



LEGACY FOR CHILDREN™



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has initiated Legacy for Children™, a set of longitudinal, randomized, controlled studies examining the potential for improving child developmental outcomes through parenting programs designed to promote self-efficacy and a sense of community.

Every Child Deserves a Chance

All children should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Legacy for Children™ endeavors to promote optimal child outcomes by improving child development through promoting self-efficacy in parents. Parental self-efficacy helps parents understand that their behavior can positively influence the development of their children and give them the chance they truly deserve.

A Community That Cares

Parents do a better job of adopting and maintaining behaviors that enhance their child's development if they receive support for these behaviors from a peer group and have a sense of belonging to a community larger than themselves.

A Wise Investment

Investing in our children is investing in our future. Early childhood investment can reduce social costs, both tangible costs such as special education, foster care, welfare, medical care, law enforcement, social security and social services, and intangible costs such as physical and emotional pain experienced by children with developmental delays and their families.

Legacy for Children™

Research question

The primary research question for Legacy for Children™ is “do children in the parenting intervention groups achieve better developmental outcomes than do the children in the comparison groups?”



Theoretical Foundation & Legacy Philosophy

The early years of life (birth to age 5 years) are crucial in a child's development. Parents play a critical role in their children's development and are responsible for the environment in which they grow up. Past research shows that the personal characteristics of successful children consistently correlate to parental influences and behavior. Thus, the basis for the theoretical foundation is that parents can positively influence their child's development.

Research Design

Legacy has both a pilot phase and a main study phase. There are 180 intervention and 120 comparison families in the main study phase and 60 of each in the pilot phase at each study site, Miami and Los Angeles. The 720 participating families are those whose children, on average, would be expected to fall below national norms on a range of developmental outcomes. Process, cost, and short- and long-term outcome data are being collected.

Research Activities

Intervention activities are designed to enhance sensitive and responsive parenting, parent/child interaction, and promote a sense of community. Other activities include verbal and cognitive stimulation through parent and parent/child group meetings, visits to the home, and participation in community events.

The Future of Our Children

Legacy's desired long-term outcome is that children will have the capacity to be self-supporting and emotionally healthy in order to lead productive lives, and to become productive citizens.