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Pathways to Family Success Final Evaluation Report

Berna Kahraman

Ghazal Zulfiqar

University of Massachusetts Boston, ghazal.zulfiqar@umb.edu

Donna H. Friedman

University of Massachusetts Boston, donna.friedman@umb.edu

Alice Carter

University of Massachusetts Boston, alices.carter@umb.edu

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PATHWAYS TO FAMILY SUCCESS FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Prepared for
**The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education**
Adult and Community Learning Services Division

April 11, 2012



Berna Kahraman, Ph.D.
Ghazal Zulfiqar, MSPA

In Consultation With
Donna Haig Friedman, Ph.D.
Alice Carter, Ph.D.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

April 11, 2012

Background

This report presents findings from the second year of the evaluation of the Pathways to Family Success Programs (PFS) funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and conducted by the Center for Social Policy (CSP) for the period September 2010 through June 2011. The 2010-2011 evaluation aimed to determine the extent to which PFS activities and interventions were effective in supporting learning outcomes and goal attainment for participating families and their children, and to identify strengths and areas of growth for the PFS Programs and partners. There were four Program sites implementing the PFS in-depth projectⁱ during the second year evaluation period. These leading agencies for the PFS sites included the following:

- Cambridge Community Learning Center
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc.
- Holyoke Public Schools
- Berkshire Children and Families, Inc.

The evaluation design involved gathering information on three different outcome levels: the first level includes outcomes for adults, children and families; the second includes outcomes at the program level, and the third focuses on outcomes for the community partnership as a whole. The evaluation utilized a mixed-method approach including both qualitative and quantitative methods and a range of data sources to answer the research questions related to the PFS in-depth projects and community partnerships. The evaluation team also conducted case studies of a sample of Pathways Families by interviewing two families from each Pathways site at two points in time.

The research questions which correspond to these different levels are included below.

1) Adult, child and family outcomes

- Are adults making educational gains?
- Are they setting and achieving goals?
- If so, is their progress greater than would be expected without participation in Pathways?
- Are children making age-appropriate developmental, language, literacy, and/or other gains?
- If so, is their progress greater than would be expected without participation in Pathways?
- Is there evidence of positive changes in family behaviors that research shows contribute to children's development and school success?
- To what extent are the families accessing community services/resources to meet their needs?

2) Program-level outcomes

- Which are the program approaches and practices that contribute towards successful family outcomes?
- Have there been changes in programs' practices? If so, what is the impact of these changes?
- What are program strengths and areas of growth?

3) Partnership-level outcomes.

- What are partners' practices and strategies which contribute to increased access to services for parents and children?
- Have there been changes in partners' practices? If so, what is the impact of these changes?
- What are partnership strengths and areas of growth?

Pathways Models

Although there is a framework under which the Pathways Programs are expected to operate and certain program components which are expected

to be in place, the Pathways Programs have considerable independence in implementation. The varying implementation approaches are a result of diverse contexts within which programs operate, including the larger socio-economic context, population characteristics and the varying needs of the populations served, the various financial and partnership structures these programs operate under, and the unique staff perspectives and approaches. Hence there is not one unique Pathways model, but rather an overall Pathways framework, adapted to local contexts, with unique characteristics, strengths and weaknesses and potential for development.

Three of the Pathways communities are located in high need areas of the state with median incomes much below the state median income and higher unemployment levels than the state average (Please refer to Table 1 in Section 1 for an overview of socio-economic characteristics of Pathways communities). Furthermore schools in two of these communities, Lawrence and Holyoke, chronically underperform on state measures of achievement.

The following excerpt is from the 2010 MA-ESE document titled: A Roadmap to Closing the Proficiency Gap.

Proficiency gaps for the lowest performing groups in Massachusetts are severe, predictable, and very persistent - often, in fact, intergenerational. The largest gaps are associated with the same population groups across the cities and towns of the Commonwealth, and indeed across the nation: children of poverty; English language learners; African Americans; Hispanics; children with special educational needs. When children from these groups are present in large numbers, we are no longer surprised that most achieve at low levels, and only a few perform at the highest levels. When - as is often the case - children from these groups are concentrated in particular schools, these are typically our underperforming, or chronically underperforming schools. (BESE Proficiency Gap Taskforce, 2010, p.4)

It is under this backdrop that Pathways Programs sought to address the complex challenges that

families and children face.

This section will provide a summary of these models, along with cross-site learnings of implementation. The outcomes for adults and children which will be presented later should be considered along with these varied models and context of Pathways Programs.

Pathways Lawrence

Pathways Lawrence is based in the Leahy School; it targets and caters to a specific segment of the parent and child school population, primarily immigrants from the Dominican Republic. The Lawrence model has perhaps been one of the most stable programs in terms of its structure, components and core staffing. It includes three ESOL classes for adults at two levels; Level 1 and 2. The child literacy component has been consistent and formalized across the years with instruction from formal teaching staff; this component takes place simultaneous with the adult basic education (ABE) classes on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. With the addition of a second teacher in 2010, the child literacy component has been strengthened. Parenting programming happens through joint programming with the Parent Teacher Association which takes place during Pathways hours. Each month there is topic of interest to parents, for example, "Understanding the Schools in the USA", or "Helping Your Child with Homework." For interactive literacy, staff organizes joint fun activities for parents and children, for example at Christmas time, they reviewed the Polar Express (A Classic Children's Book) with the parents. Lawrence has a strong core partnership with the Leahy school and the Lawrence Adult Learning Center (LALC). The school principal is a committed partner who is personally engaged in following the progress of Pathways children.

Pathways Holyoke

In the beginning of the 2010-2011 year, Pathways Holyoke transitioned into a new school-based model, much like Pathways Lawrence. The program targets and caters to the parent and child population of the Sullivan School in which it is based. Holyoke has implemented several new program elements during this year: a formalized child literacy program component, implemented

by a teacher trained in this work; and ESOL classes for adults including Levels 3-6 (in the past, Holyoke offered a Pre-GED program instead). Program approach and practices, especially in terms of what the parenting and interactive literacy components look like, have been evolving and developing during the evaluation period due to the significant program transition mentioned earlier. The new interactive literacy program component undertaken in year two which involves a multi-pronged model, has a goal of having parents visit classrooms every week to support and encourage them to become more engaged and comfortable in their child's learning. Parents can witness firsthand what the children are learning and teachers can model behavior for parents. This activity was not as consistent as planned, but willingness on the part of school personnel remains to refine the plan and try it again in the future. A second interactive literacy program component implemented in year two was for parents to read to their children for 20 minutes during program hours. A third component was a workshop series for parents that taught reading strategies parents can use at home with their children; this component culminated with parents providing a show for their children. Parents were also included in some of the after-school activities that their children engage in, including using computers, cooking, and gardening. The children's teacher helps families to understand their child's homework and teaches them how to help their children, especially with new math concepts unfamiliar to parents. "We help parents help their children", says the children's teacher. Although there is no set parenting component in the Pathways Holyoke program, when parenting issues come up in the classroom they are discussed and addressed in the ESOL classroom. The partnership with the school was formed rapidly right before the beginning of the 2010-2011 programming. The partners, including the principal of the Sullivan School and the ABE partner Community Education Project (CEP), seem very motivated and enthusiastic about the prospects of this program. The partnership with CEP and the school appears to be committed and strong.

Pathways Cambridge

The Cambridge program is hosted by the community organization, Community Learning

Center (CLC); the Agenda for Children provides the full time staff. Although not necessarily intended, the Cambridge Pathways program has evolved to serve immigrant families coming from diverse backgrounds, reflective of the diversity of Cambridge. The program provides access to different levels of ESOL via the CLC. Pathways parents have priority in attending these classes and this serves them well because there are hundreds of candidates on waiting lists for participation. Adults attend classes at different times depending on their ESOL level and preferences. During 2010-2011 programming, the levels consisted mostly of 2 and 3. The child literacy, interactive literacy and parenting program components all take place on Saturday during a single block of time from 10:00 AM -12:30 PM. The child literacy piece has become more formalized over time as a result of the addition of a teacher dedicated to implementing this program component. The teacher organizes activities according to children's needs and ages. The parenting program component takes place through "parent support group time" in which different topics, such as nutrition or health, are covered. During the interactive literacy time block, there are read alouds, and parents and children work on projects together. These activities revolve balancing content and ensuring that some of each program component is covered every month. The core partnerships are very strong and committed and include the following entities: Agenda for Children, Cambridge Community Learning Center (Pathways lead agency), Cambridge Housing Authority, Center for Families, Child Care Resource Center.

Pathways Pittsfield

Pathways Pittsfield is based at a community based organization, Berkshire Children and Families (BCF), a family and child service agency. Services are delivered in the adult learning center facility, a facility of the Pittsfield Public Schools. The program provides access to the various levels via the Pittsfield ABE program. Some of these classes involve individual one to one instruction which is tailored according to students' needs. The adult learning center saves 12-15 spots for the in-depth program throughout the year, and the program has a rolling intake. The child literacy component is in place for four days a week from 9:30am-2:30pm. The newly hired teacher (at the beginning

of the evaluation year) for this component is a certified early childhood teacher; with her hire, the child literacy component has evolved to be more formalized and intentional. The interactive literacy piece also involves intentional and structured activities. The local early intervention service (Pediatric Development Center) funds and leads the parent/child activity groups twice a week at the site. Parents are asked to keep a journal of these activities, and their progress is tracked throughout the year. The parenting program component takes place two days a week, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons; one day involves a curriculum based component, Parents as Teachers, and the other day offers group and peer support. This year the program has access to a resource called Project Link which gives families the opportunity to attend a year of college. Already, four participants of the program were utilizing this resource to advance in their education. The program components are formal and structured; families are included in the design and execution of the different pieces of the program. The core partnerships include: Berkshire Children and Families, Inc. (Pathways lead agency), Berkshire County Head Start, Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, Pediatric Development Center, Pittsfield Adult Learning Center (Pittsfield Public Schools).

Learning Gains

Site	Total pre-post adult test takers	No. of people with learning gains (% of total test takers)
Lawrence	37	31 (84%)
Cambridge	12	3 (25%)
Holyoke	7	4 (57%)
Pittsfield	22	11 (50%)
Total	78	49 (63%)

Summary of outcomes for adults, children and families

Learning Outcomes for Adults

The learning outcomes for adults were measured using the scores on the pre and post assessment tests which were designated by the Adult and Community Learning Services Division (ACLS) of the ESE according to the type of instruction offered by each of the programs; ESOL or GED preparation.

The tests implemented by the sites included BEST Plus, Clas-E(A&B), TABE 12 & 13, MAPT Math and Reading. The table below summarizes the learning gains achieved on these tests by individuals who had both pre and post test scores.

- Overall 63 percent of adult test takers achieved significant gains.
- At Lawrence which had the highest number of participants, over 80 percent of the adult test takers who had both pre and post tests made “significant educational” gains as defined by the ESE ACLSⁱⁱ.

Attendance and retention of families in the program was a challenging issue for all of the sites. Despite efforts to keep participants connected to the program, all sites lost almost 50 percent or more of their participants along the way. The reasons were varied, but mostly involved job related issues and personal or family circumstances and challenges.

PPVT & WCJ Summary of Test Scores^v

	PPVT	WCJ
Lawrence		
Improved ^{vi}	21 (64%)	11 (42%)
Deteriorated	1 (3%)	3 (12%)
Retained Position ^{vii}	11(33%)	12 (46%)
Total number of test takers ^{viii}	33	26
Holyoke		
Improved	2 (14%)	1 (8%)
Deteriorated	1 (7%)	1 (8%)
Retained Position	11(79%)	11(84%)
Total number of test takers	14	13
Cambridge		
Improved	4 (57%)	0
Deteriorated	0	3 (43%)
Retained Position	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
Total number of test takers	7	7
Three Site Total:		
Improved	27 (50%)	12 (26%)
Deteriorated	2 (4%)	7 (15%)
Retained Position	25(46%)	27(59%)
Total number of test takers	54	46

Learning Outcomes for Children

The learning outcomes for children were assessed using the Woodcock Johnson (WCJ) and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) testsⁱⁱⁱ for sites with school aged children including Lawrence, Cambridge and Holyoke. Pre-testing was conducted in December 2010 and January 2011 and post testing was conducted in June 2011. Thus, the change observed reflects a 5 – 6 month period of intervention. However considering that attendance is irregular and stepping out^{iv} is a common phenomenon, these overall results reflect varied periods of interventions. Standard scores are used to make comparisons across children and across sites. Across the three sites, there were a total of 54 students who took the PPVT pre and post tests and 46 students who took the WCJ pre and post tests. The table which is titled as PPVT & WCJ Summary of Test Scores summarizes literacy gains for children across Pathways sites.

- For the total of three sites, 50 percent of students improved their scores significantly on the PPVT^{ix} test, while 46 percent of students retained their position and learned what they were expected to learn during the testing interval.
- On the WCJ, 26 percent of the students improved their scores significantly while 59 percent of retained their position for the total of three sites.^x

With regard to children's outcomes other findings of interest are included below:

- All children who had alarmingly low scores on the pre-PPVT test achieved significant strides on the post tests.
- There is some evidence that above average attendance of children in the program leads to more significant learning gains as opposed to below average attendance of children.

Family-level Outcomes

At the family level, changes in behaviors which are known to positively impact children's literacy and improve communication between child and the parent were assessed. Furthermore, family access to community services and resources were tracked.

- Families with students that needed more help to begin with had a stronger resolve to stick to the program than families with children that needed the intervention less.
- Families are more aware of and practice behaviors which are beneficial for their children's development and literacy when pre and post test results are compared.
- Especially in programs where case management was a significant focus, families become aware of and accessed multiple services and resources within their communities.

Summary of Program Implementation Outcomes

- **More Formalized and Thoughtful Child Literacy Components:** Learning from the first year evaluation lead to a policy change which required programs to have a formalized child literacy component as part of the Pathways programming which was stated in the RFP. Thus in the 2010-2011 evaluation period, three of the Pathways sites (except Lawrence which already had formalized child literacy component in place) moved towards formalizing their child literacy component by hiring teachers trained in this area. This staffing decision led to more thoughtful and planned programming.
- **School-based Models:** The school-based models have positive implications for parenting and parent empowerment as well as child outcomes. It is evident that for the two school-based models, support for the Pathways Programs from the school administration is strong. This endorsement creates an opportunity to have parents be more involved in the greater life of the school and their children's learning. Using Title 1 Funds, the schools also contribute financial support to the Pathways Programs. Another advantage of a school based model is the communication observed between the Pathways child literacy teachers and school teachers at Lawrence and Holyoke sites. School teachers often comment on progress of Pathways children.
- **The Role of Partnerships in Model Implementation:** There are some

limitations on how Pathways Programs utilize partnerships. It is evident across all sites that the core partnerships are engaged, committed and very strong. However Pathways communities differ in how they engage with and utilize partners at the wider level.

- **Staffing Configurations:** The staffing of the case manager/outreach facilitator position is crucial to the implementation of the program and in building trust with the families. The stability of this position and the qualities of the person who fills it are especially important since these are the staff with the most frequent and intense contact with the families. It may be crucial to have bi-lingual staff, especially in programs where participants are pre-dominantly from the same ethnic community. Pathways families tend to be very diverse ethnically and linguistically; it goes without saying that in every Pathways program, staff need to be culturally competent. Having staff rooted in the same community as the parents clearly builds trust and has the potential to enhance cultural competence of all staff within the program.
- **Case Management Approach:** Among all the sites, case management is the most intense and intentional at Pittsfield; one indicator is the amount of time committed to this component at each program. At Pittsfield, allocating more time to case management has resulted with a very high number of referrals and connections to community resources.
- **Stepping-out and Retention:** Retention is still a major challenge for implementation across all programs^{xi} despite considerable effort by Program staff to reach out to these families. It appears as if allowing parents to step out of the program for a period of time created some flexibility and served them well, especially those whose lives are beset by unexpected crises. One interviewee pointed out that the attendance policy might be holding some of the parents back. Families who missed classes a few times felt as if they had broken the contract and could not return to the program only to find out, after correspondence with the case manager, that this may not always be the case.
- **Changing Demographic and Socio-economic Context:** Demographic changes are taking place in each community; attention to these changes is important for program planning and development. Almost all of the Programs use partnerships strategically to brainstorm for ideas; the changing socio-economics and demographics in communities, and the ways in which these changes may impact program participant profiles and needs deserves vigilance by partners. This focus could be incorporated into objectives of the wider partnerships and, indeed, this issue appears to be on the agenda for some of the partnerships.
- **Cohort Building:** The Pathways program experiences illustrate that cohort building can take place organically, but the program culture could be more supportive and encouraging in this area. Peer support could have potential positive implications for attendance and retention, if parents are motivated and follow up with and support each other.
- **Keeping Children Engaged and Motivated:** It was indicated by children's teachers that children are exhausted by the time they get to the program which negatively impacts their motivation to attend Pathways. This is especially true for school-based programs where children are expected to participate in additional programming after a long day of school.
- **Challenges in Data Collection:** System for Managing Accountable and Results Through Technology (SMARTT) database was not originally set up for use by the Pathways programs. During the evaluation period, recording and retrieval of all the data needed for the evaluation could not be implemented through SMARTT due to various complexities involved. For example, new fields were created to enter children's outcomes data; however linking families within the system involved creation of multiple IDs which made the process burdensome for programs and the evaluation team. Independent sheets needed to be developed for data collection which made the connections between different data components a further challenging, time consuming and complex task. This created an additional

burden for sites which needed to record and retain multiple data sheets and for the evaluation team which needed to navigate through multiple sheets to connect family information together and to create comparable data across sites.

Summary of Partnership Level Outcomes

Pathways Programs are characterized by very strong core partnerships. A list of the core partners of the Pathways Programs is included in the Appendix p. 67. Lawrence and Holyoke as school based programs have a small group of core partners; Cambridge and Pittsfield operated in a more complex and wider system of partners. Interviews with staff and partners demonstrated that across all sites the core Pathways partnerships are characterized by strong relationships and a shared commitment to the success of the in-depth programs and families. Core partners contribute to the program both in terms of financial and material resources, by providing infrastructure and staff time and therefore making Pathways programming possible. Cambridge and Holyoke faced multiple transitions this year; both lost their site coordinator or counselor (key staff) and hired new ones. Cambridge in particular felt that the way the transition was handled was a manifestation of their partnership strength—different partners stepped in to handle the work-load while the new person was brought in and trained for the job. At Holyoke, the new partnership with the local public school was a strengthening factor, since the school's Principal was very excited about promoting Pathways and family literacy. The Principal of the Leahy School at Pathways Lawrence pays special attention to the progress of the children in the Pathways program and is personally involved in supporting the program and ensuring its success. At Pittsfield, a complex system of committed core partners make programming rich and possible.

Pathways Programs have distinct cultures of collaboration and use different types of strategies to achieve goals at the wider level.

The Cambridge program is different than other sites in terms of the nature of its partnership at the wider level. Cambridge Pathways has for many years been part of multiple coalitions which have existed in the community before the development of Pathways therefore, Cambridge Pathways is not

the caller and convener of actions at the wider level, but is a key player. In addition, Pathways partners are leaders of the various coalitions. At the three other sites, Pathways holds a leadership role within the community in terms of promoting goals at the wider level. Some communities have an established culture of collaboration within their communities while others do not. Cambridge felt there are different types of collaboration depending on the stages of development; theirs is a mature collaboration built over many years. Pathways partnerships vary in the level of effort and number of creative strategies used to expand and strengthen partnerships. For example, Pittsfield brings PFS parents to partnership meetings not only to help empower parents, but also to enable the other partners to hear the stories straight from the parents. The Pittsfield program has found this strategy to be very effective in securing buy-in for the program. Power of this direct, immediate and detailed storytelling from the parents themselves generates more resources from the community, not just for these parents but for others as well. The Lawrence team has talked about different ways to secure more funding for family literacy, including attendance at local town hall meetings and conversations with public officials. Across all Pathways sites, program leaders and staff feel that building effective partnerships for family literacy required multi-faceted approaches; much of this important work involved conflict resolution. Partners needed to have a shared vision, shared language, shared understandings and diversity among the partners, including local businesses and policy makers. Pathways Programs achieved important successes during the evaluation period. These successes were in wide range of areas and included the successful organization of events for supporting family literacy as well as providing significant training for coalition partners on strategies about reading and emerging literacy. All these successes were made possible by the efforts and commitment of the Pathways coordinators who provided a leadership role and allocated significant time in convening meetings, developing strategies, and securing buy-in from a diverse group of partners. At some sites, in the absence of this role played by the Pathways coordinators, these successes may not have been possible.

Pathways partnerships operate in dynamic and diverse contexts. The contexts in which Pathways Programs have operated are varied and diverse. Some communities have a wide pool of resources to draw from while others do not. It was important for Pathways Programs and partners to be able to understand the rapid changes taking place in their local environments, to identify the opportunities and challenges, and to respond to them in a timely manner. Most thought partnerships made this responsiveness possible.

School based programs enhanced visibility and profile of Pathways Programs within their respective communities. Sites reported that they have been approached by school principals in the district who wanted to talk about family literacy and to introduce similar programs at their schools.

Use of wider partnership resources for wrap around services. The extent and the ways in which Pathways Programs utilized the resources of the wider partnership for supporting Pathways families has been very varied. At Pittsfield where case management has been the strongest component, resources are used to support parents in multiple and creative ways. Pittsfield introduces the parents to the resources in the community by physically escorting them; this approach enables parents to overcome fear, leading to navigation of the system on their own the next time. Cambridge and Holyoke which were going through major transitions this year have not utilized the referral sheet fully; their activity in this regard may be understated. At Lawrence, on the other hand, case management does not go much beyond filling out forms for parents.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Lesson 1:

Outcomes of Family Literacy & Support Models

- *Adults and children in Pathways Programs are achieving significant learning gains.* Majority of adults (63%) who participated in the Pathways Programs made significant learning gains from pre to post testing on various tests of achievement required by the ACLS during the evaluation period. At one site which had the highest number of participants, over 80 percent of the adult test takers who had both pre and post tests made “meaningful educational” gains.

The overall mean test scores of children were within acceptable ranges around the normed mean, and children, on average, sustained their positions from pre to post testing. Both these facts together mean that on average Pathways children are learning what they are expected to learn within the duration of the program and are enhancing their vocabulary. Moreover, 50 percent of Pathways children achieved significant gains from pre to post testing in a standardized language test, while one quarter made significant gains from pre to post testing on a standardized school-based skills test. There is also some evidence that above average attendance of children in the program leads to more significant learning gains as opposed to below average attendance of children. These successes are especially noteworthy given the challenging family circumstances of most Pathways families; the complexity and difficulty of achieving successful outcomes in short intervals especially for English language learners coming from a disadvantaged socio-economic context, and the short time span of the evaluation and hence the interventions.

Recommendation

- Policy makers and administrators can focus on building funding streams which will last over time in order to sustain family literacy and support programs. Part of the strategy for achieving this purpose can be to strengthen the ties between the ABE community and schools. Using Title 1 Funds, the schools provided significant financial support to the Pathways Programs which made programming possible. The Pathways experience has also illustrated the importance of having a designated coordinator who assumes a leadership role in promoting and supporting family literacy within the larger community. As stated by one of the Pathways administrators, “For example, school personnel are excited about family literacy programming and utterly overwhelmed and overcommitted in their jobs and wonder who/how coordination will happen.” Pathways coordinators provide, “oversight– someone keeping their vision on the larger picture, following up on collaborators, making sure

resources are available, support personnel.” They are in charge of “convening and facilitating meetings and keeping family literacy on the radar on a citywide basis, so that more partners are brought to the table and that all agencies and service providers are messaging the same to all families all the time: the value of education, the importance of parents being involved in their children’s education...” As discussed in the report in the absence of this role played by the Pathways coordinators, the many successes achieved in promoting family literacy may not have been possible.

Lesson 2:

Challenges of Retention & Attendance: Stepping Out

- *Stepping out of programs (leaving the program for a period of time with an intention to return) is a commonly observed phenomenon among ABE populations and there is no magic formula for improving program attendance and retention outcomes.* The evaluation highlighted that, despite attempts to keep families connected to the programs through constant communications and support with wrap-around services, only a small portion of families returned to the program; many exited the program completely after a period of stepping out. The reality is that for many families who have jobs and multiple responsibilities along with complex life circumstances, family literacy and support programs may be intense and challenging (in terms of timing and frequency of instruction). However, allowing parents to step out of the program for a period of time with the option of returning created some flexibility for program staff and served at least some parents well, especially those whose lives are beset by unexpected crises.
- *Fostering children’s engagement and motivation in the program can impact attendance and retention in family engagement programs positively.* Pathways experience revealed that children’s motivation to attend the program matters. This was especially true for school-based programs where children were expected to participate in additional programming

after a long day of school. As indicated by children’s teachers, children are exhausted by the time they get to the program which negatively impacts their motivation to attend Pathways. Teachers in one of the programs stated the need for finding strategies to overcome challenges in this area.

Recommendations

- The stepping out phenomenon needs recognition and developmental attention. There is a need to test the impact of different approaches on outcomes. Different approaches could focus on intensifying interventions that take place at intake and orientation, such as clarifying expectations and goals of participants. It is also important to have a variation of models, in other words, a variety of options for families. In the Pathways case, the parents of lowest performing children (in pre-tests) with higher needs were more persistent in their attendance to the programs as compared to families with higher performing kids whose families stepped out of programs more often. Children in both groups of families could achieve learning gains or sustain their positions. These outcomes coupled with the findings from the case study of families reveal that high-level needs coupled with strong individual motivation clearly impacts families’ attachment to the program positively, and that one size fits all approaches to program design may not be very effective. Hence testing children at the start of the programs and getting a sense of families’ circumstances and their goals and objectives and then, offering them a variety of options, in terms of intensity and duration of programming, the intensity of case management offered and, in terms of levels and rules of involvement, can help to enhance outcomes in attendance and retention.
- Policy makers, family literacy and support program administrators and community partners can focus on curriculum development and use of innovative strategies to boost and sustain student motivation especially in the case of school-based programs where student motivation may be an issue.

Lesson 3:

Identifying Potential Target Populations

- *Family literacy and support programs can foster rapid improvements in literacy and language acquisition of children and families who are new to the country and have limited English speaking skills.* Pathways experience demonstrates that newly arriving immigrant families and children can clearly benefit from the intensity of family literacy programs with wrap around services both in terms of advancing in literacy and in adapting to the larger system. However, identifying and recruiting the target populations for family literacy and support programs is a challenging task which requires careful planning and ongoing learning especially within an environment of changing socio-economics and demographics.
- *Intensive case management pays off for families with highest needs, such those with histories of trauma.* However, time, resources, and commitment of staff are pre-requisites for this intervention's effectiveness. Furthermore, continuity and stability of staffing are crucial to the success of these types of interventions.

Recommendations

- Targeting family literacy and support programs to specific communities and populations deserves planning attention. Policy makers and administrators can build on the Pathways experiences and evaluation outcomes to design and support family literacy and support programs which are specifically tailored to the populations mentioned above in high need areas of the state.
- The programs need to remain flexible in order to serve those who come with different backgrounds, cultures and issues. Implementation of programs through partnerships can offer advantages in this regard by allowing for a diversity of perspectives and aid in the development of strategies. The qualities and characteristics of the staff who have the most contact with families in programs is also crucial in remaining flexible. Building staff cultural competence can be a good investment in these types of programs; addressing the diverse issues and challenges of families

in an effective way requires a deeper understanding of the backgrounds of these families and their circumstances.

Lesson 4:

The Potential of School Based Models for School Aged Children and Their Families

- *There are significant potentials to school based-engagement models.* Literature that points to the positive effects of parent engagement in schools on children's literacy is abundant^{xii xiii}. Indeed, Pathways experience illustrated that school based models offer various opportunities for parent engagement in their children's school life and in building strong connections with families. Another advantage of school based models is the opportunity for program teachers and school teachers to coordinate and communicate and to identify areas of deficit and improvement and track children's progress; these practices reflected positively in children's outcomes under the Pathways experience. School based programs also offer advantages in terms of identifying and recruiting target groups. Furthermore, cultivating the participation of traditionally underrepresented groups in the school's life through family literacy and support programs can in return positively impact the fostering of culture diversity within schools. Finally, these programs can enhance the visibility of the family literacy and support programs within the larger community.

Recommendation

- School-based models of family literacy and support need to be supported by building on what has evolved by Pathways over the past ten years, by creating some viable funding and programmatic strategies which will last over time, and by strengthening the ties between elementary schools and the ABE community in high need areas of the state.

Lesson 5:

Advantages of Empowering Program Participants

- *Creating room for program participants to have a say in program design and implementation can foster commitment to the program and enhance retention and attendance.* These types of empowerment

strategies can also help parents build confidence and make positive changes in other areas of their lives.

- *Engagement of program graduates as community leaders and allowing program participants' direct participation and engagement in policy meetings and discussions may be an effective strategy in building momentum around family literacy and support programs.* This strategy enables the community to hear the stories straight from the parents; the power of this direct, immediate and detailed storytelling from the parents themselves has the potential to generate more resources from the community, not just for these parents but for others as well.
- *Cohort building can take place organically, but the program cultures could be more supportive and encouraging in this area.* Creating a culture based on mutual respect, appreciation of diversity and learning from one another can be made an integral part of program design. Encouraging and facilitating the organization of social activities in order to bring these parents together outside the classroom is also an option. Peer support could have potential positive implications for attendance and retention, if parents are motivated and follow up with and support each other.

Recommendation

- In program design, family perspectives and insights should be authentically engaged. Several of the Pathways sites have integrated successful strategies in this area. A lot can be learned from their experiences and other programs could benefit from their experiences.

Lesson 6:

Establishing an Ongoing Culture Learning From Practice (Evaluation)

- *Establishing an ongoing culture of learning from practice (evaluation) right from the beginning of programming is*

critically important. System for Managing Accountable and Results Through Technology (SMARTT) database was not originally set up for use by the Pathways Programs. During the evaluation period, recording and retrieval of all the data needed for the evaluation could not be implemented through SMARTT due to various complexities involved. For example, new fields were created to enter children's outcomes data, however, linking families within the system involved creation of multiple IDs which made the process burdensome for programs and the evaluation team. Independent sheets needed to be developed for data collection which made the connections between different data components a further challenging, time consuming, and complex task. This created an additional burden for sites which needed to record and retain multiple data sheets and for the evaluation team which needed to navigate through multiple sheets to connect family information together and to create comparable data across sites. There were also challenges involved in the entering and sharing of data among the ABE partners and the family and literacy support programs partly due to the complexities of the SMARTT system.

Recommendations

- Systems of data collection and evaluation need to be in tune with program design.
- The SMARTT system needs to be responsive to the need to strengthen ties between family literacy and support programs and the ABE community.
- Focusing on creating a culture for ongoing learning from the start can be beneficial. Committing funding and resources in this area, for example, by building internal evaluation capacity, can help to build a community of practice and identify challenges.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from the second year of the evaluation of the Pathways to Family Success Programs (PFS) funded by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) and conducted by the Center for Social Policy (CSP) for the period between September 2010 and June 2011. The first year of the evaluation (2009 – 2010) of the Pathways Programs evolved to take the form of an evaluation preparedness assessment and sought to clarify program design or theory; create agreement on common definitions for the core program elements, including the core interventions; agreement on the priority families to be served; data collection capacity; common measurement approaches, as well as a commitment across the board on data to be gathered at agreed upon points in time. The following definition of the Pathways Programs emerged out of the first year of the evaluation:

I. An in-depth program of coordinated, integrated services that effectively engage individual families. “In-depth program” refers to what the Department hoped would come to represent a community-owned approach in which community partners from different disciplines could and would work collaboratively to build coordinated and integrated family-centered programming for at-risk families to help them embark on a “pathway to family success”. Knowing that its funds were important but limited, the Department understood that its resources could be a catalyst for building collaborations that would benefit Pathways families in a direct way. Core Services, including referrals, are provided by partner organizations that contribute resources to the community’s comprehensive Pathways to Family Success project. Examples include:

- Co-location of services for adults and children;
- Co-enrollment of adults and children in services and tracking of progress;
- Curriculum that integrates family, health and work-related themes;
- Referral networks;
- Case management.

II. A partnership that pursues desired outcomes for family literacy programming at the community level. This partnership may pursue a variety of objectives such as:

- Capacity building for parents, service leaders and community leaders in order to increase community-level coordination and integration of services;
- Increasing public awareness about the value of family literacy strategies;
- Developing new resources for family literacy programs;
- Collaborative planning for future service delivery at the community level.

There were four Program sites implementing the PFS project during the second year evaluation period. These leading agencies for the PFS sites included the following:

- Cambridge Community Learning Center
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc.
- Holyoke Public Schools
- Berkshire Children and Families, Inc.

To begin the evaluation, the Center team worked to put together an evaluation handbook which included the agreed upon definitions, evaluation questions, data sources, indicators and tools, data collection strategies and evaluation time-line. The handbook was introduced to the Pathways Programs at a collective meeting. The 2010 – 2011 evaluation aimed to determine the extent to which PFS activities and interventions were effective in supporting learning outcomes and goal attainment for participating families and their children, and to identify strengths and areas of growth for the PFS programs and partners.

The evaluation design involved gathering information on three different outcome levels: the first level includes outcomes for adults, children and families; the second, includes outcomes at the program level; and the third, focuses on outcomes for the community partnership as a whole. The research questions which correspond to these different levels are included below.

1) Adult, child and family outcomes

- Are adults making educational gains?
- Are they setting and achieving goals?
- If so, is their progress greater than would be expected without participation in Pathways?
- Are children making age-appropriate developmental, language, literacy, and/or other gains?
- If so, is their progress greater than would be expected without participation in Pathways?
- Is there evidence of positive changes in family behaviors that research shows contribute to children's development and school success?
- To what extent are the families accessing community services/resources to meet their needs?

2) Program-level outcomes

- Which are the program approaches and practices that contribute towards successful family outcomes?
- Have there been changes in programs' practices? If so, what is the impact of these changes?
- What are program strengths and areas of growth?

3) Partnership-level outcomes.

- What are partners' practices and strategies which contribute to increased access to services for parents and children?
- Have there been changes in partners' practices? If so, what is the impact of these changes?
- What are partnership strengths and areas of growth?

The evaluation utilized a mixed-method approach including both qualitative and quantitative methods and a range of data sources to answer the research questions related to the PFS in-depth projects and community partnerships. The evaluation team also conducted a case study of Pathways families by interviewing two families from each Pathways site at two points in time. This report will begin by addressing the second level of questions related to program level outcomes and by describing the implementation of PFS programming across the four sites. The next section is a discussion of the partnership level questions. The third section focuses on outcomes for adults, families and children, followed by the case study of families. The report concludes with recommendations emerging out of this study.

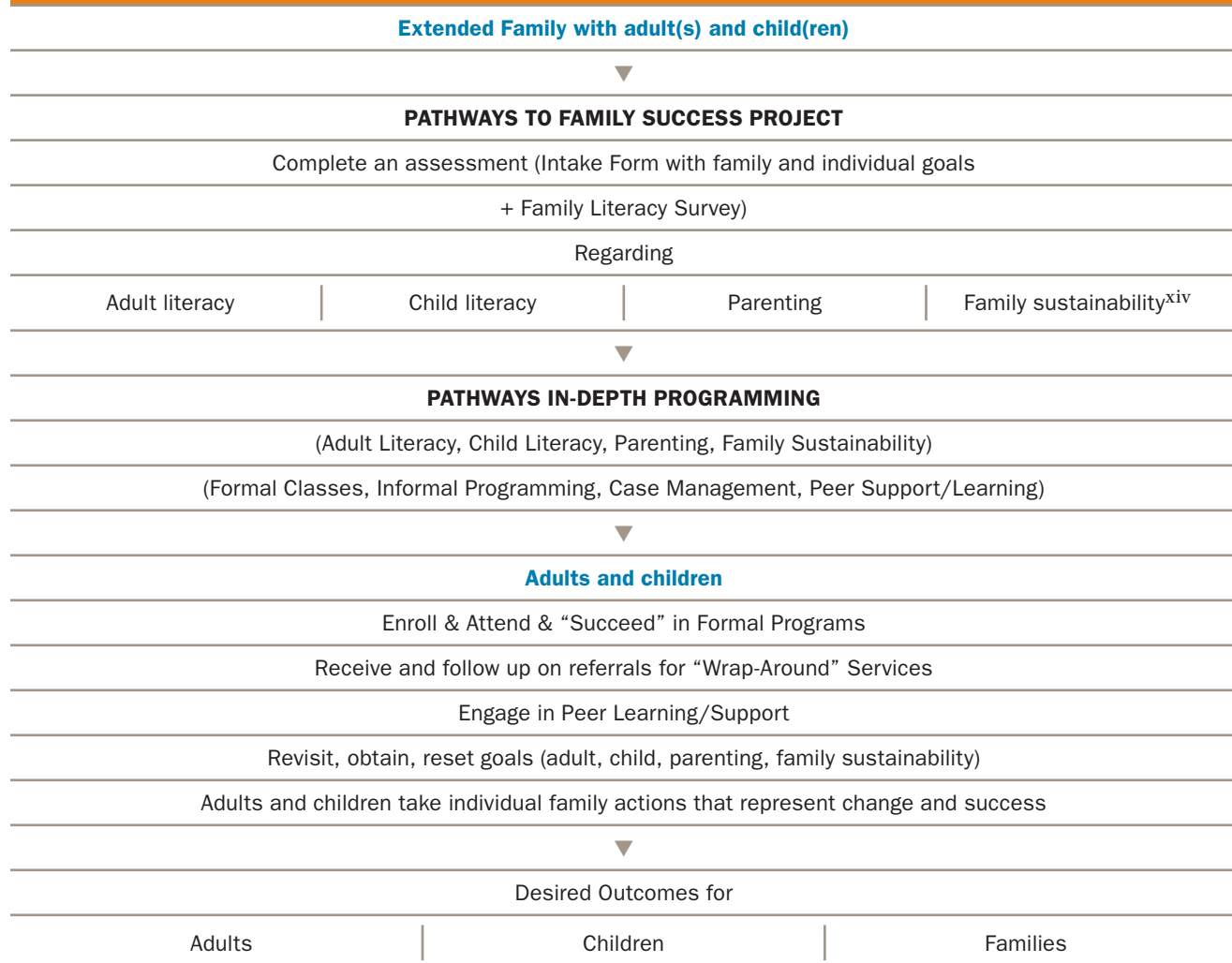
II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM ACROSS COMMUNITIES: PATHWAYS MODELS

The first year of the Pathways evaluation attempted to unearth the Pathways program theory by collecting the perspectives of in-depth program (program from this point forward) sites and the Department. Although there is a framework under which the Pathways programs are expected to operate and certain program components are expected to be in place, the programs have considerable independence in implementation. Figure 1 presents the Pathways logic model which was developed in the first year of the Pathways

evaluation. This logic model which connects interventions to the outcomes still made sense to the programs in the second year of the evaluation. However, programs agreed that the actual process was more circular and iterative with multiple feedback loops than this linear depiction suggests.

The varied implementation approaches are a result of diverse contexts within which programs operate, including the larger socio-economic context, populations and the varying needs of

FIGURE 1: Initial In-Depth Pathways Project Logic Model



Initially we understood interventions with families to take place either on-site, via in-depth programming, or off-site, partner-provided wrap-around services. It is now apparent that the model instead includes any of these project components happening on site or off site, provided by any of the core project partners, and/or partner organizations from the wider community.

the populations served, the varying financial and partnership structures these programs operate under, and the unique staff perspectives and approaches. Hence, there is not one unique Pathways model, but rather an overall Pathways model, adapted to local contexts, with unique characteristics, strengths and weaknesses and potential for development. This section will describe each model, along with reference to changes that may have taken place over the previous year of programming for each site.

Three of the Pathways communities are located in high need areas of the state with median incomes

much below the state median income and higher unemployment levels than the state average. Furthermore schools in two of these communities, Lawrence and Holyoke, chronically underperform on state measures of achievement. It is under this backdrop that Pathways programs sought to address the complex challenges that families and children face.

Table 1 provides a picture of the larger socio-economic contexts within which Pathways programs operate.

Table 2 provides results from the referral sheets which were designed and provided to the sites in

TABLE 1: Socio-Economic & Demographic Characteristics Of Pathways Cities

	Holyoke	Lawrence	Cambridge	Pittsfield	MA
Population 2010	39,880	76,377	105,162	44,737	6,547,629
Racial Mix 2000/2011	Whites (not Hispanic) (46.8%) Asian (1.1%) Black (4.7%) Hispanic or Latino (48.4%)	Whites (not Hispanic) (20.5%) Asian (2.5%) Black (7.6%) Hispanic or Latino (73.8%)	Whites (not Hispanic) (66.6%) Asian (15.1%) Black (11.7%) Hispanic or Latino (7.6%)	Whites (not Hispanic) (85.9%) Asian (1.2%) Black (5.3%) Hispanic or Latino (5.0%)	Whites (not Hispanic) (76.1%) Asian (5.3%) Black (6.6%) Hispanic or Latino (9.6%)
Persons Under 5; 18	7.7% 26.4%	8.4%; 29.0%	4.3%; 11.4%	5.7%; 21.2%	5.6% 21.7%
Median Income	\$34,496	\$32,337	\$64,420	\$43,507	\$64,496
Unemp. Rate, 2010**	11.6%	16.5%	5.6%	8.8%	8.5%
People of all ages in poverty - percent, 2005–2009	28.4%	27.3%	15.0%	16.4%	10.1%
Education (High school graduates; Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2005–2009)	75.0%; 21.3%	64.8%; 11.0%	94.5%; 71.4%	88.8%; 25.9%	88.4%; 37.8%
Foreign born persons; Language other than English spoken at home percent, 2005–2009	5.5% 43.6%	34.1%; 73.7%	25.7%; 30.5%	4.0%; 6.4%	14.1%; 20.4%

* Source U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, County Business Patterns, Economic Census, unless otherwise indicated.

** Retrieved from the Massachusetts Executive Office Labor and Workforce Development web-site: http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi_lur_a.asp#4

the beginning of the program in order to track the number and types referrals programs made to partnering or other agencies^{xv}. Tables which describe different program components and objectives, staffing, budgeting, partnerships and monitoring were filled out by each of the Programs and have been included under each relevant section.

The Lawrence Model

Program structure and components: Pathways Lawrence is based in the Leahy School; it targets and caters to a specific segment of the parent and child population, most immigrants from the Dominican Republic, of the school in which it is based. Lawrence model has perhaps been one of the most stable programs in terms of its structure,

TABLE 2: Pathways Referrals

	Lawrence	Holyoke**	Cambridge	Pittsfield
Number of entries*	21	7	20	247***
Entry period	September 2010 to June 2011	November 2010 to June 2011	November 2010 to May 2011	November 2010 to June 2011
Referral type	utility or fuel assistance, mental health service referral for child, food assistance, special education referral, workforce development, resolving tax issues, getting admission to a vacation camp seeking employment, job training and assistance with job applications	Career counseling, education	skill development opportunity, medical services, tax services, play group, summer program or afterschool program for children, summer reading program, legal services and crisis intervention	career counseling, early education services, nutrition support, career counseling, food assistance, immigration, medical services, fuel and utility assistance, job fair, mental health services, IEP meeting, academic support services, transportation, afterschool program, housing, dental services, legal services, drug or alcohol abuse, library, city or state government services, employment workshop
Referral agency	Non-core partners: DTA, MassHealth or the INS	Career Point, HALO	8 core partners; 12 non-core partners, MassHealth, local public schools, Greater Boston Legal Services or Cambridge Adventure Daycamp	Majority to outside partners
Mode of referrals	Mostly via phone	Mostly face to face	face to face and by phone	via phone, through face-to-face meetings or by filling out paperwork Mostly /together with family
Follow-up on referrals	Three cases of follow-up	Two cases of follow-up	On average one follow up per referral	At least one follow-up call or face-to-face meeting for each referral
Outcome of referrals	Majority received services	Not clear	Mixed outcomes	At least one follow-up call or face-to-face meeting for each referral

* Includes multiple entries per family **Not reflective of actual number of referrals as there was change of staff in the midst of the Program.***Highest number of referral per family was 20.

components and core staffing. It includes three ESOL classes for adults at two levels; Level 1 and 2. The child literacy component has been consistent and formalized across the years with instruction from formal teaching staff and takes place simultaneous with the adult basic education (ABE) component which happens on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. With the addition of a second teacher in 2010, the child literacy component has been strengthened. Parenting programming takes place through joint programming with the Parent Teacher Association which happens during Pathways hours. Each month there is topic of interest to parents, for example, “Understanding the Schools in the USA”, or “Helping Your Child with Homework.” For interactive literacy, staff organizes joint fun activities for parents and children. For example, at Christmas time, they reviewed the Polar Express (A Classic Children’s Book) with the parents. Lawrence has a strong core partnership with the Leahy school and the Lawrence Adult Learning Center (LALC). The school principal is a committed partner who is personally engaged in following the progress of Pathways children.

Funding: Pathways funding supports the cost of one teacher for the child component and one paraprofessional for the child component. The Leahy School supports the cost of the outreach facilitator and one teacher for the children’s component via Title 1 funding. LALC supports instruction for three ESOL classes.

Recruitment: Recruitment of program participants takes place through the Leahy School. School’s guidance councilor who is also the Pathways outreach facilitator facilitates recruitment. Hence, each year the participant profile evolves as the populations which the school serves evolve. At Lawrence, 95% of these participants have been immigrants from the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, participants live in close proximity to the school.

Staffing: Core staffing, the coordinator and the outreach facilitator, have been consistent across the years. The outreach facilitator is from the Dominican Republic, is bilingual and well rooted in the community. The staff of teachers, a total of five, has completely changed for various personal reasons in the past year, but this has not led to

major disruptions in program execution.

Case management and referrals: Case management in the Lawrence program takes place through the work of a staff person, an ‘outreach facilitator’, who helps participants, needing and seeking support services and resources, to fill out forms and navigate through service bureaucracies; she also follows up with parents to reinforce their attendance in Pathways programs. Although there have been a few community organizations who have offered services for families over the years, case management has not been the primary focus of the program. As a long term Lawrence resident, the outreach facilitator seems knowledgeable about the area and the resources in the area; however, the systematic mechanisms of referral practices and outcomes of referrals are unknown at this time.

Major program changes from last year: The major change for the Lawrence program this year involved staffing; that is, all five teachers are new to the program and an additional teacher for the child component was added. However the transition appears to have happened smoothly, without major disruptions in the provision of services.

Strengths of the Lawrence Model:

- The Lawrence model has certain strengths which arise from being based at a community school. For example, recruitment is facilitated by being located in the school building and being adopted by the school’s system. The Program has no problems in recruiting and filling the number of seats available. Furthermore, the Pathways staff has noted that being a school-based program helps them stay connected with families.
- There are clear advantages in terms of child literacy that arise from being a school based model. The children’s school teachers have been observing and commenting on the progress that the Pathways children are making. The principal of the school is personally engaged in checking the progress of Pathways children. The potential and opportunity exists for the child literacy teachers to connect with the school teachers, identify areas of deficit and improvement and track their progress; indeed, some of these interventions are happening.

TABLE 3: Pathways Lawrence Main Components, Objectives, Structure and Staffing

	Adult Literacy	Child Literacy	Interactive Literacy	Parenting
Program goals	To improve the English-language skills of immigrant parents	To improve their English language & literacy skills To assist with homework	To foster parent/child learning	To engage parents in their child's education and school To enhance parent understandings & skills
Objectives for individual participants?	To set & monitor individual adult goals To increase English language skills monitored via BEST Plus testing	To increase English language skills monitored via PPVT testing	To increase parent understanding Monitored via PASS	Expand understandings via workshops monitored via workshop topics & attendance
Progress monitored or tracked?	Lawrence Adult Learning Center & Pathways	Leahy & Pathways	Leahy & Pathways	Pathways
Budgeting	Lawrence Adult Learning Center	Leahy & Pathways	LALC, Leahy & Pathways	
Primary responsibility? Your agency or another	ESOL Lawrence Adult Learning Center	Leahy School Principal	On –site Instructional Staff	Leahy School & Pathways
Program staffing	Three ABE teachers	Two child literacy teachers one paraprofessional	All program staff	Coordinator and Outreach Facilitator
How do families access the program?	The bi-lingual school counselor outreaches to families who could benefit from services			
How is program evaluation conducted at the agency?	Leahy principal is on-site during program hours. Pathways Coordinator makes site visits to participate in staff meetings & observe instruction LALC Director makes site visits to observe ESOL instruction Data is collected on an on-going basis throughout the year (enrollment, attendance, pre-post English language testing, individual goals set & monitored , workshops and pre-post family literacy surveys) At end of school year, key Partners meet to discuss program, Pathways Coordinator facilitates focus group with on-site staff and writes a report based on the in-put & the program data	Leahy Principal encourages day time teaching staff to share educational needs of students participating in the program with the children's family literacy staff Leahy Principal facilitates a focus group with her day time staff to determine challenges and benefits of family literacy services to students enrolled Leahy Principal created a comparison group of non participating students to assess effectiveness of academic support with enrolled children	Activities are developed & based upon observed needs and documented in monthly reports	Parent workshop topics are driven by parent interests & needs observed by staff

- That a tremendous staffing transition did not disrupt the program may speak to program stability and the strength of the core partnership. The coordinator attributed this success to the soundness of basic structure of the program.

Areas of growth and challenges for the Lawrence Model:

- Case management is an area for future progress for the Lawrence Model. The number of hours allocated for this role is small. A more intensive case management approach may prove useful in terms of participant attendance and retention.
- There is potential for the Lawrence Model to evolve into a more participatory and empowerment focused model. Currently, there is little input from participants in terms of design of various program components. Transitioning into an empowerment model requires additional resources and may require training of staff in this area.
- Cohort building, that is, facilitating peer support among families, is an area which could have beneficial effects on participants over time. Currently cohort building is not intentional; it appears that, on their own, some families are making connections with each other. Intentional programmatic cohort building may be helpful in reinforcing families' efforts to stay with the program and attend program sessions, especially since families have similar backgrounds and live in close proximity to the school and each other.
- The coordinator pointed out that it has been a challenge not to have allocated funding for some staff to attend staff meetings.

The Holyoke Model

Program structure and components: In the beginning of the year 2010-2011, Pathways Holyoke transitioned into a new school-based model, much like Pathways Lawrence. The program targets and caters to the parent and child population of the Sullivan School in which it is based. Holyoke has implemented several new program elements during this year: a formalized child literacy program component, implemented by a teacher trained in this work; and ESOL classes for adults including Levels 3-6 (in the past, Holyoke offered a Pre-GED

program instead). According to staff, the ESOL component originally attracted more advanced adult learners, possibly because they felt most comfortable coming forward to learn. Later when the Program lost half of the parents, the majority of the parents who applied were beginner level ESOL. Parenting and interactive literacy components are present in the program (described under the program changes section below), although somewhat informal and sporadic. Program approach and practices, especially in terms of what the parenting and interactive literacy components look like, have been evolving and developing during the evaluation period due to the significant program changes described in more detail below.

The partnership with the school was formed rapidly right before the beginning of the 2010-2011 programming. However, despite such rapid formation, the partners, including the principal of the Sullivan School and the ABE partner Community Education Project (CEP), seem very motivated and enthusiastic about the prospects of this program for parents. The partnership with CEP and the school appears to be committed and strong.

Funding: The adult literacy component (which includes the ESOL teacher and the counselor) is covered by the Pathways grant and private funders. The child literacy component is mostly funded through Sullivan's Title 1 funds and covers a teacher and a para-professional. For interactive literacy components half of the funding comes from a private grant which is matched by the Holyoke Public Schools.

Recruitment: The 2010 – 2011 cohort was primarily recruited by school personnel through flyers, posters in the lobby of the school, personal contacts and word of mouth. Recruitment was limited to the families within the Sullivan School Community, and it has been quite challenging to fill the seats due to the change in parent needs (beginner vs. intermediate English language ability).

Staffing: The Program Coordinator (who is the Pathways Coordinator) and the adult basic education teacher remained the same. The counselor changed in the middle of the year, and this change posed some challenges in terms of program implementation. A new child literacy teacher was hired this year which enabled

this component to become more central to the program's offerings for families and children.

Case management and referrals: The role of the case manager (called Counselor at this Program) involves administering the placement tests, filling out the intake and goal forms, establishing relationships with the families, having individual and phone follow ups with parents and filling out program paperwork; her hours are limited to 5 – 5.5 hours a week. During the ongoing meetings with parents referrals to educational and community service agencies are made. The person filling this role has always been a bi-lingual/bicultural person. The new counselor is enrolled at Holyoke Community College and is working on an associate degree. According to the Pathways staff, she is a positive role model for the families. Due to the staffing change, the referral reporting form provided to sites for documenting referral activities was too incomplete to capture what may be happening with service and resource referrals on behalf of families enrolled in Pathways Holyoke.

Major program changes from last year: As mentioned earlier, the Holyoke program evolved during the past two years, shifting from being community-based to school based, discontinuing a pre-GED program, and adding both an ESOL program and child literacy services. The children's literacy component involved radical changes, turning what had been more like child care into a formalized child literacy program with dedicated teaching staff. Engaging children at widely varying ages (e.g. 5 – 12 years of age) makes this program component challenging to implement.

A new interactive literacy program component was also undertaken in year two and has evolved from a monthly activity, conducted by either the Program Coordinator or a presenter, to a multi-pronged model, which includes a goal of having parents visit classrooms every week to support and encourage them to become more engaged and comfortable in their child's learning. Parents can witness firsthand what the children are learning and teachers can model behavior for parents. This activity was not as consistent as planned, but willingness on the part of school personnel remains to refine the plan and try it again in the future. A second interactive literacy program component implemented in year

two was for parents to read to their children for 20 minutes during program hours. A third component was a workshop series for parents that taught reading strategies parents can use at home with their children; this component ended with parents providing a show for their children. Parents were also included in some of the after-school activities that their children engage in, including computers, cooking and gardening. The children's teacher helps families to understand their child's homework and to teach them how to help their children, especially since some new concepts have been introduced in the teaching of math that most parents would not be familiar with. "We help parents help their children.", says the children's teacher. Although there is no set parenting component in the Pathways Holyoke program, when parenting issues come up in the classroom they are discussed and addressed.

Strengths of the Holyoke Model:

- Although very new, Pathways Holyoke is in the early stages of transforming itself into a parent empowerment centered model in which parents are motivated and have the opportunities to connect with their children's school. This potential stems from the Sullivan School's willingness to engage parents, as well as staff and partner visions. For example, the School Principal expressed willingness to dedicate some space at the entrance of the school for a Family Literacy Center. Indeed, the parents of the Pathways program were involved in a planning exercise for creating this space, an activity that excited and motivated the parents who participated. The model could also serve as catalyst for family engagement in the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Currently, the PTO is heavily populated by white non-Hispanic parents.
- Holyoke Model, although new, promises considerable mutual learning for partners of the Pathways program. As one of the partners put it, "Schools can learn from the ABE system about different ways to connect with parents."
- According to Holyoke program staff and partners, other schools which hear about the Sullivan program have already picked up on the idea of family literacy. For example, the principal of another school

contacted the Program Coordinator to get more information about family literacy programming. There may indeed be many forthcoming indirect ripple effects from having a school-based Pathways Holyoke Program.

- Interviews with the Pathways children's teacher revealed that she is directly in touch with their classroom teachers, and these teachers inform her of areas where children need to make progress.

Areas of growth and challenges for the Holyoke Model:

- It was pointed out by one of the children's teachers that the children are exhausted by the time they get to the program after already having spent long hours at the school. It was also pointed out that children's willingness and motivation to engage in the program is likely to affect parents' attendance and retention.
- There is room for the improvement of recruitment practices in the new Holyoke

model. A needs assessment was performed in the beginning of the program that determined that there was more demand for ESOL than GED. However, later the program had challenges in retention and in filling empty seats. A more strategic recruitment strategy may prove useful in reaching out to those who might benefit the most.

- According to one of the teachers, a challenge that the program is facing is with regard to unrealistic expectations of parents for when they can complete the program or progress to a new level. In a previous report submitted to the ESE-ACLS, the CSP had identified similar issues for parents who are located at the distance learning program. The CSP had also included in that report recommendations for intake and other implementation practices which are likely to help parents to modify their expectations (Kahraman et al, 2009). These recommendations may be applicable for the Pathways Holyoke program as well, in particular,

TABLE 4: Pathways Holyoke Main Components, Objectives, Structure and Staffing

	Adult Literacy	Child Literacy	Interactive Literacy	Parenting
Program goals	Increase their English speaking and listening skills (comprehension); increase par. inv. in children's educ.	Increase English language skills and quality and quantity of homework turned in to classroom teacher	Increase quality, quantity and comfort for parents to read to children	Provide space and support in the ESOL class to safely discuss and problem-solve parenting issues
Objectives for individual participants?	EL instruction and practice; workshops in reading to children; visits to child's classroom	Provide homework assistance and English language enrichment activities; increase vocabulary	Through theater games and teaching, learn new strategies to engage children in reading	Parent will feel comfortable to bring up issues and support each other
Progress monitored or tracked?	BEST Plus testing	Teacher feedback; PPVT; WCJ	Parents self-reporting	Teacher observation
Budgeting	Covered by Pathways grant and private funders	Mostly funded through Sullivan's Title I funds	½ of the funding is a private grant which is matched by HPS	NA
Primary responsibility? Your agency or another	Community Education Project	HPS/Pathways	Enchanted Circle Theater/Pathways	CEP
Program staffing	Same as above	Sullivan School	Pathways- subcontract with ECT	
How do families access the program?	Flyers, phone calls, posters in lobby, word of mouth	Children of ESOL participants		
How is program evaluation conducted at the agency?	Joint staff meetings; administrator meetings	Joint staff meetings; administrator meetings	Joint staff meetings; administrator meetings	

spending more time at intake in clarifying expectations and building a systematic self-reflective process for goal setting during program implementation may prove useful.

- Similar to the Lawrence Model, cohort building is incidental within the Holyoke Model; however, there may be clear advantages to focus on cohort building especially within the context of a school. This could lead to groups of families feeling empowered and engaging more in the larger life of the school. One caveat, as pointed out by one of the partners, is to pay attention to the potential cliques for parents to be formed leading to unwanted divisions between different populations of parents within the school.

The Cambridge Model

Program structure and components: The Cambridge Program is hosted by the community organization, Community Learning Center (CLC); the Agenda for Children provides the full time staff. Although not necessarily intended, the Cambridge Pathways Program has evolved to serve immigrant families coming from diverse backgrounds, reflective of the diversity of Cambridge. The ABE program component which consists of different levels of ESOL classes for adults takes place at the CLC. Pathways parents have priority in attending these classes and this serves them well because there are hundreds of candidates on waiting lists for participation. Adults attend classes at different times depending on their ESOL level and preferences. During 2010–2011 programming, the levels consisted mostly of 2 and 3. The child literacy, interactive literacy and parenting program components all take place on Saturday during a single block of time from 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM. The child literacy piece has become more formalized over time as a result of the addition of a teacher dedicated to implementing this program component. The teacher organizes activities according to children’s needs and ages. The parenting program component takes place through “parent support group time” in which different topics, such as nutrition or health, are covered. During the interactive literacy time block, there are read alouds and parents and children work on projects together. These activities revolve, balancing

content and ensuring that some of each program component is covered every month.

The core partnerships are very strong and committed. For example, core partners ensured the sustainability and maintenance of the program during a period in which a staff member was missing from the program. Core partners, called the Joint Planning Team, meet on a regular basis to discuss progress of Pathways families; the program and partner staff keeps in constant communication to address areas of need.

Funding: The PFS grant goes directly to the Community Learning Center. Then the funds are subcontracted to the five core partners for support. Additional financial support is provided by all five partner agencies.

Recruitment: Recruitment takes place through multiple avenues: word of mouth; partner organization mailings, announcements in classes, newsletters. In addition, the Cambridge Housing Authority attaches fliers in its regular mailings to residents.

Staffing: A new program coordinator was hired this year who started the program in the middle of the academic year. At the beginning of February, a child literacy teacher was hired. An abundance of Cambridge Pathways staff work during the Saturday programming; staff from partner agencies join in, as well as computer staff. Volunteers from Tufts University also are on hand to assist during Saturday programming.

Case management and referrals: Case management involves follow-up with families on a regular basis on their multiple needs; the program coordinator meets with parents on a one to one basis every month to discuss their goals. Although documentation on referrals is somewhat incomplete, staff and partners are very aware of resources and direct families accordingly.

Major program changes from last year: The Cambridge program structure and approach evolved during the year due to staff changes mentioned above. By the end of the school year, the program was stabilized and the staff had adapted; however, the initial staffing instability is reflected in outcomes for this year. The addition of

an elementary school teacher for the child literacy program component has enabled this aspect of the program to be more thoughtfully planned than had been the case previously.

Strengths of the Cambridge Model:

- This Pathways program benefits from an abundance of Cambridge resources including not only opportunities for access to other resources and services in the community, but also its physical infrastructure and staffing.
- The strength and range of core partnerships is high.
- New staff and partners are very enthusiastic and motivated.

Areas of growth and challenges for the Cambridge Model:

- The Cambridge Model in its current form appears to be a juxtaposition of different program components (the Saturday program which has multiple components and the ABE classes offered during week days) which are all useful in their unique ways, but which, with refinement, could come together in a more holistic way. Although the same program has been in place for quite a number of years, program practices are still evolving and emerging. Attendance to the Saturday programming, in which three different program components are being implemented, has been quite limited; as noted earlier some of these participation challenges may be due

to staff changes and the time it takes for families to adapt to these changes. Various attendance patterns have emerged: Some families may attend ABE classes and not the Saturday programming and vice versa. This is not helped by the fact that there is no child care available during the times that the participants are attending ABE classes.

- Many families are being served for long periods of time in Cambridge Pathways; this year, almost half of Cambridge's participants had been served by the program in previous years. The staff indicates that choice of working with families who had been enrolled for several years was intentional. Parents who were previously enrolled in Pathways were kept in the program in order to provide them with the opportunity to have a sense of completion. It was very important to partners that families experience closure with Pathways and to see the transition as a way of moving forward. The program was committed to making that happen. Therefore, most of the participants who had been in the program for a number of years were able to graduate from the program in June 2011 and move to the status of alumni. Still, the limited number of new and total participants is surprising, given the extensive recruitment strategies and recruitment partners — and the realities of long waiting lists for participation in Cambridge. This issue deserves programmatic attention for the future.

TABLE 5: Pathways Cambridge Main Components, Objectives, Structure and Staffing

	Adult Literacy	Child Literacy	Interactive Literacy	Parenting
Program goals	Increase their speaking, writing skills	Customized according to children's needs	Joint parent and child activities/ projects	Discuss and problem-solve parenting issues.
Objectives for individual participants?	Increase language skills	Increase interest in reading and build vocabulary	Share strategies to engage children in reading and parent involvement in schools	Families set individual goals for themselves
Progress monitored or tracked?	BEST Plus	PPVT, Woodcock Johnson, staff observation	PASS, parent self report	Goal tracking sheets
Budgeting	ESE grant,	Pathways grant, Pathways partners	Pathways grant, Pathways partners	Pathways grant, Pathways partners
Primary responsibility? Your agency or another	CLC	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families
Program staffing	CLC	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families	CLC Agenda for Children, CCRC, Center for Families
How do families access the program?	Outreach , CLC students on waitlist get priority	Outreach throughout community	Outreach throughout community	Outreach throughout community
How is program evaluation conducted at the agency?	Joint planning team meetings/staff observation	Joint planning team meetings/ staff observation	Joint planning team meetings /staff observation	Joint planning team meetings/ staff observation
	Parent Focus group at end of year	Parent Focus group at end of year	Parent Focus group at end of year	Parent Focus group at end of year
	Informal parent feedback	Informal parent feedback	Informal parent feedback	Informal parent feedback
	Review data	Review data	Review data	Review data

The Pittsfield Model

Program structure and components: Pathways Pittsfield is located at a community based organization, Berkshire Children and Families (BCF), which is a family and child service agency. There are Pre-GED, GED and ESOL classes offered as part of the ABE component. Some of these classes involve individual one to one instruction which is tailored according to student needs. The adult learning center saves 12 – 15 spots for the in-depth program throughout the year, and the program has a rolling intake, families move in and out constantly. The child literacy component is in place for four days a week from 9:30 – 2:30. The newly hired teacher (at the beginning of the evaluation year) for this component is a certified early childhood teacher; with her hire, the child literacy component has evolved to be more formalized and intentional. The interactive literacy piece also involves intentional and structured activities. The local early intervention service (Pediatric Development Center) funds and leads the parent/child activity groups twice a week at the site. Parents are supposed to keep a journal of these activities and their progress is tracked throughout the year. The parenting program component takes place two days a week, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons; one day involves a curriculum based component, Parents as Teachers, and the other offers group and peer support. This year the program has access to a resource called Project Link which gives families the opportunity to attend a year of college. Already, four participants of the program were utilizing this resource to advance in their education. The program components are formal and structured; still families are included in the design and execution of the different pieces of the program. For example, parents asked to know more about the ways in which they could use their food stamps and the ways to cook healthy. The Program Coordinator contacted the Christian Center and asked them to donate food so that this class could be included in the curriculum. The core partnerships appear to be very strong and committed.

Funding: The Pathways grant supports 58% of BCF costs for PFS activities. This does not include early care and education for child care slots (EEC) Head Start (EEC and federal), ABE classes (ESE), BCF

Parents as Teachers — (Federation for Children with Special Needs), teaching assistants through Foster Grandparents.

Recruitment: Participants are either self-referred by other community participants and graduates, or referred by social service agencies and BCF programs, especially those which are serving young parents and domestic violence survivors, through the Department of Transitional Assistance and domestic violence shelter system. Word of mouth among program participants plays an important role in recruitment as well. For example, one of the participants was appointed to be a community leader and spread the word about the program in her own community; this strategy has effectively attracted other parents. The program does not appear to have problems in filling open spots.

Staffing: The Pittsfield program lost its Program Coordinator after the completion of the Program this year. Until then, the core Program staff had been stable. As indicated earlier, at Pittsfield, the program components, such as interactive literacy and parenting, are the most structured and intentional, as compared to all the other Pathways programs in the state. The Pittsfield Programs have clear objectives, defined curricula, and knowledgeable core program staff; the program appears to be proactive in identifying weaknesses and seeking out new strategies or curricula.

Case management and referrals: Case management is a primary focus of the program. A case manager is on site for 18 hours a week, in addition the Pathways coordinator (who is no longer working at the Program), contributes significant time to this component, working one to one with parents. The Pittsfield program is implemented using an empowerment perspective. For example, the program began producing a newsletter after demand from parents who wanted to know what was happening to their children in the child room when they were away. Parents themselves chose the name, “Home Away From Home”, as well as the content for the newsletter. Goal setting is taken very seriously and participants are asked not only to set achievable goals on a monthly basis in terms of parenting or ABE; also long terms goals and the steps to achieve those goals are discussed regularly on a one to one basis. The program has made a CD

for parents with their kids, documenting the history of the child's development; parents talk about the pictures and reflect on changes over time.

As Table 2 on referrals demonstrates, Pittsfield has the highest number of referrals on average per participant and in absolute terms, as compared with other Pathways sites. This is reflective of not only the need level of the population the program serves, but also the program focus and approach. Being located in an area which is scarcely resourced and is serving a high need population, the Program is highly successful in drawing resources from many other partners in the area.

Major program changes from last year: There has been one staff change, a new child literacy teacher hire, designed to bolster the child literacy component by making it more intentional. Also, Project Link which prepares GED and ESL students to enter degree and certificate programs at no cost to students was added. It is a project of Berkshire Community College.

Strengths of the Pittsfield Model:

- Program components such as interactive literacy and parenting are well defined and structured.
- The ability to utilize partnerships in creative and multiple ways to serve highly

TABLE 6: Pathways Pittsfield Main Components, Objectives, Structure and Staffing

	Adult Literacy	Child Literacy	Interactive Literacy	Parenting
Program goals				
Objectives for individual participants?	Improve grade levels	Develop in language, social emotional development and over development	Parent/child relationships demonstrate progress, especially in communication and parents support child learning. Parents are partners with child's school.	Parents learn about themselves and their child: development, parenting skills, challenges, stress and listening
Progress monitored or tracked?	Yes – 90 days	ASQ and ASQ-SE	Parent reflection journal weekly, And staff observation	Parent feedback forms/surveys, and staff observation
Budgeting				
Primary responsibility? Your agency or another	Adult Learning Center and case manager (BCF)	BCF, Head Start. PPS	BCF	BCF through McInerney Parent Services
Program staffing	Adult Learning Center teachers, Pittsfield Public Schools	BCF Early Childhood room staff, BCF Early Education and Care, Head Start	BCF Case Manager, Pediatric Development Staff, BCF Early Childhood staff and Coordinator	McInerney Parents as Teachers – Parent Educator, BCF Coordinator/case manager
How do families access the program?	Formal and informal intake	At BCF early childhood room, BCF child care and Head Start	PDC at program and case manager at other sites	Program administrator, case manager, early childhood staff (all coaching) and parent group from BCF
How is program evaluation conducted at the agency?	ESE and Regional Employment Board	BCF staff evaluations (yearly), ongoing supervision, and child outcomes	Parent report, child success in school	Family stability measures, parent and child outcomes, ASQ-SE, outcomes reported to United Way

disadvantaged families within the context of an under resourced, high need and economically challenging context appears to be very high.

- There is a clear emphasis on building trust with intensive case management.
- Cohort building among participants develops organically; the culture of the program and staff promote opportunities for mutual learning and sharing which appear to work.
- Among all the programs, the Pittsfield Model is the one which places the most emphasis on empowerment of families. Families appear to have a significant role in program design.
- The program places emphasis on cultural learning — that is, how groups are different from one another — and pays attention to how different cultures' traditions and perspectives affect parents' ways of rearing children.
- The program places significant emphasis on parent child relationship building and enhancement and on parent coaching.

Areas of growth and challenges for the Pittsfield Model:

- Transportation is a huge challenge; access to the program and to the resources is very difficult.
- Unemployment and economic distress in the area is very high, compared to state and national averages.
- The community seems to be evolving with influx of new families; the program needs to remain flexible in order to serve those who come with different backgrounds, cultures and issues.
- This program has very limited resources; there is need for more staffing support and other material resources such as food for program components which involve cooking. Also, the early childhood room needs upgrading.

Cross Site Learnings on Implementation

- **More Formalized and Thoughtful Child Literacy Components:** In the 2010 – 2011 evaluation period, three of the Pathways sites (except Lawrence which already had

formalized child literacy component in place) moved towards formalizing their child literacy component by hiring teachers trained in this area. This staffing decision led to more thoughtful and planned programming.

- **School-based Models:** The school-based models have positive implications for parenting and parent empowerment as well as child outcomes. It is evident that for the two school-based models, support for the Pathways Programs from the school administration is strong. This endorsement creates an opportunity to have parents be more involved in the greater life of the school (as stated by one of our interviewees) and their children's learning. Using Title 1 Funds, the schools also contribute financial support to the Pathways programs. Another advantage of a school based model is the communication observed between the Pathways child literacy teachers and school teachers at Lawrence and Holyoke sites. School teachers often comment on progress of Pathways children.

- **The Role of Partnerships in Model**

Implementation: There are some limitations on how Pathways Programs utilize partnerships^{xvi}. It is evident across all sites that the core partnerships are engaged, committed and very strong. However, Pathways communities differ in how they engage with and utilize partners at the wider level.

- **Staffing Configurations:** The staffing of the case manager/outreach facilitator position is crucial to the implementation of the program and in building trust with the families. The stability of this position and the qualities of the person who fills this position are especially important since this is the staff with the most frequent and intense contact with the families. It may be crucial to have bi-lingual staff, especially in programs where participants are pre-dominantly from the same ethnic community. Pathways families tend to be very diverse ethnically and linguistically; it goes without saying that in every Pathways program, staff need to be culturally competent. Having staff rooted in the same community as the parents clearly builds trust and has the potential to enhance

cultural competence of all staff within the program.

- **Case Management Approach:** Among all the sites, case management is the most intense and intentional at Pittsfield; one indicator is the amount of time committed to this component at each program. At Pittsfield, allocating more time to case management has resulted with a very high number of referrals and connections to community resources.
- **Stepping-out^{xvii} and Retention:** Retention is still a major challenge for implementation across all programs despite considerable effort by Program staff to reach out to these families. It appears as if allowing parents to step out of the program for a period of time created some flexibility and served them well, especially those whose lives are beset by unexpected crises. One interviewee pointed out that the attendance policy might be holding some of the parents back. Families who missed classes a few times felt as if they had broken the contract and could not return to the program only to find out, after correspondence with the case manager, that this may not always be the case.
- **Changing Demographic and Socio-economic Context:** Demographic changes are taking place in each community; attention to these changes is important for program planning and development. Almost all of the Programs use partnerships strategically to brainstorm for ideas; the changing socio-economics and demographics in communities and the ways in which these changes may impact program participant profiles and needs deserves vigilance by partners. This focus could be incorporated into objectives of the wider partnerships and, indeed, this issue appears to be on the agenda for some of the partnerships.
- **Cohort Building:** Cohort building can take place organically, but the program culture could be more supportive and encouraging in this area. Peer support could have potential positive implications for attendance and retention, if parents are motivated and follow up with and support each other.
- **Keeping Children Engaged and Motivated:** It was indicated by children's teachers that children are exhausted by the time they get to the program which negatively impacts their motivation to attend Pathways. This is especially true for school-based programs where children are expected to participate in additional programming after a long day of school.
- **Challenges in Data Collection:** System for Managing Accountable and Results Through Technology (SMARTT) database was not originally set up for use by the Pathways programs. During the evaluation period, recording and retrieval of all the data needed for the evaluation could not be implemented through SMARTT due to various complexities involved. For example, new fields were created to enter children's outcomes data, however, linking families within the system involved creation of multiple IDs which made the process burdensome for programs and the evaluation team. Independent sheets needed to be developed for data collection which made the connections between different data components a further challenging, time consuming and complex task. This created an additional burden for sites which needed to record and retain multiple data sheets and for the evaluation team which needed to navigate through multiple sheets to connect family information together and to create comparable data across sites.

III. PATHWAYS PARTNERSHIPS

This section on Pathways partnerships will focus on the outcomes of Pathways programs at the partnership level. The analysis draws from multiple data sources. A Network Health Survey was implemented online during the course of the evaluation and the analyses of the individual items on this survey are available upon request. This section will discuss the findings from this survey, as well as learnings from the partnership strategy meeting which was held on June 9, 2011 with various partners of the Pathways Programs across sites, together with findings from interviews with staff and partners, observations during the site visits, and the data from the referral sheets.

Context and Characteristics of Pathways Partnerships and Changes from Past Year:

1. The ESE's program design for the Pathways Project calls for two types of partnerships:
 - Partnerships of agencies that deliver core integrated services to individual families (a requirement of the Pathways in-depth Project) combined with supplemental services from other community agencies, for example, co-location of services for adults and children and coordinated case management.
 - Partnerships that support family literacy programming at the community level. These partnerships may pursue a variety of objectives such as increasing public awareness about the value of family literacy strategies.

The first year of the Pathways evaluation focused on identifying the presence of formal partnerships, as well as the organizational, membership and leadership characteristics of these partnerships across Pathways programs at these two levels. The second year of the evaluation investigated changes in partnership practices and strategies as compared to the first year, gathered perspectives of a wider group of partners on the purpose, performance, operations and capacity of the partnerships, identified challenges and successes which emerged during the period of the evaluation, and tracked how these partnerships translated into referrals and access to services for families in the in-depth programs across sites (The results of the referrals

sheets which were filled out by the Programs are presented in Table 2.).

Some major findings from this year's evaluation are summarized below:

Pathways Programs are characterized by very strong core partnerships. A list of the core partners of the Pathways Programs is included in the Appendix. Lawrence and Holyoke as school based programs have a small group of core partners; Cambridge and Pittsfield operated in a more complex and wider system of partnerships. Interviews with staff and partners demonstrated that across all sites the core Pathways partnerships are characterized by strong relationships and a shared commitment to the success of the in-depth programs. Core partners contribute to the program both in terms of financial and material resources, by providing infrastructure and staff time and therefore making Pathways programming possible. Cambridge and Holyoke faced a lot of transitions this year, both lost their site coordinator/counselor (key staff) and hired new ones. Cambridge in particular felt that the way the transition was handled was a manifestation of their partnership strength - different partners stepped in to handle the work-load while the new person was brought in and trained for the job. At Holyoke, the new partnership with the local public school was a strengthening factor, since the school's Principal was very excited about promoting Pathways and family literacy. The Principal of the Leahy School at Pathways Lawrence pays special attention to the progress of the children in the Pathways program and is personally involved in supporting the program and ensuring its success. At Pittsfield a complex system of committed core partners make programming possible and rich.

Pathways Programs have distinct cultures of collaboration and use different types of strategies to achieve goals at the wider level. The Cambridge Program is different than other sites in terms of the nature of its partnership at the wider level. Cambridge Pathways has for many years been part of multiple coalitions which existed in the community before the development of Pathways. Therefore, Cambridge Pathways is

not the caller and convener of actions at the wider level, but is a key player. In addition, Pathways partners are leaders of the various coalitions. At the three other sites, Pathways holds a leadership role within the community in terms of promoting goals at the wider level. Some communities have an established culture of collaboration within their communities while others do not. Cambridge felt there are different types of collaboration depending on the stages of development; theirs is a mature collaboration built over many years.

Table 7 illustrates the wider partnership successes and challenges across sites as well as the strategies employed to reach partnership goals. Pathways partnerships vary in the level of effort and number of creative strategies used to expand and strengthen partnerships. For example, Pittsfield brings PFS parents to partnership meetings not only to help empower parents, but also to enable the other partners to hear the stories straight from the parents; the power of this direct, immediate and detailed storytelling from the parents themselves generates more resources from the community, not just for these parents but for others as well. The Lawrence team has talked about different ways to secure more funding for family literacy, including attendance at local town hall meetings and conversations with public officials. Across all Pathways sites, program leaders and staff feel that building effective partnerships for family literacy required multi-faceted approaches; much of this important work involved conflict resolution. Partners needed to have a shared vision, shared language, shared understandings and diversity in the partners, including local businesses and policy makers. Pathways programs achieved important successes during the evaluation period. These successes were in wide range of areas and included the successful organization of events for supporting family literacy as well as providing significant training for coalition partners on strategies about reading and emerging literacy. All these successes were made possible by the efforts and commitment of the Pathways coordinators who provided a leadership role and allocated significant time in convening meetings, developing strategies, and

securing buy-in from a diverse group of partners. At some sites, in the absence of this role played by the Pathways coordinators, these successes would not likely have occurred.

Pathways partnerships operate in dynamic and diverse contexts. The contexts in which Pathways programs have operated are varied and diverse. Table 1 summarized the diverse socio-economic characteristics of Pathways communities. Some communities have a wide pool of resources to draw from while others do not. It was important for Pathways programs and partners to be able to understand the rapid changes taking place in their local environments, identify the opportunities and challenges, and respond to them in a timely manner. Most thought partnerships made this responsiveness possible.

School based programs enhanced visibility and profile of Pathways Programs within their respective communities. Sites reported that they have been approached by school principals in the district who wanted to talk about family literacy and introduce similar programs at their schools.

Use of wider partnership resources for wrap around services. The extent and the ways in which Pathways programs utilized the resources of the wider partnership for supporting Pathways families has been very varied. Table 2 illustrates information on number of referrals made to outside agencies and includes examples of the types of agencies the referral were made to. At Pittsfield where case management has been the strongest component, resources are used to support parents in multiple and creative ways^{xviii}. Pittsfield introduces the parents to the resources in the community by physically escorting them; this approach enables parents to overcome fear, then leading to navigation of the system on their own the next time. Cambridge and Holyoke which were going through major transitions this year have not utilized the referral sheet fully: their activity in this regard may be understated. At Lawrence, on the other hand, case management does not go much beyond filling out forms for parents as indicated earlier.

TABLE 7: Examples of Successes, Challenges and Strategies of Pathways Partnerships At the Wider Level Across Pathways Programs
(Drawn from staff and partner interviews: 2010-2011)

	Successes	Challenges	Strategies used to advance wider partnership goals
Lawrence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Literacy Day was extremely successful, many people attended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping partners engaged Fewer partners are coming to meetings this year. ABE community is still distanced from the concept of family literacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attending meetings where public officials are present and advocating for expanding funding for services Using a list-serv to do networking Maintaining strong personal communications with core partners Pathways Coordinator met with three different principals to discuss Title I funding and made suggestions. Developed a power point presentation on how literacy levels in Lawrence connect with poverty.
Holyoke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Momentum, follow through and commitment to the work at the wider partnership level Successful training of the MSPCC early intervention program on strategies about reading, emerging literacy...etc. Creation of H (Holyoke) Awards: "Not everyone can be an A student, but everyone can be an H student." Every month in every school in every grade a teacher submits the name of a student who has made progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work load has been a challenge. Lacking decision makers at the meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired a consultant to work with the Family Literacy Coalition in order to revisit and re-craft if needed the vision and mission statements Setting concrete goals and following up progress Being open to new ideas
Cambridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baby College—parenting classes for families with children ages 0-14 agencies are involved in this project which has been highly successful Family Literacy Fun Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running partnership meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking, training, writing joint grants and working on joint projects Exploring the wider network of resources within the community
Pittsfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More awareness in the community and among local funders in the significance of family literacy Partnerships getting wider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty in engaging the regional employment board as a major player when unemployment in the area is very high as the Board is overworked and understaffed. Preparing families to the meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting the early childhood agenda and literacy activities in Public Schools, promoting the story walks Produced a CD on how important it is to read for your kids for local TV show Attending and arranging meetings with multiple partners Arranging a workshop on literacy Including parents and bringing their voice to the meetings at the wider level

Discussion of findings of the Network Health Survey:

Network Health Scorecard (NHS) is an assessment tool which measures the health of a network or partnership, focusing on the following key aspects: purpose, performance, operations and capacity. An adapted version of the survey was sent to the PFS sites' partners at the core and the wider level. The total number of responses to the survey was 32; the number of respondents was 9 each for Holyoke and Lawrence and 7 each for Cambridge and Pittsfield. The respondents were from a diverse number of agencies including community colleges, early childhood programs and other community based organizations^{xix}. A full list of the agencies that respondents are affiliated with can be found in the attachment to this document. The roles of the respondents in their agencies were also very diverse, including program directors, outreach coordinators, administrators, teachers and counselors. The respondents were asked about the history of their involvement in the Pathways partnership: once again, the responses were varied, some respondents' engagement went as far back as 2004 while some were much more recent. A little less than 50 percent of participants identified that the partnership was based on an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or contract for services while the rest identified other ways in which the partnership was established. Answers included "joint meetings", "community partnership" or "through employment".

Purpose/Common Interest/Goal: The responses to the items on the purposes of the partnerships illustrated that most members (over three quarters of respondents for the three items under this category) felt strongly about the alignment of purposes among partners. Respondents were also asked to identify the purposes, common interests, and goals of the partnership in their own words. Included below are illustrative examples of partnership purposes, which in general clustered around similar types of themes.

- "To work together to promote family literacy and support services as key to addressing generational poverty"
- "To create systems, vehicles and relationships that strengthen the web of services in the community"

- "To better the Lawrence community"
- "We want the families and children to be successful and thriving"
- "Good communication; doing projects together; networking"

Included below are examples of common interests and goals:

- "Educate Holyoke community and help to create a vibrant and sustainable place to live!"
- "To transition ABE/Fam Lit students to post-secondary Ed."
- "We all have the common goals of assisting parents of babies and young children to obtain their education and advance their learning. Working together with each other and with parents helps them to identify and reach their goals for self-sufficiency and a better quality of life. It allows us to support parents through transitions as goals are accomplished and it provides a network throughout the community so that the parent can become part of this community and take on leadership roles."

Network Performance: Respondents felt very positively about most aspects of network performance, for example, "Members are adding value to each other's work" (almost 80 % of responses were clustered on the positive side) or "The network is meeting its strategic goals and objectives" (almost 75 % of responses were clustered on the positive side). Almost all respondents agreed that members were achieving more together than they could alone. The one area in which respondents were less confident was for the item, "The network is able to attract additional network funds as needed."

Examples of Partnership Successes: Participants were asked to identify different ways in which members contributed to the performance of the partnership in the past couple of months. The results of partnerships successes listed by the respondents can be summarized as follows:

- "Collaboration among partners has helped Pathways programs across sites deal with transitions and staff turnover."
- "Graduates of the program continue to use community partner resources, moving from one goal completion to the next."

- “Successful implementation of regular family literacy events has taken place across all sites with partnership collaboration.”
- “Sharing of partnership resources has made successful programming possible.”

Examples of Challenges: Respondents were also asked about challenges that the partnership encountered along the way. Included below are some examples of challenges cited by partners:

- “Difficulty engaging businesses/employers, and some state partners”
- “Missing connection with public schools”
- “Funding constraints”
- “Irregular attendance at partnership meetings”
- “Difficulty aligning family literacy goals with the ABE community’s adult ed. goals”

Network Operations: Majority of respondents felt very strongly about various aspects of network operations such as internal communications, mechanisms for conflict resolution, or reflection on experiences and adaptation. One area in which respondents felt relatively less confident was in relation to the existence of mechanisms to promote accountability among members (e.g., agreements, understandings).

Types of Activities to Increase Family Literacy

Programs in the Community: Member utilization of activities was ordered in the following way:

Collaborative planning:	80%
Service coordination:	73%
Public awareness efforts:	67%
Advocacy with public officials to increase public resources:	57%
Development of community leaders:	57%

Monitoring Progress: Most participants, who responded to the question about the ways in which the partnership monitored progress towards its goals, pointed out that meeting minutes were used for this purpose.

Communications and decision making among members: Meetings and e-mails were the primary medium of communication and decision making.

Network Capacity: Relatively speaking, the missing aspect of network capacity pointed out by respondents was connected to material resources. On the other hand, respondents felt confident about the skills and connections they had strengthened. They were also asked to identify resources which would increase capacity and performance other than increased funding. “Connections to power/schools, more training/professional development opportunities” were among the answers that emerged.

IV. PATHWAYS OUTCOMES

Background of Pathways Families

At the end of the program year a total of 98 adults had participated in the Pathways Programs during the year under review 2010-2011. Of these, 13 were from Holyoke, 12 from Cambridge, 22 from Pittsfield and 51 from Lawrence. The expectation is that the programs enroll a minimum of 12 families at all times, hence programs enroll participants on an ongoing basis. This is a common practice across ABE programs. Due to new entrants and participant exits, the total number of adults participating in the Program during the past year was greater than 92. However, at the end of the year SMARTT data were available only for these 92 adults. Tables summarizing Pathways families' demographic characteristics are included, available upon request. Below is a summary of the backgrounds of Pathways families at each site during the period of the evaluation based on the data included in SMARTT.

1. Holyoke

At Holyoke, nine families and as many adults joined at the beginning of the year, another joined in December 2010 while three joined in 2011. All of the families enrolled in the Program were Spanish speaking and of Puerto Rican descent. Of the 13, five had no high school diplomas, four had high school diplomas, one had a GED, two had equivalents of a high school diploma from their home country and one had a Bachelors degree. Of the 13: three were employed, six unemployed and looking for work, while five were unemployed and not looking. A total of 24 dependents were listed for this site. Most families had two dependents (seven out of 13 families). One family had four dependents, one had three and three had one dependent. One adult learner was listed as having no dependent; she was the sister of another student and as an extended family member, was allowed to participate in the program.

2. Cambridge

There were 11 families and 12 adults in Cambridge listed in SMARTT. These families have been part of the Program from as early as 2005 to as recently as

2011. Thus, Cambridge is different from the other sites in that the majority of the families have been part of the Program for quite a few years.

Demographic data show that five of the 11 families were Black or African American, four were Asian while the remaining three were White. All of the families are immigrants to this country. Thus, this is one of the most diverse PFS sites, which is not surprising given the level of diversity within the city of Cambridge itself.

Perhaps the greatest diversity is evident in range of these 11 families' native languages. Languages spoken include Spanish, Haitian Creole, Amharic, Portuguese, Vietnamese, and Tigrinya. Again, to an extent, this language diversity is reflective of the Cambridge community where 30% of households speak a primary language other than English.

In terms of education, there was more commonality among the 12 adults. Six had the equivalent of a high school diploma from another country, while the rest had no high school diplomas. Five were employed, two were homemakers, while the rest were unemployed. In all, the 11 families had a total of 23 children, which means that the average family size was just over two children. One family reported having four dependents, another having three, and the rest had either one or two children. Only nine of these 23 children were tested using the children's assessment tools that were employed this year to see how the children of these families were doing.

3. Lawrence

The household compositions of families at Lawrence Pathways are hard to categorize. A family can consist of a single parent usually the mother, with children; a husband and wife with children; sisters living together with their children, or extended family members such as a grandmother living with her daughter and her children. Thus, the definition of "family" when referring to Lawrence has many more nuances than is the case for the other sites, and often involves extended family members.

According to the SMARTT data, PFS Lawrence had 47 families and 51 adults. The earliest family on whom data are available joined the Program in January 2007, while the newest entrant joined in

March 2011. Of the 47 families, 40 enrolled this year, while the rest have continued from 2007, 2008 or 2009.

Racial/ethnic characteristics of the families classify all but three of them as Hispanics or Latinos; however, 100% of adult enrollees report that their native language is Spanish. As far as education is concerned only one adult had a Master's degree, another had a Bachelor's, one adult had a US high school diploma, 20 had the equivalent of a High School Diploma, and 24 had no High School Diploma.

Employment data shows that 27 were employed, one is classified as a homemaker, 15 were "unemployed and looking", while the rest were "unemployed and not looking". The 47 Lawrence Pathways families altogether listed 80 dependents: six people listed zero dependents, 16 listed a single dependent, 15 reported two dependents, eight people reported three dependents and two had five dependents.

4. Pittsfield

For Pittsfield, data are available on 22 families, all of whom entered the Program within the past 12 months. The earliest intake date was August 2010 and the latest was May 2011. Twelve families entered the Program in 2010, while the rest joined sometime during 2011. A total of ten out of the 22 families were classified as White, while eight were classified as Black or African American, and four as Hispanic or Latinos. The primary language of 11 families was English, while the native language of six was Spanish; three spoke French and are African migrants. Of the 22 families, 15 adults have no high school diploma, while four have their GEDs and a single adult has a Bachelor's degree. Except for one person, all the adults were unemployed. Two were retired, 16 were unemployed and not looking, while the rest were unemployed and looking. The 22 families had a total of 35 children. While 13 had only one child, five had two children; the rest had three children.

Pathways Adult Outcomes

Attendance and Stepping Out:

1. Holyoke

Holyoke integrated interactive literacy and parent education/support into its rate-based ESOL class. The SMARTT attendance data show that Holyoke

adults spent 16.35 hours on average every month attending Pathways programming. Interactive literacy involves parenting components, such as parents reading to their child, cooking or planting together. The Program involved three hour classes three times a week, which means that monthly program time, assuming a four-week month, was 36 hours. The actual monthly average attendance of 16.35 hours is therefore 45.5% of total planned hours. According to the ESE attendance benchmarks, this average is within the "remedial action" range. However, since a significant number of families at Holyoke stepped out of the Program, the attendance data need to be analyzed in conjunction with the stepping out data. Of the 10 families that joined in 2010, six stepped out and two of the six returned to the Program by the time it ended in June 2011. Various reasons such as family crises, medical problems and work conflicts led families to step-out.

In all, nine families stepped out in Holyoke at some point during the last year. Out of these, data are available on seven; these are included in the 13 families that are part of this analysis. In other words, only 6 families did not "step out" at all during the past year. The average attendance for families that did not step out was 19.33 hours, while the average attendance for families that did step out was 14.39 hours. Of families that stepped out:

- One family only attended for two months with an average attendance of 15 hours per month.
- Two families stepped out twice but when the session ended in June were still part of the Program. The average attendance of one of them was as low as 13.67 hours per month, while for the other it was as high as 24 hours per month.

Thus, the attendance record of families across this site was varied but some of this may be attributed to the fact that the Program had a complete overhaul this year after it was decided that it would become a school-based Program and would be located at the Sullivan School.

2. Cambridge

The planned attendance for a four week month for ESOL and Saturdays is 34 hours. This includes the following planned hours: two three-hour classes per week of adult literacy and one two-and-a-half hour

class of interactive literacy and parent education/support. As opposed to Holyoke and Lawrence, Cambridge created a non-rate based class for its parent education/support and interactive literacy. Further, an option to take additional non-rate based modules once or twice a week exists. ACLS supports this "combination" strategy to increase intensity of instruction for students who can dedicate more time to their learning. The attendance data does not distinguish between the optional non-rate based classes and the Saturday Pathways Program, hence, the analysis included both the rate based and non-rate based class and the additional non-rate based modules that an adult may have attended. On average adults attended between six to 27 hours of programming per month. The overall average monthly attendance, for students who had attendance records and including only the months that students had some attendance, is 18.

Stepping out at Cambridge has been defined as a family that stopped attending the Saturday program. Of the 11 families at Cambridge, five have been listed as having stepped out at some point; all but one had returned to the Program by year end. These five families joined Pathways either as early as 2005 or as late as 2009 therefore, they have been attending the Program for quite a few years. Work, church and children's activities conflict with the Saturday program for most of those who stepped out. Two of the families who have now returned either have irregular attendance or attend without their children for the Saturday interactive literacy program component. Hence, at Cambridge children may step out of the program independent of their parents who continue to attend the program.

3. Lawrence

At Lawrence, families are required to attend two-and-a-half hour rate-based sessions twice a week on Mondays and Wednesdays, which makes for five hours of weekly programming. During the same time, the families also received interactive literacy and child literacy which are integrated into the rate based classes. Thus, an average of 20 hours is required from families in a given month, also referred to as total planned hours. Against this, the SMARTT attendance data show that on average adults attended between 5 to 14.33 hours of programming per month. The average monthly

attendance of Pathways Lawrence families was 13.07 hours, which is 65% of total planned hours. According to the ESE attendance benchmarks, this average is within the "needs improvement" range.

During the course of the past year, the site reported that a total of 18 individuals stepped out. Most of those that temporarily left the Program or exited altogether did so because of work issues or a family crisis. Attendance records show that only five of the 47 adults attended a full year of programming, while another 14 attended six to seven months of programming. Some of the latter included those that had stepped out briefly but returned to the Program after the work conflict or family situation was resolved.

4. Pittsfield

The service chart from Pittsfield identifies one two-hour class held four times a week as the only rate based class, making total planned hours no more than 32 per month. At Pittsfield too though similar to Cambridge, a non-rate based class for parent education/support and interactive literacy was created. Further, an option to take additional non-rate based modules once or twice a week exists. On average adults attended between 16.5 to 38 hours of programming per month. The overall average monthly attendance, for students who had attendance records and including only the months that students had some attendance, is 29.7 hours.

Seven of the families listed in SMARTT stepped out during the last Program year. Of these seven, two received their GEDs and left the Program, while two moved out of state, and the rest stepped out for different reasons such as a new baby or issues related to domestic violence or mental health. Of the families that entered the Program in 2011, three attended the last two months of programming only before the year ended, while another three attended the last three months of programming.

Adult Literacy Outcomes

A total of 3 sites used the BEST Plus Assessment test, including Lawrence, Holyoke and Cambridge. BEST Plus assessment is the appropriate assessment to use for programs which offer ESOL instruction and therefore require assessment of language skills. The following overall table describes the overall assessment results from this test:

TABLE 8: BEST Plus Assessment – Overall

Number of Sites using BEST PLUS assessment	3
BEST PLUS initial date range	10/04/2010-3/30/2011
BEST PLUS post date range	02/15/2011-06/16/2011
Mean initial BEST PLUS scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	446.8837 (87.46)
# of students with initial BEST PLUS test scores	70
# of students with post-BEST PLUS test scores (as percentage of those with initial scores, in parenthesis)	45 (64%)
# of students who kept or increased initial BEST PLUS scores	42
# of students who decreased initial BEST PLUS scores	3
Mean improvement in post-test scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	106.53 (87.87)

The table above shows that there was an overall improvement amongst BEST Plus test takers, with 42 out of 45 students increasing their scores in the post-test, even though only 64% of adults post-tested. Table 9 provides the site-by-site performance of students on this test:

As Table 9 shows, by far the highest number of students taking this test was at Lawrence. This

was the only assessment test used at Lawrence. Seven adults at Lawrence received a score of 88 in their pre-test. This is the lowest score one can get when tested, and this usually occurs when the adult has no English language proficiency at the time when the test is administered. However, when these individuals were post-tested, many made significant gains.

TABLE 9: BEST PLUS Scores by Site

Site	Lawrence	Holyoke	Cambridge
No. of students for pre-test	54	13	3
Mean Pre-test Scores (Std. Dev.)	308.66 (136.32)	493.23 (45.85)	505.67 (27.02)
No. of students for post-test	37	7	1
Mean Post-test Scores (Std. Dev.)	438.16 (88.04)	537 (56.43)	510

Table 9 shows that the highest mean pre-test scores were at Cambridge, while the highest mean post-test scores were at Holyoke.

Another assessment test is the Clas-E(A&B) test, introduced this year replacing the REEP test for adult assessment. A total of two sites took this test: Cambridge and Pittsfield.

TABLE 10: Clas-E(A&B) Assessment

Number of Sites using the assessment	2
Mean initial scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	487.5 (40.67)
Mean post test scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	499.45 (65.69)
# of students with initial test scores	14
# of students with post test scores (as percentage of those with initial scores, in parenthesis)	11 (78.57%)
# of students who kept or increased initial scores	6
# of students who decreased initial scores	5

TABLE 11: Clas-E(A&B) Scores by Site

Site	Pittsfield	Cambridge
No. of students for pre-test	4	10
Mean Pre-test Scores (Std. Dev.)	481 (44.85)	490.1 (41.14)
No. of students for post-test	2	9
Mean Post-test Scores (Std. Dev.)	503.5 (86.97)	498.56 (66.66)

The table shows that 4 students in Pittsfield and 10 students in Cambridge took the pre-test. This number decreased to 2 in Pittsfield and 9 in Cambridge in the post-test. Mean scores at both sites increased over time.

Finally, the TABE 12 & 13 is a test of language and literacy that only students at Pittsfield took. The table below shows the results of testing at this site using this test:

TABLE 12: TABE 12 & 13 Assessment

Number of Sites using the assessment	1
Initial date range	9/10/2010–6/10/2011
Post date range	9/13/2010–6/7/2011
Mean initial scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	536.31 (67.62)
Mean post test scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	539.22 (35.74)
# of students with initial test score	13
# of students with post test scores (as percentage of those with initial scores, in parenthesis)	9 (69.23%)
# of students who kept or increased initial scores	5
# of students who decreased initial scores	4

A total of 13 students at Pittsfield took the pre-test, and nine took the post-test. Of these nine, five improved their scores, while four decreased their scores over time. Average scores increased slightly over time. Pittsfield was also the only site that used the MAPT Math assessments, with a total of seven students taking the pre-test but only three taking the post-test.

TABLE 13: MAPT Math Assessment

Number of Sites using the assessment	1
Initial date range	10/20/2010–05/02/2011
Post date range	03/24/2011–06/16/2011
Mean initial scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	466.43 (86.31)
Mean post test scores (Standard deviation in parenthesis)	491 (38.74)
# of students with initial test score	7
# of students with post test scores (as percentage of those with initial scores, in parenthesis)	3 (42.86%)
# of students who kept or increased initial scores	3
# of students who decreased initial scores	0

The table shows that all three students that took the test increased their scores. One student at Pittsfield also took the MAPT Reading test. The student's pre-test score was 540 but there was no post-test.

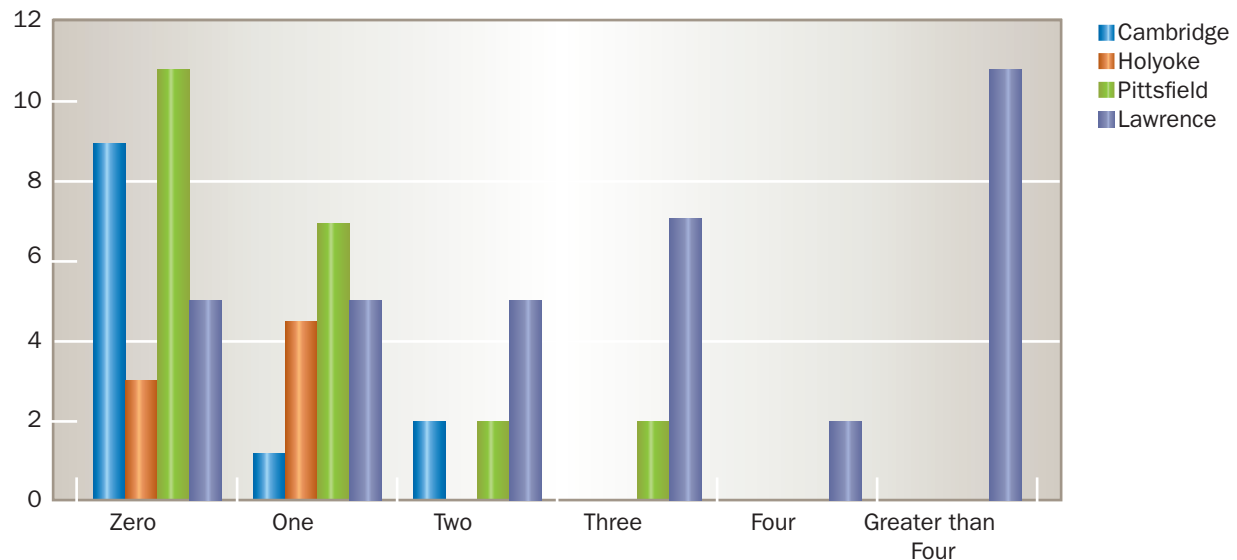
Learning Gains by Site: Table 14 shows the learning gains made by adults across all four sites using all the assessment tests listed above.

TABLE 14: Learning Gains

Site	Total pre-post test takers	No. of people with learning gains (% of total test takers)
Lawrence	37	31 (84%)
Cambridge	12	3 (25%)
Holyoke	7	4 (57%)
Pittsfield	22	11 (50%)

The above table shows that the highest proportion of students that made learning gains was at Lawrence and the lowest at Cambridge. Figure 2 below shows exactly how many learning gains were made by adults at each site:

Figure 2: Number of Learning Gains by Site



Pathways Child Outcomes

The assessments used to measure children's performance at Holyoke, Cambridge and Lawrence were the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and the Woodcock Johnson test of Achievement (WCJ). The results for these three sites will be discussed first, followed by the discussion of the results for the Pittsfield PFS, which used another test appropriate for young children. Pre-testing was conducted in December and January and post testing was conducted in June. Thus the change observed reflects a period of intervention of 5 – 6 months. However considering that attendance for most families is irregular and stepping out is a common phenomenon, periods of interventions are very varied.

The PPVT is a receptive vocabulary test while the WCJ is a school based and skills based test. Standard scores are used to make comparisons across children and across sites. For the WCJ, the broad standard scores have been used for comparative purposes. A simultaneous examination of the PPVT and the WCJ scores was also conducted.

Using standardized tests allows one to observe children's progress over the course of the intervention and comparison of pre- and post-test scores may shed some light on the impact of the intervention. However, in the absence of randomized controlled experiments making causal interpretations is not advisable. During the course of the evaluation, there were families

who stepped out from the program for a period of time. In the absence of a comparison group, which would allow one to understand the real impacts of the interventions, stepping out has provided an opportunity to compare the results of the children whose families stepped out and those who had sustained participation in the program. Presuming that the characteristics of families who stepped out did not differ significantly from those who stayed in the program, one could expect that the improvement in results for children of families who stayed in the program for its entirety will be greater than for those who did not. This claim of course assumes that longer interventions will cause greater improvements. However once again, one should take precautions in drawing conclusions; it may be that families who are stepping out could be families who leave the program because their children are doing well without the program.

A standard score of 100 indicates normal development. Scores between 85 and 115 are within one standard deviation and therefore considered within age expectations. Scores beyond that range are considered on the low or high side. If a child's standard pre-score which is within the normal range did not increase or decrease in the post-test, it is an indication that the child has learned within the expectations during the testing interval. However, deterioration in the scores over the testing interval is a sign of concern, while improvement in scores is good sign.

The following analysis must be interpreted keeping in mind that many of the children at the three sites are English language learners and several require special education services. The range of words included within these tests may not predict performance or vocabulary as well due to cultural bias. Specifically for this reason, the six children in Lawrence who were new to the country were not included in the means analysis, so as not to skew the data further.

Moreover, these children are especially vulnerable since they belong to low socio-economic households, facing unique barriers that the rest of the population may not be facing. It is also important to note that the two communities, Holyoke and Lawrence, have a substantial number of underperforming schools compared to other cities within the State. Various studies have shown that minority populations, especially those of low-socioeconomic status, perform below the normative mean on tests of normative vocabulary such as the PPVT (Allison, Robinson, Hennington, & Bettagere, 2011; Qi, Kaiser, Milan, & Hancock, 2006). Similarly, studies have found that household incomes and parents’ education affects children’s scores on the Woodcock Johnson (Davis-Kean, 2005).

A Note on Interpretation of Findings^{xx}: A standard score of 100 is the normed mean. Therefore, scores between 85 and 115 are a single standard deviation away from this mean. Scholars define “improvement” as at least half a standard deviation, that is, at least seven standard points improvement during the testing interval. Similarly, deterioration is more than or equal to half a standard deviation lower score than the pre-test. Scores below 70 are considered very low. For an average population, especially where English is not a second language, scores below 70 are a sign of mental retardation. However, given the current population such low scores may more likely to be a sign of the various barriers and constraints these families face.

Age range: At Holyoke, the average age of the children was 9.3 years, the youngest being 6.1 years and the oldest 13.1 years. At Cambridge, the average age was 9.34 years, with the youngest being 6.1 years and the oldest 11.27 years. At Lawrence, the average age was 9.1 years, with the youngest being 6 years and the oldest 12 years. Thus, the average age at all three sites was 9 years.

The analysis of the PPVT and WCJ scores across the three sites which included school aged children on the above definition of improvement and deterioration are included below. In the next section summary statistics on these tests will be presented for all families and by families who stepped out and who did not.

TABLE 15: PPVT & WCJ Summary of Test Scores ^{xxi}		
	PPVT	WCJ
Lawrence:		
Improved ^{xxii}	21 (64%)	11 (42%)
Deteriorated	1 (3%)	3 (12%)
Retained Position ^{xxiii}	11(33%)	12 (46%)
Total number of test takers ^{xxiv}	33	26
Holyoke:		
Improved	2 (14%)	1 (8%)
Deteriorated	1 (7%)	1 (8%)
Retained Position	11(79%)	11(84%)
Total number of test takers	14	13
Cambridge:		
Improved	4 (57%)	0
Deteriorated	0	3 (43%)
Retained Position	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
Total number of test takers	7	7
Three Site Total:		
Improved	27 (50%)	12 (26%)
Deteriorated	2 (4%)	7 (15%)
Retained Position	25(46%)	27(59%)
Total number of test takers	54	46

The table above shows that at Lawrence the total number of children assessed at both intervals (pre and post) using the PPVT was 33, 14 at Holyoke, and seven at Cambridge. A total of 26 children in Lawrence were assessed using the WCJ at both intervals, 13 at Holyoke and seven at Cambridge. The table shows that on average more students showed improvement under the PPVT than the WCJ. This result was expected, since the PPVT is a test of vocabulary while the WCJ is a test of reading as well as comprehension for some sub-scales. One would not expect reading-comprehension to outpace vocabulary for typical children.

As already mentioned, improvement is measured as an improvement of at least seven standard scores and deterioration is measured as a decrease of at

least seven standard scores between the pre- and post-scores. Overall, 50% of students improved on the PPVT and 26% improved on the WCJ. On the other hand, 4% and 15% deteriorated on both tests respectively. The remaining 46% and 59% did not experience change within a significant margin. While improvements defined as above are a good sign of the impact of interventions, deterioration is a cause for concern and may indicate that more intensive interventions are required for these students.

The highest improvements for PPVT were at Lawrence (64%). Lawrence also included the highest number of children (12) with scores below 70 on the pre-test. It is important to point out that all of these students who had scores below 70 made significant gains in post testing. This fact underscores the reality that children who are English Language Learners and who have been placed in a language rich environment can make rapid improvements. At Cambridge 4 of the 7 test takers improved their scores from pre to post PPVT test. At Holyoke, an improvement of only two out of seven students was on the low side. As pointed out earlier, Holyoke in the beginning of the evaluation year went through a total transition of its model, and this may partially explain the outcomes that are observed.

The number of students that improved with the WCJ was the highest for Lawrence at 42% and the lowest for Cambridge with 0%. Some children at Cambridge may not be making the same level of gains, since so many of the families have been in the program for many years and therefore likely showed benefits in earlier years. This may have something to do with the fact that Pathways at Lawrence is a school based Program and the WCJ tests school-based learning, specifically reading and comprehension. As also indicated earlier, there are advantages to being a school based model such as coordination among children's teachers.

Summary Results by families who stepped out and who did not:

As discussed earlier, a comparison across families who stepped out and those who stayed in the program may provide useful information. The number of test takers across these two groups are provided in the table below.

Table 16 shows that overall 56 students took the PPVT pre-test while 55 took the post-test. Similarly, 49 students took the WCJ pre- and post-tests but these are not necessarily the same students taking both pre- and post- tests as can be seen in Table 15. About half of the students belonged to families that stepped out during the past year, while the other half belonged to families that did not step-out. This makes for a good overall comparison between the two groups which will be detailed in the Table 17 below. The number of test-takers from families that did not step-out was greater than the number from families that stepped out at Lawrence. At Holyoke the number was equal, while at Cambridge families that stepped out were greater than families that did not. Table 17 presents the mean test scores, standard deviation and range for children that took both the pre and post-tests and who had their broad standardized scores for WCJ and standardized scores for PPVT. Children with scores lower than 70 and children who were very new to the country were excluded from this analysis in order not to skew the results^{xxv}. The next layer of analysis will include all students and will provide an analysis of the range of the scores.

TABLE 16: Number of Test-takers

	PPVT		WCJ	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Lawrence:				
Overall	33	34	26	29
Stepped-out	14	14	14	14
Did not step-out	19	20	12	15
Holyoke:				
Overall	14	14	14	13
Stepped-out	7	7	7	7
Did not step-out	7	7	7	6
Cambridge:				
Overall	9	7	9	7
Stepped-out	6	6	5	6
Did not step-out	3	1	3	1
Three Site Total:				
Overall	56	55	49	49
Stepped-out	27	27	26	27
Did not step-out	29	28	22	22

TABLE 17: Child Assessment and Stepping-out Analysis

	PPVT		Woodcock Johnson ^{xxvi}	
	Mean of pre-test (std. dev., range)	Mean of post-test (std. dev., range)	Mean of pre-test (std. dev., range)	Mean of post-test (std. dev., range)
Lawrence^{xxvii}:				
Overall	89.90 (12.27, 70-110)	88.31 (12.31, 73-113)	96.84 (12.95, 73-126)	97.7 (12.15, 72-123)
Stepped-out	94.36 (10.50, 79-110)	93.30 (13.57, 75-113)	98.54 (11.60, 76-118)	101.55 (12.07, 85-123)
Did not step-out	85 (12.69, 70-109)	84.25 (9.81, 73-108)	94.5 (15.11, 73-126)	94.17 (11.59, 72-110)
Holyoke:				
Overall	86 (7.49, 78-102)	86.5 (4.31, 81-95)	86.88 (6.08, 80-94)	85.25 (10.05, 77-103)
Stepped-out	89.33 (8.04, 78-102)	86 (8.29, 70-95)	86.66 (7.02, 80-94)	89 (13.11, 77-103)
Did not step-out	81.86 (5.30, 77-92)	85.28 (6.52, 76-95)	82.33 (7.53, 71-94)	83 (7.25, 76-94)
Cambridge:				
Overall	95.89 (8.13, 79-106)	105 (10.33, 90-120)	108.13 (17.69, 89-138)	107.14 (13.23, 87-126)
Stepped-out	96.75 (5.16, 89-105)	99.25 (11.15, 90-120)	107 (18.42, 91-138)	104.75 (14.43, 87-126)
Did not step-out	95.2 (13.87, 79-106)	112.67 (n/a ^{xxviii})	108.8 (13.65, 89-114)	110.33 (n/a)
All Three Sites:				
Overall	89.77 (10.7, 70-110)	89.9 (12.35, 70-120)	96.08 (12.27, 71-138)	96.81 (13.51, 72-126)
Stepped-out	93.65 (8.87, 78-110)	94.19 (13.43, 70-120)	100.74 (15.51, 76-138)	101.2 (13.51, 77-126)
Did not step-out	85.3 (11.1, 70-109)	85.25 (9.23, 73-108)	90.88 (13.61, 71-126)	91.94 (12.06, 72-110)

This set of results indicate that **on average** there were no significant changes in childrens' scores on pre and post testing for both the PPVT and the WCJ, and for both sub-groups, those who stepped out and those who didn't and across all sites and for the three sites collectively. (These results which are based on **averages** should not be confused with the individual results discussed above. Changes noted on an individual level may be off-set when averages are taken.) Moreover, the overall mean test scores were within a single standard deviation around the mean. Both these facts together mean that overall students are learning what they are expected to learn within the time period and in picking up vocabulary. Although there is no firm evidence or conclusion which can be drawn in relation to

thimpact of the interventions, one could argue that the fact that these children are sustaining their positions given their family situations is a good sign.

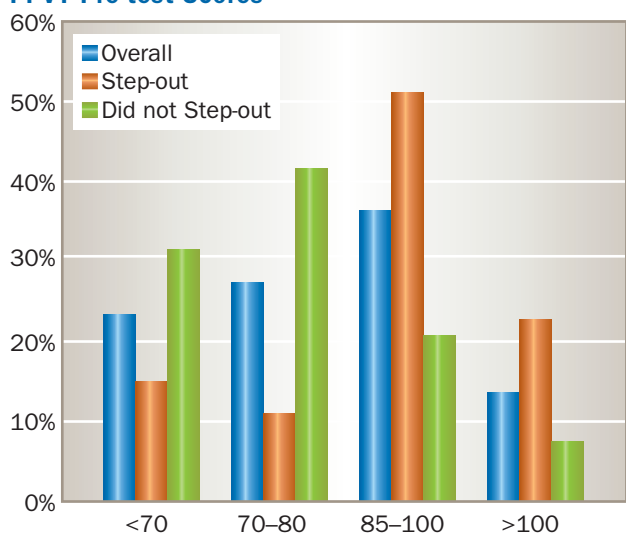
Comparing the overall numbers for children whose families stepped out during the past year to children whose families did not step out, the children of families that stepped out seem to have significantly higher results at the pre and post levels for both tests. This result may imply that parents that stepped out recognized that their child and family did not have the need for this particular intervention. At Lawrence, and to some degree at Holyoke, mean scores for pre and post-tests for both the PPVT and the WCJ reveal the same pattern, that is, children from families that stepped out had higher scores than children that did not step out.

Another way to look at the test scores results is to analyze the range of scores. The graphs below show scores received by students from families that did and did not step out during the past year and for the families overall. The first two graphs show scores from the PPVT pre and post tests, while the last two show scores from the WCJ pre and post tests. These graphs show four ranges: less than 70 signifying a very low score, 70-84 a range that is less than two standard deviations from the mean, 85-100 a range within the first standard deviation of the mean, and finally greater than 100 which includes scores higher than the mean. The range of scores are illustrated for children overall, those that stepped out during the past year and those that did not for

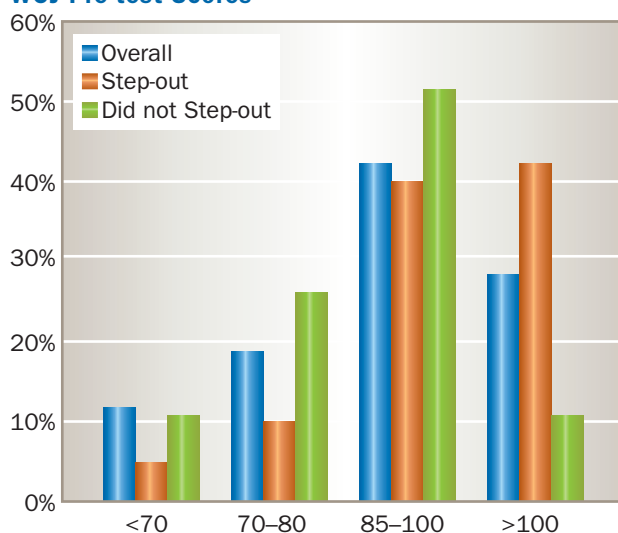
the pre and post PPVT and WCJ as a percentage of total test takers for that category.

These graphs show that the majority of student scores fall within the range 85 to 100, except in the case of WCJ post-test scores where the highest number of test scores are greater than 100. This is an encouraging result, since 100 signifies the normed mean and the range between 85 and 100 is within the first deviation around this mean. Clearly, for the WCJ the majority of students from all categories received scores greater than 85, which again is encouraging, indicating that on average children are making progress from pre to the post test.

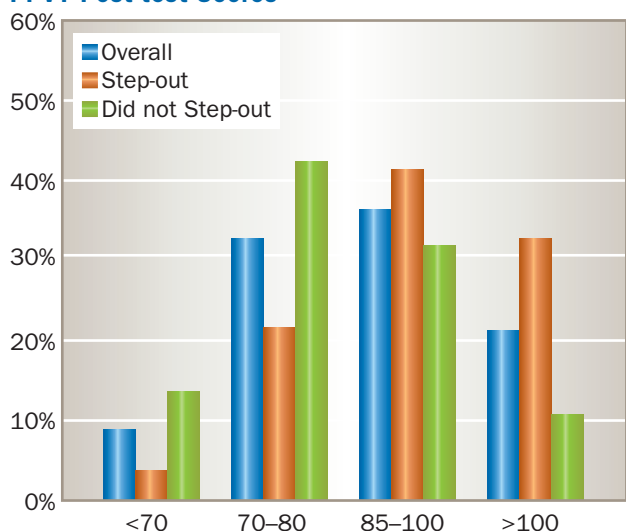
**Figure 3:
PPVT Pre-test Scores**



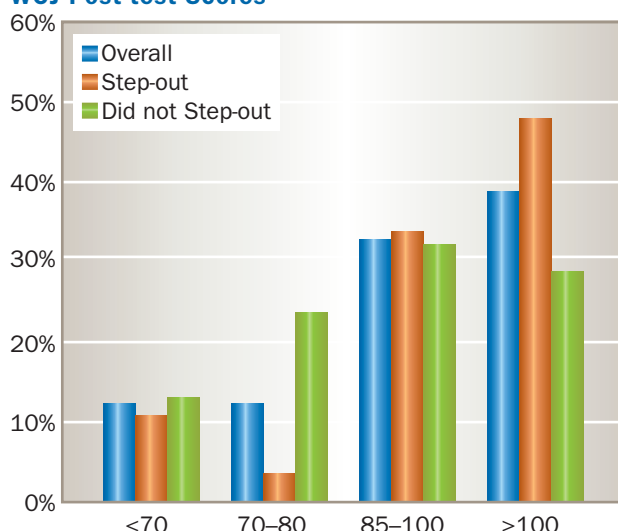
**Figure 5:
WCJ Pre-test Scores**



**Figure 4:
PPVT Post-test Scores**



**Figure 6:
WCJ Post-test Scores**



Scores on the PPVT are more spread out as the first two graphs show. For the pre-test, while the highest number of student scores falls within the 85-100 range, there is also a significant number in the 70-84 range. In the post-test more scores are added to the greater than 100 range, while scores in the below 70 range fall in proportion. This shows that children's vocabulary overall has improved over the testing interval.

Comparing the families that stepped out during the past year to families that did not, the pre and post tests show that children from the former outperformed children from the latter. There are significantly more students in the above 85 range both in pre and post WCJ and PPVT tests from families that stepped out relative to families that did not. At the same time, children from families that did not step-out outnumber children from families that stepped-out in the below 85 range. However children **in both groups** made progress from pre to post testing; with more children from both groups moving to the categories with higher scores in post testing. The fact that families of lower performing children (in pre-testing) did not step out of the program indicates that families with children that needed more help to begin with had a stronger resolve to stick to the Program than families with children that needed the intervention less.

Analysis of the scores of seven additional children at Cambridge:

There were seven additional children at Cambridge who had both pre and post tests but who were excluded from the previous analysis because the children did not have a family ID's attached when the initial results were received. The outcomes of these seven children were analyzed separately and will be presented in this section. Overall results did not differ significantly from the results presented earlier. Both pre and post average test scores of these children at Cambridge were clustered around the normed mean and were higher than children at other sites; an expected result considering that majority of families at Cambridge have been part of the program for multiple years. The average standardized pre test score of these seven children on the PPVT test was 104.7, while this number was 107.8 on the post test. Only two children achieved significant gains (as defined earlier) on the post test

and the remainder of the children retained their position, learning as much as they were expected to learn during the testing interval. The average standardized pre test score of these seven children on the WCJ test was 108.6 while this number was 107.6 on the post test. Only one student achieved significant gains, and the remainder retained their position. Among these students children's attendance (total number of hours attended) did not seem to make a meaningful difference in how outcomes varied.

Children's Attendance and Outcomes:

An analysis of children's outcomes together with children's attendance in the program at Lawrence and Holyoke is conducted to shed light into whether intensity of intervention plays a role in children's achievement. The table below illustrates the average number of hours children attended the program together with the average pre and post test scores, as well as the percentage of children who made significant learning gains for children both with below and above average attendance scores.

At Holyoke, there are no significant differences in the outcomes of children with below and above average attendance (due to small numbers the observed differences are not meaningful). At Lawrence children with both above and below average attendance have made significant learning gains on average. However at Lawrence, the percentage of children with significant learning gains are higher for the above average attendance group than the below average attendance group for both PPVT and WCJ tests: a sign that the higher intensity may be associated with the different outcomes.

Analysis for Children at Pittsfield:

Children at Pittsfield were infant/toddlers and were not yet attending school. Thus, these children were tested using MacArthur Bates Communicative Development Inventories (CDIs). The purpose of the CDIs is to measure communication and development levels of children who are in the 8 – 37 months age category. CDIs is a valid testing tool: numerous studies document the validity and reliability of the tool. It takes 20 – 40 minutes to complete and 10 – 15 minutes to score and requires little training to implement. The test data did

TABLE 18: Children's Attendance and Outcomes							
	Average hours of attendance of all children	Average Pre-PPVT Scores	Average Post-PPVT Scores	Average Pre-WCJ Scores	Average Post-WCJ Scores	% of children with significant learning gains- PPVT	% of children with significant learning gains- WCJ
Lawrence-Children Below Average Attendance	73	76.4	83.7	89.1	91	44%	36%
Lawrence-Children Above Average Attendance	73	71.9	81.8	90	95	61%	69%
Holyoke-Children Below Average Attendance	99.4	84.7	86.5	87.1	88.8	13%	13%
Holyoke-Children Above Average Attendance	99.4	83.3	86.1	84.5	88.6	29%	29%

not report standard scores or a single composite measure that could be used to conduct the type of comparative analysis that was possible for the PPVT and the WCJ. Therefore, all the sub-scales for each child were examined in order to assess performance over the testing interval.

The words and gestures version of the CDIs are used for infants between the ages of 8 to 18 months, while the words and sentences version is used for toddlers between the ages of 16 to 30 months. However, for children that might be developmentally delayed this test can be used beyond the specified age range (Fenson et. al., 2000).

Pittsfield also assessed children's developmental progress through the ASQ (Ages and Stage Questionnaire) and the Ages and Stages-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE). These data were not analyzed by the evaluation team. The data included 38 children. Of those 38, not all were in the program long enough for a second assessment. However, 22 demonstrated progress in developmental areas (ASQ), and 22 demonstrated progress in social emotional development (ASQ-SE).

A Note on Interpretation of Findings:

One potential issue with the CDIs stems from the fact that test scores are based on parental reports of infant word recognition, comprehension and word or sentence production. Studies report discrepancies between parental reports and actual tests using infant and toddler language comprehension and production. For instance, Houston-Price, Mather and Sakkalou (2007) report that parents significantly under-reported child performance on the CDIs. On the other hand, scholars have also established that parental reports have proven to be highly valid measures of early language development. However, it is often argued that parents from low socio-economic backgrounds and from minority ethnicities often report scores that are much lower in comparison to middle-class children and children from non-minority backgrounds (Dale & Patterson, 2009).

Keeping these caveats in mind the test scores of the 11 children that were tested using the CDIs were analyzed. These tests were taken by families that had entered the Program either in 2010 or within the first two months of 2011. In all, four

children were assessed using Words and Gestures and another seven were assessed using Words and Sentences. The age range for Words and Gestures was between 1.45 and 2.1 years while the age range for Words and Sentences was between 2.7 and 3.76 years.

For Words and Gestures, two children were both pre and post-tested while the other two could not be post-tested because their families had stepped out at the time the post-test was conducted. Both young children on whom pre and post-test data are available were shown to have improved over time. Only one child had stepped out in the Words and Sentences assessment category, so pre and post-test data are available for six of the children that were assessed using this version of the CDIs. Of these six, all children showed improvement over time. Two of these children had a much higher level of pre-test raw scores as compared to the others. It is difficult to say whether this difference in base raw scores is significantly affected by parent reporting styles or whether these two children are truly above the other children in the group. Both these children belonged to families that had attended programming only during the period February to June 2011: both had parents that were “unemployed but not looking” and did not have a high school diploma.

Since all children assessed using the CDIs improved over time, it is pertinent to mention the maturation issue. Given that all children naturally learn from their environment, it is difficult to ascertain what portion of the gain in test scores can be attributed to Pathways. This problem referred to as maturation is considered an internal threat to validity for any study (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2004). In a study such as this, maturation is a threat to the internal validity of the research design since there is no control group. Since these particular test results are not standardized, maturation remains an issue that one needs to be mindful of when interpreting the results.

Pathways Family Outcomes

At the family level there were two outcome areas that were of interest. One was related to whether the families were accessing community services

and resources that they needed. This piece is tied to the case management component of the program implementation. Goals data as well as the data entered into the referral and the stepping out^{xxix} sheets were used to assess progress families were making in this area. Furthermore, analyses of the qualitative data supplemented the overall analyses.

As mentioned earlier, programs differed in how intensive their case management and hence their “wrap around service components” were. Furthermore, the families they served and the context in which they operated differed. This variation was definitely reflected in the referral sheet information which was presented in Table 2. Pittsfield which had the highest number of referrals, also allocated the most time for case management and had to be very creative in how they drew upon resources for families from the community. Pittsfield also had arguably the most vulnerable families with histories of crises or trauma. Due to transition issues taking place during the evaluation period and/or the amount of time and focus allocated to the case management program component, families benefiting from the wider pool of resources is more limited in the other three sites as compared to what Pittsfield achieved. For example, in Pittsfield, staff reported providing families with support in filling out forms or navigating bureaucracies.

The second area of interest was related to the changes in family behaviors known to contribute to children’s school success and/or development. A range of age-appropriate tools were used across sites to measure progress in this area. The Parent and School Survey (PASS) was used at Cambridge, Lawrence and Holyoke in order to assess changes in families’ knowledge and perceptions in relation to their children’s school. The tools named “Books and reading to your child” and “TV and video” were utilized at Pittsfield, which serves children aged 1-4 years, to assess changes in family behaviors in these aspects of everyday life which are known to be related to children’s development.

Analysis of Goals Data: There were a total of 522 goals set by 98 adults who participated in the program. The most frequently set goals out of a total of 522 goals are listed below:

"Learn about or use community organizations or resources"	18%
"Have greater involvement in children's schooling"	11%
"Get and Use library card"	10%
"Participate in community activities"	10%
"Increase participation in school activities"	6%

Seventy one percent of all goals set were met. The most frequently set goals listed above were reported as being met at 80 percent or more of the time.

Discussion of Results from PASS: A copy of PASS and summary statistics for individual items on PASS are available upon request. PASS is designed to measure and assess parental involvement in children's education and included items which corresponded to the following categories: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making and collaborating with community^{xxx}. The test was implemented by teachers or site coordinators at different sites. It is not clear to the evaluation team how far these results would be impacted by different modes of implementation of the tool (For example, whether the test was implemented one to one or in groups or whether the participants were provided assistance in completing the test). Furthermore, with self report instruments of a Likert-type scale, there is always the issue of self-report bias. Not all of the pre-test takers took the post test, hence any changes in results should further be interpreted with caution. It is also important to note that PASS assesses a wide variety of parent behaviors some of which are outside of the parameters of Pathways, for example, volunteering. The decision to use PASS as is, without exclusion of such items was a conscious one and intended to gather additional information which could be of use to Pathways programs.

Overall, the majority of responses to the survey were clustered on the positive side of the survey (agree and strongly agree), both in pre and post testing, sometimes reaching 100 percent of all respondents responding in this way. Only few parents disagreed with the statements included in the survey

Below is a list of the areas in which improvements in how comfortable families felt from pre-test to the post-test were evident.

- "I am confused about my legal rights as a parent of a student."
- "I talk with other parents frequently about educational issues."
- "My child attends community programs (e.g. YMCA, park/recreation, community theatre) regularly."
- "I have visited my child's classroom several times in the past year."
- "If my child was having trouble in school I would not know how to get extra help for him / her."
- "I know about many programs for youth in my community."

Other interesting findings:

- A majority of parents indicated that they did not volunteer at their children's school and there were no changes in pre and post test results.
- The last six items on the survey are related to the issues which make families' involvement in their child's school difficult.
- Lack of time seems to be somewhat of an issue for almost 50% of parents according to both pre and post results; this is more of an issue around 14% of the parents and not an issue at all for the remaining 36%.
- Timing of programs was not an issue for almost half of the parent population and somewhat of an issue for around one third in both pre and post tests.
- Having small children was not an issue for 65% and 54% of the population in pre and post testing respectively, and somewhat or a larger issue for the rest.
- Transportation was not listed as an issue for around 70% of the parents in both pre and post tests.
- Work schedules seem to be a larger issue for Lawrence parents than for families at the other sites.

Discussion of Results from Books and Reading and TV and Video:

A copy of these tools and the analyses of the raw results from individual items in these tools are available upon request. These tools assess parent and child behaviors in relation to reading books and watching TV and the different ways and the intensity at which these activities are adapted^{xxxi}. These tools were implemented at the Pittsfield site only. Twenty-one parents filled out the pre-test, while 16 filled out the post test. The first question examined how much TV the children watched. Watching TV intensively for many hours every day could indicate that the children are not being stimulated in other ways that would be more beneficial for their development. Three parents reported in the pre-test that their children never watched TV. Also, from 16 people reporting that their children watched TV everyday in the pre-test, this number was reduced to two in the post test. In post-test 50% of the respondents said that their children watched TV one to three times a week. Also, in the post-test, 87% of these parents indicated that their children on average watched between one-two hours of TV a day; this number was a little higher in the pre-test. In the post-test more people reported watching TV with their child than had been reported in the pre-test; but this was a small change. The majority of parents reported talking about TV programs with their children. Only a minority (close to 20%) responded that their children watch TV alone. Around half of the parents

report, at both pre and post-test points, that their children are doing other activities while watching TV.

In terms of books and reading to your child, overall, beneficial behaviors seemed to have emerged at the post test period as compared to the pre-test point in time. For example, more parents reported in the post test that their child enjoyed being read to. Or from 14 who at pre-test reported never asking their children “why” something happened in a book, in the post test only one reported not asking their children that question.

Staff observations indicate that there are improvements in relationships between the children and their parents from the beginning to the end of the program. Staff point out that parents are making meaningful behavioral changes, and their relationships with their children are much stronger, e.g. they are able to make much more eye contact or show their affection or simply communicate with their child. One of the interventions at the Pittsfield site in this regard is to develop family albums for these parents who rarely have photos with their children and to discuss the changes that take place over time. The site also uses journaling as a method to help families reflect on their children’s development. These interventions especially are stated to make significant positive differences in how parents relate to and communicate with their children.

V. “STEPPING OUT”

Stepping out has been defined in the following way in the Handbook of Evaluation developed in the beginning of the evaluation period. A participant has stepped out if he or she does not attend the required number of ABE or ESOL classes established in local program policy but continues to be engaged in some way with the Pathways Program. For example, families who step out may continue to work on their specific family goals or seek staff assistance with barriers to participation. Staff is aware that a current situation is impeding their participation and that the family intends to reengage with the in-depth project. The following analysis is based on SMARTT attendance data and site-prepared ‘stepping out’ documentation forms. A stepping out form was created in the beginning of the evaluation period and was provided to the sites for keeping track of when families stepped out. This sheet was kept in Excel and included columns for when the families stepped out, for what reason, the number and nature of contacts made to reconnect the families to the program. The families were matched using SMARTT ID numbers.

1. Lawrence

A total of 54 Lawrence adults are currently listed as being connected to Pathways in the ESE SMARTT system, and out of these 10 are extended family members. One family each has been with the Program since 2007 and 2008, four families have been with the Program since 2009, while 35 entered the Program in 2010 and another 13 in 2011. Only amongst the families that entered the Program in 2010 and 2011 was the ‘stepping out’ phenomenon witnessed during the year that ended June 2011.

The site’s stepping out documentation form lists 21 students as having stepped out during the 2010 – 11 Program year. The following observations have been noted regarding the stepping-out phenomenon at Lawrence:

- All 21 adults who stepped out during the Program year are still listed in SMARTT.
- Out of these 21, 18 are no longer attending the Program (approximately one third of total participants).

- Of these 18: 12 had to step-out because of conflicts with work schedules, one had a family crisis, one had medical issues, one returned to his/her home country; for three families, reasons for ‘stepping out’ are unknown.
- In order to keep connected to families that had stepped out and to maintain enough of a connection for reengagement, the counselor called each of them multiple times. Three families returned; the remaining families decided to drop out of the program altogether.
- Of the families that stepped out, 16 joined in 2010 while five joined in 2011.
- Of the three families that returned after stepping out, only one stepped out twice because of work issues, while the other two stepped out once only.
- With three families, the primary adult listed on the documentation form was an extended family member.

2. Holyoke

At Holyoke, stepping out was a serious problem. Families that stopped attending did so because of health reasons, job conflicts, child care issues or other personal problems. The stepping-out documentation forms indicate that the counselor called families that had stopped attending classes anywhere from 6 to 14 times and met several families in person as well to try to maintain their connection with the Program. What follows is a detailed description of Holyoke families:

There were a total of 15 Holyoke families listed either in SMARTT, in the stepping-out documentation form or both. As noted earlier, under enrollment and recruitment have been challenging areas for Holyoke, so the results on stepping out should be assessed taking these facts into account. Out of 15 families, four families joined in October and stayed in the Program for the rest of the year. One family joined late, in May of 2011, and attended the last two months of programming. Another family attended the Program from February to May 2011 but was not listed on the documentation form as having stepped out even though attendance in June was zero.

TABLE 19: Stepping Out at Holyoke

Family #	Attended Programming	Step-out	Return	Exit
1	Oct-Jan '11	—	—	Feb '11
2	Oct-Dec '10, Apr-Jun '11	Jan '11	April '11	—
3	Oct-Dec '10	—	—	Dec '10
4	Oct-Feb '11	April '11	—	—
5	Dec '10, Apr-Jun '11	Jan '11	Apr '11	—
6	Nov-Dec '10	—	—	Jan '11
7	Nov-Feb '11	—	—	Feb '11
8	Nov-Dec '10	Dec '10	—	—
9	Mar-May '11	May '11	—	—

The other nine families are all listed in the stepping out documentation form from Holyoke. The following table illustrates their progression in the Program:

What is unclear from the step-out documentation form is why the site chooses to consider families 4, 8 and 9 as having “stepped out” rather than “exited” and considers families 1, 3, 6 and 7 to have exited the Program. This might be due to the uncertainty and confusion experienced by the sites as to when to exit families and when to remove the Pathways tags. In the comments and explanation column there are individuals from both lists that have indicated a desire to return but family or work situations are deterrents. One discrepancy between the step-out documentation forms and SMARTT data was that three families are still listed in SMARTT even though the step-out documentation indicates that they no longer attend programming.

Except for two families that stepped out and returned within the Program year, the rest of the

nine stepped out and had not returned to the Program by the end of the year. As already noted, there are a host of reasons as to why families have stepped out and the site has made considerable effort to stay connected with these families. The site coordinator noted that being a school-based Program helps them to stay connected and keep in touch with families that have stepped out, and it is hoped that once their situation is resolved they will return to the Program.

3. Cambridge

At Cambridge, 12 families are listed in SMARTT but out of these three do not have family IDs. There are five families listed in Cambridge's step-out documentation form. The Program kept in touch with families that stepped out through regular telephone calls and through keeping them informed of upcoming events that might be of interest.

The following table describes the stepping out phenomena from Cambridge in specific detail:

TABLE 20: Stepping Out at Cambridge

Family #	Attended PFS Program	Step-out Date(s)	Return	Exit	Who currently attends?
1	Sept '09-current (except for step-out period)	Oct '10, Mar '11	Nov '10, Apr '11	—	Family
2	July '09-Feb '11	Feb '11	—	—	No one
3	Sept '08–current (except for step-out period)	Feb '11, Mar '11	Mar'11, Apr'11	—	—
4	Oct'07	Unclear for how often children attend			Mother only
5	June'05	Irregular since Oct 2010			

The Cambridge program is different from other Pathways sites in that families attend ESOL or ABE classes during the week and have Pathways classes on Saturdays. Not being able to attend because of work, while still a concern, was not the greatest reason for stepping out. Saturday being a weekend, program attendance is more affected by children's activities such as going to the Y, as well as other reasons such as families' church involvements.

4. Pittsfield

SMARTT currently lists 16 Pittsfield families while the stepping-out documentation forms received from the site list 15 people as having stepped out. Out of these 15, six left the Program because they graduated and received their GEDs. Families that stepped out for reasons other than successful completion of their GED were kept connected to the Program through weekly phone calls or home visits. The following are specific details on these families:

joined in 2011; of these, three joined in April 2011 while the latest one joined in May 2011.

Stepping Out: Staff and partner perspectives

'Stepping out' has been a real challenge at all sites as the above analysis illustrates. All sites utilized strategies to keep families connected, and some of these families returned to the program, while others exited altogether. It is important to note once again here that each of the programs experienced unique challenges in this regard as explained later in the text: Cambridge being a weekend model, Holyoke an afterschool model, Lawrence is an evening model and Pittsfield is a day time project. The fact that some families at each site chose to return to the program or stay connected is an important finding. Having labeled this phenomenon as a challenge, following-up with families on a more systematic basis when they step out and recording

TABLE 21: Stepping Out at Pittsfield

Family #	Attended Programming	Step-out	Return	Exit
1	Sept'10-Mar'11, May-11-current	Mar'11	May'11	—
2	Feb-Apr'11	May'11	Jun'11	—
3	Sept'09-Feb'11	Mar'11, May'11	Apr'11	Not attending currently
4	Feb-Mar'11	Apr'11	—	Not attending currently
5	Sept'10-Dec'10	—	—	Jan'11
6	Sept-Mar'11	—	—	Mar'11
7	Sept'10	No record in SMARTT, no step-out data listed on step-out sheet		
8	Sept-Oct'10	—	—	Nov'10
9	Feb-Mar'11	—	—	Apr'11

Many of these parents continued to attend their ESOL or ABE classes even though they had stepped out of the Pathways program, as the SMARTT attendance record shows. The families listed in the table above that stepped out momentarily did so for reasons such as pregnancy. Of the families that are no longer attending Pathways programming, one moved out of state, another transferred to another Program, one violated the terms of the contract and was asked to leave, and the reasons for the rest are unclear. Of the families that have continuously attended programming and remained current at year end, five enrolled in 2010 while another five

what happens may have helped sites to tackle this challenge in a planful way. However it also clear that for many families, returning may not be an option.

Cambridge: At Cambridge, staff pointed out that the winter weather is especially challenging for families; attendance is more regular during spring and fall months. Also, in terms of Saturday programming, some children were enrolled in primarily seasonal Saturday activities, and they preferred to attend those activities rather than attend Pathways. "Sometimes it's the kids that are

stepping out, not necessarily parents,” said one of the interviewees. However, in general, when parents had to step out for a while due to work schedules, he or she made an effort to stay in touch with the program or even sent a representative such as a sister, a cousin or a spouse. At Cambridge where ABE programming and other programming are separated from one another, there have also been cases in which some families, for periods of time, attended the ABE component only, while others attended the Saturday programming only. Keeping on top of this has also been a challenge. Cambridge staff felt that it has been useful and important to have identified stepping out with the help of the evaluation process as it is a reality that impacts programming and family progress. One of the useful strategies identified at Cambridge for increasing families’ attendance for Saturday programming has been to make calls to let them know about the topic or the activity of that week. The family makes more of an effort to attend when it is something that they are interested in.

Holyoke: At Holyoke, staff drew attention to one of the challenges: having families stay in the program who have younger children; the young ages of these children and the lack of child care posed barriers to participation. Staff pointed out that reaching parents when they stepped out was made easy by being school-based; sometimes the program was able to utilize the school’s outreach worker to make home visits. Strategies used by staff involved building a trusting relationship and following-up through multiple phone calls to see if there was anything that could be done for the family, especially if they were in a crisis situation or needed help in some way. The children’s teacher at Holyoke believed that it was important to keep the children engaged and motivated to come so that their parents would follow. She was already thinking of changing some of the activities for next year to make them attractive for children. She believed having these fun activities alongside homework and other literacy interventions could help children stay connected to the program and hence increase

their parents’ desires and motivation to stay in the program.

Lawrence: At Lawrence, staff call parents to remind them of classes. When parents do not show up for one or more classes, the outreach coordinator who has the same background as parents calls them and asks them about what’s going on. If it is a work scheduling conflict which may be resolved in a period of time, she makes note of the situation and advises parents to return when the situation is resolved. The Outreach Coordinator states that parents don’t miss class because they want to stay home and watch TV: they miss class because they may have a sick mother to look after or they may have found a job with a conflicting schedule or they be pregnant and need bed rest. According to the Coordinator what differentiates families who finish the program from those who do not is the level of commitment. “You know most of the parents work in factories. They are out there at 6:00 AM in the morning to 3:00 PM in the afternoon. They come home. They have to cook, they have to clean the house to come back at 5:30 PM for a program. So they have to be committed.” According to her, families said they were doing this because “I want to better my life, I want to help my kid’s education and this is why I’m committed, even though I’m tired.”

Pittsfield: At Pittsfield there were a number of cases in which families felt depressed due to such reasons as not being able to pay electric bills or get diapers for the baby, and they chose to stay home. The case manager or the coordinator would call the families who were in these circumstances and offer help for dealing with some of these issues: most of these families eventually came back. They were referred to and connected with resources they needed. The case manager follows up on attendance every day, and makes calls and follows up every time that a family does not attend to see if there is anything that can be done. At Pittsfield, too, introducing the option of stepping out and to be able to return has worked well for some of the families who were not ready for full engagement with the program due to life crises.

VI. CASE STUDY OF PATHWAYS FAMILIES

This part of the report will present the findings from the family-level case studies that were undertaken as part of this evaluation. Two parents from each of the four sites were selected to be interviewed in the earlier part of the year and then again towards the end of the year. What follows is a systematic analysis of the 16 interviews with these eight parents. In selecting the participants, SMARTT demographic data was analyzed to obtain a sample of eight people that represented the diversity of the Pathways populations. However, some of the parents who were chosen had either stepped out or left the program entirely. The site coordinators

or counselors assisted in choosing replacement families. The site coordinators or counselor from each site then asked the parents for permission for the evaluation team to contact them and interview them twice during the year. The interviews were semi-structured in that the interviewers utilized an interview guide for consistency in content across families, however, they allowed and encouraged the emergence of new relevant topics whenever appropriate. In order to protect the identity of the interviewed women pseudonyms are used throughout the discussion of findings.

TABLE 22: Pathways Case Study Families

Site	Pseudonym of participants	Time spent in the Program	Family Characteristics	Employment	Race	Education	Welfare
P	Beth	1 year	Single mother	No, not looking	African	Working on GED	Yes
P	Lisa	More than 1 year	Single mother	No. Going to work during the summer	Latino	Got her GED, going to college	Yes
H	Marsha	Less than 1 year	Two parent family	Yes, personal care assistant	Latino	Unclear	No
H	Eva	Less than 1 year	Two parent family	Yes, personal care assistant	Latino	Unclear	No
L	Victoria	Less than 1 year	Single mother	No, but looking, was employed before.	Latino	Unclear	Yes but unemployment benefits are about to be removed
L	Julie	Less than 1 year	Two parent family	Yes, as a housecleaner at a local motel	Latino	Unclear	Previously but not anymore
C	Sheila	5 years	Two parent family	Yes, used to work as a home health worker	Haitian	Unclear	Unclear
C	Judy	1 year	Two parent family	Yes, as a house cleaner	Latino	Unclear	Unclear

Table 23 describes the children of these parents:

TABLE 23: Children of the Interviewees

Site	Parent	# of Kids	Children's Ages	How many participate in the Program	Any issues with children
P	Beth	2	4 and 6 years	None	Older one has ADHD
P	Lisa	1	Just over 2 years	None	Speech delay
H	Eva	3	3 kids. 14, 10 and 8 years old	The younger two	Mentions one child is hyper active
H	Marsha	2	2 kids: 6 year and another in 6th grade	Younger one regularly. Older one sometimes	Younger one has asthma
L	Victoria	1	11 years	1	Limited English fluency. Moved to the country last year.
L	Julie	2	4 and 7 year old	Older child only	Limited English fluency. Recently moved to the country
C	Sheila	1	4th grader	1	No.
C	Judy	3, only 1 lives at home	8 years	1	No.

Who are these Pathways parents?

Beth: A young woman who has had a hard life but is currently participating in Pathways at Pittsfield. She is originally from Liberia but was living in Guinea when an American charity saw her and brought her to Florida in March, 2005. After living in Florida for four years she moved to Pittsfield in 2009. In her own words: *"My life was terrible in Florida and when I came here I went to this program. Now I see a lot of changes"*. She received no education in her home country and keeps repeating *"I had to start from A"*. She has two sons, a 6 year old and a 4 year old. One of these children has severe ADHD, has to be medicated and has been moved from school to school because of his problem. This child was born in Guinea but her younger son was born in Florida and is from a man who abandoned her two months after she became pregnant.

Beth lives in a neighborhood which is mostly white. It is accessible by bus. She has a few friends who like her are from Africa, though from a different country, that is, Ghana. She has lost touch with her parents and does not know where they are, even though she is trying to find out. She has a sister who lives somewhere in the US and she talks to her often. Beth appears to be a very strong woman. She herself says she doesn't know how she has achieved all that she has, given how hard her life has been. She is now someone who encourages other women to get

educated and make a better life for themselves. She would like single mothers like herself to get more support.

Lisa: Lisa is approximately 20 years old. She was born in Ecuador but came to this country as a very young child. She is a single mother who dropped out of high school. Before coming to Pathways in Pittsfield she was homeless, and couldn't get either childcare or a job. She was prone to frequent panic attacks and would end up in the hospital often. However, she feels that being stereotyped is her biggest problem: *"the biggest challenge I have is being stereotyped by everybody. Because other teen moms don't do what they should, they immediately think that I'm not doing what I should and that I'm a bad mother because I'm young. But I can honestly say, I think I'm probably the best mother that anybody will meet. My daughter is the world to me."* Lisa completed her GED at Pathways, has successfully finished her first year of college and hopes to get her Master's degree someday.

Lisa's father disowned her after she had her baby. She has now been able to make contact with the rest of the family and is getting back with them but does not get as much support from them as she would like. Since Lisa does not have a car, she has to walk 30 minutes to get to the Program. But when the weather is bad the Program staff picks her up and

brings her over. Lisa describes herself as persistent and outspoken and says that the Program helped her find her voice.

Eva: Eva moved to Holyoke 5 years ago with her family from Puerto Rico. She has a husband and they both work. His family lives in Holyoke and they were the main reason they chose to relocate here. Eva came without knowing English, tried to learn on her own with help from her children who were learning at school but decided to join Pathways after receiving an invitation from her children's school in September 2010.

In Holyoke, Eva used to take the bus to work and the children's school, but this Valentine's Day her husband presented her with a car. She says she is not social since she keeps herself busy with her own family. Eva is an ambitious woman, who wants to learn English in order to improve her job prospects. She feels frustrated that her friends and neighbors do not want to join the Program and is upset also with people who have left the Program. She says she keeps trying to motivate others to join the Program and learn English for free. She says she herself never misses class. Eva is also the one the teacher relies on sometimes to communicate with other students who only speak Spanish.

Marsha: Marsha from Holyoke prefers not to talk about her family circumstances too much, and it is hard to discern much about her personal life and life challenges. She mentions she was employed in the first interview but complained it was a night shift which was hard for her because of her children. By the time of the second interview, she had become unemployed. She is from Puerto Rico but moved to Holyoke seven years ago. Not knowing English has been a problem for Marsha.

Marsha has a sister and brother in the area. The brother has been in the US for 20 years and has a stable job; like her, her sister is new and is not as fluent in English and despite having a Bachelor's degree from her own country is only able to find work at Walmart. Marsha appears to be shy and good natured.

Sheila: Sheila is a Haitian woman who lives in Cambridge and who has been with Pathways for five years (SMARTT records show that she might have been part of CLC for an additional of two

years). She has now been told by the Program staff that she must graduate by year-end. She lives with her husband and daughter who is a 4th grader. She was working as a home health worker when we interviewed her the first time but by the next interview her department had been shut down because of budget cuts and she was moved into another place within the same organization; now, she is required to work in the kitchen with less pay. She has been looking for work but so far has not had any luck.

Sheila stated that apart from her husband and daughter that live with her, she also has a mother and brother who live in the area. She has a car which makes her commute very short. She says her daughter enjoys the parks in the city, but does not mention anything else about the larger community in Cambridge. Sheila is a hard worker who will work even for much less pay. She appears to be a very committed mother. For instance, she would like to get a break during the weekend but because her daughter enjoys coming to Pathways on Saturdays she neglects her own rest for the sake of her daughter.

Judy: Judy, also from Cambridge Pathways, came to the US from Columbia a few years ago. She has a son who comes to Pathways with her. She describes an unhappy union with her son's father who has not helped her to obtain legal status in the country, even though he can apply for her based on his own status in the country. She also describes financial hardship because as an undocumented worker she can only get a job cleaning people's homes and that too only once a week. Her partner, on the other hand, it seems does work but does not help her financially. Financial problems cause a lot of stress and she is also dealing with her son's growing behavioral issues which she feels are because of the dysfunctional family dynamics. She is excited though because she just graduated from the Cambridge Community Learning center and is now looking forward to going to Harvard Extension School to continue learning English.

Victoria: Victoria from Lawrence is a single mother who migrated from the Dominican Republic a year ago with her son. She lives with him and a brother, who recently moved to Lawrence from the Dominican. She is applying everywhere for jobs

but has not found one yet. She says she is between a rock and a hard wall because she needs to attend Pathways in order to improve her English, but she also needs a job in order to improve her economic condition and to be able to send money back home to her mother. She reports that even though she has food stamps and unemployment benefits, the latter are about to be removed since she is already on an extension. She says because of the high number of unemployed people, even employment agencies can no longer offer much help. She also mentions that she realizes there is discrimination and racism and she feels unwelcome here sometimes.

Victoria says of living in Lawrence: *"there is a lot of delinquency, a lot of violence so right now I don't like it too much....the rent here is affordable ...right now I have to be in Lawrence because it's cheaper. The good thing about this city is that there are many programs, there are programs for everything to help people. In the school there are programs for the children, programs to help with rent, electricity, food, whatever problem you have, there are people here to help especially when you are low income. They help a lot. We are also Latinos, there are so many of my people here, I feel like I am swimming in my own ocean, you know what I mean?"* Victoria seems reserved and had not made many friends at the Program. At the same time, she appeared to be ambitious and motivated to learn English and be a role model for her son. She is very motivated about learning English but says that everyone around her speaks Spanish and that makes it very difficult for her to practice English. She says her classmates stare at her because she asks so many questions in class, but she says that she needs to ask questions so she can understand everything that is being talked about in class. She went and testified in front of the school committee as part of the effort to convince the city not to cut funding for the schools. She says she is an active participant in the school and everyone knows her there.

Julie: Julie, from Lawrence, is a very recent immigrant from the Dominican Republic, and had no English fluency prior to joining the Program in September 2010. She used to live in the Dominican Republic with her children while her husband lived and worked in the US, but recently her husband moved the rest of the family to Lawrence. During the first interview Julie mentioned that her husband

also attended Pathways and was at a higher ESOL level than she was. However, by the time of the second interview he had stepped out because of conflict with his work schedule.

Julie also talks about being comfortable in Lawrence because of the number of Dominicans in the area and at the school; she says it's almost like living in the Dominican Republic itself. By the time of the second interview she had only been in the country eight months. She finds the cold weather hard to adjust to especially because she has to walk to the school and back. Julie points out that that life here is more fast paced compared to her native land, but that she would like to live here for now. She has brothers living in New York but no other family in the country. However, she talks about the fact that she has good neighbors and in an emergency she knows she can count on them. Julie says that it is hard to live within the limited income that both her husband and she are able to earn. She works part-time as a housekeeper at a local motel while her husband has recently been able to find work again after having been laid-off. She comments on how hard it is to find a job, let alone a decent one. Julie is a motivated person. She says of herself: "There are people that come but don't come tomorrow. But not me, if I don't come it's because there was an obstacle, so I've only missed once." She also says that she and others work to motivate and encourage each other. They call up someone who misses classes to find out why and make sure that they return to class.

How did the parents find out about the Pathways Program: The Lawrence and Holyoke parents found out about Pathways through their children's schools. Julie at Lawrence was introduced to Pathways by the school counselor who is also part of the Pathways team. Julie says she didn't have to wait long since both she and her son had no fluency in English when her son was enrolled at the Leahy school in September 2010. At Pittsfield, one mother found out about the Program from a friend, while the other found out about it through her own research. At Cambridge, Sheila was asked to attend a Program called "Let's Talk" where she heard about Pathways while Judy, also from Cambridge, was introduced to Pathways at the Community Learning Center where she had gone to learn English.

What were the mothers' hopes when entering the Program? Beth from Pittsfield mentioned that this is the first time she has been in a Program such as this. For Lisa the Program is also the first she has joined after doing her own assessments of all Programs in the area where she would be eligible to attend. She says at this Program she feels like she is part of a family. She tried a teen parenting program but did not get a good feeling so she left. Both women wanted to go to school and get an education but also needed the intensive case-management support that they were able to find at the Program.

At Holyoke, Eva says she has never attended a family literacy program before and this is her first time. She hoped to learn to speak and write English. Eva has a medical assistant's certificate but her English was not good enough for her to be able to interact with patients and she felt she needed to improve her language so she could get the job she wanted. (Even though Eva is here to learn English she is able to communicate well and did not need her interview to be conducted in Spanish.) However, for her, she wants to improve her English further to be able to interact with patients and take down their medical history and also be able to write English fairly well. She also said learning the language would help her interact with others in her personal life better. In her own words: *"When you go out to any kind of place, you can find people that speak only English and don't speak Spanish. I need to express what I want to say in English for the people that don't speak Spanish. So when you go to the doctor sometimes, your doctor don't speak Spanish. Sometimes you need to wait until they found somebody who speaks Spanish so they can translate to the doctor what you are trying to say. If I speak English or try to understand, maybe the doctor can attend to me more quickly and I don't need to wait until he found somebody who speaks English so they can come."*

Marsha also from Holyoke said almost the same thing: *"I have learned a lot, when I go to the doctors or the meetings I had to find an interpreter, but now I can get along by myself. There are some words that are hard to say but I can do a lot of things alone now without an interpreter."*

Sheila was not very clear about her own hopes and aspirations. She did want to learn English but says her primary motivation for coming to Pathways

Cambridge is because her daughter likes to attend the Saturday program where she gets to do many activities such as planting, crafts and learning how to use a computer. She mentioned that if it wasn't for her daughter she might not come to the Program, since she works seven hours a day from Monday to Friday and Saturday would ideally be her day to sleep in.

Judy says that for her learning English is important because she is now living in the US. She enjoys her English classes very much and is looking forward to going to Harvard Extension School in the fall. She would have liked to go there in the summer but problems with her and her son's insurance prevents her from doing so.

For Victoria the primary motivation for joining Pathways in Lawrence was to learn English in order to improve her job prospects and make a "better future for myself and my son". She also wants to learn English so she can help her son with his homework and to be a role model for him.

For Julie in Lawrence, since she is such a recent migrant, before Pathways she had never had the opportunity to attend a family literacy program. She hopes that both she and her son will learn English through this Program. When we first interviewed her, she had learned enough vocabulary to be able to greet people in English and to ask for directions but by the second interview she knew how to interact with her doctor in English.

The Mothers' Perceptions of the Program

Beth joined Pathways when her son was two years old. Mother and son would go to the Program together. The child would go to the daycare while she would attend classes Monday through Thursday, starting at 10:30am. However, now neither of her children accompany her to the Program anymore; both go to school. The Coordinator at Pathways helped Beth find a Head Start Program for her son when he turned three. The Coordinator also connected Beth to the various agencies she needed resources from, such as the Department of Transitional Assistance and MassHealth. The Coordinator also fills out the paper work for her and helps her advocate for her son at the school. Sometimes because of her accent, Beth feels it is easier for the Coordinator to talk to the utility

company or service worker at an agency on her behalf. Beth also reports that the Coordinator helped her get her driver's license and her citizenship. They even helped her get out of a shelter and move to a place of her own with her two sons. She says of the Program: *"They help me with my son.... Because I don't have a car, like when they call me he out of control, they will help me to get there. Any problem, I come to them for my children. They always there. They make sure they help me."*

However, perhaps the biggest help Beth received from the Program was the emotional support, which she mentions multiple times. At one point she says: *"I'm frustrated and stuff and when I'm ready to cry and I don't have nobody to talk to, I go and talk to her. And she says I know it's gonna be okay. And I'll be like I can't do it anymore, I don't want to go back. She talk to me and she encourage me"*

The same is true for Lisa whose daughter is now just over two years old and goes to another place to learn. The Program staff helped Lisa get connected to other agencies. She says she was denied three times from receiving public assistance before program staff helped her; once they were involved, she got on welfare within a month. They helped Lisa get housing within a month and a half even though she had been trying herself for over a year. She says of her experience at Pathways: *"When I entered the program, I was homeless with my daughter. I was practically illiterate and I was suffering severe anxiety and depression, going through panic attacks. They helped me get housing, money and medication... they helped me fix my life. They helped me get everything I needed. They helped me get back on WIC. They helped me get my money, my food stamps. They helped me get my apartment. They helped me get everything inside my apartment. They just connected me with so many people, so I can start over and start providing a true life for my daughter and be able to provide an example for her."* Of the unconditional emotional support Lisa says: *"I didn't want everybody to laugh at me because I couldn't read and write. I remember walking in and immediately they gave me a hug."* When Lisa came to the Program she had severe panic attacks and depression and had to be hospitalized; but now because of this support she is able to take care of herself and her daughter.

Talking about the Program at Holyoke, Eva says she did get a lot of help with her language. She felt that since her English was limited and the teacher spoke what she felt to be too fast she could not understand everything. This made her too nervous to speak but the teacher encouraged her later. Eva was unsure about who exactly the Program staff at Holyoke were since there has been staff turnover but she mentioned that the Coordinator came to the school during the adult literacy classes to check in with all the students. Eva says that she has not needed or received any other support or help from the Program except for the literacy intervention. Her favorite part is the vocabulary component for she enjoys learning new words. She does mention that the Program counselor does help people fill job applications and suggest jobs in the area.

Marsha at Holyoke feels the Program is important for her and she wishes the Program would have more hours of literacy classes. She says the reading aloud is especially important for her. She says she comes even when she is not feeling well "because its necessary for me". However, Eva reports that Marsha has been irregular with attending classes.

At Cambridge, Sheila felt the Program helped her daughter learn many things such as how to use a computer. She also learned about the resources in the city through the Program staff. She mentioned that if she has a problem she calls the Program and someone helps her. For instance, her daughter's teachers have complained that her daughter's math scores are very low and when she informed the Program about this they helped her find a tutor for her daughter.

Judy from Cambridge, also shared positive feelings about the Program. She said of the Program *"When I go there, it's my space. It's my space"*. She also mentioned that she has weekly contact with the Program Coordinator and most of the time this contact is initiated by the Coordinator herself on Fridays. This is in the form of a phone call to check in and remind her of the Saturday Program. During the first interview, Judy mentioned her reservations about the Coordinator being so new and not being knowledgeable about the resources in the area. However, by the time we interviewed Judy for the second time it seemed the Coordinator had settled

in well and Judy seemed much more relaxed about trusting her.

Julie from Lawrence is excited that she can now speak enough English to be able to greet someone in English and ask for directions in the street. However, she says it is not just the adult literacy component that has been helpful to her but that the parenting support has been especially useful. In her own words: *"they are always attentive to the development of the children....every four weeks we have a meeting to learn about how to work with our kids, how to help the kids with their homework. Apart from learning English I have learned a lot."* Both mothers from Lawrence mention how the interactive literacy and parenting are a strong component of the Pathways Program at Lawrence. They tell us that the Program staff often talks about family literacy and discusses how important it is for the entire family to grow together as a whole.

Victoria, feels the importance of the program in all aspects of her life. She asked the teacher if they could increase the number of days so she could learn even more than she is right now. She says that even if she is sick and cannot make it to class she would still come to drop her son off. In her second interview she talked about how much her English had improved: *"I am definitely progressing in speaking English and I just got back from a job interview and that was all in English. Before I could not speak and did not understand anything and now I do.... Now that I can go buy something and ask people for help. So yes I feel more comfortable, I feel better."* Julie also says: *"They always have solutions to any problems, they always offer help on the event that you can't do something or participate. They really motivate you to come"*

Support of Other Parents in the Program

Beth and Lisa both report having made friends with many mothers while at the Program at Pittsfield and they have continued to stay in touch with them.

Eva at Holyoke says she has a sister-in-law at the Program so it helps knowing someone from before. Lisa stated what helped her form a connection with other mothers is that they have children of a similar age and their circumstances are similar. Marsha at Holyoke says, *"I think we get along well and when one of my classmates missed a class I let her know what*

she missed, what we talked about, we help each other. For example, I have one friend that encourages me, who tells me that I didn't know any English and now I know more. We are supportive of each other." She also says that sometimes they all go to a coffee shop together and practice ordering food in English.

Sheila at Cambridge reports that she has met people from many different countries and cultures at Pathways and has made good friends with them for the five years that she has been a part of the Program. However, she says she is not in touch with any of them outside the Program.

Judy, at Cambridge, says that she has a friend in the Pathways Program, who actually introduced her to the Program. Other than that she mentioned that she has met several people from different countries while at the Program and shared her own traditional food with them as they have with her.

Victoria from Lawrence says that she tells the other people in class to ask more questions because they are recent migrants from the Dominican and need to learn and the way to learn is to ask questions. Julie says that she has made friends at the Program and it seems that the adults who are regular at the Program keep each other motivated. They make sure to call a person if they miss class to find out what happened and to encourage them to return to class the next time. She says they practice with each other in English too.

How are Children Doing? What has the Program Done for the Children?

Beth reported in the second interview that the school her son had begun in February has been going well and the dreaded phone calls asking her to take her son home had stopped. She gives a lot of credit to the Program: *"They help me with my son.... Because I don't have a car, like when they call me he out of control, they will help me to get there. Any problem, I come to them for my children. They always there. They make sure they help me."*

Lisa said: *"They help you learn how to become a better parent."* She mentioned the Program invites people from the Pediatric Development Center (PDC) to come and tell them about how to bring up the children. Lisa says her child didn't speak a word when she joined the Program but being

at the Program helped her with her speech. The Program helped her identify through the PDC that that her daughter had a hearing problem, and now after intensive speech therapy she has moved on to become an advanced learner for her age. She says of the children's component: *"The children get to take bags of books home and activities for their age. So even when they are home they have resources to play and learn."*

At Holyoke, Eva has two children that attend Pathways with her. The children's teacher helps the kids with their homework. The Program also helps parents and children develop an interest in reading by making parents read to their children for 20 minutes every time they meet for class. Eva reports that since there is only one classroom for all the children her daughter who is one of the oldest in the room sometimes resists going because she feels out of place. On the other hand, her daughter does help the teacher with the younger kids.

Marsha's daughter is in the 6th grade and she too tells her that she does not want to go to Pathways and would rather stay home and study for school on her own. Marsha says that if she misses her own class it is because of her daughter's resistance to come. Marsha feels she is more able to help her 6 year old who is in Kindergarten with homework than before. Marsha is very happy with what the Program has done for her son. She says: *"I have witnessed his growth. Last year he failed and had to redo kindergarten and his grades were poor but now he is now at the level you should be in. the only problem he has is with writing and some with reading. He didn't know how to read last year but this year he does, he recognizes the words."*

Eva feels that the adult literacy classes have helped her communicate better with the children's teachers. *"Because the first two years with my kids in the school, I always ask for translate. Sometimes I sit with a teacher and they no have any person translate at the moment and I say okay, don't worry, I understand. But when I leave, I feel like oh my God, I don't really understand half what the teacher says. So it's like okay, oh yeah, you're right, yeah, yeah. But sometimes I understand only half of what the teacher said. Now I understand better but I speak, too. I talk*

to the teacher my concerns, my questions about my kids, about the school. So it's really nice talk with the teacher like that."

In her first interview Sheila expressed concern about the fact that her 4th grader was weak in math and that she herself didn't know how to help her except with her reading. However, by the next interview her problem seemed to have lessened considerably because of the tutor that had been arranged for her daughter with the help of a Pathways program staff. She also mentioned that she had found out about many resources in the area through Pathways.

Judy's son is doing very well at school. She says he loves coming to the Pathways Saturday program because he gets to see his own big brother who lives and works in New York only once a year. He feels that at Pathways the people he gets to meet, especially the university students that sometimes come in on Saturdays, are like his big brothers and sisters. He also enjoys the various activities and computer time on Saturdays.

Victoria feels her son has improved in school because of the way the children's teacher at Pathways explains the homework to her son. She mentions that when he first came to the country he hated going to school because he had trouble with the language and would not understand his teachers but now he likes to hang out with his friend and finds it easy to speak to them in English. Her son enjoys the interactive literacy at Pathways where parents and children do their activities together.

Julie from Lawrence says that the Program provides a lot of support for her. Her main challenge is her own lack of fluency in English as well as that of her children's. She says the counselor encourages her to contact her in the event that she doesn't understand her child's homework. At the same time, during the Monday and Wednesday Pathways programming her son gets helps with homework and both her children, even the one who is too little to officially attend the programming, are taught language fluency. Both children enjoy the program and insist on going even when it is too cold to walk to the school in the evening.

Aspirations for Children:

Beth says of her older son who has ADHD: *"obviously I want to see my son do better in school. I want him to stay in school. I don't really want him coming home. I want him to get an education. I don't want him to be like juggling like me."* She is driven to continue her education because of her children. She says: *"Sometimes...don't want to go to school. I say I'm too old. I say I'm gonna go and learn how to read and write. But when I think I say tomorrow who gonna do my kids homework? I got to help them. So I say I don't care, let me start from A. Maybe I'll get to the level."*

Eva says she is fine with whatever her children want to be. One of them says he wants to be a soldier another says she wants to be a nurse. Sheila wants her daughter to learn to play music. Since this was her last year at Pathways she plans to put her daughter in music classes after the year ends. Judy proudly tells the interviewer about how smart her son is and how well he is doing in school. She has high hopes from him. Julie from Lawrence wants her children to grow up here, get a good education and to be able to choose the careers they love and *"to do something great for tomorrow"*.

Victoria though is perhaps the clearest on what she wants for her son: *"I tell him starting now and I tell him look the situation that I am in and my brother who doesn't know any English. I tell him that we are struggling because of our lack of English and education but that isn't his destiny. I put my brother in the English class from Tuesday to Friday in the morning because he works in the evening until 2 or 3 am. So I tell him that the job isn't good and he tells me that I didn't study. I told him that I'm telling you from experience and now I know how important an education is, I tell him that I want him to be a professional not work in a factory for the rest of his life. I don't want him to pass through what I am passing through, when you need something I can't provide it because of lack of money. My son said that he will be a football player or a scientist and I tell him that even to do football you still need to study. I want him to be a professional so that he does not have people on top of him at work telling him what to do or yelling at him and doing hard labor work that you only have a break of 15 minutes and eat fast and eat food that you don't like. You should be a manager, a lawyer, these are not easy jobs but their lives are easier, it's a not a factory or construction worker."*

Aspirations for Self:

Beth would like to be *"independent tomorrow, able to do things on my own and take care of my kids and my family."* She is working on her GED and dreams of going to college to become a chef. But for now she will take up any job, cleaning or helping out in the kitchen. Beth is in touch with the father of her older son who is still in Guinea. She is a citizen now so she would like to apply for him to join her as soon as she can.

Lisa says she learned from watching others get their GED, grow up and move on at Pathways. She learned how to be a good mother and to know how and where to get help if she needed it. She learnt to deal with failure. For example, when she failed her GED because of a panic attack and wanted to give up she mentioned that the Coordinator and Counselor talked to her and helped her deal with failure and move on, and keep trying. She finally did get her GED and is now going to college. Even though she has her GED, she still comes because she gets tutored. But the real reason is that she wants to stay connected with the Program. She is studying to be a social worker and aspiring to get her Master's in Social Work. She wants to work for the Program itself some day. She would also like to get a degree in psychology and work with young children. She is hoping that by the time she is 25 she will be able to buy *"a small, little house"* but for the time being she is trying for a car.

Eva, on the other hand, says, *"maybe one or two years, I see me working in a hospital, in a big hospital, helping people. That's my dream."* Marsha wants to go to college for business studies but feels her biggest challenge is not being fluent in English. She wants to establish her own business.

Sheila from Cambridge has a CNA license but does not have a job as a CNA and would like one. In fact she would like a better job because she recently was moved to a new department at work with less pay. She is actively looking but so far has not found anything. Judy at this point is focused on getting her immigration papers processed so she can have legal status in the country.

Victoria wants to become a citizen of this country. She wants to learn English to get a better job to make a better future for herself and her son. She dreams of becoming a nurse and to work with the

elderly. Julie says her aspiration is to perfect her English and then go to a university. In her country she was studying to be a health systems manager. She would like to become a nurse eventually. She worries about where she will go after she has mastered both ESOL levels offered at Pathways Lawrence to continue her studies in English.

Conclusion:

The interviews draw out the difficult economic circumstances of these immigrant women, who face important barriers including not being completely fluent in English, in many cases being a single parent, being unable to find a job and feeling discriminated against as an immigrant.

Being first generation mothers, all of them have high hopes for themselves and for their children and this is what appears to motivate their continued attendance at the Program.

VII. LESSONS LEARNED & RECOMMENDATIONS

Earlier sections presented and discussed areas of improvement and lessons learned specific to the Pathways programs. This section focuses on lessons and recommendations which can be utilized by policy makers and family literacy and support programs at large including their community partners.

Lesson 1: Outcomes of Family Literacy & Support Models

- *Adults and children in Pathways programs are achieving significant learning gains.* Majority of adults (63%) who participated in the Pathways programs made significant learning gains from pre to post testing on various tests of achievement required by the ACLS during the evaluation period. At one site which had the highest number of participants, over 80 percent of the adult test takers who had both pre and post tests made “meaningful educational” gains. The overall mean test scores of children were within acceptable ranges around the normed mean, and children, on average, sustained their positions from pre to post testing. Both these facts together mean that on average Pathways children are learning what they are expected to learn within the duration of the program and are enhancing their vocabulary. Moreover, 50 percent of Pathways children achieved significant gains from pre to post testing in a standardized language test while one quarter made significant gains from pre to post testing on a standardized school-based skills test. There is some evidence that above average attendance of children in the program leads to more significant learning gains as opposed to below average attendance of children. These successes are especially noteworthy given the challenging family circumstances of most Pathways families; the complexity and difficulty of achieving successful outcomes in short intervals especially for ELL learners coming from a disadvantaged socio-economic context, and the short time span of the evaluation and hence the interventions.

Recommendation

- Policy makers and administrators can focus on building funding streams which will last over time in order to sustain family literacy and support programs. Part of the strategy for achieving this purpose can be to strengthen the ties between the ABE community and schools. Using Title 1 Funds, the schools provided significant financial support to the Pathways programs which made programming possible. The Pathways experience has also illustrated the importance of having a designated coordinator who assumes a leadership role in promoting and supporting family literacy within the larger community. As stated by one of the Pathways administrators, “For example, school personnel are excited about family literacy programming and utterly overwhelmed and overcommitted in their jobs and wonder who/how coordination will happen.” Pathways coordinators provide, “oversight– someone keeping their vision on the larger picture, following up on collaborators, making sure resources are available, support personnel.” They are in charge of “convening and facilitating meetings and keeping family literacy on the radar on a citywide basis, so that more partners are brought to the table and that all agencies and service providers are messaging the same to all families all the time: the value of education, the importance of parents being involved in their children’s education...” As discussed earlier in the report in the absence of this role played by the Pathways coordinators, the many successes achieved in promoting family literacy may not have been possible.

Lesson 2: Challenges of Retention & Attendance: Stepping Out

- *Stepping out of programs (leaving the program for a period of time with an intention to return) is a commonly observed phenomenon among ABE populations and there is no magic formula for improving program attendance and retention outcomes.* The evaluation highlighted that, despite

attempts to keep families connected to the programs through constant communications and support with wrap-around services, only a small portion of families returned to the program; many exited the program completely after a period of stepping out. The reality is that for many families who have jobs and multiple responsibilities along with complex life circumstances, family literacy and support programs may be intense and challenging (in terms of timing and frequency of instruction). However, allowing parents to step out of the program for a period of time with the option of returning created some flexibility for program staff and served at least some parents well, especially those whose lives are beset by unexpected crises.

- *Fostering children's engagement and motivation in the program can impact attendance and retention in family literacy and support programs positively.* Pathways experience revealed that children's motivation to attend the program matters. This was especially true for school-based programs where children were expected to participate in additional programming after a long day of school. As indicated by children's teachers, children are exhausted by the time they get to the program which negatively impacts their motivation to attend Pathways. Teachers in one of the programs stated the need for finding strategies to overcome challenges in this area.

Recommendations

- The stepping out phenomenon needs recognition and developmental attention. There is a need to test the impact of different approaches on outcomes. Different approaches could focus on intensifying interventions that take place at intake and orientation, such as clarifying expectations and goals of participants. It is also important to have a variation of models, in other words, a variety of options for families. In the Pathways case, the parents of lowest performing children (in pre-tests) with higher needs were more persistent in their attendance to the programs as compared to families with higher performing kids whose families stepped out of programs more often. Children in both groups of families could achieve learning gains or sustain their

positions. These outcomes coupled with the findings from the case study of families reveal that high-level needs coupled with strong individual motivation clearly impacts families' attachment to the program positively and that one size fits all approaches to program design may not be very effective. Hence testing children at the start of the programs and getting a sense of families' circumstances and their goals and objectives and then, offering them a variety of options, in terms of intensity and duration of programming, the intensity of case management offered and, in terms of levels and rules of involvement, can help to enhance outcomes in attendance and retention.

- Policy makers, family literacy and support program administrators and community partners can focus on curriculum development and use of innovative strategies to boost and sustain student motivation especially in the case of school-based programs where student motivation may be an issue.

Lesson 3: Identifying Potential Target Populations

- *Family literacy and support programs can foster rapid improvements in literacy and language acquisition of children and families who are new to the country and have limited English speaking skills.* Pathways experience demonstrates that newly arriving immigrant families and children can clearly benefit from the intensity of family literacy programs with wrap around services both in terms of advancing in literacy and in adapting to the larger system. However, identifying and recruiting the target populations for family literacy and support programs is a challenging task which requires careful planning and ongoing learning especially within an environment of changing socio-economics and demographics.
- *Intensive case management pays off for families with highest needs, such those with histories of trauma.* However, time, resources and commitment of staff are pre-requisites for this intervention's effectiveness. Furthermore, continuity and stability of staffing are crucial to the success of these types of interventions.

Recommendations

- Targeting family literacy and support programs to specific communities and populations deserves planning attention. Policy makers and administrators can build on the Pathways experiences and evaluation outcomes to design and support family literacy and support programs which are specifically tailored to these populations in high need areas of the state.
- The programs need to remain flexible in order to serve those who come with different backgrounds, cultures and issues. Implementation of programs through partnerships can offer advantages in this regard by allowing for a diversity of perspectives and aid in the development of strategies. The qualities and characteristics of the staff who have the most contact with families in programs is also crucial in remaining flexible. Building staff cultural competence can be a good investment in these types of programs; addressing the diverse issues and challenges of families in an effective way requires a deeper understanding of the backgrounds of these families and their circumstances.

Lesson 4: The Potential of School Based Models for School Aged Children and Their Families

- *There are significant potentials to school based-engagement models.* Literature that points to the positive effects of parent engagement in schools on children's literacy is abundant^{xxxii xxxiii}. Indeed, Pathways experience illustrated that school based models offer various opportunities for parent engagement in their children's school life and in building strong connections with families. Another advantage of school based models is the opportunity for program teachers and school teachers to coordinate and communicate and to identify areas of deficit and improvement and track children's progress; these practices reflected positively in children's outcomes under the Pathways experience. School based programs also offer advantages in terms of identifying and recruiting target groups. Furthermore, cultivating the participation of traditionally underrepresented groups in

the school's life through family literacy and support programs can in return positively impact the fostering of culture diversity within schools. Finally, these programs can enhance the visibility of the family literacy and support programs within the larger community.

Recommendation

- School-based models of family literacy and support need to be supported by building on what has evolved by Pathways over the past ten years, by creating some viable funding and programmatic strategies which will last over time and by strengthening the ties between elementary schools and the ABE community in high need areas of the state.

Lesson 5: Advantages of Empowering Program Participants

- *Allowing room for program participants to have a say in program design and implementation can foster commitment to the program and enhance retention and attendance.* These types of empowerment strategies can also help parents build confidence and make positive changes in other areas of their lives.
- *Engagement of program graduates as community leaders and allowing program participant's direct participation and engagement in policy meetings and discussions may be an effective strategy in building momentum around family literacy and support programs.* This strategy enables the community to hear the stories straight from the parents; the power of this direct, immediate and detailed storytelling from the parents themselves has the potential to generate more resources from the community, not just for these parents but for others as well.
- *Cohort building can take place organically, but the program cultures could be more supportive and encouraging in this area.* Creating a culture based on mutual respect, appreciation of diversity and learning from one another can be made an integral part of program design. Encouraging and facilitating the organization of social activities in order to bring these parents together outside the classroom is also an option. Peer support could have potential

positive implications for attendance and retention, if parents are motivated and follow up with and support each other.

Recommendation

- In program design, family perspectives and insights should be authentically engaged. Several of the Pathways sites have integrated successful strategies in this area. A lot can be learned from their experiences and other programs could benefit from their experiences.

Lesson 6: Establishing an Ongoing Culture Learning From Practice (Evaluation)

- *Establishing an ongoing culture of learning from practice (evaluation) right from the beginning of programming is critically important.* System for Managing Accountable and Results Through Technology (SMARTT) database was not originally set up for use by the Pathways programs. During the evaluation period, recording and retrieval of all the data needed for the evaluation could not be implemented through SMARTT due to various complexities involved. For example, new fields were created to enter children's outcomes data, however, linking families within the system involved creation of multiple IDs which made the process cumbersome for programs and the evaluation team. Independent

sheets needed to be developed for data collection which made the connections between different data components a further challenging, time consuming, and complex task. This created an additional burden for sites which needed to record and retain multiple data sheets and for the evaluation team which needed to navigate through multiple sheets to connect family information together and to create comparable data across sites. There were also challenges involved in the entering and sharing of data among the ABE partners and the family and literacy and support programs partly due to the complexities of the SMARTT system.

Recommendations

- System of data collection and evaluation need to be in tune with program design.
- SMARTT system needs to be responsive for the need to strengthen ties between family literacy and support programs and the ABE community.
- Focusing on creating a culture for ongoing learning from the start can be beneficial. Committing funding and resources in this area, for example, by building internal evaluation capacity, can help to build a community of practice and identify challenges.

APPENDIX: LIST OF PATHWAYS CORE PARTNERSHIPS

Cambridge

- Agenda for Children
- Cambridge Community Learning Center (Pathways lead agency)
- Cambridge Housing Authority
- Center for Families
- Child Care Resource Center

Holyoke

- Community Education Project
- Holyoke Public Schools (Pathways lead agency)
- Lt Clayre Sullivan School (Holyoke Public Schools)

Lawrence

- Francis M. Leahy School (Lawrence Public Schools)
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc. (Pathways lead agency)
- Lawrence Adult Learning Center (Lawrence Public Schools)

Pittsfield

- Berkshire Children and Families, Inc. (Pathways lead agency)
- Berkshire County Head Start
- Berkshire County Regional Employment Board
- Pediatric Development Center
- Pittsfield Adult Learning Center (Pittsfield Public Schools)

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END NOTES

- i. In-depth project refers to a project that identifies specific families from one or more ABE or ESOL target populations in need in the community, provides educational services to children and adults in the same family in the identified target population, and coordinates and integrates these services for children and parents with family/parenting education/support including health and employability and/or interactive literacy activities. It is preferred that these services be co-located.
- ii. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/BESTpolicy.pdf>
- iii. The PPVT is a receptive vocabulary test while the WCJ is a school based and skills based test.
- iv. Stepping out has been defined in the following way in the Handbook of Evaluation developed in the beginning of the evaluation period: A participant has stepped out if he or she does not attend the required number of ABE or ESOL classes established in local program policy but continues to be engaged in some way with the Pathways Program.
- v. Based on standard scores
- vi. Improved implies improvement by a significant margin.
- vii. Retained position means that the student score may have gone up or down but not by a significant margin and hence it can't be interpreted as an improvement or deterioration.
- viii. These are students with both pre and post test scores.
- ix. A standard score of 100 is the normed mean. Therefore, scores between 85 and 115 are a single standard deviation away from this mean. Scholars define "improvement" as at least half a standard deviation, that is, at least seven standard points improvement during the testing interval. Similarly, deterioration is more than or equal to half a standard deviation lower score than the pre-test.
- x. Ibid.
- xi. A detailed discussion of the stepping out phenomenon is provided in a later section.
- xii. Kreider, H., Caspe, M., Kennedy, S., & Weiss, H. (2007). Family involvement in middle and high school students' education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- xiii. Caspe, M., Lopez, M. E., & Wolos, C. (2006/2007). Family Involvement in Elementary School Children's Education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- xiv. Family sustainability, according to the Pathways to Family Success model, refers to outcomes related to social and economic well-being (such as mental and physical health, housing, employment, and others), which are addressed through wrap-around services such as supplementary workshops, crisis intervention and case management, and which contribute significantly to a family's ability to improve literacy outcomes.
- xv. This involved filling out an excel sheet which included the columns: types of referrals; name of agency/ provider the family was referred to; nature of partnership; date referral made; who made the contact; how the contact was made; follow-ups and outcome of the referral. An initial list of referral types was generated together with the programs and was included in a drop-down menu, together with an option of "other" which was to be specified.
- xvi. A detailed discussion of Pathways partnerships will be included in the following section.
- xvii. Stepping out has been defined in the following way in the Handbook of Evaluation developed in the beginning of the evaluation period: A participant has stepped out if he or she does not attend the required number of ABE or ESOL classes established in local program policy but continues to be engaged in some way with the Pathways Program. A detailed discussion of the stepping out phenomenon is provided in a later section.
- xviii. It is important to keep in mind that Pittsfield families are highly at risk and perhaps the most vulnerable among all the groups.
- xix. A full list of the agencies that respondents are affiliated with can be found in the attachment to this document
- xx. In consultation with Alice Carter.
- xxi. Based on standard scores
- xxii. Improved implies significant improvement as defined by scholars in the area.
- xxiii. Retained position means that the student score may have gone up or down but not by a significant margin, and hence it can't be interpreted as an improvement or deterioration.

- xxiv. These are students with both pre and post test scores.
- xxv. There were a total of 13 students in the Pre-PPVT; five students in the post PPVT and five students in the pre WCJ and six students in the post WCJ who had scores below 70.
- xxvi. Broad scores only.
- xxvii. Analysis excludes all students that had scores less than 70.
- xxviii. Only one observation.
- xxix. Discussed in the next section.
- xxx. Ringenberg et al. (2005). The Test-Retest Reliability of the Parent and School Survey. *School Community Journal*. 15 (2). Academic Development Institute, Lincoln IL.
- xxxi. These tools were developed and provided to the Pathways project by Professor Alice Carter, the Director of Clinical Psychology PhD Program at University of Massachusetts Boston whose expertise is: Identification of infants and toddlers at risk for problems in social, behavioral, and emotional functioning; the role of family functioning in child development.
- xxxii. Kreider, H., Caspe, M., Kennedy, S., & Weiss, H. (2007). Family involvement in middle and high school students' education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
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