


Key Accomplishments

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION 

Overview

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong is improving the quality of early childhood education (ECE) provided in formal settings such as preschool, infant care, and licensed family child care. Our goal is that all publicly funded Oakland early childhood sites will offer high-quality programming to Oakland children and families.

Background

OSSS initially focused primarily on Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), supporting organizational capacity through institutionalizing ECE leadership positions, and scaling curriculum and participation in the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). As OUSD's ECE infrastructure has grown stronger, OSSS has deepened our efforts to improve quality across systems.

Benchmarks of Success:

OSSS Results-Based Accountability Indicators

% of publicly funded Oakland early childhood sites and family child care homes that have a 4 or 5 star QRIS rating

% of children served in high quality rated programs

of early educators that have been trained in and apply trauma-informed care

Implementation

- All state-funded programs participate in QRIS.
- New Teacher Center has provided OUSD sites with professional development and coaching, reaching 1,530 students in 57 classrooms during 2018-19.
- Resilient Oakland Communities and Kids (ROCK) program includes Saturday trainings, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and mind-body stress reduction, reaching over 95 OUSD and City of Oakland Head Start/Early Head Start early childhood educators.
- Smart and Strong Kids (SSK) program identifies and scales promising practices for boys of color, including family engagement, individualized classroom supports and kindergarten transition practices.



OUSD and Head Start early childhood educators at a ROCK Compassion Fatigue training.

Results

- All OUSD and Head Start early childhood sites have **quality ratings of 4.0 or higher** (out of 5).
- Children whose teachers received 3 years of New Teacher Center coaching **made greater gains and had higher Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) outcomes**, across all outcome areas.
- SSK preliminary evaluation shows **improved DRDP outcomes** at SSK sites with interventions.
- Teacher feedback from ROCK has been consistently positive, along with **regular reports of using trauma-informed practices in the classroom**. Formal evaluation being planned for 2019-20.



Key Accomplishments

FAMILY, FRIENDS, & NEIGHBORS



Overview

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong is providing supports and resources to informal caregivers of young children. Our goal is that programs are expanded to serve more families and caregivers of children 0 to 5, in areas currently limited in services, and in the culturally responsive and language-appropriate ways that families want and need to be served.

Background

OSSS commissioned several research studies surveying the landscape of services and supports for family, friend and neighbor caregivers, and documenting feedback from parents and caregivers on those services and supports. OSSS then convened community-based organizations and developed a Family Resource Center framework for Oakland.

Implementation

- Oakland 0-5 Family Resource Center (FRC) Network is formalized with consistent participation from community-based organizations.
- Community playgroups, utilizing evidence-based curricula such as Kaleidoscope, have been supported by OSSS.
- Employing a Research Justice framework, Parent Voices Oakland conducted a parent and caregiver study in East Oakland.
- Glen Price Landscape Analysis provided an overview of services and supports available to families of young children in Oakland.

Results

- **Leveraged \$125,000 from five funders** to seed the 0-5 Oakland FRC Network in Lotus Bloom.
- Oakland Fund for Children & Youth (OFCY) Early Childhood Funding Strategy included **\$1.2 million for FRCs**.
- Parent Voices Oakland report **informed the development of local ballot initiatives** designed to increase access and improve the quality of childcare.
- Focus group evaluation documented high quality of playgroups, with **caregivers feeling welcomed** with a place to connect with other adults and to **learn developmentally appropriate activities**. Caregivers also noticed positive **changes in themselves and children** (children are more social, verbal and independent; caregivers try new things at home with children and use more positive discipline).

Benchmarks of Success:

*OSSS Results-Based
Accountability Indicators*

Caregivers have what they need
to provide quality care: # and
locations of agencies supporting
informal care providers



Playgroup participants at circle time



Key Accomplishments

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT



Overview

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong is providing supports and resources to ensure that Oakland has a system for developmental screening and follow-up services for families with children 0 to 5. Our goal is that OUSD and other providers are more equipped to screen and serve children who have developmental, social and cognitive needs.

Background

OSSS began piloting developmental screening at OUSD in 2015-16, with the support of First 5 Alameda's Help Me Grow program. OSSS then began scaling screening throughout OUSD's early childhood education (ECE) programs, along with professional development for early childhood educators on screening, referrals for appropriate services, and classroom modifications to meet children's needs.

Implementation

- Developmental screenings at all OUSD ECE sites as of 2018-19.
- Training is provided for early childhood educators on screening and follow-up
- Children who score 'of concern' or 'monitoring' are re-screened, beginning spring 2019.
- Families are engaged around activities to support children's development.
- After screenings, referrals to services and classroom modifications are made.

Results

- From initial pilot in 2015-16, **80% of all OUSD preschool children screened** in 2018-19.
- Re-screening of children who scored 'of concern' or 'monitoring' showed general improvement. 70% of children who previously scored 'of concern' in at least one domain scored either 'no concern' in all domains or moved up to 'monitoring'. 69% of children who previously scored 'monitoring' at least one time scored 'no concern' in all domains.
- Developmental screenings allow the OUSD early childhood teachers to meet children where they are developmentally, providing the opportunity to set goals and implement teaching strategies that will make the most impact.
- Some children received assistance from mental health consultants; others were connected to speech and/or behavioral therapists.

Benchmarks of Success:

OSSS Results-Based

Accountability Indicators

% of children 0-5 screened for developmental needs

% referred out to appropriate interventions

"Developmental screenings have supported my teaching because the parents give you invaluable insight on the first 3 years of the child's life which tell me where to start and how to best support the child".

Annette Wright, United Nation CDC
OUSD Early Childhood Teacher

Key Accomplishments

SYSTEMS CHANGE 

Overview

Oakland Starting Smart and Strong is expanding and improving upon the basic infrastructure of Oakland's early childhood system, incorporating an equity framework that prioritizes parents and families. Our goal is that Oakland's early childhood system and supports will be stronger, more sustainable and able to offer greater access to higher quality services to children and families.

Implementation

- Systematic collection, analysis and communication of data related to early childhood experiences, including the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and preschool experience.
- Maximizing ECE enrollment through convening providers and improving communication about enrollment.
- Kindergarten Transition Forms scaled at all OUSD preschool sites in 2018-19.
- Communications efforts promote the work of OSSS committees and partners to inform the community and influence policy and resource allocation.
- Convened a Boys of Color Early Years Health and Education Workgroup that issued an equity analysis of indicators and a Call to Action to adopt common indicators
- Alignment of local ECE initiatives.
- Biannual Early Childhood Funders Network convenings.

Benchmarks of Success:

OSSS Results-Based Accountability Indicators

% enrollment in ECE

Families transitioning to pre-k feel successful and supported (stay enrolled)

of OSSS partners with a formal structure for parent voice/ advocacy

Resources are allocated to mitigate implicit bias (i.e. being culturally and linguistically responsive through resources)



Task Force participants discussing how to use EDI data

Results

- **89% of kindergarten teachers** participated in EDI data gathering.
- **User-friendly dashboards** with preschool experience and EDI data have been developed.
- 46 OUSD elementary school sites received a **total of 420 Kindergarten Transition forms** completed in 2018-19, from 30 preschool teachers. Fifteen sites participated in additional kinder transition practices, impacting 676 preschool students.
- 50 community members and leaders participated in developing the **Promising Practices Portfolio**, highlighting successful local programs and practices supporting boys of color and their families.
- Collaborative structure includes active workgroups and committees, dedicated backbone staff, a Lead Planning Team that meets monthly with robust attendance, and a **large community Task Force of over 60 agencies**.
- Newsletter mailing list of **424 subscribers, with a high open rate of 40%**.

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