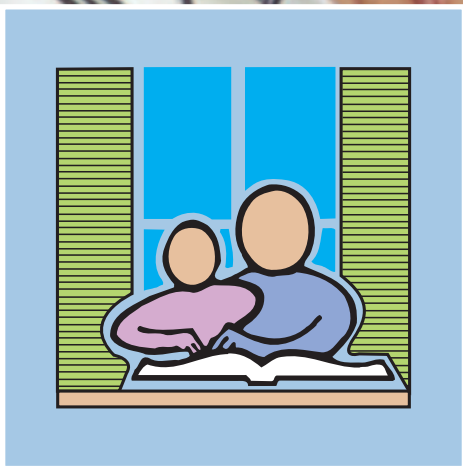


COLORADO EVEN START



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This report is available online at www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/EvenStartIndex.htm.

COLORADO EVEN START

2006–2007 Progress Report

Prepared by Beckie Anderson
for the Colorado Department of Education

Key Findings of the 2006–2007 Progress Report

An **Even Start** family literacy program is an integrated adult education, early childhood education, and parent education program that facilitates parents and children spending time together doing literacy activities. This Progress Report provides information about the ten (10) Colorado **Even Start** programs, and the educational and self-sufficiency gains made by the families they serve. It includes seven years of program data collected on the *Colorado Family Literacy State Performance Measures*. A second year's data is presented on parents' behavior related to children's literacy development. For the first time this year, data is reported on two new assessments used with **Even Start** preschool children preparing to enter kindergarten.

For the past ten years, the Colorado Department of Education has supported a statewide evaluation of Colorado **Even Start** programs. The following findings are highlights from the 2006–2007 evaluation:

- Colorado **Even Start** programs met 85% of the targeted goals contained in the state performance measures.
- Colorado **Even Start** programs served 431 families with 567 children.
- Of **Even Start** parents studying to pass the General Educational Development (GED) examination and teen parents working toward obtaining a high school diploma, 72% attained their goals this year. This figure shows a 17% increase from two years ago and the highest percentage in the four years the statistic has been calculated.
- An average of 83% of eligible teen parents in **Even Start** graduated from high school over the past eight years.

“Unlike literacy education that focuses on young children or adults in isolation, family literacy situates the act of learning to read and write within a web of supportive, intergenerational relationships.”
(Family Strengthening Policy Center, 2007)

- Of the preschool children given a pre and post Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT III), 73% made significant gains on this measure of receptive vocabulary.
- Using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), preschool children recognized an average of 13 upper case letters.
- 61% of parents demonstrated progress in reading to their children.
- 86% of unemployed **Even Start** parents seeking work obtained employment.

Research Foundation for Family Literacy

Literacy in Everyday Life, a report from the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) is based on an assessment administered to over 19,000 adults (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). Findings from this report provide insight into parent–child literacy interactions as they relate to parents' literacy levels. Results show that the higher the literacy level of the parent the more likely they were to read to their child regularly in the previous week. Specifically, 50% of parents with proficient literacy skills reported reading to their child five or more days the previous week. Comparatively, 27% of parents with below basic literacy skills reported the same amount of reading (five times or more) the previous week.

According to the report the following factors also increased as parents literacy levels increased:

- Percentage of parents whose children (ages 3–5) knew the letters of the alphabet
- Percentage of parents who engaged in rhyming activities with their children during the previous month

- Percentage of parents who talked to their children about things they studied in school
- Percentage of parents whose children (ages 2–17) often saw them reading, and
- Percentage of parents who were involved in four activities in their children’s school.

Literacy in Everyday Life concludes that, in general, parents with higher literacy levels engaged in more literacy-related activities with their children. Findings such as the relationship between parent literacy levels and children’s alphabet knowledge confirm the intergenerational literacy connection which is a basic tenet of the family literacy model.

Upon establishing the intergenerational connection, a key question for family literacy is—can the literacy behaviors of parents be influenced in order to impact the literacy levels of their children? A meta-analysis on the effects of family literacy interventions provides an answer (Senechal, 2006). This analysis reviewed 14 scientific studies on parent–child activities in the home designed to improve children’s literacy.

Overall findings were that parent involvement has a positive impact on children’s reading. Interventions used in the studies were as effective for children experiencing reading difficulties as they were for normally developing children. Also, the socioeconomic level of participating families did not influence the positive outcomes of the interventions.

Based on the review of specific strategies, Senechal concludes the review with two recommendations. First, educators should train parents to teach children specific reading skills. Second, educators should encourage parents to listen to their children read. These recommendations align with efforts of family literacy programs to assist parents in fostering their children’s literacy development.

The Background of Even Start

The purpose of **Even Start**, as outlined in federal legislation, is to help break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and low literacy by providing a unified family lit-

eracy program for low-income families. **Even Start** has three related goals:

- to help parents improve their literacy or basic education skills,
- to help parents become full partners in educating their children, and
- to assist children in reaching their full potential as learners.

Even Start is funded through the U.S. Department of Education under the No Child Left Behind Act, Title I. Title I is the largest federally funded education program designed to provide services for preschool, elementary, and secondary students. **Even Start** is Part B, Subpart 3 of Title I (Refer to *Guidance for the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program: Part B, Subpart of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [ESEA]*, 2003).

Federal funding for **Even Start** in 2006–2007 totaled \$99 million. This reflects a 56% decrease in funding from the \$225 million provided the previous year. These funds are allocated to state governments and distributed to local programs through competitive grants. In Colorado, **Even Start** is administered by the **Even Start** State Coordinator, housed in the Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFLA) Unit of the Office of Student Support Services at the Colorado Department of Education.

State Funding for Family Literacy

Two types of state funds were made available for Colorado family literacy services during the 2006–2007 program year.

In the spring 2006 legislative session, representatives voted to allocate \$200,000 to the existing Family Literacy Education Grant Program (HB02-1303). The bill originally passed in 2001 with no state funds. The funds were administered by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Unit of the Colorado Department of Education and were dispersed through a competitive grant process for existing **Even Start** and AEFLA programs.

The second allocation of money came from the Title I Office at the Colorado Department of Education. In response to the decrease in federal **Even Start** funds

for 2006–2007, Title I provided \$301,000 for Colorado **Even Start** programs to continue operation in 2006–2007.

Colorado Family Literacy Consortium

The Colorado Family Literacy Consortium was created in 2000 through an **Even Start** Initiative Grant as a vehicle for building state-level participation and leadership. Although these grant funds are no longer available, the Consortium continued to function and met bimonthly during 2006–2007.

The Consortium is composed of members representing the Center for Effective Parent Involvement in Public Education, Colorado Department of Education (including Adult Education & Family Literacy, Colorado Preschool Program, **Even Start**, Prevention Initiatives, and Title I), Colorado Department of Human Services (Colorado Works/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families {TANF}), Colorado Head Start Association, Colorado Parent and Child Foundation, Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), Metropolitan State College, Rocky Mountain Parents as Teachers and Urban Peak.

The goals of the Colorado Family Literacy Consortium are to improve the quality of family literacy programs in the state through increased accountability measures, quality training experiences, dissemination of information, and collaboration among state agencies. This year consortium members served as readers for the Family Literacy Education Grant Program applications.

Colorado Family Literacy Training Center

This was the third year in which the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Family Literacy Consortium supported a training site: the Colorado Family Literacy Training Center. The center advances the Consortium's commitment to provide quality training experiences in the state.

The Family Literacy Training Center provides training and technical assistance to those interested in the field

of family literacy throughout the state. The Training Center is sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education; the Colorado Family Literacy Consortium; Pikes Peak **Even Start**; and Colorado Springs School District 11, Adult & Family Education and Title I.

During the year, Center staff provided 29 trainings with 753 participants. This is an 8% increase in the number of people trained last year and a 54% increase in the number trained during the Center's first year. Training topics ranged from Dual Language Acquisition to using the *Parent Education Profile* (an assessment tool). Of the trainings provided, 18 were rated by participants using a five-point scale with five being high. The overall average rating was 4.7.

Training Center staff responded to 12 requests for technical assistance. These included site visits to observe program services or staff meetings, followed-up with suggestions for improvement.

Center staff conducted a survey of stakeholders at the end of the program year. The survey asked for information on quality of trainings and technical assistance, availability of staff, level of communication and requests for other services. Responses included appreciation of customized trainings, research-based information and trainings that address a variety of learning styles. All comments regarding technical assistance, availability of staff and communication were positive.

Training Center staff also organize trainings for the Colorado Family Literacy training cadre which consists of family literacy professionals who have completed the National Center for Family Literacy's (NCFL) Certified Trainer Program. The program prepares participants to conduct NCFL's *Foundations in Family Literacy* training. The three-day *Foundations* training provides a basic overview of the principles and practices of family literacy and the research that supports those practices (information about the National Center for Family Literacy is available at <http://www.familit.org/>).

Two *Foundations in Family Literacy* trainings were offered this year, one in Colorado Springs and one in Delta. The 45 attendees included new **Even Start** staff, Title I staff, adult educators, Head Start staff and other community literacy advocates.

Colorado Even Start Programs

The most common type of **Even Start** program in Colorado is a center-based program in a location, such as a school, where families come to participate. A typical session includes instruction time for parents in adult basic education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED) examination preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, or job-skills training. Parents also participate in parent education. During adult education, the children are involved in an early childhood education (ECE) component. Early childhood options range from children learning and interacting in a preschool setting to 'homework help' for children in the primary grades. At some point during the session, children and parents come together for literacy activities in a component referred to as Parent and Child Together (PACT) time or Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA). This often takes place in the early childhood room with some activities initiated by the children. Literacy sessions are usually held several times a week.

Colorado **Even Start** staff make regular home visits to provide individualized literacy activities that address the unique needs of each family. Home visits are integrated with center-based programming and are typically scheduled once a month.

Even Start programs may serve teen parents enrolled in high school. Teen parents often take parenting classes from **Even Start** personnel for high-school credit. PACT can be part of these classes or part of home visits. Adult education is obtained through the high school courses in which the teen parent is enrolled.

Staff Qualifications

Even Start staff members are required to meet qualifications as outlined in federal legislation and further delineated by state policy. In all cases, programs are encouraged to hire the most highly qualified staff available.

Colorado **Even Start** program administrators (usually referred to as program coordinators) are required to have earned a minimum of an associate's degree; to

complete the *National Center for Family Literacy's Even Start Administration Training*; to participate in specific ongoing professional development activities, such as national training and quarterly professional development meetings; and to participate in the statewide evaluation process.

Early childhood instructional staff members must have earned a minimum of an associate's degree in early childhood education. Because all **Even Start** early childhood facilities [child-care centers, family child-care homes, and/or preschools] must be licensed through the *Office of Child-Care Services in the Colorado Department of Human Services (OCCS/CDHS)*, individual early childhood staff may substitute OCCS/CDHS certification in their specific positions for a college degree.

All parent educators must have earned a minimum of an associate's degree. In order to expand the number of highly qualified, bilingual individuals who are supporting **Even Start** families, the *Colorado Family Literacy Consortium* has set policy that individual home visitors may substitute certification through the *Home Instructional Program for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY)* or *Parents as Teachers (PAT)* for a college degree.

Adult education instructors must have earned a minimum of an associate's degree and obtained the Colorado Department of Education's *Literacy Instruction Authorization*.

Literacy Instruction Authorization

According to the *Working Poor Families Project* (Duke & Ganzglass, 2007) raising the quality of instruction is a critical issue in adult education. The Colorado Department of Education's Adult Education and Family Literacy Unit addressed this challenge by creating the *Literacy Instruction Authorization (LIA)*. The LIA is a teaching credential for adult and family literacy educators.

Five courses which lead to the authorization are available through the Colorado Community College Online system: *Introduction to Adult Education Instruction*; *Planning, Organizing, and Delivering Adult Education Instruction*; *Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education*; *Teaching English as a Second Language to Adult Learners*; and *Family Literacy in Adult Education*.



In addition to the online versions, traditional classroom courses are offered by local community colleges when there is adequate enrollment. Enrolled students receive three hours of credit for each class successfully completed. Completion of these courses leads to receipt of an authorization in *Literacy Instruction*, a teaching credential offered by the Colorado Department of Education for adult and family-literacy educators. The acquisition of this credential is required for each program funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), along with adult educators funded through **Even Start**.

An alternative means has been developed to assist educators in receiving the *Literacy Instruction Authorization*. Applicants submit a portfolio which includes documentation of professional teaching experience, coursework completed, and training/volunteer experience specific to adult education and/or family literacy. Members of a Portfolio Committee, representing the Consortium, the Colorado Department of Education, and external experts, review the application in order to recommend approval of experience equivalency through a Certificate of Equivalency, granted through Colorado Community College System (CCCS). The Committee also reviews transcripts to determine course equivalency, as a substitution for one or more of the classes required for the LIA.

The Portfolio Committee also has charge of creating the policy of renewal of the five year credential, and the updating and streamlining of the whole LIA process. This improved process will result in the creation of version four of the LIA handbook.

Colorado Basic Literacy Act

In 2004, the Colorado State Legislature revised the Colorado Basic Literacy Act, originally enacted in 1996. According to the requirements of this act, Individual Literacy Plans (ILPs) must be formulated jointly by parents, teachers, and administrators for children in the primary grades (K-3) who are not reading at grade level. **Even Start** personnel across the state are assisting school districts with the development of ILPs. When **Even Start** children are not reading at grade level, **Even Start** programs become part of the resources delineated in an action plan.

Program Descriptions

During 2006-2007, the ten Colorado **Even Start** programs operated sites in Alamosa, Aurora, Boulder, Carbondale, Center, Colorado Springs, Cortez, Delta, Denver, Durango, Glenwood Springs, Lafayette, Leadville, Monte Vista, Rifle and Waverly. As a result of the federal funding cuts, only six of these ten programs received federal **Even Start** money. The other four programs were at the end of their four year funding cycle in 2006. These four programs applied for and were awarded the Title I grants previously described. The coordinators of these programs agreed to participate in all of the local evaluation activities and data collection requirements for **Even Start** and are therefore included in this report.

Aurora Public Schools provided an **Even Start** program for the sixth year. The program served families at the district's Early Childhood Center. Staff instituted school-age PACT at 12 schools. The evening dad's class continued, covering topics on child-development and parenting. Sixty percent of parents made progress in reading with their child as measured by the Parent Education Profile.

The Boulder Valley Family Literacy Program has received an **Even Start** grant for six years. In alliance with Boulder County Head Start, the program serves families in two elementary schools in Lafayette and Boulder. With the support of the state Family Literacy Education fund, a licensed teacher was hired to facilitate stronger lesson plans for the school-age children and support PACT at the child's home school. A partnership was created between English-speaking parents and Spanish-speaking parents at one school. Each group provides a weekly language lesson to the other group.

Pikes Peak **Even Start**, the Colorado Springs program, has received **Even Start** funding for eleven years. Community Partnership for Child Development (Head Start and the Colorado Preschool Program) collaborates with El Paso County School Districts 2 and 11 to implement the grant. This year the program had 85% of the families they serve receive 300 or more hours of service, a 19% increase from last year. Due to the continued success of the collaboration and growing wait lists, the partners will open four additional family literacy sites in 2007.

The Piñon Project in Cortez has completed its ninth year of providing **Even Start** services. Working in partnership with the local adult education program, the Project provides **Even Start** programming at the Unlimited Learning Center (adult education program) and Southwest Open School, a charter alternative high school. Of the parents served in the adult education program, 73% obtained a job; 65% moved off Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and 78% stopped other forms of public assistance.

The Delta County Family Literacy Program operated as an **Even Start** site for the second year. The program is a collaborative between Delta County School District, Delta County Adult Literacy Program and Delta County Department of Human Services. In addition to parent education classes, parent groups were held twice a week divided according to ages of children—parents with middle and high school age children and parents with elementary age children—to address the specific needs of each group.



Metropolitan State College of Denver: Families Learning Together **Even Start** has served families for the past eight years. The program successfully moved to Munroe Elementary where they were offered permanent space in two adjacent classrooms. PACT was conducted with parents who joined children in 17 of the school's elementary classes.

Durango School District 9R completed its sixth year as an **Even Start** grantee in cooperation with Fort Lewis College and the Durango Adult Education Center. This year the program reconfigured to serve five elementary schools and focus more programming at the Adult Education Center. The program will be part of a new parent participation program developed by the National Center for Family Literacy called *AYP=All Your Parents*. In part, AYP will serve as a recruitment avenue to identify families who could benefit from family literacy services.

Colorado Mountain College (CMC), based in Glenwood Springs, in partnership with Roaring Fork School District RE-1 and Garfield School District RE-2, has operated an **Even Start** program for ten years. A new site at Crystal River Elementary in Carbondale expanded family literacy services from two to four days. Staff also collaborated with the Roaring Fork Family Resource Center to offer parenting sessions at three Rifle Elementary schools.

Lake County Public Schools completed its fifth year operating an **Even Start** program in Leadville. In partnership with the Lake County Public Library, the **Even Start** program serves families at West Park Elementary and The Center/Pitts Elementary. The program focused efforts with teen parents and implemented the *Parents as Teachers* curriculum *Issues in Working with Teen Parents* for parent education.

The San Luis Valley **Even Start** Program has provided family literacy services for nine years. The Monte Vista School District, in conjunction with the Alamosa campus of Trinidad State Junior College, collaboratively works with SLV Welfare Advocates and the Immigrant Resource Center to support this initiative. Program services are offered in Alamosa, Center, Waverly and Monte Vista. The program added after-school tutoring this year. When tutors moved from La Llave (Alamosa's program site) to

the Tierra Nueva Migrant and Seasonal Housing complex, transportation was no longer a problem and attendance tripled.

Evaluation of Colorado Even Start

Two levels of evaluation of Colorado **Even Start** programs have been in place for the past ten years. First, the Coordinator of Local **Even Start** Evaluations and local program coordinators conduct reviews of individual programs, focusing on quality of service delivery. Second, programs collect data on the accomplishments of their families. These outcomes, including data for the **Colorado Family Literacy State Performance Measures**, are aggregated for an analysis of program and state-level impact.

Local Program Evaluations

The following question guides the evaluation of local programs, which is coordinated through a statewide system:

- How can **Even Start** programs effectively support family gains in literacy and self-sufficiency?

Programs receive an evaluation visit on an every-other-year schedule. Peer assistance teams are a key feature of local evaluations. These three-member teams consist of the independent evaluator and a coordinator from each of two other **Even Start** programs in the state. Coordinators from **Even Start** programs not receiving a local evaluation visit participate twice as members of a peer assistance team. The same evaluator coordinates these teams and serves as a team member for each local evaluation.

The *Guide to Quality: Even Start Family Literacy—Program Implementation and Continuous Improvement, Volume I, Revised* (RMC Research Corporation, 2001) is used as a key document in the local evaluation process for defining standards of effective **Even Start** programs. In consultation with the evaluator, staff members identify one or two areas from the guide for the focus of the evaluation. One area is required to align with indicators of the state performance measures on which the program has achieved low outcomes.

The main activity of the peer assistance teams is a site visit. During the visit, team members observe classes and activities in each of the four program component areas. Team members lead focus groups with parents, staff members, and collaborators. Lesson plans are examined in relation to observed class activities. Family files are reviewed including staff documentation of observations, rationales and ratings for the *Parent Education Profile* (RMC Research Corporation, 2003).

Program staff members complete the *Guide to Quality's* self-assessment in the chosen areas prior to the team's visit. Peer assistance team members complete the same assessments at the end of the site visit. Based on the observations, focus groups, and assessment results, team members develop commendations and recommendations for the program. These are presented and discussed during a final meeting with the program staff.

Programs that are not being evaluated by peer assistance teams also receive site visits. The **Even Start** State Coordinator conducts these visits. This structure provides an opportunity for the State Coordinator to review staff's progress in responding to the recommendations from the previous year's local evaluation on-site.

Colorado Statewide Even Start Evaluation Results

National statistics on **Even Start** consistently show that **Even Start** programs serve the intended population: undereducated, low-income families. Statistics provided by the **Even Start** Office at the U.S. Department of Education (Even Start Family Literacy Program Annual Business Meeting, 2007) show that, in program year 2005–06 approximately 38,000 families were served through **Even Start**. Participants had the following characteristics:

- 87% of families were at or below the federal poverty level.
- 87% of parents did not have a high school diploma or GED.
- 51% of parents had not progressed beyond the 9th grade.

This report reviews changes experienced by Colorado **Even Start** families but does not suggest that **Even Start**

is the exclusive reason for these changes. Numerous contributions, formal and informal, work together for families. It is beyond the realm of this document to address all factors influencing Colorado **Even Start** families. Changes and progress reported here are based on a family's participation in **Even Start** as one facet of support in their lives.

Colorado Even Start Progress Report

The following questions guided the design of the *Colorado Even Start Progress Report*. They are based on the legislative goal of **Even Start** to expand educational opportunities for families and to break the cycle of poverty.

- What educational gains did adults make?
- What educational gains did children make?
- What parenting goals were met?
- What self-sufficiency gains did families achieve?

To provide useful information to the state Department of Education and the local programs, the report also addresses these questions:

- How many families were served?
- What was the cost of serving these families?
- How often did families attend **Even Start** programming?

Program staff submitted data in July of 2007 for families served during the 2006–2007 program year. For the purposes of completing the data collection forms, program staff counted only those families who participated in 30 hours or more of **Even Start** programming. This total includes a minimum of seven hours of participation in each of the **Even Start** core services: adult education, early childhood education, parent education, and parent/child interaction. The 30-hour threshold increases the likelihood that program effects are, in fact, being measured.

Up through this year, program staff members have selected their own assessment instruments for determining developmental levels of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. These instruments often align with those used by collaborators such as Head Start or district preschool programs. After this year, programs will be required to choose from a limited list of assessments as part of a state department of education effort called *Results Matter*.

In order to assess progress on achieving state performance measures, program staff also tracked outcomes for families who participated in 300 or more hours of **Even Start** services and in 100 hours of adult education.



Colorado Family Literacy State Performance Measures— Outcomes

Even Start legislation requires states to develop and implement performance measures as indicators of program quality. Local **Even Start** coordinators in Colorado assisted in drafting and piloting performance measures for two years, before the state subsequently adopted them. The measures, approved by the Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Education, were revised in 2003 and are being used for purposes of monitoring, evaluation, and program improvement. Additional changes

were made last year due to the adoption of a new assessment—the *Parent Education Profile* (PEP).

Colorado’s performance measures address program quality, adult literacy, children’s literacy, parenting education, and family self-sufficiency. Targets for performance are goals family-literacy staff members across the state use while working with families. The following table details outcomes on performance indicators for the past seven years.

Performance Indicator	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
1.1 100% of programs will provide four components of service in a well-integrated, intensive manner of substantial duration, which facilitates sustainable change in families, as measured by local evaluation and monitoring visits.	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100% of programs provided four components of service
1.2 100% of programs will offer year-round services, as measured by program records.	42 weeks	42 weeks	40 weeks	42 weeks	42 weeks	41 weeks	Average weeks of service: 42
1.3 One hundred percent of programs will collaborate with public schools through coordination with Title I programs, and through participation with school staff in implementing Individual Literacy Plans (ILPs) for primary-grade children who are reading below grade level, as measured by local evaluation and monitoring visits, and by program records.	92% 75%	93% 93%	100% 100%	92% 92%	92% 100%	100% 91%	100% partnered w/ Title I 87% assisted with ILPs
2.1 After 100 hours of participation in the adult education program, 75% of parents will achieve their short-term education goals outlined in their family education plan, as measured by staff assessment.	79%	86%	87%	80%	89%	85%	89% of parents achieved education goals
2.2 After 100 hours of participation in the adult education program, 75% of parents in the ABE/ASE program will progress through one level, as measured by CASAS or TABE scores, or demonstrate adequate yearly progress as measured by appropriate assessment.	84%	91%	90%	87%	81%	77%	78% of ABE/ASE parents progressed through one level
2.3 After 100 hours of participation in the adult education program, 75% of parents in the ESL program will progress through one level, as measured by Oral BEST, BEST PLUS, or CASAS scores.	76%	85%	88%	85%	87%	68%	78% of ELL parents progressed through one level

Performance Indicator	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
2.4 After 100 hours of participation in adult education, 50% of parents in the ASE program will pass the GED exam, or high school seniors will earn a high school diploma, as measured by program records.	44%	34%	48%	53%	65%	70%	72% of eligible parents passed GED exam or received high school diploma
2.5 After 100 hours of participation in adult education, 60% of eligible parents seeking to enroll in higher education or training, with access to financial aid, will enroll, as measured by program records.	87%	58%	84%	89%	78%	74%	92% of eligible parents enrolled in higher education or training
3.1 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 75% of parents will achieve parenting goals according to their family education plans as measured by self-assessment.					Data not collected		93% of parents met their parenting goal
3.2 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of a subset of parents will improve use of literacy materials in their home, as measured by one level gain on Scale I A of the Parent Education Profile.					66% of new parents improved the use of literacy materials with their children at home		58% of new and returning parents improved the use of literacy materials with their children at home
3.3 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of a subset of parents will improve use of TV/Video their home, as measured by one level gain on Scale I B. of the Parent Education Profile.					60% of new parents improved the use of TV/Video for their children at home		36% of new and returning parents improved the use of TV/Video for their children at home
3.4 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of a subset of parents will improve the integration of language and learning in home activities, as measured by one level gain on Scale I C. of the Parent Education Profile.					60% of new parents improved the integration of language and learning in home activities for their children		55% of new and returning parents improved the integration of language and learning in home activities for their children
3.5 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of a subset of parents will increase their priority on learning together at home, as measured by one level gain on Scale I D. of the Parent Education Profile.					73% of new parents increased their priority on learning with their children at home		57% of new and returning parents increased their priority on learning with their children at home
3.6 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of parents will improve the quality of their verbal interactions with their children, as measured by one level gain on Scale II E. of the Parent Education Profile.					74% of new parents improved the quality of their verbal interactions with their children		53% of new and returning parents improved the quality of their verbal interactions with their children

Performance Indicator	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
3.7 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of parents will improve their use of strategies for reading with their children, as measured by one level gain on Scale II F. of the Parent Education Profile.						53% of new parents improved their use of strategies for reading with their children	61% of new and returning parents improved their use of strategies for reading with their children
3.8 After a minimum of six months of participation in the program, 40% of parents will improve their support for their child's learning of book and print concepts, as measured by one level gain on Scale II G. of the Parent Education Profile.						61% of new parents improved their support for their child's learning of book and print concepts	55% of new and returning parents improved their support for their child's learning of book and print concepts
4.1 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 85% of preschool-age children will be functioning at age-appropriate levels of development; or preschoolers will demonstrate one year's growth in reading readiness skills within one year, as measured by age-appropriate assessment instruments.	86%	93%	89%	92%	89%	94%	92% of preschoolers were at age-appropriate levels
4.2 After 300 hours of family participation in the program and 90% school attendance, 80% of primary-grade children will be reading at grade level [and will not be placed on Individual Literacy Plans]; or primary-grade children will demonstrate one year's growth in literacy skills within one year, as measured by age-appropriate assessment instruments.	85%	86%	96%	80%	84%	89%	84% of primary-grade children were reading at grade level
4.3 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 80% of primary-grade children with an Individual Literacy Plan at the beginning of the school year will demonstrate one year's growth in literacy skills within one year as measured by age-appropriate assessment instruments.	NA	NA	NA	68%	85%	79%	77% of primary grade children with an ILP made one year's growth
4.4 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 75% of primary-grade children will attend public school 90% of the time, as documented by school records.	54%	69%	71%	76%	81%	77%	87% of primary grade children had high attendance
4.5 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 90% of primary-grade children will be promoted to the next grade level, as documented by school records.	100%	97%	97%	92%	99%	100%	99% of primary grade children were promoted
5.1 After 300 hours of participation in the program, 75% of parents will achieve self-sufficiency goals according to their family education plan, as documented by program records and staff assessment.	81%	80%	85%	83%	92%	82%	83% of parents achieved self-sufficiency goals

Performance Indicator	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
5.2 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 50% of parents seeking employment will obtain a job, as documented by program records.	NA	NA	NA	72%	82%	91%	87% of parents seeking employment obtained a job
5.3 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 40% of employed parents will hold a job for six months during the program year, as documented by program records.	NA	NA	NA	45%	61%	60%	58% of employed parents held a job for six months
5.4 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 25% of employed parents will improve their employment status, as documented by program records.	33%	38%	24%	20%	16%	15%	18% of employed parents improved job status
5.5 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 50% of parents learning English will demonstrate a sustained use of English in the community, as measured by staff assessment.	NA	NA	63%	87%	88%	75%	87% of ELL parents used English in the community
5.6 After 300 hours of family participation in the program, 100% of eligible parents who want to enter the military will do so, as documented by program records.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No parents had goal of entering military



This year Colorado **Even Start** programs met the targeted percentages for 23 of the 27 performance measures (85%). Last year, programs met the same number of targets (85%). See Chart I for a seven year history of program attainment on state performance indicators.

There were four unmet indicators this year. The first—1.3—was below the target of 100% because one **Even Start** program did not participate with school staff in implementing Individual Literacy Plans (ILPs) for children in their program.

The second unmet goal—3.3—pertains to parents’ improvement in the use of TV and video for their children. This year 36% of parents made improvements while the target for this indicator is 40%. Last year, 60% of parents made improvements but a direct comparison between these statistics cannot be made because last year the parents assessed were all new to the program. This year the assessed parents included new and returning parents.

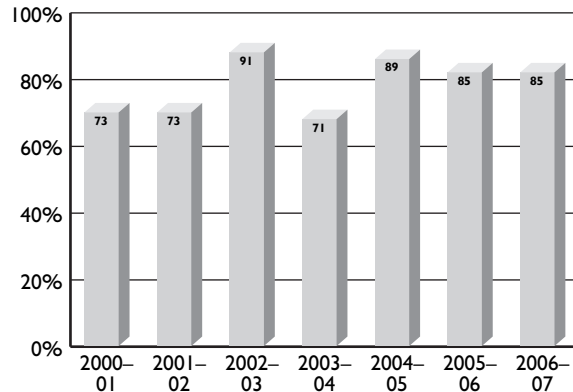
The third unmet goal—4.3—involves primary-grade children with an ILP who made one year’s growth in literacy skills within one school year. This year, 77% of children with ILPs met the goal. The target for this indicator is 80%. This indicator was added four years ago, with a four-year average outcome of 77%.

The final unmet indicator—5.4—reflects the number of employed parents who improve their employment status by obtaining a raise, promotion, or a better job. This year 18% of employed parents improved their status. This figure is three percentage points higher than last year but below the target of 25%. The seven-year average for this indicator is 23%.

Who participated in Even Start during 2006–2007?

Colorado **Even Start** programs served 431 families with 567 children during 2006–2007. Last year, 382 families with 595 children were served. The shift from last year to this year in serving more families and fewer children reflects a state policy change which allowed programs to serve children in a three-year age span. For example, a program could serve children ages 2 to 5 years. Previously, state policy required programs to serve all children from participating families ages 0 to 7 years.

Chart I: Attainment of State Performance Indicators



Participants this year included 436 adults, 107 infants, 131 toddlers, 209 preschool children, and 120 children in the primary grades (K–3). English Language Learners comprised 66% of participating adults. The percentage of English Language Learners served by the Colorado programs has remained fairly stable with a five year average of 65% (range—60%–68%).

What was the cost of serving Even Start families in 2006–2007?

During 2006–2007, the Colorado Department of Education disbursed \$910,305 to six community collaborations to fund **Even Start** programs. Additional Title I money was awarded to four previous **Even Start** programs. Local program coordinators typically combine **Even Start** monies with other funds and in-kind donations to cover costs. For example, \$167,500 was awarded to the 10 programs by the Colorado Department of Education’s Adult Education and Family Literacy Unit. **Even Start** funding is awarded based on the proposed services, not on the actual number of families served.

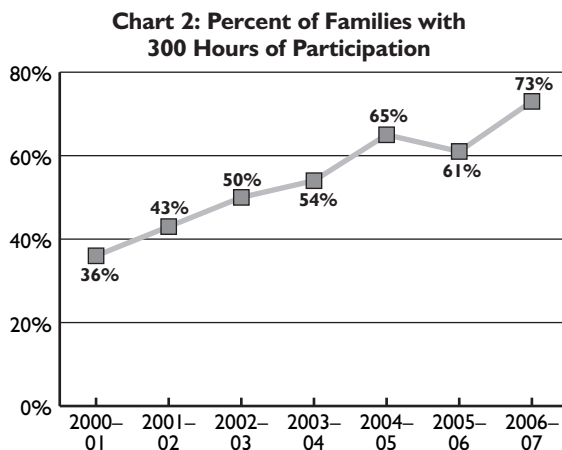
This year the average cost of serving an **Even Start** family in Colorado was \$2,854 (based only on the state allocation of **Even Start** federal funds to six local programs excluding the four programs that continued with Title I funds). The previous two years, the average cost per family was \$4,698 and \$4,363. The average cost per family this year is \$1,844 less than last year, a decrease of 40%. The reduction in costs is partially due to new state

requirements for serving children. As a result of these changes, some programs stopped providing early care and education for infants, the most costly age group of children to serve. As a cost comparison, Head Start's national average cost for serving one child is \$7,209 (Head Start Bureau, 2007).

How regularly did families attend Even Start programming?

Program staff members track the attendance hours of each participating family. Once families have participated in 300 hours of service, they are included in the group of families whose successes are reported using the state performance measures. Three hundred hours of participation indicates approximately six months of consistent attendance, based on the state requirement that programs provide a minimum of 15 hours of service per week.

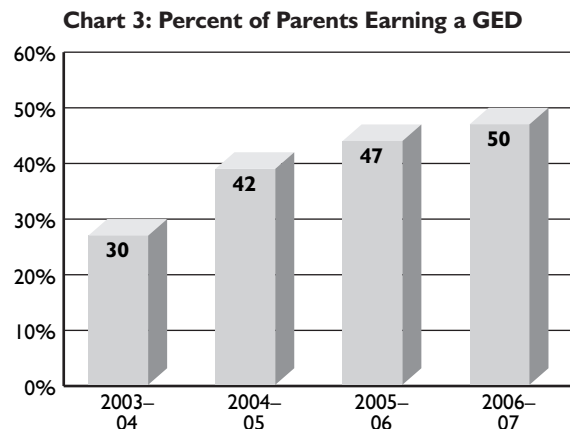
Chart 2 displays the percentage of families that reached 300 hours or greater of participation for the past seven years. The number of families with 300 hours or more of attendance shows an overall increase beginning with 36% of families in 2000–01, and moving to 73% of families this year.



What educational gains did adults in Even Start make?

Parents seeking a GED or high school diploma: Focus groups conducted as part of the **Even Start** program evaluation process reveal that many parents enroll in an **Even Start** program to advance their own education. This year, 7% of **Even Start** parents worked on passing the GED examination or earning a high school diploma. The number of parents with same goal last year was 10%. This percentage has dropped each year since 2003–04 when 24% of parents worked toward a GED. Only parents who test at a ninth-grade level or higher (studying in Adult Secondary Education) are counted as being eligible to pass the GED test. The drop in numbers of parents studying for the GED could be due to the growing number of ESL learners who are not yet ready for ninth-grade work in English. Successfully passing the GED examination means passing five subject-focused subtests: mathematics, language arts—reading, language arts—writing, social studies, and science.

Of the 32 parents studying to pass the GED examination, 19% began taking subtests, and 50% passed. This is an increase from the past two years when 47% and 42% of parents passed the test. Chart 3 presents the percentage of parents who studied for and passed the GED examination over the past 4 years. Nationally, 52% of eligible Even Start parents earned a GED in 2005–06 (U.S. Department of Education, Even Start Annual Business Meeting).



Of the parents working to pass the GED examination and teen parents working toward high school graduation, 72% were successful this year. This is a 17 point increase from two years ago and the highest completion rate since the statistic has been calculated. In Vermont's Even Start programs, 69% of eligible adult students earned a high school diploma or a GED (Vermont Department of Education, 2007).

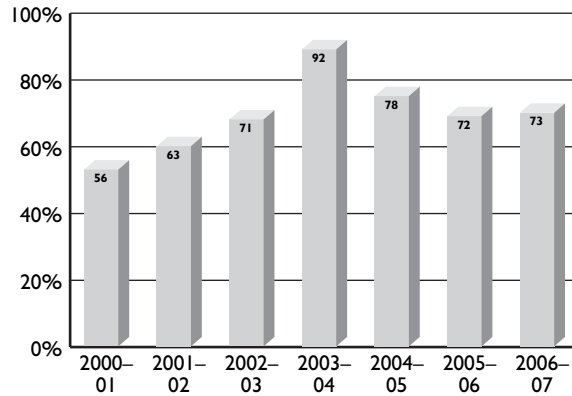
Teen parents participating in **Even Start** programs often are enrolled in high school. **Even Start** staff provides these parents with support to help them stay in school and graduate. This year, 75% of **Even Start** teen parents enrolled in high school remained in school. This figure is lower than last year's, when 86% of teens stayed in school.

Of this year's teen parents, 20 were seniors and eligible for graduation. Sixteen of these teens (80%) graduated from high school. This rate is lower than the rates for the past two years of 89% and 87%. The average graduation rate for teen parents in **Even Start** over the past eight years is 83%. The 2005 high school graduation rate for all public school students in Colorado was 69.8% (Colorado Children's Campaign, 2007).

Parents who are English Language Learners (ELL): This year 284 (66%) parents in **Even Start** studied to improve their English language skills. Sixty-seven percent of ELL parents progressed through one or more learning levels as measured by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) or Basic English Skills Test (BEST Plus). Of the parents with 300 hours or more of participation, 78% progressed through one level. Last year, 274 parents studied English, and 62% moved through at least one level. Nationally in 2006, 72% of **Even Start** ELL parents made significant progress as measured by the BEST Plus assessment (U.S. Department of Education, Even Start Annual Business Meeting).

Parents who enrolled in vocational training or higher education: Enrolling in higher education is considered a meaningful step toward breaking the cycle of poverty. Of the eligible parents, 73% continued their learning by enrolling in college or a vocational training program. Last year, 72% of eligible parents enrolled. Chart 4 exhibits a seven-year history of the percentage of eligible parents who entered higher education or training.

Chart 4: Percent of Parents Enrolled in Higher Education or Training



What educational gains did children in Even Start achieve?

Infants and toddlers: This year, 91% of infants and 87% of toddlers participating in **Even Start** were functioning at age-appropriate levels of development. Last year 95% of infants and 94% toddlers were at age level.

Preschoolers: This year, 92% of **Even Start** preschoolers were functioning at age-appropriate levels of development. Figures from the previous two years were 90% and 86%.

In response to a new federal requirement, **Even Start** program staff assessed preschool children using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test—3rd Edition (PPVT-III: Dunn and Dunn, 1997) and the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS—Pre-K: Invernizzi, Sullivan, Meier & Swank, 2004). The PPVT-III measures children's receptive vocabulary development. The PALS addresses alphabet knowledge through a number of subtests. The subtest used by **Even Start** programs assesses children's ability to recognize upper case letters.

Twenty-six Colorado children completed a pre and post test for the PPVT III this year. Children needed to meet three criteria in order to be tested; entering kindergarten the following year; enough command of English to understand the directions for the test in English; and, attended the program for at least six months.

Of the children tested, 73% made significant gains (an increase of four or more standard score points) from fall to spring with a minimum of six months between tests. Nationally in 2005–06, 80% of **Even Start** children made significant gains on the PPVT (U.S. Department of Education, Even Start Annual Business Meeting).

Thirty Colorado children in **Even Start** were tested on the PALS Pre-K Upper Case Alphabet Recognition Subtest. This is a one-time, spring assessment also given to children who have been in the program for six months or longer. The preschoolers recognized an average of 13 upper case letters. By comparison, national **Even Start** data show that in 2005–06, preschoolers recognized an average of 15.2 letters (U.S. Department of Education, Even Start Annual Business Meeting).

Primary-grade (K–3) children: School attendance is one predictor of school success. Eighty-six percent of **Even Start** children in the primary grades attended school 80% or more of the time. Last year, 93% of **Even Start** children met this attendance goal.

This year, 97% of **Even Start** children in the primary grades (K–3) were promoted to the next grade level. This statistic has remained high for nine years, always 89% or above. Results of a statewide evaluation of Illinois **Even Start** programs (Illinois State Board of Education, 2006), showed that 97.1% of children in that state were promoted. In comparison, national statistics show that 87–90% of children in low-income families are promoted (Wertheimer, 2003) and that 87% of Hispanic children are promoted (U. S. Department of Education, 2003).

Even Start personnel supported children in their programs who had Individual Literacy Plans (ILPs). The public schools are required to facilitate development of literacy plans for children who are not reading at grade level. Thirty-nine percent of all primary-grade children served through **Even Start** had ILPs in 2006–2007. This statistic is higher than last year when 29% had ILPs. Some school districts automatically place children on ILPs, regardless of their reading ability, if English is not their first language. Five **Even Start** children successfully attained all of their goals during the year and were removed from the ILP process.

For the sixth year, data were gathered on how many of the primary-grade children were performing at or above grade level or demonstrated one year's growth in literacy skills within one year. Results show that 85% of **Even Start** children belonged in this category, compared to 78% last year. A Massachusetts evaluation of **Even Start** programs looked at a slightly different category of children. In this state, 71% of **Even Start** children in grades 1–3 were reading on grade level by the end of the school year (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2006).

What parenting goals did **Even Start** participants meet?

Parent Education Profile

This was the second year for Colorado **Even Start** programs to use a new assessment tool—the *Parent Education Profile* (PEP)—to document changes in parenting behaviors. This instrument was developed by RMC Research Corporation and New York **Even Start** programs (2003) as a way to measure the growth of parents in their role as educators of their children.

The PEP has four scales which incorporate research-based parent behaviors and correlate them to learning outcomes for children. The scales cover parent's support for their child's learning in the home environment (I), the parent's role in interactive literacy activities (II), the parent's role in supporting children's learning in formal education settings (III), and taking on the parent role (IV). Within each of these four scales there are three to five subscales which further delineate parenting behaviors. Each of the subscales has five levels, with Level 1 describing behaviors that are the least supportive of literacy development and Level 5 describing behaviors that are the most supportive.

Colorado **Even Start** programs identified the first two scales as most relevant to the services they provide, and used Scales I and II for the past two years. Staff members across the state continue to be trained in the use of the assessment.

Assessments were made in the fall of 2006 and the spring of 2007 on 10 families within each program. Most

programs rated a combination of new and returning families. Staff made observations and collected anecdotal records related to parenting behaviors identified in the PEP. After compiling at least ten observations of a family, staff members met as a team to determine which level of each subscale best represented the parent’s typical behavior. Rationales were written for the assigned ratings.

Scale I of the Parent Education Profile: Parent’s Support for Children’s Learning in the Home Environment consists of four subscales. The following table shows the percentage of parents who mastered one level or more on each of the subscales.

Use of Literacy Materials	Use of TV/Video	Home Language and Learning	Priority on Learning Together
58% of parents made progress	36% of parents made progress	55% of parents made progress	57% of parents made progress

Scale II of the Parent Education Profile: Parent’s Role in Interactive Literacy Activities consists of three subscales. The following table shows the percentage of parents who mastered one or more levels on each subscale during 2006–07.

Expressive and Receptive Language	Reading with Children	Supporting Book/Print Concepts
53% of parents made progress	61% of parents made progress	55% of parents made progress

The outcomes on these ratings demonstrate that the majority of parents in **Even Start** programs make behavioral changes related to the literacy development of their children. The highest outcome (61% of parents mastered one or more levels) was on the subscale for *Reading with Children*. This subscale encompasses storytelling, singing and reading books. It also involves the use of strategies to engage children in a story or song.

Use of TV/Video is a subscale of Scale I that had the lowest outcome (36% of parents mastered one or more levels). The first level of this subscale describes parents not monitoring TV viewing—content or amount of time.

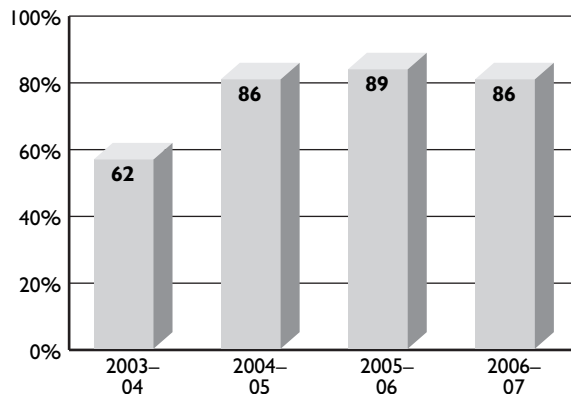
Level five details parents using TV as a learning tool and watching with the child to moderate content. For many parents who progressed, this change meant moving from no monitoring to encouraging some watching of age-appropriate programs or setting limits on content and times for viewing.

What self-sufficiency gains did Even Start families accomplish?

Self-sufficiency, in this report, is defined as decreased dependence on social services (e.g., welfare) and increased independence, demonstrated mainly through gaining employment. Self-sufficiency gains made by families are viewed as steps toward breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

This year, 26% of **Even Start** parents were employed prior to entering the program. Eighty-six percent of the unemployed parents, who wanted a job, obtained a job during this program year. This is lower than last year when 89% of unemployed parents found work. See Chart 5 for a four year history of this employment statistic. Beginning in 2003–2004, this figure was computed by counting only those parents who had the goal of obtaining employment. In Pennsylvania family literacy programs, 72% of adults whose goal was to obtain a job did so (Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, 2006).

Chart 5: Percent of Parents Entering Employment



Another characteristic of employment identified by **Even Start** programs is improvement in job status. This includes receiving a promotion, raise, or a different job with more desirable work conditions or benefits. This year, 19% of employed adults improved their employment status. Last year, 17% of adults improved their status. Of this year's employed parents, 57% held a job for six months or longer.

In a related statistic, 35% of adults in **Even Start** receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) payments either reduced or stopped their welfare benefits. This is a decrease from last year when 39% reduced or stopped their benefits. Although **Even Start** supports families in decreasing welfare dependency, this movement is more likely attributed to welfare reform requirements that limit the time families may receive welfare payments. Pennsylvania's Family Literacy programs again provide comparison data, though from a broader category. Including reducing or eliminating TANF or other public assistance, 60% of adults achieved this goal (Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, 2006).

Colorado **Even Start** parents made other self-sufficiency gains this year:

- 11% of families made improvements in their housing
- 76% of parents increased their participation in the community (e.g., regularly used the library, voted, obtained driver's licenses, and/or accessed other community services)
- 70% of parents learning English used English in the community
- 41% of parents followed a budget for six months or longer, and
- 10% obtained a car.

Conclusion

The *National Assessment of Adult Literacy* demonstrates that the literacy needs of the U.S. population are broad, diverse and no less than the needs of ten years ago. *Literacy in Everyday Lives* (U.S. Department of Education, 2007) documents patterns within families that correlate the literacy skills of parents to their literacy interactions with their children, and the literacy skills of their children. A meta-analysis of multiple studies on the effects of family literacy interventions reveals that parents can be taught to help their children build literacy skills (Senechal, 2006).

Findings from this report show that outcomes for Colorado **Even Start** family literacy programs continue to be strong. More families have higher program attendance than in previous years, an increased percentage of parents earned a GED, and almost three-quarters of preschool children made significant gains in receptive vocabulary.

Momentum for family literacy services continues and is growing. Nationally, organizations focused on literacy, families and Hispanics have endorsed family literacy. The National Center for Family Literacy reports a substantial increase in requests for training. At the state level, there is a rallying of support for family literacy from sources beyond **Even Start**. Title I, Adult Education and the state legislature have funded efforts to raise literacy levels for children and adults in Colorado.



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APPENDIX: Colorado Even Start Directory

Aurora

Aurora Public Schools Family Literacy Program

Paula Niemi, Even Start Coordinator

Boulder (Boulder and Lafayette)

Boulder Valley Family Literacy Program

Karen Carr, Even Start Coordinator

Colorado Springs

Pikes Peak Even Start

Tara Shaw, Family Literacy Coordinator

Cortez

Piñon Project Family Centers

Virginia Howey, Executive Program Director

Delta

Delta County Family Literacy Program

Lee-ann Short, Even Start Coordinator

Denver

Metropolitan State College of Denver: Families Learning Together

Susan Cotton, Even Start Coordinator

Durango

Durango School District 9-R

Libby Culver, Even Start Coordinator

Leadville

Lake County Public Schools

Jodi Hawkswell, Even Start Coordinator

Roaring Fork Valley (Glenwood Springs and Rifle)

Roaring Fork Valley Even Start Program

Rebecca Ruland, Even Start Coordinator

San Luis Valley (Alamosa, Center and Monte Vista)

San Luis Valley Even Start Program/La Llave

Robin Leist, Project Coordinator



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