
- Infrastructure/physical modifications

Staff Outcomes

- Shift in role image
- Improved professional practices
- Improved personal practices
- Increased proficiency with program concepts

Child Outcomes

- Improved behavior/self-regulation
- Increased time outdoors and activity
- Increased opportunities for learning
- Increased appreciation for nature
- Increased independence
- Healthier food is served

Family Outcomes

- Changed at-home practices
- Actively requested information
- Exposed to program philosophies

95% Valued Group Trainings

88% Valued Networking

84% Valued Direct Support

90% Reported Impact on the Centers

88% Reported Impact on the Students

86% Reported Impact on the Staff

45% Reported Impact on the Families

INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY

- Demostration Site Network Steering Committe
- Principles embedded in practice
- Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles
- Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings
- Physical modifications

In addition to the themes that were presented in the main narrative of the report, study participants discussing the Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County mentioned the following program-specific themes.

Key Elements of Support

Study participants reported that the Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County cross-center site visits were instrumental in fostering staff learning and understanding of how to implement and enhance outdoor learning environments. The OCPSBC offered opportunities for site directors and teachers to see other outdoor classroom sites. These firsthand experiences were embedded into program design, as the large-group trainings were held at centers with developed environments. Many site directors and teachers demonstrated a sense of agency and engagement by choosing to voluntarily visit other sites beyond these formal opportunities, and others suggested that this be an added program element in future incarnations of the initiative.

> *"Children can fill up a bucket of sand firmly, and another loosely, and then they can compare and contrast the buckets' volume. So you're teaching math concepts and science concepts, but the children are not sitting at a desk learning from a book."*
>
> – Director

Initiative Outcomes for Centers

One priority of the OCPSBC was to provide vision and guidance to centers to support the design and enhancement of their outdoor learning environments. The physical modifications to center grounds that resulted from participant involvement in the Outdoor Classroom Project - Santa Barbara County was mentioned as an important outcome of this program.

Initiative Outcomes for Students

Center staff reported that students learned to appreciate nature and developed a sense of independence as a result of their center's involvement with OCPSBC. Many study participants reported that providing more learning opportunities outside of the walls of the center positioned the children to naturally learn about and respect the life cycle of plants as well as worms, birds and bugs. Related, children were provided opportunities to engage with their centers' gardens. This gave them a hands-on learning experience as well as an opportunity to appreciate the growth cycle of their food. Study participants attributed this outcome to both PFI and OCPSBC. Further, a key tenet of the OCPSBC is to "be as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible." Study participants reported that this principle manifests in OCPSBC-centric centers in a variety of ways, and generally provides children with more opportunities to explore independently and push beyond preconceived boundaries (while under the watchful eye of the center staff).

Initiative Sustainability

In addition to the methods by which staff recognize that they will be able to sustain their programming beyond TOF support, they also acknowledged that the physical shifts to their outdoor learning environments were concrete contributors to sustainability.

PRESCHOOL FOOD INITIATIVE



INITIATIVE PURPOSE

The Fund worked with directors, teachers, kitchen staff and parents to improve outcomes for children through PFI. Specifically, this initiative attempts to create ECE programs that are center of wellness for children and families. Through PFI, directors and teachers 1) improve center food quality standards and systems, 2) educate children, staff, and parents about the value of healthy food practices and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) use year-round, pesticide-free center gardens to support healthy eating, physical activity and learning.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT

The Orfalea Fund's Preschool Food Initiative directly touched 90 centers, serving more than 4,500 children. These centers varied in size, funding type, and county region. Many of these centers serve high-needs children, those who are from low-income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT

- High quality information
- Flexibility in training
- Applied learning
- Center-centric support
- Relationships
- TOF team and people
- Sharing, networking, collective problem solving
- Respect and valuing of staff

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offerings
- Train staff to find related resources
- Increase support for staff to attend trainings
- Present content more concisely
- Increase experiential learning opportunities
- PFI matrix was cumbersome

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- Lack of staff consensus
- Buy-in by key stakeholders
- Changing minds and habits
- Bureaucracy
- Staff turnover
- Funding
- American cultural reliance on sugar to celebrate
- Family practicalities and cultural influences
- Federal and state food regulations

INITIATIVE OUTCOMES

Center Outcomes

- Principles embedded in curriculum
- Policy changes
- Healthier food is served

Staff Outcomes

- Shift in role image
- Improved professional practices
- Improved personal practices
- Increased proficiency with program concepts
- Increased acknowledgement of need to model good behavior

Child Outcomes

- Improved behavior/self-regulation
- Increased time outdoors and activity
- Increased opportunities for learning
- Increased appreciation for nature
- Increased appreciation for new foods
- Healthier food is consumed

Family Outcomes

- Changed at-home practices
- Actively requested information
- Exposed to program philosophies
- Increased appreciation for new foods

100% Valued Direct Support

89% Valued Networking

82% Valued Group Trainings

87% Reported Impact on the Staff

83% Reported Impact on the Centers

70% Reported Impact on the Students

52% Reported Impact on the Families

INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY

- Demostration Site Network Steering Committe
- Principles embedded in practice
- Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles
- Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings

In addition to the themes that were presented in the main narrative of the report, study participants discussing the Preschool Food Initiative mentioned the following program-specific themes."

Suggestions for Improvement

The PFI matrix, a set of desired practices that allowed TOF to collect center -specific information on PFI-related practices and progress, was cumbersome to complete: while study participants recognized the value of having an instrument that codifies initiative expectations, they found it difficult to fill out as requested by the Fund.

Barriers to Implementation

Study participants reported a number of barriers to implementing PFI practices specifically. First, they mentioned that sugar, in our culture, is heavily utilized as a means of celebration. Many study participants reported that this was a large hurdle to overcome among their staff as well as their children and families. They often mentioned that they removed sugar from celebrations, but that it had been difficult to find a replacement that students and staff fully embraced. Second, they felt that family practicalities and culture create a challenge to PFI impact. Center staff reported that family access to healthier foods, family understanding of the value of healthier foods, and family tradition of incorporating culture into food can create a barrier to extending the impact of their work beyond their centers' environments. Finally, some center staff mentioned that Federal and State food regulations create a challenge to initiative implementation. A minority of study participants reported that they were not able to institute the food-related changes that they intended, and that were aligned to the PFI, due to State and Federal regulations on federally-funded meal service.

> *"I have heard from our families that our healthy foods policies, and what we do here at the center, has translated into them eating healthier at their houses. And they're cooking more, We don't see a lot of prepackaged foods in the students' lunches anymore."*
>
> *– Director*

Initiative Outcomes for Staff

As a result of their participation in the PFI, staff understand the need to model good practices. Many study participants reported that they shifted their own eating behaviors and habits in part due to their acknowledgment that they are modeling behavior to the centers' children. They restricted staff consumption of unhealthy foods and beverages from public view and/or restricted it from the center altogether. This recognition of the importance of modeling positive behavior often extended into their homes, as they modeled these behaviors to their own children and families.

Initiative Outcomes for Students

Study participants reported that children consume better quality food at the centers as a result of centers' participation in the PFI. The majority of center staff reported that they were able to improve the food that they served to the children. Specifically, they now serve fewer processed foods and more whole fruits and vegetables. Many adjusted milk and juice policies, purchase organic foods as they are able, and work with local producers to increase their farm-to-center intake. Study participants attributed this outcome as well as the related efforts to both PFI and OCPSBC, as they felt that the children's exposure to the life cycle of produce encouraged them to eat more fruits and vegetables. Staff also reported that children and their families are exposed to and learn appreciation for new foods as a result of the centers' efforts related to PFI. Staff reported that children were frequently presented with food items with which they were previously unfamiliar as a part of the centers' efforts to implement PFI principles. Children often tried and enjoyed these new foods, sometimes even asking parents to purchase them for their homes. Center staff often embed nutrition education into the curriculum during snack and meal times in order to help children understand the value of these new foods as well.

ACCREDITATION SUPPORT



INITIATIVE PURPOSE

The Accreditation Support program was different from OCPSBC and PFI in that it was designed to support early childhood centers through the process of becoming accredited (or reaccredited) as high quality centers, rather than in carrying out specific activities directly with young children. The Orfalea Fund supported this project in partnership with First 5 Santa Barbara County. Accreditation is the designation of high quality earned from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The Orfalea Fund-First 5 Accreditation Project supports centers in their progress from their current level of quality up the scale to the ultimate level of becoming nationally accredited. Support included trainings for center directors and regular technical assistance throughout the accreditation process.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT

The Accreditation Support Program, directly touched 47 centers, serving more than 2,225 children. These centers varied in size, funding type, and county region. Many of these centers serve high-needs children, those who are from low-income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support.

KEY ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT

- High quality information
- Flexibility in training
- Applied learning
- Center-centric support
- Relationships
- TOF team and people
- Sharing, networking, collective problem solving
- Respect and valuing of staff

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offerings
- Train staff to find related resources
- Increase support for staff to attend trainings
- Present content more concisely
- Increase experiential learning opportunities

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- Lack of staff consensus
- Buy-in by key stakeholders
- Changing minds and habits
- Bureaucracy
- Staff turnover
- Funding

INITIATIVE OUTCOMES

Center Outcomes

- Principles embedded in curriculum
- Policy changes

Staff Outcomes

- Shift in role image
- Improved professional practices
- Improved personal practices
- Increased proficiency with program concepts
- Improved cohesion and communication among staff

Child and Family Outcomes

Although the accreditation support most likely influenced children and families in ways similar to OCPSBC and PFI due to its similar effects on centers and staff, these outcomes weren't communicated by study participants as they were with each of the other initiatives.

100% Valued Direct Support

100% Valued Networking

80% Valued Group Trainings

80% Reported Impact on the Staff

60% Reported Impact on the Centers

INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY

- Principles embedded in practice
- Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles
- Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings
- Community expectation for high-quality centers

In addition to the themes that were presented in the main narrative of the report, study participants discussing the Accreditation Support mentioned the following program-specific themes.

Initiative Outcomes for Staff

Study participants reported that staff are more cohesive and reflective of practice as a result of the accreditation process and related support. Many staff reported that they and their peers are better able to have constructive conversations about their practice as a result of the accreditation process, and that this has led to better staff cohesion.

Initiative Sustainability

Study participants reported that the community now expects centers to be accredited. Some staff believe that the Fund's efforts to increase the number of early childhood centers that receive accreditation has been shifting the community's expectations regarding such recognition. While families might not be clear on the relationship between this achievement and quality of care, they have begun to seek out centers with this distinction. This expectation is expected to contribute to accreditation sustainability efforts.

> *"The application of the standards make me feel like I'm actually making a difference and that I'm actually worthy. The accreditation process has encouraged me to bring quality practices into the center and reset the perceptions of early childhood care."*
>
> *– Director*







LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Principles of success that underlie all three TOF ECE initiatives were identified in this evaluation. These principles may serve as a guide to organizations interested in pursuing this work in their own communities.



1] Have a strong foundation of ECE expertise, and select initiatives with a strong research base behind them. High quality information rooted in scientific research was essential to gaining support and buy-in by key stakeholders for the programs by stakeholders. Sharing this information through a combination of hands-on and didactic experiences in the training sessions was a particularly important practice for the successful transfer of knowledge.



2] Make a long-term and strategic commitment of resources, particularly financial resources and staff expertise. The free support in the form of staff trainings, onsite consultation, and program materials provided by TOF was essential given the financial and logistic challenges related to this workforce and their centers. Center staff felt respected and appreciated due to this commitment of resources; demonstrating this respect to an oft-undervalued population was essential to generate buy-in by key stakeholders from these important program participants.



3] Maintain flexibility and adaptability in program support. Practices included being flexible in training schedules by offering trainings at multiple times, in multiple locations, and not requiring that attendees progress through the training sequentially. Collecting and using formative feedback to improve program support was also key. Providing center-specific support through onsite and phone/email consultation is another demonstration of this principle.



4] Build a community of believers in high quality ECE with emphasis on preschool food and outdoor learning. This can be accomplished by adhering to the first three principles. Identifying, engaging, and empowering staff whose personal belief systems were aligned with the initiatives' principles allowed these staff to credibly and persuasively communicate the initiatives' worth to others. Providing networking opportunities among centers further extended these communities. Cross-site visits and visits to model centers also played a key role in inspiring staff commitment.



5] Embrace the processes of change. One element of success was encouraging centers to tailor the initiatives to the cultural context of the families they served and adapt them to their children's abilities as the programs evolved. A second key change process was encouraging "baby steps" and incremental change toward initiative goals, particularly given that changing hearts, minds, and habits takes time. A final change process was encouraging staff to be comfortable with the prospect that there will always be "more work to do," as this is an indication of program progress and commitment.



6] Consider initiative sustainability at program inception, and initiate and support a community-driven framework for sustainability. This was accomplished by setting up the Demonstration Site Network Steering Committe for OPCSBC and PFI activities made up of center staff whose mission was to plan for sustainability during and after supported program activities. This, and positioning staff to engage and involve their children's parents, the centers' decision-makers, and the related community, can support initiative continuation over time.



In addition to applying these key principles and promising practices in related program development or refinement efforts, we identified the following recommendations based on center staff suggestions for program improvements.



7] Preemptively address regular staff turnover. Define methods by which trained staff can pass on lessons learned to new staff so that centers can carry on program activities and principles beyond initially-trained staff. These efforts might include "skill share" or cross-training activities where trained staff pass on what they have learned to other center personnel.

8] Offer the support to all center staff simultaneously. This would increase the likelihood that center staff are all well-versed in initiative principles and are on the same page about the value and methods of implementation. This will increase the likelihood of progress and decrease the barriers to implementation related to staff buy-in.



9] Work with the organizations in control of the centers (such as churches or public school systems). This would work ensure that they, too, understand the importance of and value in the initiative principles, making them more likely to support programs and empower centers to make program-related changes.

10] Set aside additional funding. While staff appreciated the generosity of the Fund, they recognized additional funding needs such as funds to cover substitutes to enable center staff to attend trainings, and to cover infrastructure costs related to program implementation.

APPENDICES



Evaluating Orfalea Fund's
Work in Santa Barbara County

APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW GUIDE

I'm [Name] and I work with Evaluation Specialists, a woman-owned small business that conducts public policy and program evaluations and is independent from The Orfalea Fund. The Orfalea Fund has hired us to objectively study its investments over the past decade to improve the county's early childhood education centers. As such, we are essentially evaluating the Fund; we are not evaluating you or your Center. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary, and we sincerely appreciate you taking the time to contribute to our understanding of their work.

We have scheduled 60 minutes for this conversation, and I intend to be very respectful of that time limit. As such, I may re-route the conversation occasionally to make sure we cover all of our questions. This will keep us focused and will ensure that I am making the best use of your time.

Your individual comments will be kept confidential. They will not be shared with The Orfalea Fund, your Center coworkers, or the public. Rather, Evaluation Specialists will summarize all of the interviews we conduct and present The Orfalea Fund with a summary of key findings. Please therefore be candid in our conversation, as your input will help The Fund learn and help other districts grow.

We would like to audiotape today's conversation in order to facilitate accurate transcription of the conversation. The digital recording will be stored securely during the transcription process and will be properly disposed of at the completion of the study.

Do you have any questions?

Do I have your permission to turn on the recorder?

[Turn on the recorder]

Please state your name, role, and center's name on the recording. We are collecting this information as part of the recording merely to help us organize the interviews and analyze the data. Again, your individual comments will not be publicly connected with your identifiable information.

Since the year 2000, the Orfalea Fund has funded and implemented many programs in Santa Barbara County to support early childhood education centers to increase center quality. The three key programs that we are interested in hearing your feedback on today are:
The Preschool Food Initiative
The Outdoor Project - Santa Barbara County
The Quality Counts Accreditation Support program administered by First 5

Please tell me about what you and your peers think about these programs.
Discuss the general perception of these programs, yours and others.
Discuss any positive perceptions.
Discuss any negative perceptions.

Tell me about your experiences with the support offered by TOF in relation to the [TOF ECE program(s)].

- What worked well?
- What didn't work well?
- What was missing?
- What type of professional support was most helpful and why?
- What do you think are the most valuable aspects of the [TOF ECE programs]?

Can you tell me about how your center's involvement has influenced you?

- How do you think your and your center's involvement in the [TOF ECE programs] has influenced:
  - your self-image
  - your personal practices
  - your professional practices
    - Prompt here about networks and professional development if not mentioned organically
    - Prompt here about the public perception of the interviewee's role if not mentioned organically.
  - iv.Your center's culture, including priorities, policies, philosophy and even hiring practices

Can you tell me about how your center's involvement has influenced others?

- How do you think your and your center's involvement in the [TOF ECE programs] has influenced:
  - Your center
  - your center's team
  - the center's community
  - your center's children
  - your center's families

Discuss how you feel your center's and/or community's characteristics (such as student population, geography, family involvement) has affected your experiences with the [TOF ECE programs.]

Can you tell me about any barriers or challenges you experienced as you planned for and implemented the [TOF ECE programs]?

- Discuss the obstacles you faced in meeting your related goals prior to engaging with the [TOF ECE programs].
  - What kind of additional support, before, during, or after rollout, would have been helpful and why?
- What challenges did you run into as you were planning the [TOF ECE programs]?
- What challenges did you run into as you were implementing the [TOF ECE programs]?
  - [Interviewer will need to be prepared to prompt beyond "money" as an obstacle.]

Can you discuss any factors that you think contributed to your success in overcoming barriers to programming and/or being successful?

- To what do you attribute [the positive impacts mentioned above]?
- What key elements of the TOF support of the [TOF ECE programs] facilitated success?
- What key elements of your center's or community's context facilitated success?

Can you tell me about how your center will sustain the quality practices that you've implemented as a result of these programs?

- How do you intend to sustain these [TOF ECE programs]?
- What challenges regarding sustainability do you foresee?
- What support do you feel you and/or the center needs to sustain the [TOF ECE programs]?

Can you tell me what you think other funders need to know to replicate and scale the [TOF ECE programs] in their environments?

- What do you believe other centers in other districts would need to know, to have, and/or be able to do in order to replicate this work within their context?
- You mentioned [core principles, such as creating a circle of peers, or making you feel empowered, that surfaced during the course of the conversation] a few times today. What other big picture concepts of the [TOF ECE programs] do you think influenced you or your center?
- Is there anything else that you'd like to mention regarding your experiences with these programs?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B. QUOTES ILLUSTRATING TRENDS

KEY ASPECTS OF SUPPORT	
High quality information	"The trainings themselves are rich, and they are very insightful, very educational. They're trying to teach you to be able to take the information and become a teacher of it yourself, so not just throwing you a fish but actually teaching you to fish." (Teacher)
Flexibility in training	"It was available. The nice thing is, is they split it up. It was -- they were offered in the North County, South County, and Mid County, so, you know, everything wasn't in Santa Barbara. You know, so I could send people at different times. They offered Saturdays, which was huge, because we're all in the classroom all day long, and so, there's not a time really that we can get away. And it was hard to get subs to cover for us, so they were very flexible and understood that portion, which was great." (Director)
Applied learning	"There was one training that I went to that most of my staff went as well, that was very hands-on. We did cutting exercises, talked about cleaning. What do you call it when you dip it into the bleach? Sterilizing. The knives, the cutting boards, the work area. That was very hands-on. So everything hands-on I really appreciated." (Director)
Center-centric support	"They have come out and done visits here, and that to me is great because it's one-on-one time. And that's really important, I mean you can't ask all the questions you want or the hard questions in a huge gathering. So having that one-on-one time I think was extremely important." (Director)
Initiative team and people	"Also just their availability and willingness to help, you know, to answer questions. They are so involved and willing to help and approachable, which is really important. You can be part of a big foundation but if you're not someone that I feel that I can approach, that I feel is going to support me then you're not going to make a difference." (Teacher)
Sharing, networking, collective problem solving	"I found so much value in my attendance at the workshops in other locations, so that you could see other programs and discuss with other teachers, "We've done similar things. This didn't work at our program because of that." So it was really the -- I guess the interaction with the other teachers was really very... beyond the scope of what the information was being offered there, and that was helpful." (Director)
Respect and valuing of staff	"I always felt so respected by them. Being in early childhood we just do our work and there aren't always a lot of kudos, but they, the Orfalea Fund, saw how important our job is, how we affect children, how we affect the future and the direction that things are going in right now, and they realized that we needed to make a huge change, and so I felt so respected by them and I felt very honored that they were willing to offer me the training for free. I felt very blessed that they really truly saw the true good work that we were doing and they showed appreciation." (Director)

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT	
Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offerings	"I think they could've done a little better job of connecting centers together. Maybe meeting with two centers that were similar so that there could be sharing and support amongst the centers. I just feel like things could've been done a little bit differently. They should have set up more opportunities for mentoring amongst each other." (Director)
Ease the process of finding related resources	"It would be great if they create kind of an online trading space, kind of like a marketplace. It could market old tires or stumps or branches or flowers, so that anyone who wants them knows where to find them." (Teacher)
Increase support for staff to attend trainings	"I think what's hard with training is when it's during the week or on the weekends, it's just hard. It's a no win situation because if it's during the week, it's hard to let staff go because of the student-teacher ratio requirements, and then when it's on the weekends, you always have that tug of that being their personal time." (Director)
Present content more concisely	"I kind of felt like the training sometimes was stretched out a little too much to where we were repeating what we went over the previous training. That was hard because we were taking time from our families to go to the trainings on the weekend, and then they were repeating everything we learned the last time." (Teacher)
Increase experiential learning opportunities	"I'm more of a hands-on kind of learner anyway, and I know we had talked about it too at some of our meetings, but I think that if we could offer some where it's the talking and the learning part and then maybe at the end of the workshop have hands-on recipes where they can create and do their own -- like just making fruit skewers or come up with like six different things and have tables where they could go around and hands-on learn how to make some of these food dishes that are easy to do for children." (Director)
BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION	
Lack of staff consensus	"It took a while for change to occur, because you needed everyone to understand and they didn't come to the trainings to see and hear why we needed to make the changes, and so I think that was the hardest part, that everyone at the center didn't get the same training." (Director)
Buy-in by key stakeholders	"So there is challenges with having teachers join in with you, so how do you present material, how can you engage teachers, and have them feel this-- what you hope, at least a similar level of commitment as you? So there is that learning frame and that timeframe, and there are always those teachers who take it 100 percent, and those who, you know, they come along a bit. And you do your best that you can, so that can be a challenge. There's also the challenge of working with parents who value what they're offering now, and often might not see the value of changing what they do for their children." (Director)
Changing minds and habits	"I think our biggest challenge is just changing people's mindsets and winning them over. People really have their un-thought about, unfiltered, just subconscious ideas of what they're comfortable with children eating and where they think children should be to learn and how they should act in an early childhood environment. And it's really hard to kind of get to the root of those preconceptions and change them." (Teacher)

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION continued	
Bureaucracy	"There probably is more stuff that I would like to incorporate, but it doesn't meet school district standards. So that's definitely-- the latest thing is, is I'm going to have a log climber, and the school district is really struggling with that, because it's not plastic, and it's not going to be installed by a playground installer." (Director)
Staff turnover	"I had two lead teachers who both had gotten involved and excited about it, but they never finished taking the classes, and then now they're gone, so that's one of the things that I find difficult, is because if you train your staff and then they leave then you've got to kind of reinvent and start over again." (Director)
Funding	"Funding, funding. It's a tricky one for us, because we are nonprofit. We have to ask for so much from our parents, and funding is not something that they can help us with. We have been lucky enough for them to help us with time, but sometimes you do need funding more than time, so I think that's our biggest is that we are nonprofit and we don't have a lot of funding for things." (Teacher)
FACILITATORS OF IMPLEMENTATION	
Parent and community involvement	"I think the parents are very committed to the center, and they really understand when they come in here that these programs are programs that you do with your child. They're extremely supportive in all the activities that we do, so we are able to do more." (Director)
Incremental change	"I just always felt like they provided a lot of really good information, and it was very understandable, and they made it to where it didn't feel overwhelming to try to come back here and apply it, which I was really thankful for, because sometimes when you go to these and you see all the things that you could be doing it can be overwhelming and like "Oh my gosh, how am I ever going to be able to do all that?" So they've been really good at helping us take one step at a time, and each step you take is progress, and that's something that I felt really positive about, because I'm one of those people that if I feel like there's too much and I get overwhelmed I get stuck, and I won't even start." (Teacher)
Decision-maker support	"Our executive director at this agency is real supportive of all of the principles of the programs and I think she's attended some of the workshops herself. And our current program manager in this area is also real supportive of those concepts. So I think it really helps when the people that are supervising our centers are not pushing against the programs." (Director)
Personal belief system	"The whole general idea and notion of the need for children to learn outside and eat healthy foods is something that I have always believed in personal. So it was a really natural fit for me to incorporate the programs into the center." (Director)

CENTER OUTCOMES	
Principles embedded in curriculum	"I think that we've embedded the principles of the programs-- it's a very important belief for us so we've embedded them into our center practices," (Director)
Policy changes	"Well, there were some policy changes made in terms of just an inclusion that children would be exposed to the outdoor environment, sugar would be limited and our supplies would be organized and labeled properly; stuff like that." (Director)
STAFF OUTCOMES	
Shift in role image	"And so, it's all three of those things make me feel like I'm actually making a difference and that I'm actually worthy, you know, because in this position, it's always been kind of a babysitting job before, not really an occupation. And so, it has really encouraged me to bring in quality practices here and bring us on a higher level." (Director)
Improved professional practices	"I think it's changed everything. We, definitely always think of how we can do what we do inside outdoors, or how we can connect our lessons with the food that the children are eating, and how we can communicate all of this back to the families to let them know that we are part of the outdoor classroom, we are part of PFI, and we are a high quality center." (Teacher)
Improved personal practices	"I'd say they influenced me personally, I am more aware with my own children of what they're eating and what we're eating as a family and then how much time, too, that we spend outside, outdoors and just being able to let the children explore. So, I do notice that I'm at home with my own children, that I am more outdoors and we're eating a little bit healthier." (Teacher)
Increased proficiency with initiative concepts	"So the accreditation process helps a teacher say, "The reason that we do this large motor activity, throwing the ball, is that we're strengthening the core, which then strengthens the arm, which then makes your fingers work so that you can do that small motor skills." And without the accreditation support-- it's hard to articulate because staff either haven't had the education or they're just not thinking of it in that way." (Director)
CHILD OUTCOMES	
Improved behavior/self-regulation	"I've seen the benefits with my own eyes, working with children directly, that it benefits them and their ability to self-regulate, to make positive choices, to focus and attend, to have a higher self-esteem and just more confidence in general, more cooperative skills." (Teacher)

Increased time outdoors and activity	"I think that they know that all the activities that we do when we're doing them outside, like when we run around the track and when we play games, running games, and they know that it's good for their heart, and so they can always say to me after they're doing those kinds of activities, "My heart is saying, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you," as it beats. And they enjoy the snacks outdoors too. We serve their snacks outside and sometimes they pick their snacks right off the plants in the garden." (Director)
Increased opportunities for learning	"When I was explaining to the son today about how children can fill up a bucket of sand and they can just fill it up very loosely and then they can pat the other bucket and compare and contrast and it's-- that's volume right there. So you've got math concepts, you've got science concepts, but they're not sitting at a desk learning from a book." (Director)
FAMILY OUTCOMES	
Changed at-home practices	"I just got so much information from our families about how our healthy foods policies, and what we do here at the center and our growing, and our gardening, has translated into eating healthier at their houses. And they're cooking more, We don't see a lot of prepackaged foods in the students' lunches anymore." (Director)
Actively requested information	"I'm noticing more and more parents who are like, "Oh my gosh, I love that" when I tell them about the programs. Whereas when I first started doing tours, it was a lot of, "What? Why are you outside? Why can't they eat that? I don't know.." But now I'm getting more and more parents who are just like, "Wow, you know, that's so cool, I love it. How do I do this at home?" (Teacher)
Exposed to initiative philosophies	"We shared a lot with the families about what we learned through the programs, like when we went to a training we would make a little sign and just say please ask us about this training or we shared a lot with the parents via bulletin… big poster boards… so we sort of documented it a lot for the families to see." (Director)
INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY	
Demostration site network steering committee	"The committee that I'm on in Santa Barbara, we've talked about how to sustain the programs in the county, and what we're hoping to do is rally together a group of 8 to 10 different centers that can offer workshops for other centers and be demonstration sites where people can come to see how the programs work in action." (Director)
Principles embedded in practice	"It's just part of what we do, it's sort of in our DNA now." (Director)
Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles	"And so the programs mean that much to us and if we have a staff who is content and happy and love their job and love what they're doing, then the programs are going to thrive no matter what." (Teacher)
Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings	"We close twice a month early for our staff meetings, so I could easily at least once a month throw some sort of outdoor classroom or PFI training into our staff meetings. I just have to figure out how to do it and kind of pick topics every month. I think that would be the easiest way to keep it going without having that extra support." (Director)

APPENDIX C. EVALUATION RUBRICS - OUTDOOR PROJECT - SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

1. Impact: How impactful were the TOF OCPSBCSBC efforts in changing practices, perceptions, attitudes and behaviors among center staff, enrolled children and their families?

1A: Center Impact Impacting the center by shifting policies and practices aligned to the goal of increasing the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs ("philosophies and practices").

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of how their center policies and practices that emphasize outdoor environments and experiences for children have substantially shifted and are embedded into the center's culture as a result of staff involvement in OCPSBCSBC. They provide detailed examples of how the outdoor environment has been significantly modified to include numerous sustainable elements of the program's principles. They describe many learning activities that had previously been conducted indoors as having been moved outdoors. Outdoor learning time has been maximized.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how their center practices that emphasize outdoor environments and experiences for children have shifted as a result of staff involvement in OCPSBCSBC, and provide one or more examples of how related policies have changed. They provide detailed examples of how the outdoor environment has been modified to include some elements from the program's principles. They describe how they've changed activities as a result of what they've learned through OCPSBCSBC. More learning occurs outdoors than prior to staffs' involvement in the program. Children spend more time outside. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center policies, practices but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how center culture has shifted in a way that increases the possibility of sustainability.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how their outdoor environment has been modified slightly to include at some elements from the program's principles. They describe some activities that had previously been conducted indoors as having been moved outdoors, but they do not equate this outdoor time as an occasion for learning.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described the outdoor environment as having not been notably modified as a result of staff involvement in OCPSBC. Neither policies nor practices have markedly shifted to emphasize outdoor environments and experiences.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with/knowledge of OCPSBC.

1B: Staff Impact Impacting the center staff by changing knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors related to the goal of increasing the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs ("philosophies and practices").

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of increased program-related knowledge, positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) and perceptual changes (value of being outdoors, ability to do most indoor activities outdoors) and positive program-related behavior changes (conducts as many activities outdoors as possible, embeds curriculum into the outdoor setting, spends more time outside with own family) among themselves and their fellow staff as a result of the OCPSBC program. They identify how the programming has significantly changed both their professional and personal perspective and practices. They describe feeling sufficiently equipped with resources and knowledge to initiate OCPSBC philosophy and practices within their center. They describe how they have fully embraced the philosophies and principles of the programming and describe ways in which they are personally attached to the principles and guiding implementation.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of increased program-related knowledge and positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) and perceptual changes (value of being outdoors, ability to do most activities outdoors), and positive related behavior changes (conducts more activities outdoors, embeds curriculum into the outdoor setting) among themselves and their fellow staff. They identify how the programming has changed their professional perspective and practices, but may not have changed their personal perspective and practices. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement OCPSBC philosophy and practices. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the staff, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how they have shifted their personal beliefs and practices to be aligned with OCPSBC philosophies.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of either increased program-related knowledge, or improved perceptual and attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) changes, but do not describe professional or personal behavior changes related to participation in OCPSBC. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement OCPSBC philosophy and practices.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable increased program-related knowledge, perceptual and attitudinal changes, or behavioral changes related to participation in OCPSBC. They describe not feeling sufficiently equipped to initiate and/or share OCPSBC philosophy and practices and describe a lack of notable change in professional and personal perspective and practice.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC efforts. Interviewee did not mention staff impact of OCPSBC efforts.

1C: Child Impact Impacting the centers' children in ways related to the goal of increasing the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs ("philosophies and practices").

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of increased student-interest in program-related activities and are able to describe improvements in student-specific program-related outcomes. They describe examples of the children being proactively engaged in the OCPSBC principles of learning while being outdoors, self-initiating learning opportunities, and actively sharing their lessons learned with their families and other students.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of increased student-interest in program-related activities though they do not provide examples of improvements in student-specific program-related outcomes. They describe children as being proactively engaged in the OCPSBC principles of learning while being outdoors. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's children indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about child outcomes that are shifting as a result of the OCPSBC programming.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of increased student-interest in being outdoors. They do not describe children sharing their lessons learned or using the outdoor opportunities as learning opportunities.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable increased student-interest in being outdoors and a lack of notable student outcomes as a result of the OCPSBC efforts.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of OCPSBC efforts.

1D: Family Impact Impacting the center's families in ways that are related to the goal of increasing the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs ("philosophies and practices").

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of improved program-related perception, attitudinal and behavioral changes in parents as a result of their awareness of OCPSBC. They describe parents' increased knowledge and perceived value in the principles of OCPSBC, and parent interest in increasing time spent outdoors with their families at home.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of parents being aware of the program and actively asking questions or making comments about the program. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's families indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about family outcomes that are shifting as a result of the OCPSBC programming.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of only minimal program awareness. They described most family/parent awareness and related impact as passive.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable parent awareness in OCPSBC-related knowledge, and a lack of notable parent engagement in OCPSBC-related practices.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of OCPSBC efforts.

2. **Value:** How valuable were the OCPSBC program elements offered to ECE staff?

2A: Large Group Offsite Trainings for ECE center staff to equip them to increase the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers spoke highly of the usefulness of the OCPSBC training sessions in terms of 1) understanding OCPSBC philosophy and OCPSBC-related practices, and understanding and addressing current gaps in their centers' environments, and 2) understanding how to implement some of the philosophies and practices within their respective centers. They described the trainings as providing them with appropriate resources and information to share the principles of the program to other parties and sufficiently equipped them to preemptively overcome potential barriers to implementation.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers gave examples of how the OCPSBC training sessions were valuable/useful to them in terms of 1) understanding OCPSBC philosophy and OCPSBC-related practices, and 2) understanding how to implement some of the philosophies and practices within their respective centers including addressing current gaps in their centers' environments. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element helped them share the principles with others or overcome potential barriers to implementing OCPSBC practices.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers gave examples of how the OCPSBC training sessions were valuable/useful to them in terms of understanding OCPSBC philosophy and practices, but were not able to demonstrate/describe ways that the training helped them to understand how to implement the practices within their respective centers or address gaps in their center environments.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described the OCPSBC training sessions as not notably valuable/useful to them in terms of understanding or applying OCPSBC philosophy and practices.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2B: Direct Support (onsite evaluations, consultations, responsive support) for ECE center staff to equip them to increase the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers spoke highly of the center-specific support and described how the on-site consultations, trainings, and evaluations were very useful and the center-specific responsive support was extremely timely and astute. They described significant and sustainable OCPSBC-related changes made at their center as a result of this individualized and expert direct support. They described this support as being directly applicable and tailored to their center context and provided examples of how their center's programming would not have been as effective had this direct support not occurred.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers identified examples of center-specific support and described how the on-site consultations, trainings, and evaluations were useful/valuable and the center-specific responsive support was timely and astute. They described some OCPSBC-related changes made at their center as a result of this direct support, and described the support as being tailored to their center context. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element was essential in helping them implement the OCPSBC practices.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how the on-site consultations, trainings, and evaluations were somewhat useful/valuable or mentioned the reactive support as being timely and astute. They did not provide examples of how this direct support helped them to implement OCPSBC-related changes at their center.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described a lack of adequate direct support or described this direct support as not markedly useful or valuable.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2C: Networking Opportunities for ECE Center staff to equip them to increase the quantity, quality, and benefit of outdoor experiences for children in early care and education programs.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of how the networking opportunities within the OCPSBC program efforts were significantly valuable in terms of supporting their center's OCPSBC activities. They actively engaged in networking with other centers both during and outside of the OCPSBC program efforts/trainings. They described these opportunities as time to share lessons learned and identify ways to overcome challenges related to OCPSBC implementation. They provided examples of ways in which their center's programming would not have been as effective had the networking opportunities not occurred.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how the networking opportunities within the OCPSBC program efforts were valuable in terms of supporting their center's OCPSBC activities. They actively engaged in networking with other centers during OCPSBC program efforts/training and felt that these opportunities were instrumental to their OCPSBC efforts, but did not describe ways in which they engaged with these networks outside of the trainings. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the networking and sharing continued and contributed to OCPSBC implementation efforts beyond the formal trainings.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how the networking opportunities within the OCPSBC program efforts were somewhat valuable in terms of supporting their center's OCPSBC activities. They passively engaged in the networking opportunities during OCPSBC program efforts/trainings, but did not describe them as being instrumental to the OCPSBC efforts.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described the networking opportunities within the OCPSBC program efforts as not being markedly valuable. They did not engage or they passively engaged in the opportunities provided.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with OCPSBC program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

APPENDIX C. EVALUATION RUBRICS - PRESCHOOL FOOD INITIATIVE

1. Impact: How impactful were the TOF PFI efforts in changing perceptions, attitudes and behaviors among center staff, enrolled children and their families?

1A: Center Impact Impacting the center by shifting policies and practices aligned to the goals of 1) improving the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increasing opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teaching children, staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of how their center policies and practices that emphasize healthy food for children and are aligned to the PFI standards (matrix) have shifted and are embedded into the center's culture as a result of staff involvement in PFI. They provide detailed examples of how the food environment has been significantly modified to include numerous and sustainable elements of the program's principles, such as partnering with local farmers or adjusting the food budget for future years.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how their center practices that emphasize healthy eating and are aligned to the PFI standards (matrix) have shifted as a result of staff involvement in PFI, and provide one or more examples of how related policies have changed. They provide detailed examples of how the food environment has been modified to include some elements from the program's principles, such as serving healthful food at school events and birthday celebrations. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center policies, practices but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how center culture has shifted in a way that increases the possibility of sustainability.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how their food environment has been modified slightly to include at some elements from the PFI standards (matrix). They do not describe changes in policies.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described the food practices as having not been notably modified as a result of staff involvement in PFI. Neither policies nor practices have markedly shifted to emphasize healthy foods and experiences.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with/knowledge of PFI.

1B: Staff Impact

Impacting the center staff by changing knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors aligned to the goals of 1) improving the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increasing opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teaching children, staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of increased health-inspiring knowledge as articulated in the PFI matrix, and positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) and perceptual changes (value of healthier foods) among themselves and their fellow staff. They identify how the programming has substantially changed both their professional perspective and practices (including modeling appropriate food-related behavior in front of the children), and their personal perspective and practices (continuing better practices in their home environments). They describe feeling sufficiently equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement the standards of PFI philosophy and practices and articulate and share the philosophy and practices with other staff and families. They describe how they have fully embraced the philosophies and principles of the programming, ways in which they are personally attached to the principles and guiding implementation, and ways in which staff have contributed their own ideas to the PFI programming efforts.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of increased health-inspiring knowledge as articulated in the PFI matrix, and positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) and perceptual changes (value of healthier foods) among themselves and their fellow staff. They identify how the programming has changed their professional perspective and practices (including modeling appropriate food-related behavior in front of the children), but may not have changed their personal perspective and practices. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement the standards of PFI philosophy and practices and articulate and share the philosophy and practices with other staff and families. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the staff, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how they have shifted their personal practices to be aligned with PFI philosophies or personally contributed to program evolution efforts.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of either increased program-related knowledge, or improved perceptual and attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and commitment) changes, but do not describe professional or personal behavior changes related to PFI.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable increased program-related knowledge, perceptual and attitudinal changes, or behavioral changes related to participation in PFI. They describe not feeling sufficiently equipped to initiate and/or share PFI philosophy and practices, and a lack of notable change in professional and personal perspective and practice.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI efforts. Interviewee did not mention staff impact of PFI efforts.

1C: Child Impact Impacting the centers' children in ways aligned to the goals of 1) improving the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increasing opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teaching children, staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of children receiving higher quality food and beverages that support better health. They described children as experiencing whole, unprocessed food through foods served at the center, and nutrition education through group activities such as reading. They reported that the children at their centers have gained an understanding of the importance of healthy food choices, and provide examples of how the program-related activities have had impacts on children's health outcomes. They described examples of the children actively sharing their lessons learned with their families and other students.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of children receiving higher quality food and beverages that support better health. They described children as experiencing whole, unprocessed food through foods served at the center, and nutrition education through group activities such as reading. They reported that the children at their centers have gained an understanding of the importance of healthy food choices. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's children indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about child outcomes that are shifting as a result of the PFI programming.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of children receiving higher quality food and beverages that support better health, but did not describe the children as learning from or being impacted by the PFI-activities and products.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable increased student-interest in healthy foods and a lack of notable student outcomes as a result of the PFI efforts.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of PFI efforts.

1D: Family Impact

Impacting the center's families in ways that are aligned to the goals of 1) improving the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increasing opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teaching children, staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of families recognizing that their center is committed to being a center of wellness and being aware of center practices that support PFI standards. They reported that parent food contributions at school are regularly aligned with the PFI intention and that parents actively ask questions or make comments about the program. They describe parents' intentions of applying the food quality related learnings from the center to their homes.
Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of families recognizing that their center is committed to being a center of wellness and being aware of center practices that support PFI standards. They reported that parent food contributions at school are regularly aligned with the PFI intention and that parents actively ask questions or make comments about the program. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's families indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about family outcomes that are shifting as a result of the PFI programming.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors and teachers provided examples of only minimal program awareness. They described most family/parent awareness and related impact as passive.
Not Impactful	Center directors and teachers described a lack of notable positive shifts in program-related knowledge, and a lack of notable improved program-related perception, attitudinal and behavioral changes in parents as a result of PFI.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of PFI efforts.

2. **Value:** How valuable were the PFI forms of support offered to ECE staff?

2A: Large Group Offsite Trainings for ECE center staff to equip them to 1) improve the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increase opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teach children, other staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers spoke highly of the PFI training sessions in terms of 1) inspiring them to make PFI-related changes at their centers, 2) understanding PFI philosophy that healthy eating and eating behaviors can positively influence student behavior and energy, and 3) understanding how to implement the PFI standards (matrix) aligned to this philosophy. They described the trainings as providing them with appropriate resources and information to share the principles of the program to other parties and sufficiently equipping them to preemptively overcome potential barriers to implementation.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers gave examples of how the PFI training sessions were valuable/useful to them in terms of 1) inspiring them to make PFI-related changes at their centers, 2) understanding PFI philosophy that healthy eating and eating behaviors can positively influence student behavior and energy, and 3) understanding how to implement the PFI standards (matrix) aligned to this philosophy. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element helped them share the principles with others or overcome potential barriers to implementing PFI practices.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers gave examples of how the PFI training sessions were valuable/useful to them in terms of understanding PFI philosophy that healthy eating and eating behaviors can positively influence student behavior and energy, but were not able to demonstrate/describe how this understanding helped them to implement the PFI standards (matrix) aligned to this philosophy.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described the PFI training sessions as not sufficiently valuable/useful to them in terms of understanding PFI philosophy and practices.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2B: Direct Support (onsite evaluations, consultations, responsive support) for ECE center staff to equip them to 1) improve the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increase opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teach children, other staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers spoke highly of the center-specific support, such as the provision of samples, responsive communication, and training and/or tools at their on-site visits, in terms of its contributions to improving their ability and desire to make improvements in food practices, and to identify the gaps at their center between their current practices and ideal practices. They described substantial PFI-related changes made at their center as a result of this direct support, and described the support as being tailored to their center context. They provided exemplary examples of how their center's PFI programming would not have been as effective had this direct support not occurred.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers described how center-specific support, such as samples, responsive communication, and training and/or tools at their on-site visits, increased their ability and desire to make improvements in food practices, and to identify the gaps at their center between their current practices and ideal practices. They described some PFI-related changes made at their center as a result of this direct support. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element was essential in helping them implement the PFI practices.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers described how center-specific support, such as samples, responsive communication, and training and/or tools at their on-site visits, increased their desire to make improvements in food practices. They did not describe how this support translated into changes at their center or equipped them to identify gaps between their current practices and ideal practices.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described a lack of adequate direct support or described this direct support as not notably useful or valuable.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2C: Networking Opportunities for ECE center staff to equip them to 1) improve the centers' food quality standards and systems, 2) increase opportunities to children, staff, and parents about the value of proper nutrition and physical activity through training and modeling, and 3) teach children, other staff, and parents to appreciate the value and impact of gardening on nutrition and physical activity.

Highly Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided exemplary examples of how the networking opportunities within the PFI program efforts were significantly valuable in terms of supporting their center's PFI activities. They actively engaged in networking with other centers during PFI program efforts/training and felt that these opportunities were constructive in providing inspiration, resources, and best practices related to their PFI efforts. They provided examples of ways in which their center's programming would not have been as effective had the networking opportunities not occurred. They described how these professional relationships and sharing of practices continued outside of PFI trainings.
Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how the networking opportunities within the PFI program efforts were valuable in terms of supporting their center's PFI activities. They actively engaged in networking with other centers during PFI program efforts/training and felt that these opportunities were constructive in providing inspiration, resources, and best practices related to their PFI efforts, but did not describe ways in which they engaged with these networks outside of the trainings. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the networking and sharing continued and contributed to PFI implementation efforts beyond the formal trainings.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors and teachers provided examples of how they enjoyed the networking opportunities within the PFI program efforts and passively engaged in networking with other centers during the training, but did not mention that the networking was inspiring or helpful in terms of supporting their PFI activities.
Not Valuable	Center directors and teachers described the networking opportunities within the PFI program efforts as not being sufficiently valuable. They did not engage or they passively engaged in the opportunities provided.
Unable to Assess	Center directors and teachers did not have experience with PFI program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

APPENDIX C. EVALUATION RUBRICS - ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

1. Impact: How impactful were the TOF Accreditation Support efforts in changing perceptions, attitudes and practices among centers, center staff, children, and families.

1A: Center Impact Impacting the center by shifting policies and practices aligned to the accreditation standards and recognized as being indicative of a high-quality center.

Highly Impactful	Center directors provided exemplary examples of how their center practices that emphasize accreditation-related quality education and experiences for children have shifted as a result of staff involvement in the accreditation process, and many examples of how related policies have changed. They describe how they've integrated and operationalized the standards at their center a result of what they've learned through the accreditation process, and how their center is stronger administratively. They described how they use their accreditation status in their communications about their centers and how they are inspired to pursue national accreditations as well.
Impactful	Center directors provided examples of how their center practices that emphasize accreditation-related quality education and experiences for children have shifted as a result of staff involvement in the accreditation process, and provide one or more examples of how related policies have changed. They described how they've integrated and operationalized the standards at their center a result of what they've learned through the accreditation process. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center policies, practices, and culture, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how they are communicating about their related efforts or striving for more credentials of quality.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors provided examples of how their center practices that emphasize accreditation-related quality education and experiences for children have shifted as a result of staff involvement in the accreditation process.
Not Impactful	Center directors described the quality practices as having not been notably modified as a result of staff involvement in Accreditation support efforts. Neither policies nor practices have markedly shifted to emphasize the accreditation principles and quality standards.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with/knowledge of Accreditation.

1B: Staff Impact Impacting the center staff by changing knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviors related to the accreditation standards and recognized as being indicative of a high-quality center.

Highly Impactful	Center directors provided exemplary examples of an understanding of accreditation standards and positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and pride) and perceptual changes (value of accreditation and improving quality), and positive related changes in professional practice among themselves and their fellow staff. They identify how the programming has significantly changed their professional perspective and practices and that they believe that the accreditation helps them to provide higher quality services to children and their families. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement and articulate the value of accreditation standards and the link between these standards and quality. They may discuss how the advancement in quality in their centers have led them to have higher aspirations professionally.
Impactful	Center directors provided examples of an understanding of accreditation standards and positive related attitudinal (such as enthusiasm and pride) and perceptual changes (value of accreditation and improving quality), and positive related changes in professional practice among themselves and their fellow staff. They identify how the programming has changed their professional perspective and practices and that they believe that the accreditation helps them to provide higher quality services to children and their families. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement the accreditation standards. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the staff, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about how they are sharing the value of accreditation or striving for more professional credentials.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors provided examples of an understanding of accreditation standards. They identify how the programming has changed their professional practices and that they believe that the accreditation helps them to provide higher quality services to children and their families. They describe feeling equipped, with resources and knowledge, to implement the accreditation standards.
Not Impactful	Center directors described a lack of notable improvements in accreditation-related knowledge, perceptual and attitudinal changes, or behavioral changes related to participation in accreditation support efforts. They describe not feeling sufficiently equipped to initiate and/or share accreditation principles and standards and a lack of change in professional and personal perspective and practice.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with accreditation efforts. Interviewee did not mention staff impact of accreditation efforts.

1C: Child Impact Impacting the centers' children in ways that are related to the accreditation standards and recognized as being indicative of a high-quality center.

Highly Impactful	Center directors provided exemplary examples of children being developmentally assessed and receiving developmental screenings as a result of their center accreditation goals. They described ways in which the accreditation support and their intentions to become accredited enabled them to offer children a significantly broader range of and higher-quality learning opportunities, and addressed the learning needs within all domains of the childrens' development. They described ways in which the process and achievement of accreditation directly and substantially impacted children's learning outcomes.
Impactful	Center directors provided examples of children being developmentally assessed and receiving developmental screenings as a result of their center accreditation goals. They described ways in which the accreditation support and their intentions to become accredited enabled them to offer children a broader range of and higher-quality learning opportunities, and addressed the learning needs within all domains of the childrens' development. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's children indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about child outcomes that are shifting as a result of their accreditation efforts.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors described ways in which the accreditation support and their intentions to become accredited positioned them to offer children a broader range of and higher-quality learning opportunities, but did not mention whether or not they actually offered these new opportunities.
Not Impactful	Center directors described a lack of notable improvements in student outcomes as a result of the accreditation efforts.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with accreditation efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of accreditation efforts.

1D: Family Impact Impacting the center's families in ways that are related to the accreditation standards and recognized as being indicative of a high-quality center.

Highly Impactful	Center directors provided exemplary examples of families recognizing and appreciating that their center is committed to being a center of quality early care, and being aware of center practices that are aligned to accreditation standards. They reported that parents actively engaged in the accreditation process and seek out and enroll in accredited centers. They described parents as actively sharing the value of accreditation and the standards of accreditation with other parents.
Impactful	Center directors provided examples of families recognizing and appreciating that their center is committed to being a center of quality early care, and being aware of center practices that are aligned to accreditation standards. They reported that parents actively engaged in the accreditation process and seek out and enroll in accredited centers. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program impacted the center's families indirectly, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly impactful" and/or few/no examples about family outcomes that are shifting as a result of their accreditation efforts.
Minimally Impactful	Center directors provided examples of families recognizing that their center is committed to being a center of quality early care, and being passively aware of center practices that are aligned to accreditation standards.
Not Impactful	Center directors described a lack of notable improvements family outcomes as a result of the accreditation efforts.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with accreditation efforts. Interviewee did not mention child impact of accreditation efforts.

2. **Value:** How valuable were the Accreditation forms of support offered to ECE staff?

2A: Large Group Offsite Trainings for ECE center staff to help them move through the NAEYC accreditation process and become a recognized high-quality center.

Highly Valuable	Center directors gave exemplary examples of how the Accreditation training sessions and learning communities were valuable/useful/worthwhile to them in terms of 1) understanding the accreditation process and the importance of achieving status, 2) understanding how to implement the accreditation process, and 3) understanding how accreditation validates the quality of their center. They reported that their involvement in the trainings clarified the accreditation process and made them feel it was achievable. They spoke highly of the trainings in terms of providing them with appropriate resources and information to share the quality standards and the standards' value to other parties and equipping them to preemptively overcome potential barriers to achieving accreditation.
Valuable	Center directors gave examples of how the Accreditation training sessions and learning communities were valuable/useful/worthwhile to them in terms of 1) understanding the accreditation process and the importance of achieving status, 2) understanding how to implement the accreditation, and 3) understanding that accreditation validates the quality of their center. They reported that their involvement in the trainings clarified the accreditation process and made them feel it was achievable. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element helped them share the principles with others or overcome potential barriers to achieving accreditation.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors gave examples of how the Accreditation training sessions and learning communities were valuable/useful/worthwhile to them in terms of understanding the accreditation process and the importance of achieving status.
Not Valuable	Center directors described the Accreditation training sessions as not notably valuable/useful to them in terms of understanding Accreditation processes and requirements.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with Accreditation program efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2B: Direct Support (onsite evaluations, consultations, responsive support) for ECE center staff to help them move through the NAEYC accreditation process and become a recognized high-quality center.

Highly Valuable	Center directors identified exemplary examples of receiving responsive and encouraging support from their "accreditation coordinator" and spoke highly of the support in terms of its usefulness in coaching them through their accreditation-related challenges. Staff described feeling comfortable initiating contact with their coordinators and felt that coordinators' were reliable in their responsiveness. They reported that the support was directly applicable and tailored to their center context, and felt that this aspect of the support was instrumental in helping them navigate through the accreditation process.
Valuable	Center directors identified examples of receiving responsive and encouraging support from their "accreditation coordinator" and provided examples of how this support was useful/valuable in coaching them through their accreditation-related challenges. Staff described feeling comfortable initiating contact with their coordinators and felt that coordinators' were reliable in their responsiveness. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the program element was essential in helping them navigate through the process.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors identified examples of receiving responsive and encouraging support from their "accreditation coordinator" and provided examples of how this support was somewhat useful/valuable in coaching them through their accreditation-related challenges.
Not Valuable	Center directors described a lack of adequate direct support or described this direct support as not notably useful or valuable.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with Accreditation support efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

2C: Networking Opportunities for ECE center staff to help them move through the NAEYC accreditation process and become a recognized high-quality center.

Highly Valuable	Center directors provided exemplary examples of how the networking opportunities within the accreditation training efforts were valuable in terms of making them feel less isolated through the process, and supporting their center's process of applying for and achieving accreditation. They actively engaged and felt comfortable in networking with other centers during the accreditation efforts/training and felt that these opportunities were instrumental to them achieving center accreditation by providing cross-site lessons learned, and continued networking informally outside of the formal support efforts, via phone calls, document sharing, etc.
Valuable	Center directors provided examples of how the networking opportunities within the accreditation training efforts were valuable in terms of making them feel less isolated through the process, and supporting their center's process of applying for and achieving accreditation. They actively engaged and felt comfortable in networking with other centers during the accreditation efforts/training, but did not describe ways in which they engaged with these networks outside of the trainings. In general, the examples provided strong enough credible evidence to conclude that the program element was valuable overall, but not quite as many or as powerful examples as in "highly valuable" and/or few/no examples about how the networking and sharing continued and contributed to accreditation efforts beyond the formal trainings.
Minimally Valuable	Center directors provided examples of how the networking opportunities within the accreditation training efforts were somewhat valuable in terms of making them feel less isolated through the process, and supporting their center's process of applying for and achieving accreditation. They passively engaged in networking with other centers during the accreditation efforts/ training.
Not Valuable	Center directors described the networking opportunities within the Accreditation support efforts as not being notably valuable. They did not engage or they passively engaged in the opportunities provided.
Unable to Assess	Center directors did not have experience with Accreditation support efforts. Interviewee did not mention.

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE: CENTER SIZE

	Large (n=25)	Small (n=18)
General Sentiments		
Expressions of gratitude	40%	50%
Key aspects of support		
High quality information	60%	50%
Flexibility in training	64%	67%
Applied learnings	72%	56%
Center-centric support	72%	61%
TOF team and people	52%	44%
Sharing, networking, collective problem solving	64%	72%
Respect and valuing of staff	80%	56%
Suggestions for improvement		
Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offeringsed	4%	6%
Train staff to find related resourceses	12%	0%
Increase support for staff to attend trainings	16%	17%
Present content more concisely	24%	28%
Increase experiential learning opportunities	16%	11%
Barriers to implementation		
Lack of staff consensus	36%	56%
Buy-in by key stakeholders by key stakeholders	72%	56%
Changing minds and habits	52%	44%
Bureaucracy	24%	33%
Staff turnover	8%	28%
Funding	72%	83%
Facilitators to implementation		
Buy-in by key stakeholders by key stakeholders	68%	78%
Incremental change	44%	28%
Decision-maker supportt	48%	39%
Personal belief systems	68%	39%
Center Outcomes		
Principles embedded in curriculumm	36%	22%
Policy changes	52%	56%
Staff Outcomes		
Shift in role image	16%	11%
Improved professional practices	60%	44%
Improved personal practices	52%	44%
Increased proficiency with program concepts	52%	50%
Child Outcomes		
Improved behavior/self-regulation	28%	61%
Increased time outdoors and activity	40%	56%
Increased opportunities for learning	16%	22%
Family Outcomes		
Changed at-home practices	24%	39%
Actively requested information	32%	61%
Exposed to program philosophieses	88%	83%
Program Sustainability		
Demostration site network steering committee	24%	17%
Principles embedded in practice	28%	28%
Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles	40%	33%
Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings	8%	33%

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE: SCHOOL ROLE

	Director (n=26)	Teacher (n=17)
General Sentiments		
Expressions of gratitude	54%	29%
Key aspects of support		
High quality information	58%	53%
Flexibility in training	73%	53%
Applied learnings	69%	59%
Center-centric support	85%	41%
TOF team and people	62%	29%
Sharing, networking, collective problem solving	69%	65%
Respect and valuing of staff	69%	71%
Suggestions for improvement		
Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offeringsed	4%	6%
Train staff to find related resourceses	4%	12%
Increase support for staff to attend trainings	27%	0%
Present content more concisely	12%	47%
Increase experiential learning opportunities	12%	18%
Barriers to implementation		
Lack of staff consensus	54%	29%
Buy-in by key stakeholders by key stakeholders	69%	59%
Changing minds and habits	58%	35%
Bureaucracy	31%	24%
Staff turnover	33%	6%
Funding	85%	65%
Facilitators to implementation		
Buy-in by key stakeholders by key stakeholders	77%	65%
Incremental change	46%	24%
Decision-maker supportt	50%	35%
Personal belief systems	58%	53%
Center Outcomes		
Principles embedded in curriculumm	23%	41%
Policy changes	65%	35%
Staff Outcomes		
Shift in role image	12%	18%
Improved professional practices	58%	47%
Improved personal practices	46%	53%
Increased proficiency with program concepts	65%	29%
Child Outcomes		
Improved behavior/self-regulation	27%	65%
Increased time outdoors and activity	50%	41%
Increased opportunities for learning	12%	29%
Family Outcomes		
Changed at-home practices	31%	29%
Actively requested information	46%	41%
Exposed to program philosophieses	88%	82%
Program Sustainability		
Demostration site network steering committee	27%	12%
Principles embedded in practice	38%	12%
Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles	46%	24%
Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings	23%	12%

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE: REGION

	North County (n=17)	South County (n=26)
General Sentiments		
Expressions of gratitude	53%	38%
Key aspects of support		
High quality information	59%	54%
Flexibility in training	71%	62%
Applied learnings	59%	69%
Center-centric support	65%	69%
TOF team and people	29%	62%
Sharing, networking, collective problem solving	53%	77%
Respect and valuing of staff	82%	62%
Suggestions for improvement		
Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offeringsed	0%	8%
Train staff to find related resourceses	6%	8%
Increase support for staff to attend trainings	12%	19%
Present content more concisely	29%	23%
Increase experiential learning opportunities	24%	8%
Barriers to implementation		
Lack of staff consensus	53%	38%
Buy-in by key stakeholders	65%	65%
Changing minds and habits	41%	54%
Bureaucracy	24%	31%
Staff turnover	41%	0%
Funding	88%	69%
Facilitators to implementation		
Buy-in by key stakeholders	76%	69%
Incremental change	35%	38%
Decision-maker supportt	53%	38%
Personal belief systems	47%	62%
Center Outcomes		
Principles embedded in curriculumm	24%	35%
Policy changes	53%	54%
Staff Outcomes		
Shift in role image	18%	12%
Improved professional practices	41%	62%
Improved personal practices	59%	42%
Increased proficiency with program concepts	47%	54%
Child Outcomes		
Improved behavior/self-regulation	47%	38%
Increased time outdoors and activity	47%	46%
Increased opportunities for learning	29%	12%
Family Outcomes		
Changed at-home practices	47%	19%
Actively requested information	53%	38%
Exposed to program philosophieses	88%	85%
Program Sustainability		
Demostration site network steering committee	18%	23%
Principles embedded in practice	24%	31%
Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles	29%	42%
Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings	29%	12%

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE:
FUNDING SOURCE

	Faith Based (n=8)	Federal (n=4)	For Profit (n=6)	Non Profit (n=12)	State (N=13)
General Sentiments					
Expressions of gratitude	25%	50%	67%	42%	46%
Key aspects of support					
High quality information	75%	50%	83%	67%	23%
Flexibility in training	88%	50%	67%	75%	46%
Applied learnings	75%	100%	33%	67%	62%
Center-centric support	63%	75%	100%	67%	54%
TOF team and people	50%	75%	33%	42%	54%
Sharing, networking, collective problem solving	38%	75%	67%	92%	62%
Respect and valuing of staff	88%	75%	83%	75%	46%
Suggestions for improvement					
Set up network of centers who can operate together outside TOF offerings	0%	0%	0%	17%	0%
Train staff to find related resources	0%	0%	0%	8%	15%
Increase support for staff to attend trainings	13%	25%	0%	17%	23%
Present content more concisely	25%	0%	0%	50%	23%
Increase experiential learning opportunities	0%	0%	0%	8%	38%
Barriers to implementation					
Lack of staff consensus	25%	25%	50%	50%	54%
Buy-in by key stakeholders	88%	25%	67%	75%	54%
Changing minds and habits	63%	25%	67%	50%	38%
Bureaucracy	13%	50%	17%	33%	31%
Staff turnover	25%	25%	0%	17%	15%
Funding	75%	100%	83%	75%	69%
Facilitators to implementation					
Buy-in by key stakeholders	50%	75%	83%	100%	54%
Incremental change	38%	75%	50%	25%	31%
Decision-maker support	50%	50%	17%	50%	46%
Personal belief systems	38%	75%	83%	42%	62%
Center Outcomes					
Principles embedded in curriculum	38%	25%	33%	33%	23%
Policy changes	50%	25%	50%	58%	62%
Staff Outcomes					
Shift in role image	13%	25%	17%	8%	15%
Improved professional practices	63%	50%	50%	58%	46%
Improved personal practices	63%	50%	50%	58%	31%
Increased proficiency with program concepts	38%	50%	50%	50%	62%
Child Outcomes					
Improved behavior/self-regulation	38%	50%	33%	42%	46%
Increased time outdoors and activity	50%	50%	33%	58%	38%
Increased opportunities for learning	13%	25%	0%	25%	23%
Family Outcomes					
Changed at-home practices	25%	50%	17%	33%	31%
Actively requested information	38%	75%	0%	58%	46%
Exposed to program philosophies	75%	100%	100%	92%	77%
Program Sustainability					
Demostration site network steering committee	13%	25%	17%	25%	23%
Principles embedded in practice	25%	25%	17%	25%	38%
Staff enthusiasm and belief in the principles	50%	50%	50%	42%	15%
Knowledge sharing in staff-specific trainings	0%	25%	33%	25%	15%

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE: VALUE AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Mean Scores (1-4) of Value and Impact Perceptions of Value and Impact Compared Across Center Types and Respondent Roles

	OCPSBC_Value of Group Training	OCPSBC_Value of Direct Support	OCPSBC_Value of Networking	OCPSBC_ Impact on Center	OCPSBC_ Impact on Staff	OCPSBC_ Impact on Students	OCPSBC_ Impact on Families
Center Size							
Large	3.46	3.27	3.07	3.24	3.25	3.26	2.45
Small	3.29	3.50	3.20	3.47	3.44	3.28	2.61
Center Location							
North County	3.29	3.57	3.33	3.38	3.31	3.29	2.56
South County	3.46	3.28	3.00	3.31	3.33	3.25	2.50
Center Funding							
Faith Based	3.43	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.16	3.25	2.33
Federal	3.33	3.67	3.00	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.00
For Profit	3.80	4.00	2.67	3.50	3.17	2.83	2.17
Non Profit	**3.25**	**3.00**	**3.22**	**3.17**	**3.42**	**3.18**	**2.64**
State	3.36	3.33	3.14	3.42	3.40	3.58	2.55
Interviewee Role							
Director	3.50	3.39	3.06	3.40	3.35	3.17	2.57
Teacher	3.25	3.29	3.25	3.24	3.29	3.41	2.47

	PFI_Value of Group Training	PFI_Value of Direct Support	PFI_Value of Networking	PFI_Impact on Center	PFI_Impact on Staff	PFI_ Impact on Students	PFI_Impact on Families
Center Size							
Large	3.24	3.50	2.91	3.17	3.09	3.09	2.55
Small	2.85	3.67	3.14	2.82	3.25	2.89	2.78
Center Location							
North County	3.00	3.67	3.14	3.13	3.13	3.18	2.88
South County	3.15	3.50	2.91	2.96	3.18	2.87	2.50
Center Funding	*						*
Faith Based	3.50	3.00	3.00	3.29	3.29	3.14	2.33
Federal	3.50	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.25	2.75	3.75
For Profit	3.40	4.00	2.67	3.50	3.00	2.50	2.17
Non Profit	**3.00**	**3.67**	**3.00**	**2.73**	**3.36**	**3.09**	**2.82**
State	2.56		3.20	2.92	2.90	3.17	2.55
Interviewee Role							
Director	3.14	3.57	3.00	3.13	3.17	2.88	2.67
Teacher	3.00		3.00	2.86	3.13	3.20	2.64

*Teachers were not asked about Accreditation Support, as this support was only offered to Directors. Thus, we do not provide results disaggregated by interviewee role.

APPENDIX D. DATA TABLE: VALUE AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (continued)

Mean Scores (1-4) of Value and Impact Perceptions of Value and Impact Compared Across Center Types and Respondent Roles

	Accredidation Support_Value of Group Training	Accredidation Support_Value of Direct Support	Accredidation Support_Value of Networking	Accredidation Support_Impact on Center	Accredidation Support_Impact on Staff
Center Size					
Large	3.14	3.71	3.43	2.25	2.75
Small	3.00	3.38	3.00	2.83	3.33
Center Location					
North County	2.50	3.40	3.00	3.00	3.50
South County	3.25	3.60	3.38	2.50	3.00
Center Funding					
Faith Based	2.50	3.50	3.50		
Federal	3.00	3.67	3.00	3.00	3.00
For Profit	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00
Non Profit	**3.00**	**3.50**	**3.33**	**2.00**	**3.00**
State	3.33	3.25	3.00	2.75	3.00

APPENDIX E. REFERENCES

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