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Maximizing Family Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement 2020-23 Brief

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Maximizing Family Knowledge, Choice, and Engagement


Throughout 2020 to 2023, the NH renewal Preschool Development Grant (NH PDG) was a collaboration between the [University of New Hampshire \(UNH\)](#), NH's [Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#), [Department of Education \(NHED\)](#), and the [Council for Thriving Children](#). The grant sought to improve family knowledge, choice, and engagement through the creation of resources and infrastructure. This brief presents **two highlighted initiatives** NH PDG funded in support of this goal, the **key successes** of each initiative, **future opportunities**, and **relevant findings from the evaluation of the grant**.


Resources for Authentic Family Engagement

NH PDG partnered with the Parent Information Center/ NH Family Voices (PIC/NHFV) to encourage authentic, meaningful family voice, engagement, and representation at all levels of the early childhood system.

 **Developed open-source, universal resources and supports for family engagement**, such as [interactive tools](#) to facilitate systematic family engagement, [roadmaps](#) for bringing families into decision-making processes, and a [webinar series](#) to support effective family engagement practices.

 **Collaborated on strategies and opportunities** for authentic family engagement in NH with the Alliance of Regional Early Childhood Coalitions (RECC Alliance).

 **Introduced resources and provided technical assistance and support to NH's Family Resource Centers (FRCs)** focused on systematic, evidence-based approaches to family engagement and incorporating family voice into decision-making processes. This work was a collaboration with New Hampshire Children's Trust (NHCT).

 **Provided training and support to the Family and Community Advisors**, a chartered body of parents, membership entity representatives, providers, advocates, and other stakeholder groups. The Family and Community Advisors forms one of the four quadrants of NH's early childhood governance structure alongside the DHHS and NHED Early Childhood Integration Teams and the Early Childhood Scientific Advisory Panel.



PIC/NHFV will **continue to lead the Family and Community Advisors** to advance efforts to incorporate family voice and perspectives into decision-making processes and early childhood program planning.



Stakeholders reported the family engagement resources and technical assistance supported by NH PDG **changed the family outreach practices of NH's FRCs**.



Stakeholders reported the family engagement practices of Regional Leads were **positively influenced by the family engagement resources and technical assistance**.



"[PIC/NHFV's and NHCT's support helped to] dispel the myth that FRCs are only for a certain kind of person or family...they are using strategies designed to engage all kinds of families to make them aware of the important services and programs they provide." — Stakeholder



Family Resource Center (FRC) Infrastructure Enhancement

FRCs are hubs of local support for families with young children that provide an array of programs and services specific to the needs of their communities. NH PDG partnered with NHCT to facilitate infrastructure enhancements for NH's 16 FRCs.

★ **Strengthened FRCs** by providing subgrants to support internal capacity building and community-specific initiatives, as well as facilitating trainings for FRC staff.

★ **Assisted FRCs in pursuing FRC of Quality (FRC-Q) designation**, both for the first time and for redesignation, through group training sessions and individual technical assistance.

★ **Enhanced FRC data systems and communications** through building and maintaining the Family Support Data System, which monitors family engagement and service data. NHCT also provided tailored communications support and a common platform for FRCs to manage social media.



NHCT will continue to provide **infrastructure support related to data systems, communications, and FRC-Q designation** to all 16 of NH's FRCs.

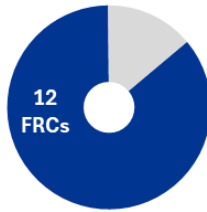
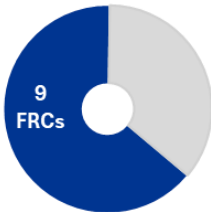


The majority of FRCs used subgrant funds for **capacity building or infrastructure** and for **creating or expanding programs**.

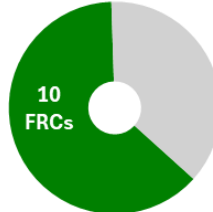
Capacity Building or Infrastructure

New or Expanded Programs

Year 1 (2020)
n = 14



Year 2 (2021)
n = 16

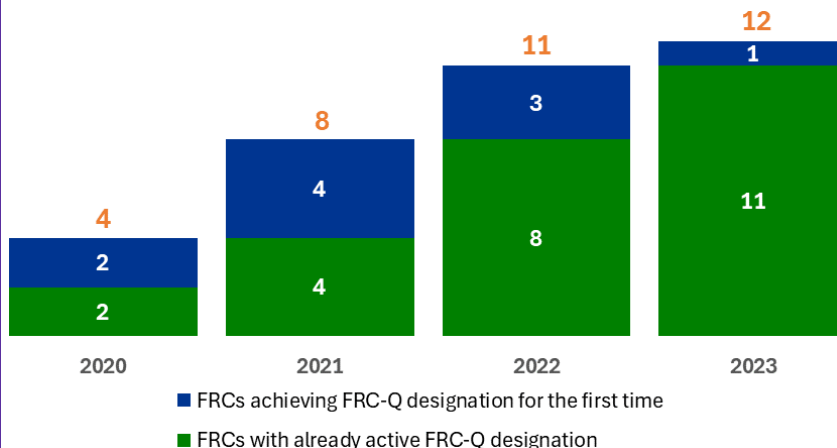


Examples of funded activities include:

- Staff training and professional development
- Data system/ technology upgrades
- Preschool programming
- Parent education classes
- Kinship Community closet
- Dads' groups
- Positive family connections group
- Play groups
- Developmental screening



The **total number of FRCs with the Quality designation tripled** from 2020 to 2023.



FRC-Q, as designated by NH's Wellness and Primary Prevention Council, denotes a documented level of service quality and family support approaches that meets the [NH FRC of Quality Operational Standards](#).

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