

# EVALUATION OF THE INCREDIBLE YEARS

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September 2006 – August 2007



OCTOBER, 2007  
OMNI INSTITUTE

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction and Background.**

The mission of Invest in Kids (IIK) is to partner with communities in Colorado to improve the health and well-being of young children, especially those from low-income families, through effective, research-based programs. To date, IIK has adopted two such programs, first the Nurse Family Partnership, and later The Incredible Years, which is the focus of this report.

IIK adopted The Incredible Years (IY) as its second major initiative because of “the outstanding outcomes IY has produced in over 10 years of rigorous research.” IIK works with communities to provide the support needed (including up to \$5000 in matching funds during the initial stages of implementation) to implement the program with fidelity to the proven model and to achieve similar positive outcomes for children and families in Colorado.

The Incredible Years is divided into three distinct training programs that are designed to enhance social competence and reduce aggression in young children aged three to eight years. The three developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive programs are the child social skills program known as Dinosaur School, the teacher skill-building program, and the BASIC Parent Training Program.

Research has shown that these training programs are effective in promoting positive parent and teacher interactions with children, strengthening children’s social and emotional competence and self-regulation, and reducing behavior problems. Each uses real life video vignettes of children interacting with other children, teachers and parents. The vignettes help to promote group discussion and problem solving and to serve as a stimulus for role-play activities. Together, the programs provide a cost-effective, comprehensive approach that supports the healthy development of young children, engages parents in their children’s education, and strengthens teachers’ skills.

In July 2006, IIK contracted with OMNI Institute, a nonprofit, social science research firm in Denver, to evaluate The Incredible Years program in Colorado. The goals of the evaluation were to assess: (1) the overall effectiveness of The Incredible Years in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado, and (2) the critical factors associated with program success in these settings.

### **Method.**

The evaluation specifically addressed the following questions:

#### Dinosaur School Program.

1. To what extent did children’s social competence change during The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?
2. To what extent did outcomes for children differ depending on their level of social competence when they entered the program?
3. To what extent did teachers’ and paraprofessionals’ classroom management strategies change during their implementation of The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?
4. To what degree did teachers deliver The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program with fidelity?
5. How satisfied were teachers with The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?

### BASIC Parent Training Program.

6. To what extent did children's social competence change during parent participation in The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?
  7. To what extent did parents' skills in promoting their children's social competence change during the BASIC Parent Training Program?
  8. To what degree did parent group leaders deliver the BASIC Parent Training Program with fidelity?
  9. How satisfied were parents with The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?
- The evaluation design included pretest and posttest measurement, based on surveys completed by teachers and parents, to assess change in child, parent, and teacher skills during the time they were involved in The Incredible Years programs. Fidelity of program implementation was assessed throughout the programs, based on data collected from surveys completed by teachers, parents and parent group leaders, and from observations of teachers and parent group leaders completed by IIK staff. Lastly, parent satisfaction and teacher satisfaction with the programs were assessed at the end from parent and teacher surveys.

Dinosaur School Program. The Dinosaur School is typically taught by one classroom teacher and one paraprofessional over the course of the academic year. *Pre-evaluation packets* were mailed to participating sites in late September 2006; teachers and paraprofessionals were asked to complete the forms and return them to OMNI before the end of October. *Post-evaluation packets* were mailed in early April 2007; teachers and paraprofessionals were asked to complete the forms and return them before the end of May.

BASIC Parent Training Program. Parent groups began at different times throughout the year. *Pre-evaluation packets* were sent to the participating site prior to the first class. Parent group leaders were asked that they and the parents in their group complete the forms during the first session and then return them to OMNI. *Post-evaluation packets* were sent by the seventh session and returned at the end of the program.

### **Results.**

The overall number of participants for each of the measures differs slightly depending on the pattern of missing data for a particular measure.

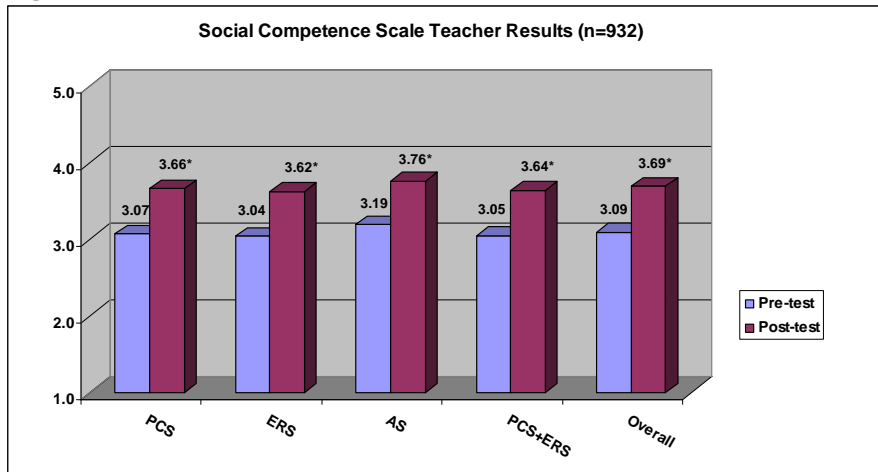
### Dinosaur School Program.

1. *To what extent did children's social competence change during The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?*

The *Social Competence Scale/Teacher* assesses each child's: (1) Prosocial and Communication Skills (PCS), e.g., "resolves peer problems on his/her own," (2) Emotion Regulation Skills (ERS), e.g., "accepts legitimate imposed limits," and (3) Academic Skills (AS), e.g., "follows teacher's verbal directions," based on a teacher's experience with that child. Teachers rate each child on a scale from 1-5 with 1 = not at all; 5 = very well.

As is shown in Figure 1, overall, there was a statistically significant increase in the mean ratings of student skills from pretest to posttest for each of the five scores reported for this measure: PCS, ERS, and AS, as well as a PCS + ERS combined score and a PCS + ERS + AS overall score. For each score, the mean rating increased from "moderately well" towards "well" from the beginning to the end of the Dinosaur School.

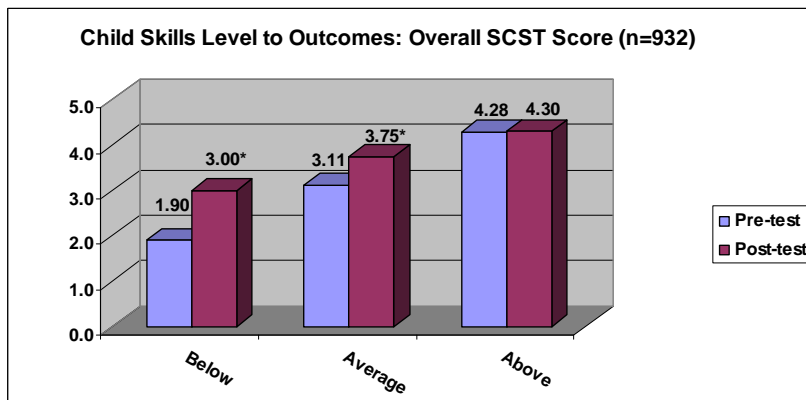
**Figure 1**



2. To what extent did outcomes for children differ depending on their level of social competence when they entered the program?

Children were divided into three groups based on their pretest scores on the *Social Competence Scale*. As is shown in Figure 2, there was a statistically significant increase from pretest to posttest in overall social competence for those children who were rated either “below average (n = 235)” or “average (n = 468)” on the pretest. Overall, these findings demonstrate that those children who were most in need of program services (reflected by low pretest scores) showed the most improvement after participating in the Dinosaur School.

**Figure 2**



3. To what extent did teachers' and paraprofessionals' classroom management strategies change during their implementation of *The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program*?

The *Teacher Strategies* measure is composed of five subscales: (1) Managing Classroom Behavior, e.g., “how confident are you in managing current behavior problems in your classroom?”, (2) Working with Parents, e.g., “collaborate with parents on a home-school behavior program,” (3) Total Positive Strategies, e.g., “comment on good behavior,” (4) Inappropriate Strategies, e.g., “single out a child or a group of children for misbehavior,” and (5) Positive Approaches with Parents, “call

parents to report good behavior.” There were no statistically significant changes in mean scores on any of these five subscales from pretest to posttest for teachers (n = 51) or paraprofessionals (n = 14).

#### *4. To what degree did teachers deliver The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program with fidelity?*

Fidelity of implementation was measured by teacher report and by IIK staff observations. Of particular interest was adherence to implementation markers such as “dosage” or the percent of activities conducted by teachers such as reviewing the rules poster or reading books. Overall, teachers (n = 39) reported delivering high “dosage” of activities, conducting, on average, a minimum of 85% of the available choices of activities.

Another key marker of implementation fidelity included percent of teachers attending the standard training in The Incredible Years program which was reported to be 69.5%.

IIK staff observed 58 teachers included in this evaluation at least once during the school year, rating them on: (1) how well they engaged in promoting skills such as acting playful with children and preparing for transitions effectively, (2) how well they involved parents, (3) children’s responses to the teacher, and (4) overall implementation which included preparation, knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts, and fidelity to presentation methods. Overall, teachers were rated as doing between “well” to “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

#### *5. How satisfied were teachers with The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?*

Sixty-nine teachers completed the *Teacher Satisfaction Survey*. When asked, “How easy was it to integrate the Dinosaur School Program into your regular classroom curriculum, 66.6% of teachers responded either “easy” or “very easy.” When asked about how well the program met their goals for social and emotional development, almost 80% responded either “well” or “very well.”

Approximately 75% of teachers responded either “mostly” or “definitely” when asked if “the content and activities of the program were developmentally appropriate and individualized as needed.”

With regard to training, over 80% responded that they were either “prepared” or “very well prepared” to implement the program on their own next year, and slightly less than half (45.7%) responded that they would either “definitely” or “most definitely” like ongoing training. Almost half (47.5%) of the teachers responded that the workload involved in implementing the curriculum was either “realistic” or “very realistic.”

With regard to parent involvement and homework activities, only 33% of teachers responded that students’ parents were either “involved” or “very involved” in the Dinosaur School Program. Only 31.8% indicated that homework activities were either “important” or “definitely important” for the students.

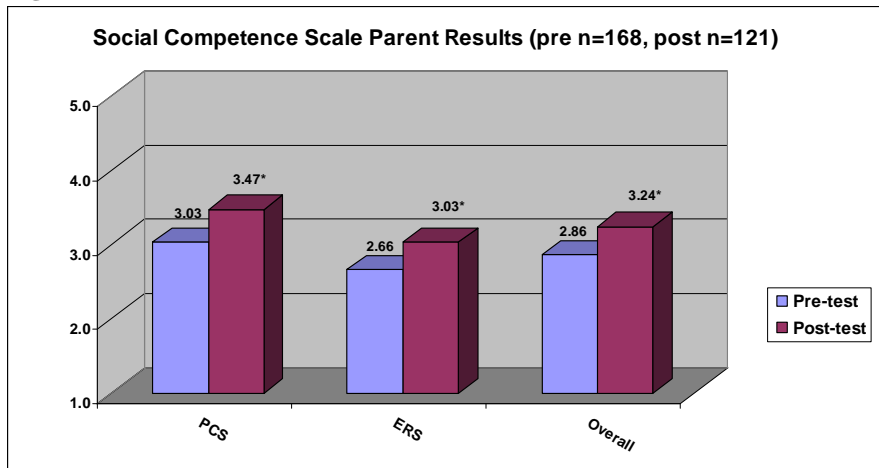
#### BASIC Parent Training Program.

#### *6. To what extent did children’s social competence change during parent participation in The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?*

The Social Competence Scale/Parent is composed of two subscales: (1) Prosocial and Communication Skills (PCS), e.g., “My child works out problems with friends or brothers and sisters on his/her own,” (2) Emotion Regulation Skills (ERS), e.g., “My child can calm down by himself/herself when excited or all wound up.” Parents rate their child from 1 to 5 with 1 = not at all; 5 = very well.

As is shown in Figure 3, there was a statistically significant increase in the mean ratings from pretest to posttest for Prosocial and Communication Skills, Emotion Regulation Skills, as well as overall.

**Figure 3**



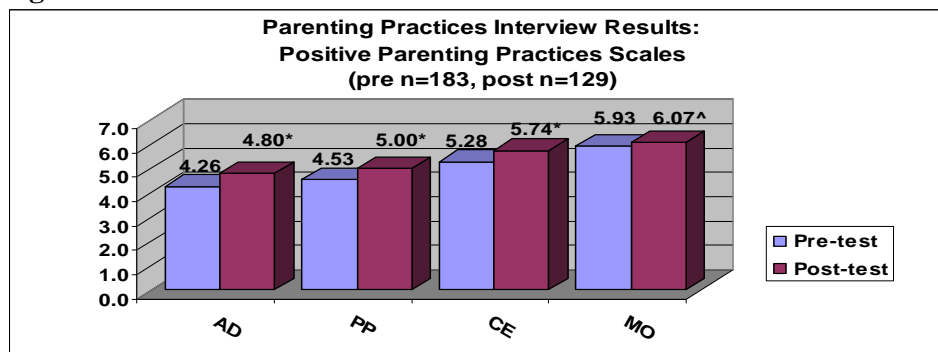
7. To what extent did parents' skills in promoting their children's social competence change during The Incredible Years Parent Skill Building Program?

The *Parenting Practices* measure is composed of two scales, Positive Parenting and Negative Parenting. Each scale is further divided into a number of subscales.

For Positive Parenting Practices, the four subscales are: (1) Appropriate Discipline (AD), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you give your child a brief time out away from family?, (2) Positive Parenting (PP), e.g., when your child behaves well, how often do you praise or complement your child?, (3) Clear Expectations (CE), e.g., when your child goes to bed or gets up on time, how likely are you to praise or reward your child?, and (4) Monitoring (MO), e.g., what percentage of your child's friends do you know well? All items are rated on a 7-point scale. For each subscale, an increase in the mean from pretest to posttest indicates that parents are using more positive parenting techniques with their children.

As is shown in Figure 4, the mean increase from pretest to posttest for three of the positive parenting subscales was statistically significant, and the fourth approached significance.

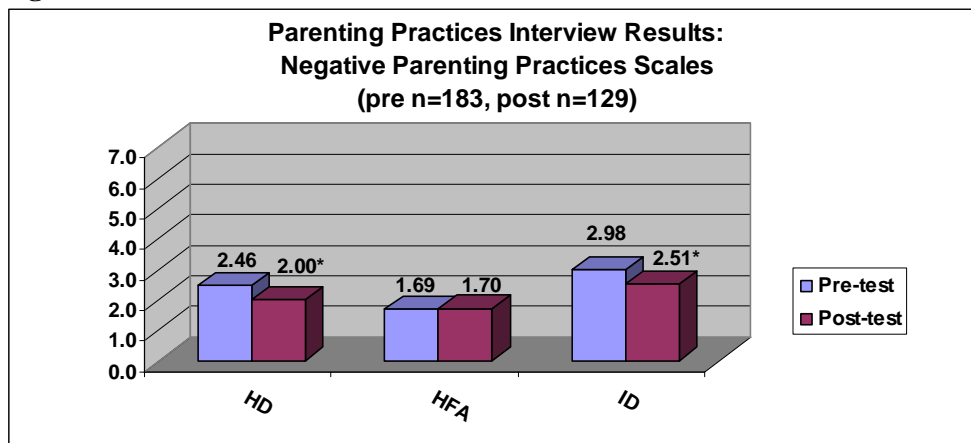
**Figure 4**



For Negative Parenting Practices, the three subscales are: (1) Harsh Discipline (HD), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you give your child a spanking, (2) Harsh for Age (HFA), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you send child to room for at least 60 minutes, and (3) Inconsistent Discipline (ID), e.g., if you ask your child to do something and she does not do it, how often do you give up trying to get him/her to do it? All items are rated on a 7-point scale. For each subscale, a decrease in the mean from pretest to posttest indicates that parents are using less negative parenting techniques with their children.

Results indicated that there was a significant decrease in Harsh Discipline and in Inconsistent Discipline from pretest to posttest. There was essentially no change in the use of discipline that was harsh for age.

**Figure 5**



8. *To what degree did parent group leaders deliver The Incredible Years Parent Training with fidelity?*

Fidelity of implementation was measured by parent group leaders and by IIK staff observations.

Overall, group leaders (n = 22) completed an average of 74.2% of the vignettes and 89.3% of the session agenda items per session, indicating a high level of fidelity of implementation of the Parent Group Training.

IIK staff observed and rated group leaders (n = 24) on: (1) the quality of their leader and group process skills, leadership skills, relationship building skills, knowledge, and methods and promotion skills, (2) parent's responses to the group leader, and (3) overall implementation which included knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts and fidelity to presentation methods. Group leaders were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = not well; 5 = extremely well. Overall, parent group leaders were rated as doing between "well" to "very well" with regard to implementation quality.

9. *How satisfied were parents with The Incredible Years Parent Training?*

Parents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the (1) overall program, (2) teaching format, (3) specific parenting techniques, (4) parent group leaders, and (5) other parent group members/their parent group itself.



The following description highlights responses to selected questions from each of the subscales. For the Overall Program subscale, when asked if the problem(s) that originally prompted the parent to take this program had improved for their child, over 90% responded “improved” or “greatly improved.” Moreover, almost all (97.1%) responded that they would either “recommend” or “strongly recommend” the program to a friend or relative.

With regard to Teaching Format, almost all (97.1%) reported that the content of information was “useful” or “extremely useful.” Almost all parents (95.7%) responded that they found the overall group of specific parenting techniques to be “useful” or “extremely useful.” Almost all parents (94.1%; average for two leaders) found their leader’s teaching to be “high” or “superior” and responded that their leader was either “helpful” or “extremely helpful” (96.4%; average for two leaders). When asked about their parent group, almost 90% found their group to be “supportive” or “very supportive.”

## **Discussion.**

The Incredible Years is designed to enhance social competence and reduce aggression in young children aged three to eight years. The goals of this evaluation were to assess (1) the overall effectiveness of the Incredible Years in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado, and (2) the critical factors associated with program success in these settings.

### Dinosaur School Program.

- Results indicate a significant increase from pretest to posttest in the social competence of young children who are taking part in the Dinosaur School Program.
- Children who were rated as below average or average in social competence at the beginning of the Dinosaur School Program showed significant gains in social competence over the school year.
- Perhaps surprisingly, despite the change in child social competence, there was no corresponding change on any aspect of teacher strategies from pretest to posttest. This included managing classroom behavior, working with parents, total positive strategies, inappropriate strategies, and positive approaches with parents.
- Although there was no significant change in reported teacher strategies, the majority of teachers report satisfaction with the Dinosaur School Program. Most indicated that it was easy to integrate the program into their regular curriculum and that the program met their goals for social and emotional development.
- Most teachers also reported that they were prepared to deliver the program on their own in the future.
- Overall, teachers reported covering 85% of the activities.
- IK staff ratings of teachers observed in the classroom were favorable. Overall, teachers were rated as doing between “well” and “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

### BASIC Parent Training Program.

- Parents who were participating in the BASIC Parent Training Program report a significant increase in their child’s social competence mirroring the positive change reported by teachers for children in their classes.

- Parents also report positive changes in their parenting practices as measured by an increase in their use of appropriate discipline, positive parenting, and clear expectations and a decrease in harsh discipline and inconsistent discipline.
- Parent satisfaction with all aspects of the program was high. Over 90% reported that the problem(s) that originally prompted them to take the program had improved or greatly improved.
- On average, group leaders covered almost 75% of the vignettes and completed almost 90% of the session agenda items each week.
- IIK staff ratings of parent leaders observed in their groups were favorable. Overall, group leaders were rated as doing between “well” and “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

## Introduction and Background

In 1998, Invest in Kids (IIK) was founded by a group of attorneys and other community leaders in response to the ever-increasing number of serious crimes being committed by young people. The founders realized that this trend was likely to continue if effective programs were not in place to keep children from “falling through the cracks.” Therefore, they committed themselves to finding and supporting programs to help at-risk children get a better start in life.

The mission of Invest in Kids (IIK) is to partner with communities in Colorado to improve the health and well-being of young children, especially those from low-income families, through effective, research-based programs. To date, IIK has adopted two such programs; first the Nurse Family Partnership, and later The Incredible Years (IY), the latter of which is the focus of this evaluation report.

IIK adopted The Incredible Years as its second major initiative because of “the outstanding outcomes IY has produced in over 10 years of rigorous research.” IIK works with communities to provide the support needed (including technical assistance and up to \$5000 in matching funds during the initial stages of implementation) to implement the program with fidelity to the proven model, and to achieve these positive outcomes for children and families in Colorado.

The Incredible Years is divided into three distinct training programs that are designed to enhance social competence and reduce aggression in young children aged three to eight years. The three developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive programs (e.g., Webster-Stratton, 2004) are the child social skills program taught by teachers known as Dinosaur School, the Teacher Training Program, and the BASIC Parent Training Program. Research has shown that these training programs are effective in promoting positive parent and teacher interactions with children, strengthening children’s social and emotional competence and self-regulation, and reducing behavior problems (e.g., Hutchings, Bywater, Daley, & Lane, 2007; Reid, Webster-Stratton & Hammond [in

press]; Taylor, Schmidt, Pepler, & Hodgins, 1998; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2002; Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2001; Webster-Stratton & Taylor, 1998). Each uses real-life video vignettes of children interacting with other children, teachers and parents to promote group discussion and problem solving, and to serve as a stimulus for role-play activities. Together, the training programs provide a cost-effective, comprehensive approach (Olchowski, Foster, and Webster-Stratton, 2006; Webster-Stratton, 2000) that supports the healthy development of young children, engages parents in their children's education, and strengthens teachers' skills.

## **Description of the Evaluation**

In July 2006, IIK contracted with OMNI Institute, a nonprofit, social science research and technical assistance firm based in Denver, to evaluate The Incredible Years program in Colorado. The goals of the evaluation were to assess: (1) the overall effectiveness of The Incredible Years in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado, and (2) the critical factors associated with program success in these settings. The specific questions that the evaluation was designed to address are outlined below, organized by each of the three training programs.

### **Dinosaur School Program**

9. To what extent did children's social competence change during The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?
10. To what extent did outcomes for children differ depending on their level of social competence when they entered the program?

### **Teacher Training Program.**

11. To what extent did teachers' and paraprofessionals' classroom management strategies change during their implementation of The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?

12. To what degree did teachers deliver The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program with fidelity?

13. How satisfied were teachers with The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?

**BASIC Parent Training Program**

14. To what extent did children's social competence change during parent participation in The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?

15. To what extent did parents' skills in promoting their children's social competence change during the BASIC Parent Training Program?

16. To what degree did parent group leaders deliver the BASIC Parent Training Program with fidelity?

17. How satisfied were parents with The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?

The evaluation design included pre-test and post-test measurement, based on surveys completed by teachers and parents, to assess changes in child, parent, and teacher skills during the time they were involved in The Incredible Years programs. In addition, fidelity of implementation was assessed throughout the lifespan of the program, based on data collected from surveys completed by teachers, parents and parent group leaders, in addition to, observations of teachers and parent group leaders completed by IIK staff. Lastly, parent satisfaction and teacher satisfaction with the programs were assessed following training, through parent and teacher surveys.

The evaluation protocol for the Dinosaur School and BASIC Parent Training Programs will be described, in turn, below. Summaries of the evaluation measures employed and the timetable of administration is provided in Tables 1 and 2 following these descriptions.

**Dinosaur School and Teacher Training Program Evaluation Protocol.** The Dinosaur School is typically taught by one classroom teacher and one paraprofessional over the course of the

academic year. *Pre-evaluation packets* were mailed to participating sites during the week of September 25, 2006. These packets included the following forms: *Teacher Profile*, *Teacher Strategies*, *Social Competence Scale/Teacher*, and the *Unit Checklists*. Teachers and paraprofessionals were asked to complete the forms and return them to OMNI during the subsequent week of October 23rd. In preparation for teacher completion following the school-year end of the Dinosaur Program, *post-evaluation packets* were mailed to participating sites during the week of April 6, 2007. These packets included the following forms: *Teacher Strategies*, *Social Competence Scale/Teacher*, and the *Teacher Satisfaction Survey*. Teachers and paraprofessionals were asked to fill out the forms and return them to OMNI by May 18th. To encourage participation, a reminder card was sent at the beginning of May, and teachers were offered a \$10 gift card as an incentive to return the forms on time.

In addition to the *Unit Checklists* completed by the teachers, fidelity of implementation was also assessed through direct observations by IIK staff. IIK staff observed teachers in their classrooms at various times throughout the year and completed the *Implementation/Quality of Teacher Child Group Process Measure* each time.

**Table 1: Dinosaur School and Teacher Training Program Measures**

Measures	Description	Pre	Post
Teacher Profile	Provides basic information about the background/ experience of the teachers and paraprofessionals delivering the program.	X	
Teacher Strategies	Measures teachers' and paraprofessionals' practices for managing classroom behavior, specific teaching techniques, and approaches for working with parents. The measure is both reliable and valid, and has been used in previous research regarding social-emotional learning with young children.	X	X
Social Competence Scale/ Teacher (One per Child)	Provides information about each student's prosocial/communication skills, emotion regulation skills, and academic skills based on teacher experience with each child. The measure is both reliable and valid, and has been used in previous research regarding social-emotional learning with young children.	X	X

**Table 1: Dinosaur School and Teacher Training Program Measures (Continued)**

Measures	Description	Pre	Post
Teacher Satisfaction Survey	Provides teachers an opportunity to report on the value of the Dina School Training content areas, how much they liked the program, and how well they were able to implement the program.		X
Unit Checklists	Units 1 to 7 were to be filled out by teachers as each unit was completed. For each unit, teachers indicate the video vignettes and lessons covered, whether they followed process guidelines (such as opening circle time with a predictable routine), practice activities completed, and what they did to promote the unit concepts (such as, praising children who were following directions).	Sent in Pre-Packet, filled-out throughout year. Returned in Post-Packet	
Implementation/Quality of Teacher Child Group Process Measure	This measure rated teachers on: (1) how well they engaged in promoting skills (such as, acting playful with children and preparing for transitions effectively), (2) how well they involved parents, (3) children’s responses to the teacher, and (4) overall implementation, which included preparation, knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts, and fidelity to presentation methods.	Completed up to four times throughout the year by IIK Staff.	

**BASIC Parent Training Program Evaluation Protocol.** Parent groups began at different times throughout the year. IIK staff notified OMNI when a parent group was planning to begin. *Pre-evaluation packets* were sent to the participating site prior to the first class. These packets included the following forms: *Parent Profile, Parent Practices Interview, Social Competence Scale/Parent, Group Leader Profile, Parent Weekly Evaluation Form, and Leader Checklists.* Parent group leaders were asked that they and the parents in their group complete the forms during the first session and then return them to OMNI. Then, *post-evaluation packets* were mailed to participating sites during the seventh week of the twelve-week program. These packets included the following forms: *Parent Practices Interview, Social Competence Scale/Parent,* and the *Parent Program Satisfaction Questionnaire.* Parent group leaders were asked that they and the parents in their group complete the forms during the last session and then return them to OMNI.

In addition to the *Parent Weekly Evaluation Forms* completed by the parent and the *Leader Checklists* completed by group leaders, fidelity of implementation was also assessed through direct observations by IIK staff. IIK staff observed group leaders during their parent group sessions and completed the *Implementation/Quality of Parent Group Leader Process Measure* each time.

**Table 2: BASIC Parent Training Program Measures**

Measures	Description	Pre	Post
Group Leader Profile	Provides basic information about the background/ experience of the group leaders delivering the program.	X	
Parent Profile	Provides basic demographic information, such as, parent education, primary language spoken at home, race/ethnicity, and any disabilities their child might have.	X	
Parent Practices Interview	Measures the different practices parents use to discipline their child and teach him/her right from wrong. This measure is both reliable and valid, and has been used in previous research regarding social-emotional learning with young children.	X	X
Social Competence Scale/ Parent	Provides information about their child’s prosocial/ communication skills and self-control based on parent experiences. The parent version of the social competence scale, like the version for teachers, is both reliable and valid and has been used in previous research regarding social-emotional learning with young children.	X	X
Parent Program Satisfaction Questionnaire	Provides parents with an opportunity to report on the value of program content areas, learning modalities used, and group process.		X
Parent Weekly Evaluation Form	Measures how helpful parents found the content of the weekly session, the videotape vignettes, the group leaders’ teaching, and the group discussion.	Sent in Pre-Packet, filled-out after each session. Returned with Post-Packet.	



**Table 2: BASIC Parent Training Program Measures (Continued)**

Measures	Description	Pre	Post
Leader Checklists	Sessions 1 to 12 were to be filled out by group leaders at the end of each session. For each session, group leaders indicate the content, key concepts, and principles covered via group discussion, video vignettes and role play. They also indicate whether they followed process guidelines, such as, writing the agenda on the board and reviewing parents' home activities.	Sent in Pre-Packet, filled-out after each session. Returned with Post-Packet.	
Implementation/Quality of Parent Group Leader Process Measure	This measure rated group leaders on: (1) the quality of their leader and group process skills, leadership skills, relationship-building skills, knowledge, and methods and promotion skills, (2) parents' responses to the group leader, and (3) overall implementation, which included knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts and fidelity to presentation methods.	Completed twice during the 12 week session by IIK Staff.	

## Results

In this section, teacher and paraprofessional profile data will be presented first. Next, results relating to child and teacher outcomes, fidelity of Dinosaur School Program implementation, and teacher satisfaction with the Dinosaur School Program are discussed, addressing, in turn, each of the evaluation questions relating to the Dinosaur School and the Teacher Training Program presented earlier in the Description of Evaluation Section. Finally, results relating to child and parent outcomes, parent satisfaction, and fidelity of the BASIC Parent Training Program implementation are discussed, addressing, in turn, each of the evaluation questions relating to the BASIC Parent Training Program presented earlier in the Description of Evaluation Section. The overall number of participants for each of the measures differs slightly depending on the pattern of missing data for a particular measure.

## Statistical Considerations for Interpretation of Results

In this report, change over the course of the program is assessed by statistically comparing participants' responses to survey questions prior to program participation, known as baseline or a **pre-test**, and following completion of the program, referred to as a **post-test**. This comparison is made through a test of statistical significance, called a **paired samples t-test**, which assesses the likelihood that an observed change between pre-test and post-test is statistically meaningful.

When using a paired samples t-test, each individual's response on the pre-test must be matched to his/her post-test responses in order to statistically compare participants' pre-post data. Unique identifying information (e.g., an identification number) is used to make this match. Data that can not be matched, due to someone only taking the pre-test or only the post-test, for example, is excluded from the paired samples t-test. The data included in the analysis are referred to as **matched cases**.

When matched pre-post data is not achievable (e.g., inadequate sample size, no unique identifier, etc.), the group difference on the pre-test can be compared to the post-test. This group sample t-test can be used to assess the likelihood that an observed change between pre-test and post-test is not due simply to chance. While this statistical test is less sensitive than a paired samples t-test, it can provide helpful information about statistically meaningful changes.

Statistical tests, like the t-test, are tests of **statistical significance**. Statistical significance is a way of representing the probability that shifts in pre-post data indicate a real change. Tests of statistical significance calculate that probability (p-value); in turn, this can be used to judge the level of confidence with which one can generalize observed changes. It is standard practice in the social sciences to consider p-values less than ( $<$ ) 0.05 statistically significant. In some cases, p-values between .05 and .08 are worth noting because they approach the .05 benchmark. In these cases, the term "approaching significance" is used.

An important **limitation** of interpreting the p-value and statistical significance is with regard to statistical power. Most small programs lack an **adequate sample size**, that is, the number of participants completing the pre- and post-test, to evoke confidence in the p-value and test of statistical significance. A more unrestricted analysis is to determine the **effect size** to answer the question: how much of an effect did the program have? **Effect size** analyses provide an indication of the amount of change regardless of sample size. Effect size can be interpreted similarly to a “percent difference” on a metric between .00 and .99. Effect sizes can be negative or positive, and a score of 0 represents no change. Generally speaking, effect sizes in social research are likely to be small (under .2).

Effect sizes and p-values can be used together to provide a more comprehensive picture of true program outcomes, particularly with a larger sample size. In the case of a sample size of 15 or fewer, p-values should not be interpreted. In those instances, effect sizes can provide a “benchmark” for comparison against other small sample results.

### **Dinosaur School and Teacher Training Programs**

Program success can be a product of the professional training and experience of the individuals implementing a program. Data collected from the *Teacher Profile* provides information about the teachers and paraprofessionals delivering the Dinosaur School Program in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado. Information about participating teachers is presented below first, followed by that of participating paraprofessionals. Please note that profile data on teachers and paraprofessionals presented below reflects 1) the teacher population from which completed matched pre-posttest teacher strategy and outcome data for participating children were available, and 2) those paraprofessionals who remained with the program through its duration.

As is shown in Table 3, slightly more than half (50.8%) of the teachers had ten or more years of experience in early childhood or elementary education while the majority of the remaining teachers (47.6%) had between two and nine years of experience. Moreover, approximately 76% of the teachers reported having at least an Associate’s Degree, and more than half (55.8%) at least a Bachelor’s Degree. The majority of participating teachers was Caucasian (65.1%) with a mean age of 41 years. The standard training that IIK provides for teachers and paraprofessionals is three days long. Most teachers (69.5%) completed 3+ days of Incredible Years training, whereas 10.2% reported receiving no training. It is important to note that in some sites, the Dinosaur School is taught by an outside facilitator rather than the classroom teacher. In these situations, the facilitator is trained, but the classroom teacher is not trained. This would help to explain why 10.2% of teachers reported receiving no training.

**Table 3 Series: Profile Data on Teachers Participating in the Dinosaur Program (n = 63)**

	0 – 1 Years	2 – 9 Years	10+ Years
<b>Years of experience in early childhood or elementary education</b>	1.6%	47.6%	50.8%

	GED / High School Diploma	Some College	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Master’s Degree	Other
<b>Highest Educational Level Completed</b>	1.6%	18.0%	19.7%	41.0%	14.8%	4.9%

	Mexican/ Mexican-American	Other Latino/ Hispanic	African American	Caucasian	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Other
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	12.7%	9.5%	4.8%	65.1%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%

	None	1 Day	2 Days	3+ Days
<b>Amount of Incredible Years training received</b>	10.2%	8.5%	11.9%	69.5%

As is shown below in Table 4, slightly more than half (51.2%) of the paraprofessionals had between two and nine years of experience in early childhood or elementary education while almost 30% had ten or more years of experience. Moreover, approximately 33% had at least an Associate’s Degree and 25% had at least a Bachelor’s Degree. The majority was Caucasian (53.8%) with a mean age of almost 36 years. Half completed 3+ days of Incredible Years training, whereas 30.6% reported receiving no training.

**Table 4 Series: Profile Data on Paraprofessionals Participating in the Dinosaur Program (n = 41)**

	0 – 1 Years	2 – 9 Years	10+ Years
<b>Years of experience in early childhood or elementary education</b>	19.5%	51.2%	29.3%

	GED / High School Diploma	Some College	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Master’s Degree	Other
<b>Highest Educational Level Completed</b>	20.0%	42.5%	7.5%	20.0%	5.0%	5.0%

	Mexican/ Mexican-American	Other Latino/ Hispanic	African American	Caucasian	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Other
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	25.6%	10.3%	0.0%	53.8%	2.6%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	5.1%

	None	1 Day	2 Days	3+ Days
<b>Amount of Incredible Years training received</b>	30.6%	5.6%	13.9%	50.0%

Having completed our description of the backgrounds of the teachers and paraprofessionals delivering the Dinosaur School Program to children, we now move on to the questions this evaluation was intended to address.

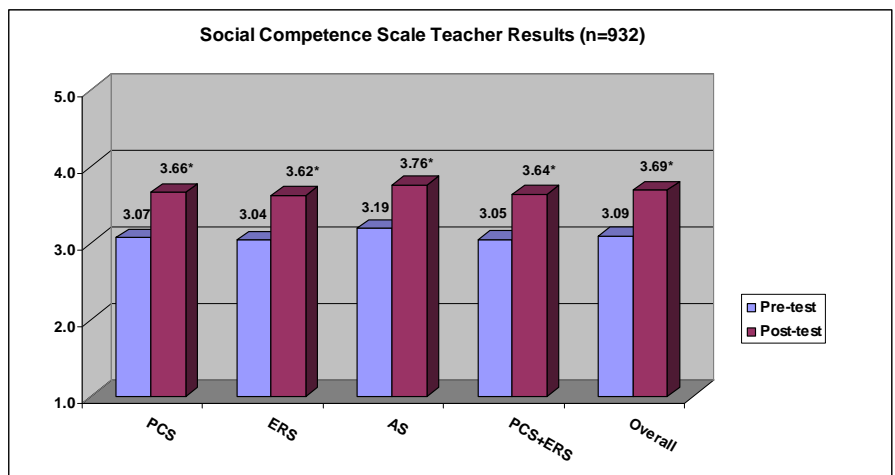
1. *To what extent did children’s social competence change during The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?*

As was noted in the Introduction and Background section, the Dinosaur School Program is designed to enhance social competence and reduce aggression in young children. The *Social Competence Scale/Teacher* is composed of three subscales: (1) Prosocial/Communication skills (PCS), e.g., “resolves peer problems on his/her own,” (2) Emotion Regulation Skills (ERS), e.g., “accepts legitimate imposed limits,” and (3) Academic Skills (AS), e.g., “follows teacher’s verbal directions.” Students are rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 = not at all, 3 = moderately well, and 5 = very well. This measure provides individual scores for each of the three subscales; that is, PCS, ERS, and AS, as well as, a PCS + ERS combined score and a PCS + ERS + AS overall score. An increase in the mean score from pre-test to post-test indicates an increase in student social competence.

**Figure 1**

As is illustrated in Figure 1, overall, there was a significant increase ( $p < 0.05$ ; matched t-test) in the mean rating of student skill from pre-test to post-test for each of the five scores reported for this measure. For each score, there

was an increase from a mean rating of “moderately well” towards a mean rating of “well” from the beginning to the end of the Dinosaur School. Moreover, effect sizes were large, ranging



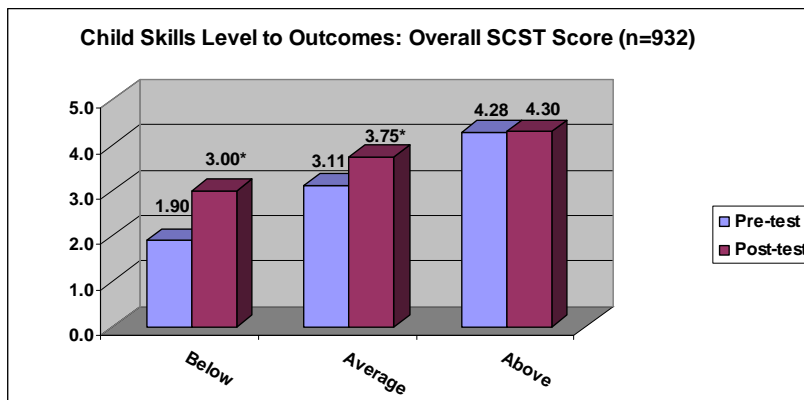
from 0.60 to 0.66. This is noteworthy, since effect sizes in social science research are typically small (under .2). These large effect sizes suggest that participation in the Dinosaur School is related to the kind of positive change in social competence the program is intended to affect.

2. To what extent did outcomes for children differ depending on their level of social competence when they entered the program?

Children were divided into three groups based on their pre-test scores on the *Social Competence Scale/Teacher*, that is, below average, average, and above average. The percentage of children who improved in their overall social competence from pre-test to post-test was 94%, 81%, and 62%, respectively, for the “below average,” “average,” and “above average” groups.

Moreover, as is shown in Figure 2, there was a statistically significant increase ( $p < .001$ ; matched t-test) from pre-test to post-test in overall social competence for those children who were rated either “below average ( $n = 235$ )” or “average ( $n = 468$ )” on the pre-test. This is important because these results demonstrate that those children who were most in need of program services (reflected by low pre-test scores) showed the most improvement after participating in the Dinosaur School.

**Figure 2**

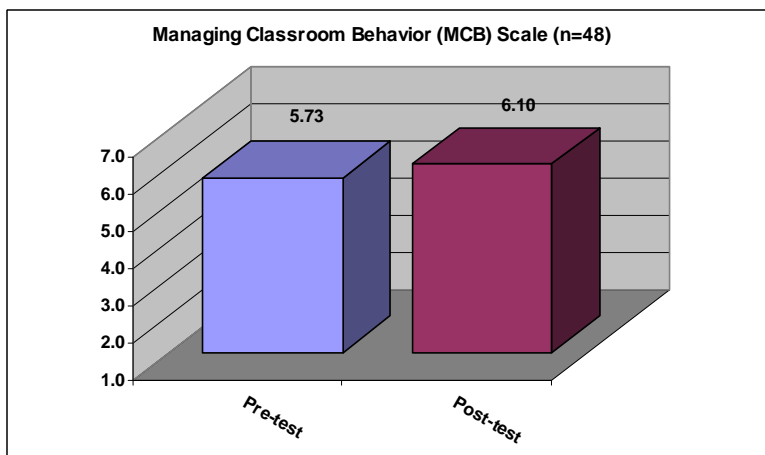


3. To what extent did teachers' and paraprofessionals' classroom management strategies change during their implementation of the Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?

The *Teacher Strategies* measure is composed of five subscales. For each subscale, an increase in the mean from pre-test to post-test indicates an increase in appropriate and effective teaching strategies.

One subscale is Managing Classroom Behavior (MCB), e.g., “how confident are you in managing current behavior problems in your classroom?” Response choices range from 1 to 7, with 1 = very unconfident, 4 = neutral, and 7 = very confident. Results (matched t-test) indicate that the increase in mean teacher response from pre-test to post-test was not significant (see Figure 3), but there was a moderate effect size (0.28).

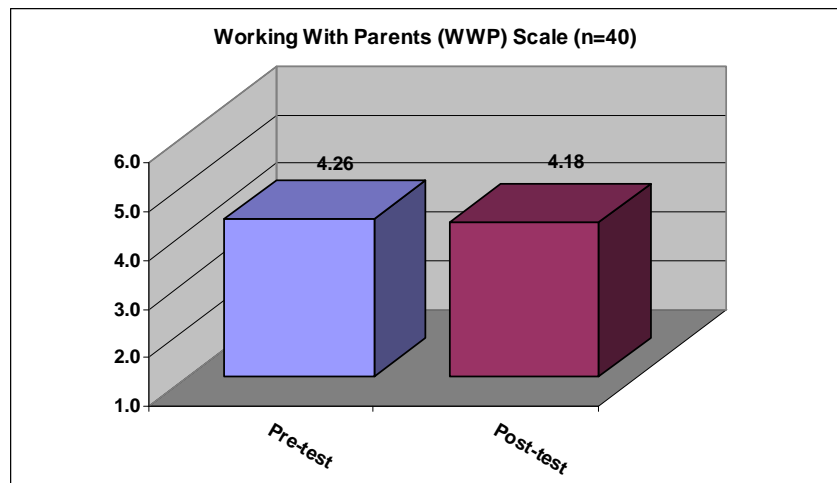
**Figure 3**



Another subscale is Working with Parents (WWP), e.g., “collaborate with parents on a home-school behavior program.” Response choices range from 1 to 6, with 1 = never, 3 = 2 to 3 times a year, and 6 = daily.

**Figure 4**

Results indicate that the decrease in mean teacher response from pre-test to post-test was not significant (see Figure 4), and the effect size was small (-0.11).

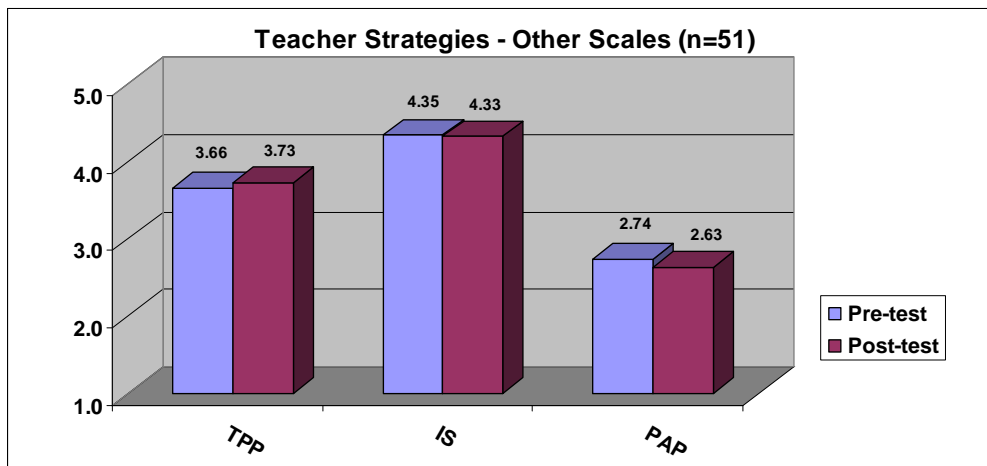




The three other subscales are (1) Total Positive Strategies (TPS), e.g., “comment on good behavior,” (2) Inappropriate Strategies (IS), e.g., “single out a child or a group of children for misbehavior,” and (3) Positive Approaches with Parents (PAP), “call parents to report good behavior.” Each item in these subscales is rated for both frequency of use and usefulness on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = rarely/never, 3 = half the time, and 5 = very often. The score for each item is the average of the combined ratings for frequency of use and usefulness. Items on the IS subscale are reverse scored.

For Total Positive Strategies, results indicate that the increase in mean teacher response from pre-test to post-test was not significant. Moreover, neither the decrease in mean teacher response from pre-test to post-test for Inappropriate Strategies nor Positive Approaches with Parents was significant (see Figure 5). Effect sizes were small. They were 0.18, -0.04, -0.15, respectively, for Total Positive Strategies, Inappropriate Strategies, and Positive Approaches with Parents.

**Figure 5**



In addition to assessing change in the average of the combined ratings for frequency of use and usefulness for each of these three subscales, ratings for frequency of use and for usefulness were also analyzed separately. As was true for the average rating, there were no significant changes from pre-test to post-test for the separate ratings of frequency of use or usefulness for Total Positive Strategies, Inappropriate Strategies, or Positive Approaches with Parents.

Only fourteen paraprofessionals completed both the pre-test and post-test *Teacher Strategies*. Due to the small sample size, these results will not be reported in detail. It should be noted, however, that there were no significant changes in mean paraprofessional scores on any of the five subscales from pre-test to post-test.

In addition to assessing change in mean response from pre-test to post-test on the five subscales of the *Teacher Strategies* form, teachers' responses to the individual questions comprising each subscale were evaluated, as well. For each question, the percentage of teachers who selected response choices that indicated a high frequency of use, for example, "often" or "very often," was also calculated. For questions relating to Managing Classroom Behavior, the corresponding choices were "confident" or "very confident." Teachers' responses to highlighted questions are reported below. Responses to all of the questions on the Teacher Strategies form can be found in Appendix A.

Ninety percent of the teachers reported being "confident" to "very confident" in managing current behavior problems in the classroom. Slightly more, 93%, responded being "confident" to "very confident" in their ability to manage future behavior problems in the classroom.

With regard to Total Positive Strategies, 98% of teachers reported that they praised good behavior "often" or "very often," and 100% of teachers responded that they gave clear positive directions "often" or "very often."

For Inappropriate Strategies, when asked how often they singled out a child or a group of children for misbehavior, 13% said "often" or "very often." None of the teachers reported using physical restraint "often" or "very often."

With regard to Working with Parents, 50% of teachers involved parents in special activities to do with their child at home "1x/week" to "daily," and 58% report that they ask parents to volunteer in the classroom "1x/week" to "daily."

For Positive Approaches with Parents, 47% sent notes home about positive behavior “often” to “very often,” and 34% made home visits “often” to “very often.”

4. *To what degree did teachers deliver The Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program with fidelity?*

Recall that fidelity of implementation was measured by teacher report using the *Unit Checklists* and by IIK staff observations using the *Implementation/Quality of Teacher Child Group Process Measure*.

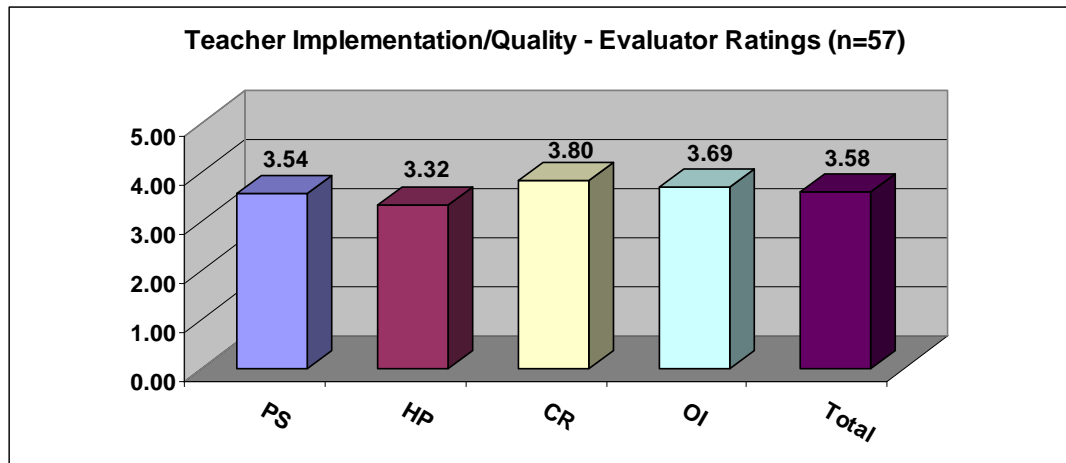
Of particular interest was adherence to implementation markers (such as, “dosage”) or the percent of activities conducted by teachers (such as, reviewing the rules poster or reading books). Overall, teachers (n = 39) reported delivering high “dosage” of activities, conducting, on average, a minimum of 85% of the available choices of activities. Although variability in amount delivered existed, it was in a positive direction; teachers tended to deliver *more* activities than the average. This finding held for units 1 through 5, with the majority of teachers dropping off in implementation after Unit 5. This drop off is likely due to the fact that teachers were encouraged to focus on and complete the first five units and consider units 6 and 7 to be “extra” or “bonus” units.

In addition, another key marker of fidelity of implementation included percent of teachers attending the standard training in the Incredible Years program. A large percent of teachers (69.5%) reported receiving 3+ days of training.

Fifty-seven of the 63 teachers who had completed pre- and post-test *Social Competence Scales* for their students and/or their own pre- and post-test *Teacher Strategies* forms were observed at least once during the school year. The *Implementation/Quality of Teacher Child Group Process Measure* rated teachers on: (1) how well they engaged in promoting skills, such as, acting playful with children and preparing for transitions effectively (PS), (2) how well they involved parents (HP), (3) children’s responses to the teacher (CR), and (4) overall implementation which included preparation,

knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts, and fidelity to presentation methods (OI). Teachers were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = not well, 3 = well, and 5 = extremely well. Mean scores for the four scales, as well as, a total mean score are shown in Figure 6. Overall, teachers were rated as doing between “well” to “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

*Figure 6*



5. *How satisfied were teachers with the Incredible Years Dinosaur School Program?*

Sixty-nine teachers completed the *Teacher Satisfaction Survey*. Their responses are presented in Table 5. When asked, “How easy was it to integrate the Dina School Program into your regular classroom curriculum,” 66.6% of teachers responded either “easy” or “very easy.” When asked about how well the program met their goals for social and emotional development, almost 80% responded either “well” or “very well.” Almost 40% responded “well” or “very well” when asked how well the program met their goals for enhancing emergent literacy, reading, and writing. Approximately 75% of teachers responded either “mostly” or “definitely” when asked if “the content and activities of the program were developmentally appropriate and individualized as needed.” Moreover, 76% replied that they were either “likely” or “very likely” to do small group activities next year.

With regard to training, over 80% responded that they were either “prepared” or “very well prepared” to implement the program on their own next year, and slightly less than half (45.7%) responded that they would either “definitely” or “most definitely” like ongoing training. Almost half (47.5%) of the teachers responded that the workload involved in implementing the curriculum was either “realistic” or “very realistic.”

With regard to parent involvement and homework activities, only 33% of teachers responded that students’ parents were either “involved” or “very involved” in the Dina School Program. Only 31.8% indicated that homework activities were either “important” or “definitely important” for the students.

**Table Series 5: Teacher Satisfaction Questions (n = 69)**

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Easy (4)	Very Easy (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q1. How easy was it to integrate the Dina School Program into regular classroom curriculum?</b>	2.9%	14.5%	15.9%	36.2%	30.4%	3.77

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Well (4)	Very Well (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q2. How well did the Dina School Program meet your goals for social and emotional development?</b>	0.0%	2.9%	17.6%	45.6%	33.8%	4.10
<b>Q3. How well did the Dina School Program meet your goals for enhancing emergent literacy, reading and writing skills?</b>	1.5%	23.5%	35.3%	30.9%	8.8%	3.22

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Prepared (4)	Very Prepared (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q4. Do you feel prepared to implement the Dina School Program on your own next year?</b>	0.0%	7.5%	10.4%	44.8%	37.3%	4.12

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Involved (4)	Very Involved (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q5. How involved were your students’ parents in the Dina School Program?</b>	16.7%	31.8%	18.2%	28.8%	4.5%	2.73

**Table Series 5: Teacher Satisfaction Questions (n = 69) (Continued)**

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Mostly (4)	Definitely (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q6. Did you think the content and activities of the program were developmentally appropriate and individualized as needed?</b>	2.9%	15.9%	5.8%	49.3%	26.1%	3.80

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Important (4)	Definitely Important (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q7. How important were the homework activities for the students?</b>	18.2%	24.2%	25.8%	21.2%	10.6%	2.82

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Likely (4)	Very Likely (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q8. How likely are you to do the small group activities next year?</b>	3.0%	9.0%	11.9%	43.3%	32.8%	3.94

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Realistic (4)	Very Realistic (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q9. What did you think about the workload involved in implementing this curriculum?</b>	5.1%	37.3%	10.2%	39.0%	8.5%	3.08

	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Neutral (3)	Definitely (4)	Most Definitely (5)	Mean Score
<b>Q10. Would you like ongoing training?</b>	11.9%	16.9%	25.4%	27.1%	18.6%	3.24

	Mean Score
<b>Teacher Satisfaction Survey Scale Total</b>	3.50

## BASIC Parent Training Program

As discussed earlier, the *Group Leader Profile* provides background information about the individuals who are delivering the BASIC Parent Training Program in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado. Slightly more than 25% of the group leaders had 10 or more years of experience in early childhood or elementary education, while almost half (48.4%) had between two and nine years of experience. Almost 84% had at least an Associate’s Degree, and more than half (58.1%) had a Master’s Degree. Seventy-one percent were Caucasian with a mean age of 40 years (see Table 6).

**Table Series 6: Parent Group Leader Demographics (n = 31)**

	0 – 1 Years	2 – 9 Years	10+ Years
<b>Years of experience in early childhood or elementary education</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>48.4%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>

	GED / High School Diploma	Some College	Associate’s Degree	Bachelor’s Degree	Master’s Degree	Other
<b>Highest Educational Level Completed</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>	<b>58.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

	Mexican/Mexican-American	Other Latino/Hispanic	African American	Caucasian	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Other
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

The *Parent Profile* provides background information about the parents who attend the Parent Groups (see Table 7). Of the 180 parents who completed the form, over 70% were mothers. Almost half (46.9%) were Caucasian, with the next largest ethnic group being Mexican/Mexican American (19.6%). One quarter of parents had at least a college degree, with an additional 32.6% having had at least some college. English was the primary language spoken in the majority of homes

(85.6%), followed by Spanish (14.4%). Additional questions that asked about incidence of emotional or behavioral problems and language delay were asked of everyone, but intended only for parents with children in a Dinosaur School Program. We, therefore, cannot be sure when non-responses indicate the questions to be non-applicable or represent missing data. Of the parents who responded to this question, 21.8% report their children to have an emotional or behavioral problem, and 17.2% indicated language delays for their child.

**Table Series 7: Parent Profile (n = 180)**

	Mom	Dad	Other
Person completing the form	72.6%	17.1%	10.3%

	Males	Females
Child's Gender	45.5%	54.5%

	Mexican/ Mexican-American	Other Latino/ Hispanic	African American	Caucasian	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Other
Parent's Ethnicity	19.6%	12.8%	2.8%	46.9%	9.5%	1.7%	0.6%	3.4%	2.8%

	Grades 0-8	Grades 9-11	GED / Diploma	Some College	College Graduate	Post-College Degree
Highest Educational Level	1.6%	18.0%	19.7%	41.0%	14.8%	4.9%

	English	Spanish	Korean	Vietnamese	Chinese	Other
Primary Language Spoken at Home	85.6%	14.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	Mexican/ Mexican-American	Other Latino/ Hispanic	African American	Caucasian	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Other
Child's Ethnicity	21.3%	14.9%	4.0%	39.7%	8.6%	1.1%	0.0%	7.5%	2.9%

	Language Delay	Cognitive Delay	Physical Handicap	Attention Deficit Disorder	Vision or Hearing Problems	Learning Problems	Emotional/ Behavioral Problem
Does your child have?	17.2%	4.4%	0.6%	6.1%	5.6%	5.6%	21.8%

^Percentages reflect those who answered "yes"



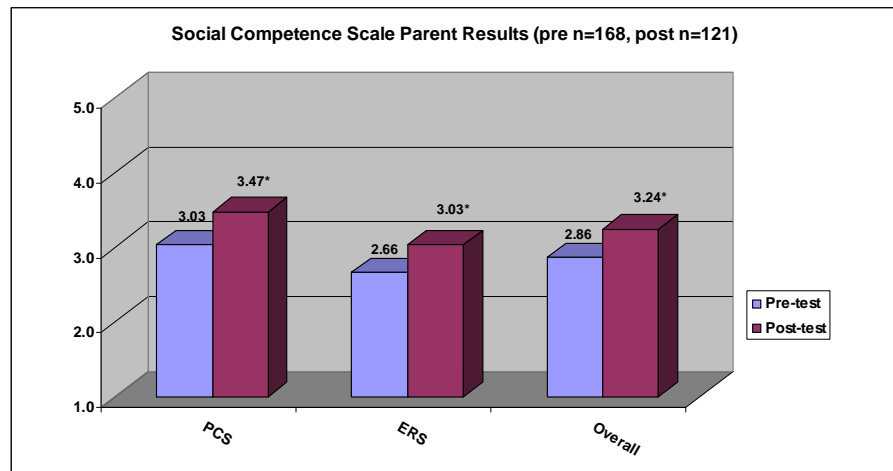
6. To what extent did children’s social competence change during parent participation in The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?

The *Social Competence Scale/Parent* is composed of two subscales: (1) Prosocial/Communication Skills (PCS), e.g., “my child works out problems with friends or brothers and sisters on his/her own,” and (2) Emotion Regulation Skills (ERS), e.g., “my child can calm down by himself/herself when excited or all wound up.” Children are rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 = not at all, 3 = moderately well, and 5 = very well. This measure provides individual scores for each of the two subscales, that is, PCS and ERS, as well as, an overall score. An increase in the mean score from pre-test to post-test indicates an overall increase in children’s social competence.

In order to maximize all data available, the following pre-test/post-test analyses employed a group-samples t-test design. There were 168 pre-test measures and 121 post-test measures.

**Figure 7**

The increase in the mean from pre-test to post-test for Prosocial/Communication Skills was significant ( $p < .05$ ), as was the increase in the mean from pre-test to



post-test for Emotion Regulation Skills ( $p < .05$ ). For both subscales, effect size was large, that is, 0.61 and 0.55, respectively (See Figure 7).

7. To what extent did parents’ skills in promoting their children’s social competence change during The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training Program?

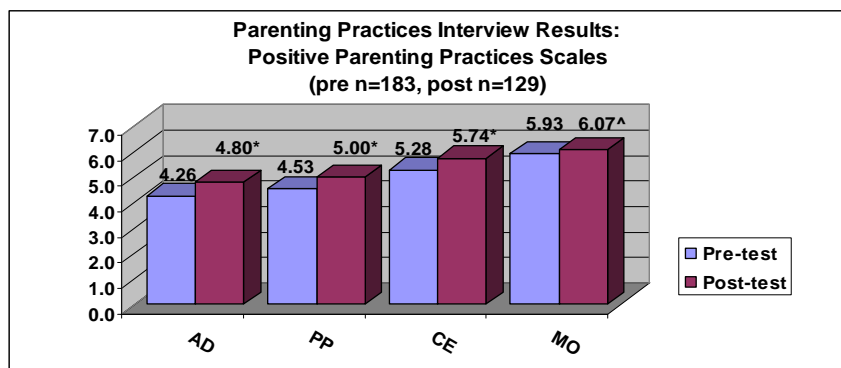
The *Parenting Practices* measure is composed of two scales: positive parenting and negative parenting. Each scale is further divided into a number of subscales, four for positive parenting and three for negative parenting. In order to maximize all data available, the following pre-post analyses employed a group-samples t-test design.

For positive parenting practices, the four subscales are: (1) Appropriate Discipline (AD), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you give your child a brief time out away from family?, (2) Positive Parenting (PP), e.g., when your child behaves well, how often do you praise or complement your child?, (3) Clear Expectations (CE), e.g., when your child goes to bed or gets up on time, how likely are you to praise or reward your child?, and (4) Monitoring (MO), e.g., what percentage of your child’s friends do you know well?

All items are rated on a 7-point scale, but the scale varies depending on the item, not the subscale. For one 7-point scale, items are rated from 1 to 7, with 1 = never, 4 = about half the time, and 7 = always. For another, items are rated from 1 to 7, with 1 = not at all likely, 4 = moderately likely, and 7 = extremely likely. Some questions are multiple choice. For each item, however, the higher the number, the more positive the response. Therefore, for each subscale, an increase in the mean from pre-test to post-test indicates that parents are using more positive parenting techniques with their children.

**Figure 8**

As is illustrated in Figure 8, there was a mean increase from pre-test to post-test for all four of the positive parenting subscales. The



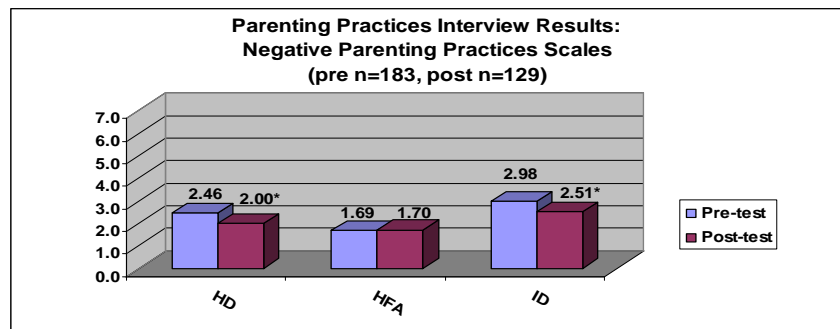
increases for appropriate discipline, positive parenting, and clear expectations were significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), and effect sizes were moderate for PP (0.45) and CE (0.43), and large (0.57) for AD. The difference for monitoring approached significance ( $p > 0.05, < 0.10$ ; effect size was small, 0.19).

For negative parenting practices, the three subscales are: (1) Harsh Discipline (HD), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you give your child a spanking, (2) Harsh for Age (HFA), e.g., when your child misbehaves, how often do you send child to room for at least 60 minutes, and Inconsistent Discipline (ID), e.g., if you ask your child to do something and she does not do it, how often do you give up trying to get him/her to do it?

All items are rated on a 7-point scale, with 1 = never, 4 = about half the time, and 7 = always. For negative parenting practices, for each subscale, a decrease in the mean from pre-test to post-test indicates that parents are using less negative parenting techniques with their children.

**Figure 9**

Results indicate that there was a significant decrease ( $p < .05$ ) in harsh discipline from pre-test to post-test (Large effect size, 0.65). The decrease in inconsistent discipline from pre-test to post-test was also



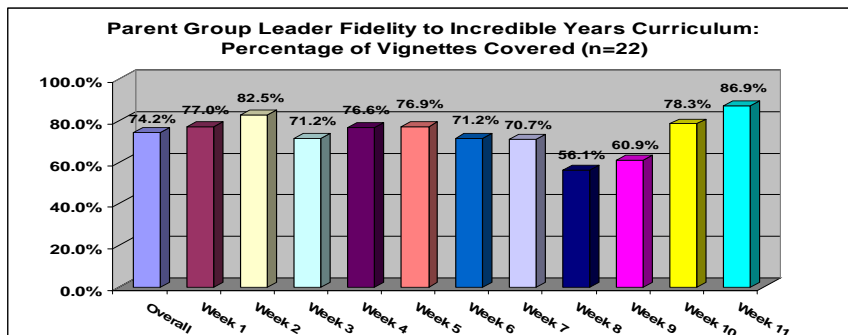
significant ( $p < .05$ ), and the effect size was small, 0.19. There was essentially no change from pre-test to post-test in the use of discipline that was harsh for age (see Figure 9).

8. *To what degree did parent group leaders deliver The Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training with fidelity?*

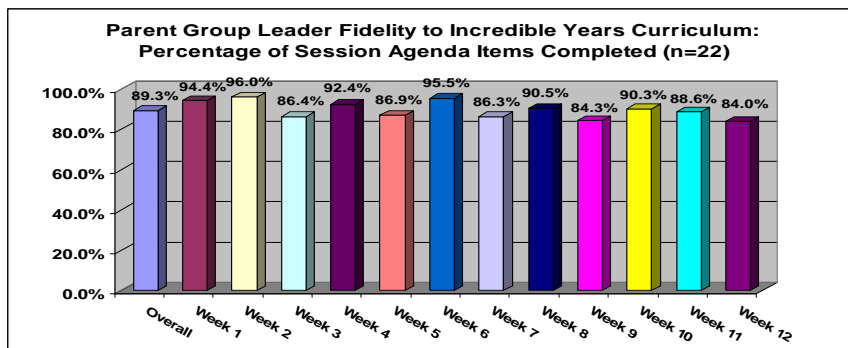
Recall that fidelity of implementation was measured by parent group leaders using the *Leader Checklists* and by IIK staff observations using the *Implementation/Quality of Parent Group Leader Process Measure*.

Twenty-two parent group leaders completed the *Leader Checklists*. Overall, group leaders completed an average of 74.2% of the vignettes (see Figure 10) and 89.3% of the session agenda items (see Figure 11) per session. The higher the percentages of program components completed, the higher the level of fidelity of implementation of the Parent Group Training. The intended goal for this program is 80%. At all but two sessions, the percentage of video vignettes covered was over 70%. The percentage of session agenda items covered was over 80% for all sessions and over 90% for half of them.

**Figure 10**



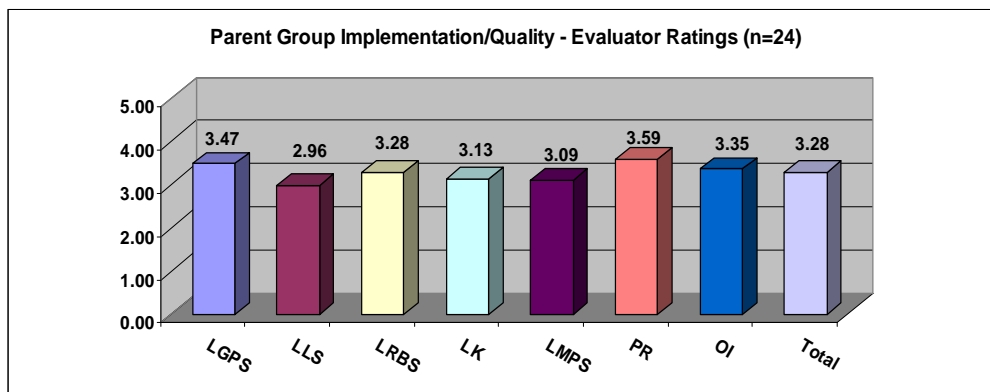
**Figure 11**



Observations were made during at least one and, in most cases, two sessions (for all but three Parent Groups) of each of the 24 Parent Groups that participated in the Evaluation. The *Implementation/Quality of Parent Group Leader Process Measure* rated group leaders on: (1) the quality of their leader and group process skills (LGPS), leadership skills (LLS), relationship-building skills

(LRBS), knowledge (LK), and methods and promotion skills (LMPS), (2) parent’s responses to the group leader (PR), and (3) overall implementation (OI), which included knowledge of the curriculum content and key concepts and fidelity to presentation methods. Group leaders were rated on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = not well, 3 = well, and 5 = extremely well. Mean scores for the seven scales, as well as, a total mean score are shown in Figure 12. Overall, parent group leaders were rated as doing between “well” to “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

**Figure 12**



*9. How satisfied were parents with the Incredible Years BASIC Parent Training?*

The Parent Satisfaction Questionnaire is divided into five subscales which ask about parents’ satisfaction with the: (1) overall program, (2) teaching format, (3) specific parenting techniques, (4) parent group leaders, and (5) other parent group members/their parent group itself. Responses to some of the questions are reported below. Responses to all of the questions can be found in Appendix B.

All items are rated on a 7-point scale. As can be seen in Appendix B, for three subscales (that is, the overall program, parent group leaders, and parent group subscales) the 7-point scale varies depending on the item, not the subscale. The other two subscales (that is, teaching format and specific parenting techniques) use the same 7-point scale. Items are rated from 1 to 7, with 1 = never, extremely useless, 4 = neutral, and 7 = extremely useful. For each item, the higher the

number, the more positive the response. Therefore, for each subscale, an increase in the mean from pre-test to post-test indicates that parents are using more positive parenting techniques with their children.

The following description highlights responses to selected questions from each of the subscales. Please refer to Appendix B: Table 8 for responses to all of the questions. For the Overall Program subscale, when asked if the problem(s) that originally prompted the parent to take this program had improved for their child, over 90% responded “improved” or “greatly improved.” Moreover, almost all (97.1%) responded that they would either “recommend” or “strongly recommend” the program to a friend or relative.

With regard to Teaching Format, almost all (97.1%) reported that the content of information was “useful” or “extremely useful.” The majority also responded either “useful” or “extremely useful” when asked about group discussions of parenting skills (97.1%), practice of play skills at home with their child (92.6%), reading a chapter from the book (86.7%), and weekly handouts (86.9%). In contrast, only 34.6% found “buddy calls” to be useful or extremely useful.

Almost all parents (95.7%) responded that they found the overall group of specific parenting techniques to be “useful” or “extremely useful.” All (100%) reported that using praise was either “useful” or “extremely useful.” Ignoring was rated as the least effective technique, with 71.4% responding that it was “useful” or “extremely useful.”

Moreover, almost all parents (94.1%; average for two leaders) found their leaders’ teaching to be “high” or “superior,” and responded that their leader was either “helpful” or “extremely helpful” (96.4%; average for two leaders). When asked about their parent group, almost 90% (89.9%) found their group to be “supportive” or “very supportive,” and almost half (47.1%) reported that it was “likely” or “very likely” that they will continue to meet with one or more of the

parents in the group. Clearly, as responses to the survey indicate, overall, parents were very satisfied with the Parenting Program they attended.

Parent satisfaction with the program is clearly reflected in the following comments that parents wrote on their *Parent Program Satisfaction Questionnaire*, which speak to different aspects of their experiences in the parent groups:

“I learned so much about how to praise my child and discipline.”

“It was good to meet away from children to ‘think’ about raising a child. It’s good to see what you need to invest every day of their lives and to see how the good things we do as parents will benefit us in the long term.”

“The teachers were genuinely concerned about me and my family. It was a good feeling to know that other families have the same problems that we do.”

“How it felt in the group as a whole. It was nice visiting with other parents and learning new skills and ideas. Never know when you might need to try something different.”

## **Discussion**

The Incredible Years is designed to enhance social competence and reduce aggression in young children aged three to eight years. The goals of this evaluation were to assess (1) the overall effectiveness of the Incredible Years in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado, and (2) the critical factors associated with program success in these settings. Results of the evaluation will be discussed for the Dinosaur School and Teacher Training Programs, and the BASIC Parent Training Program, in turn.

### **Dinosaur School Program and Teacher Training Program**

Results indicate a significant increase from pre-test to post-test in the social competence of young children who are taking part in the Dinosaur School Program. Overall, significant positive

change was reported for all three aspects of social competence that were measured: prosocial/communication skills, emotion regulation skills, and academic skills. Moreover, children who were rated as below average or average in social competence at the beginning of the Dinosaur School Program showed significant gains over the course of the school year.

Despite the significant change in child social competence, there was no corresponding significant change on any aspect of teacher strategies from pre-test to post-test. This included managing classroom behavior, working with parents, total positive strategies, inappropriate strategies, and positive approaches with parents. However, these non-findings may be due to a “ceiling effect.” That is, at the beginning of the school year teachers rated themselves as highly confident and able in the variety of strategies measured, leaving little room for growth and change over the course of the year.

Although there was no significant change in reported teacher strategies, the majority of teachers reported a good deal of satisfaction with the Dinosaur School Program. Most indicated that it was easy to integrate the program into their regular curriculum, that the program met their goals for social and emotional development, and that they were likely to do small group activities next year. Most teachers also reported that they were prepared to deliver the program on their own in the future.

Despite their positive response to the program, only about half of the teachers responded that the workload involved in implementing the curriculum was “realistic.” Nevertheless, IIK staff ratings of teachers observed in the classroom were favorable, indicating that there was a high quality of classroom implementation. Overall, teachers were rated as doing between “well” and “very well” with regard to implementation quality.



## **BASIC Parent Training Program**

Parents who were participating in the BASIC Parent Training Program report a significant increase in child social competence for both prosocial/communication skills and emotion regulation skills. This mirrors the positive change reported by teachers for children in their classes. Parents also reported positive changes in their parenting practices from pre-test to post-test as measured by an increase in their use of appropriate discipline, positive parenting and clear expectations, and a decrease in harsh discipline.

Parent satisfaction with all aspects of the program was high. Over 90% reported that the problem(s) that originally prompted them to take the program had “improved” or “greatly improved.” Moreover, close to 100% of parents reported that they would recommend the program to a friend or relative.

On average, group leaders covered almost 75% of the vignettes and completed almost 90% of the session agenda items each week.

Finally, IIK staff ratings of parent leaders observed in their groups were favorable. Overall, group leaders were rated as doing between “well” and “very well” with regard to implementation quality.

## **Recommendations**

As the foregoing review indicates, IIK has been very successful in implementing The Incredible Years programs in early care and education settings in Colorado. Results for all who are participating in the programs—children, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and group leaders—are positive, and satisfaction with the different programs is high. The following recommendations,

based on lessons learned, are intended to build on that success and continue to move the program forward in Colorado.

During the next phase of the evaluation, OMNI will continue to work with IIK to build evaluation capacity, to promote the use of evaluation findings for program refinement, and to enhance overall data quality. One of the primary ways that overall data quality can be enhanced is through consistent participation of teachers, parents and parent group leaders in the evaluation. Both, OMNI and IIK will work to increase participants' awareness of the importance of evaluation, simplify evaluation materials and procedures, and share preliminary data with teachers in the fall so they can use the information to inform their teaching for the remainder of the year.

IIK might want to consider ways to encourage teachers to engage more regularly with parents. Only 33% of teachers reported that parents were either "involved" or "very involved" in the Dinosaur School Program. Moreover, teacher responses to questions about different types of contact with parents indicated that the majority were not "often" or "very often" in contact with parents through regular correspondence, phone calls or visits. Teacher-parent collaboration can be extremely beneficial for a child since it provides an opportunity for teachers and parents to share information and to work together to support a child both in school and outside of school.

In the coming year, IIK might want to encourage more paraprofessionals to attend the Dinosaur School training. The program is likely to be more effective if teachers and paraprofessionals share the same knowledge about the program and work together to implement it consistently in the classroom.

One goal of the evaluation was to assess the critical factors associated with program success in early childhood care and education settings in Colorado. This goal relates to questions, such as, "what key factors, for example, teachers' years of experience in early childhood or elementary

education, were associated with changes in children’s social competence?” Such questions could only be addressed in a preliminary way this past year due to data quality issues. Increasing participation in the evaluation will make it possible to explore these kinds of questions more fully during the coming year.

With that in mind, IIK might want to consider creating a site profile for each Dinosaur School site that includes other supports and services that are available to the site (e.g., their Qualistar rating, etc.). This information could be helpful when assessing program effects and/or understanding obstacles to implementation.

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# Appendix A

## Teacher Strategies and Behaviors

As noted in the report, the teachers completed self-report descriptions of their own teaching strategies and behaviors. Across the seven categories of teaching strategies and behaviors, the teachers' self-reports indicate overall positive teaching strategies and behaviors, which are reflected in the following results.

### Managing Classroom Behavior

- 90% reported being “confident” to “very confident” in managing current behavior problems in the classroom
- 93% reported being “confident” to “very confident” in their ability to manage future behavior problems in the classroom

### Praise and Incentives

- 96% commented on good behavior “often” to “very often”
- 56% rewarded good behavior with incentives “often” to “very often”
- 98% praised good behavior “often” to “very often”
- 49% used group incentives “often” to “very often”
- 45% used special privileges “often” to “very often”
- 38% set up individual incentive programs “often” to “very often”

### Proactive Strategies

- 84% used problem-solving strategies “often” to “very often”
- 78% used anger management strategies “often” to “very often”
- 90% prepared children for transitions “often” to “very often”
- 100% gave clear positive directions “often” to “very often”
- 96% used a clear classroom discipline plan “often” to “very often”
- 75% labeled (described) children’s feelings “often” to “very often”
- 6% used green-yellow-red light as a warning system “often” to “very often”

### Useful Limit-Setting Strategies

- 47% used Time Out (Time Away) for destructive behavior “often” to “very often”
- 64% ignored misbehavior that was non-disruptive to the class “often” to “very often”
- 88% used verbal redirection for child who was disengaged “often” to “very often”
- 57% warned of consequences for misbehavior “often” to “very often”
- 63% used nonverbal signals to redirect child who was disengaged “often” to “very often”

### Inappropriate Strategies

- 13% described or commented on bad behavior “often” to “very often”
- 13% singled out a child or a group of children for misbehavior “often” to “very often”
- 0% used physical restraint “often” to “very often”
- 8% used comments in a loud voice “often” to “very often”
- 2% used in-house suspensions “often” to “very often”
- 2% threatened to send child out of classroom if s/he didn’t behave “often” to “very often”
- 0% sent child home for misbehavior

- 6% called parents to report bad behavior “often” to “very often”
- 8% sent home notes to report problem behavior to parent “often” to “very often”

#### Positive Approaches With Parents

- 34% made home visits “often” to “very often”
- 30% held parent support groups “often” to “very often”
- 57% sent newsletters home “often” to “very often”
- 47% sent notes home about positive behavior “often” to “very often”
- 2% called child after a bad day “often” to “very often”
- 8% took a student interest survey “often” to “very often”
- 27% called parents to report good behavior “often” to “very often”

#### Working With Parents

- 30% promoted parent involvement “1x/week” to “daily”
- 9% taught parenting skills “1x/week” to “daily”
- 23% collaborated with parents on home-school behavior programs “1x/week” to “daily”
- 8% held extra parent conferences for particular problems “1x/week” to “daily”
- 50% involved parents in special activities to do with child at home “1x/week” to “daily”
- 62% developed parent partnerships “1x/week” to “daily”
- 58% asked parents to volunteer in classroom “1x/week” to “daily”
- 94% talked to parents “1x/week” to “daily”

# Appendix B



Parent Program Satisfaction Questionnaire (n = 70)

*A: "The Overall Program" Subscale*

	Considerably Worse (1)	Worse (2)	Slightly Worse (3)	The Same (4)	Slightly Improved (5)	Improved (6)	Greatly Improved (7)	Mean Score
A1: The problem(s) that originally prompted me to take this program for my child is (are):	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	7.2%	60.9%	30.4%	6.20
A2: My child's problems which I/we have tried to change using the methods presented in this program are:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	11.4%	61.4%	27.1%	6.14

	Very Dissatisfied (1)	Dissatisfied (2)	Slightly Dissatisfied (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (6)	Greatly Satisfied (7)	Mean Score
A3: My feelings about my child's progress are that I am:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	10.0%	47.1%	38.6%	6.20

	Hindered much more than helped (1)	Hindered (2)	Hindered Slightly (3)	Neither helped nor Hindered (4)	Helped Slightly (5)	Helped (6)	Helped Very Much (7)	Mean Score
A4: To what degree has the program helped with personal /family problems not directly related to your child?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.6%	11.4%	41.4%	38.6%	6.10

	Very Pessimistic (1)	Pessimistic (2)	Slightly Pessimistic (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Optimistic (5)	Optimistic (6)	Very Optimistic (7)	Mean Score
A5: My expectation for good results from the Incredible Years Program is:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%	4.3%	38.6%	45.7%	6.19

	Very Inappropriate (1)	Inappropriate (2)	Slightly Inappropriate (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Appropriate (5)	Appropriate (6)	Very Appropriate (7)	Mean Score
A6: I feel that the approach used to change my child's problems in this program is:	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	47.1%	45.7%	6.30

	Strongly Not Recommended (1)	Not Recommended (2)	Slightly Not Recommended (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Recommended (5)	Recommended (6)	Strongly Recommended (7)	Mean Score
<b>A7: Would you recommend the program to a friend or relative?</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	21.4%	75.7%	6.71

	Very Unconfident (1)	Unconfident (2)	Slightly Unconfident (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Confident (5)	Confident (6)	Very Confident (7)	Mean Score
<b>A8: How Confident are you in managing current behavior problems at home?</b>	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	1.4%	7.1%	50.0%	40.0%	6.24
<b>A9: How confident are you in managing future behavior problems at home using what you learned from this program?</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	5.7%	52.9%	40.0%	6.31

	Very Negative (1)	Negative (2)	Slightly Negative (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Positive (5)	Positive (6)	Very Positive (7)	Mean Score
<b>A10: My overall feeling about achieving my goal in this program for my child/family is:</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	38.6%	58.6%	6.54

	Mean Score
<b>Scale A: "The Overall Program"</b>	6.3

***B: "Teaching Format" Scale***

	Extremely Useless (1)	Useless (2)	Slightly Useless (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Useful (5)	Useful (6)	Extremely Useful (7)	Mean Score
<b>B1: Content of information presented was:</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	47.1%	50.0%	6.46
<b>B2: Demonstration of parenting skills through use of videotape vignettes was:</b>	0.0%	1.4%	2.9%	4.3%	11.4%	51.4%	28.6%	5.94
<b>B3: Group discussion of parenting skills was:</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	23.2%	73.9%	6.70
<b>B4: Practice of play skills at home with your child was:</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	2.9%	39.7%	52.9%	6.41
<b>B5: Other home activities were:</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	32.9%	67.1%	6.67
<b>B6: Reading Chapters from the book</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	10.3%	48.5%	38.2%	6.22

was:								
B7: If you used the CD/audiotape of the chapter, did you find them:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	7.1%	64.3%	14.3%	5.79
B8: Weekly handouts were:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	10.1%	47.8%	39.1%	6.23
	Extremely Useless (1)	Useless (2)	Slightly Useless (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Useful (5)	Useful (6)	Extremely Useful (7)	Mean Score
B9: I found the “buddy calls” to be:	1.8%	0.0%	7.3%	47.3%	9.1%	29.1%	5.5%	4.71
B10: Use of practice or role plays during group sessions were:	0.0%	1.4%	4.3%	4.3%	26.1%	43.5%	20.3%	5.67
B11: Phone calls from group leaders were:	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	37.7%	11.3%	28.3%	18.9%	5.15

	Mean Score
Scale B: “Teaching Format”	6.05

### C: “Specific Parenting Techniques” Scale

	Extremely Useless (1)	Useless (2)	Slightly Useless (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Useful (5)	Useful (6)	Extremely Useful (7)	Mean Score
C1: Child-Directed Play	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	36.8%	51.5%	6.40
C2: Descriptive Commenting	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	8.8%	35.3%	51.5%	6.28
C3: Praise	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	19.1%	80.9%	6.81
C4: Rewards	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	2.9%	14.5%	31.9%	49.3%	6.25
C5: Ignoring	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	21.4%	27.1%	44.3%	6.00
C6: Positive Commands	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	8.8%	47.1%	42.6%	6.31
C7: Time Out	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	5.8%	42.0%	47.8%	6.33
C8: Loss of Privileges, Logical Consequences	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	10.1%	53.6%	33.3%	6.17
C9: Problem solving with children	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	7.1%	8.6%	48.6%	35.7%	6.13
C10: Problem solving with adults & teachers	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	8.8%	19.1%	33.8%	38.2%	6.01
C11: Helping child control his/her anger	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.8%	14.7%	36.85	39.7%	6.07
C12: This Overall Group of Techniques	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	25.7%	70.0%	6.66

	Mean Score
Scale C: “Specific Parenting Techniques”	6.28

### D. “Evaluation of Parent Group Leaders” Scale

#### Group Leader #1

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Slightly Below Ave. (3)	Average (4)	Slightly Above Ave. (5)	High (6)	Superior (7)	Mean Score
D1: I feel that the leader’s teaching was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	1.4%	39.1%	56.5%	6.49

D2: The leader's preparation was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	30.4%	63.8%	6.55
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	Extremely Dissatisfied (1)	Dissatisfied (2)	Slightly Dissatisfied (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (6)	Extremely Satisfied (7)	Mean Score
D3: Concerning the leader's interest and concern in me and my child, I was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.5%	39.7%	57.4%	6.53

	Extremely Unhelpful (1)	Unhelpful (2)	Slightly Unhelpful (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Helpful (5)	Helpful (6)	Extremely Helpful (7)	Mean Score
D4: I feel the leader in the program was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%	20.3%	76.8%	6.72

*Group Leader #2*

	Very Poor (1)	Poor (2)	Slightly Below Ave. (3)	Average (4)	Slightly Above Ave. (5)	High (6)	Superior (7)	Mean Score
D1: I feel that the leader's teaching was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	2.9%	39.1%	53.6%	6.42
D2: The leader's preparation was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	43.3%	2.9%	30.4%	62.3%	6.51

	Extremely Dissatisfied (1)	Dissatisfied (2)	Slightly Dissatisfied (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (6)	Extremely Satisfied (7)	Mean Score
D3: Concerning the leader's interest and concern in me and my child, I was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%	38.2%	55.9%	6.47

	Extremely Unhelpful (1)	Unhelpful (2)	Slightly Unhelpful (3)	Neutral (4)	Slightly Helpful (5)	Helpful (6)	Extremely Helpful (7)	Mean Score
D4: I feel the leader in the program was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	2.9%	29.0%	66.7%	6.61

	Mean Score
Scale D: "Evaluation of Parent Group Leaders" Combined Score	6.54

E. "Parent Group" Scale

	Very Unsupportive (1)	Unsupportive (2)	Somewhat Unsupportive (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Supportive (5)	Supportive (6)	Very Supportive (7)	Mean Score
E1: I feel the group was:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	7.2%	34.8%	55.1%	6.42

	Very Uninterested (1)	Uninterested (2)	Somewhat Uninterested (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Interested (5)	Interested (6)	Very Interested (7)	Mean Score
E2: Concerning other group members' interest in me and my child, I felt they were:	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.5%	10.4%	47.8%	34.3%	6.09

	Yes	No
E3: I would like to keep meeting as a group:	76.3%	23.7%

	Highly Unlikely (1)	Unlikely (2)	Somewhat Unlikely (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Likely (5)	Likely (6)	Very Likely (7)	Mean Score
E4: How likely is it that you will continue meeting with 1 or more of the parents in your group?	4.4%	8.8%	17.6%	7.4%	14.7%	30.9%	16.2%	4.76

	Mean Score
Scale E: "Parent Group" Scale (E1, E2, E3)	5.75