



EVALUATION OF THE 2014 COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM'S PARENT PROGRAM

Evaluation of the 2014 Community Violence Prevention Program's Parent Program

July 2015

Prepared by

Jessica Reichert, Senior Research Analyst
Hannah Ridge, Research Intern

This evaluation was supported by Grant #10-DJ-BX-0015 awarded to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of ICJIA or the U.S. Department of Justice.

Suggested citation: Reichert, J., & Ridge, H. (2015). *Evaluation of the 2014 Community Violence Prevention Program's Parent Program*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
300 West Adams, Suite 200
Chicago, Illinois 60606
Phone: 312.793.8550
Fax: 312.793.8422
www.icjia.state.il.us

Acknowledgements

ICJIA wishes to thank the following individuals and agencies for providing assistance and guidance for this project:

Kathy Goetz Wolf, *Be Strong Families*
Dara Griffin, *Be Strong Families*
James McCombs, *Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention*
Malik Nevels, *Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention*
Kristy Rauch, *Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention*
Guy Schingoethe, *Be Strong Families*

The agency would like to acknowledge the following ICJIA staff and former staff for their assistance:

Megan Alderden
Shamsideen Balogun
Caitlin DeLong, Intern
Christine Devitt Westley
Jin Fong
Tracy Hahn
Shataun Hailey
Marilyn Jackson
John Maki
Wendy McCambridge
Cristin Monti Evans
Mark Myrent
Sal Perri
Mark Powers
Cindy Puent
Christopher Schweda
Rebecca Skorek
Lisa Stephens

Table of contents

Key findings.....	i
Introduction	1
Literature review.....	2
About the Parent Program.....	5
Methodology.....	17
Findings: Administrative program data.....	22
Findings: Protective factors survey.....	23
Findings: Exit surveys	36
Parent Leader exit survey	36
Coordinator and Manager exit survey	48
Findings: Training evaluations.....	54
Parent Leader training.....	54
Coordinator and Manager training.....	58
Findings: Parent Café evaluation	62
Findings: Community service project data.....	66
Implications for policy and practice	68
Conclusion	71
References.....	72
Appendix A: Protective factors survey.....	75

Key findings

State and local child protective services receive 3.5 million reports of child maltreatment for 6.4 million children per year (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). The estimated economic burden resulting from maltreatment of children in the U.S. is \$124 billion (Fang, Brown, Florencea, & Mercy, 2012). Child maltreatment is the most common harmful childhood experience causing victims significant and sustained losses to subsequent health-related quality of life including depression, substance abuse, and perpetrating violence (Corso, Edwards, Fang, & Mercy, 2008; Sacks, Murphey, & Moor, 2014). The child victims are more likely to be delinquent and arrested in adulthood than those not experiencing maltreatment (Children's Defense Fund, 2005). Child maltreatment risk factors are prior abuse of the perpetrator, lack of familial support, parental alcohol abuse, living in impoverished communities, parental stress or mental disorders, parental aggression, use of corporal punishment, and child behavioral problems (Black, Heyman, & Slep, 2001).

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (Authority) researchers conducted an evaluation of the Community Violence Prevention Program's (CVPP) Parent Program. The program, which ended August 2014, sought to increase protective factors to reduce child maltreatment by employing and training nearly 1,000 Chicago-area parents to lead service projects to help other parents in 20 communities. The Center for the Study of Social Policy stated that effective parenting programs to prevent child maltreatment attempt to improve parent understanding of child development and teach child management (2003). In addition, those that are parent-led promote parental resilience and inter-parent connections.

Authority researchers analyzed multiple surveys of more than 3,500 staff and participants, as well as administrative data to obtain feedback on training and general program operations.

Key findings

Change in participant protective factors to reduce child maltreatment

Authority researchers measured four protective factors to reduce child maltreatment created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Factors are: 1) *family functioning and resiliency*, 2) *social and concrete support*, 3) *nurturing and attachment*, and 4) *child development and knowledge of parenting*.

Authority researchers administered pre- and post-tests to program participants to measure changes on scores on the protective factors before and after the program. Based on pre- and post-test scores of 300 program participants, all four protective factors had a small increase in average scores. However, two protective had very small changes in the mean scores (*social and concrete support*; *child development and knowledge of parenting*); therefore, improvement could be made in those areas of program instruction, particularly as it relates to addressing the protective factors.

Parent Cafés

All community programs were required to offer parent-led Parent Cafés, a parent engagement strategy that uses small group conversations to facilitate self-reflection, peer-to-peer learning, support, and education on protective factors to reduce child maltreatment. Surveys showed that the parent experiences of Parent Cafés were positive. Almost all participants found information provided to be helpful. The most commonly requested improvement to Parent Cafés was expanding them to more locations in the community and an increase in length and frequency. Incorporating technology and social networking education was also requested, but specifically by parents who are not experienced with the technology their children use frequently.

Parent feedback

Most parents who participated had learned about the program from a friend, relative, or community agency. Participants rated highly program materials, resources, training, and support from their administrative teams. Almost all respondents rated the program successful and said that they used what they learned in the program in their daily lives. Most said their service projects improved the community and 80 percent thought the service projects increased protective factors of child maltreatment. Some participants suggested expanding the program and making it a year-around program.

Staff feedback

Program staff, including Program Coordinators and Program Managers rated the program positively; sharing that the training was well-designed, trainers were knowledgeable, and protective factors were covered. Many indicated that the training programs offered opportunity for personal improvement and that there was an excitement to train and share their knowledge and experiences with parent participants.

Training feedback

Parent Program participants and staff highly rated the content of their training. Most program participants enjoyed sharing, communicating, and interacting with others. Many gained knowledge about parenting. Many staff reported personal improvement with the training and that they were inspired to share their experiences during the training of parent participants.

Implications for policy and practice

The Parent Program ended in August 2014. However, similar programs created in the future should work to reduce child maltreatment by increasing parents' protective factor of *social and concrete support* by offering more information on resources for tangible goods and services to help families cope with stress. In addition, programs should improve the protective factor of *child development and knowledge of parenting* by further promoting the understanding of child development and reasonable expectations for children. An increase the number of Parent Cafés was also recommended to create space for more community discussions on these and other protective factors.

The program should target those most at-risk for maltreating children by targeting younger parents and primary caregivers. In addition, programs should work toward more father participation.

Finally, the program should collect additional data in order to have a greater understanding of who participated in the program and their program activities. Data include age of participants and their children, as well as data on community service projects and to what extent they fit into the overall program goal of violence prevention by reducing child maltreatment and promoting healthy families.

Introduction

In 2014, the Parent Program provided training to 1,000 parents in 20 Chicago-area communities training and coordinated their participation in community service projects. The Parent Program was one of three programs offered through the Community Violence Prevention Program (CVPP). Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) Research and Analysis Unit researchers analyzed administrative data and developed four surveys to evaluate the Parent Program and answer key research questions. These included a training evaluation survey, a pre- and post-survey (given at the beginning and end of the program), and two exit surveys.

The following research questions guided the evaluation.

Research questions about **the parent trainings**:

- How did Parent Leaders learn about the program?
- To what extent did Parent Leaders complete the training?
- To what extent did the training meet its goals and objectives?
- How was the quality of the training?
- How satisfied were Parent Leaders with aspects of the training and the training overall?
- To what extent did the training prepare parents for their job as a Parent Leader?
- How confident were the Parent Leaders in implementing their training in their daily lives and in their communities?

Research questions about **the community service projects**:

- To what extent were Parent Leaders effective in leading the service projects?
- What did the participants learn and find beneficial from the service projects?
- Did Parent Leaders obtain the materials or resources necessary to complete the service projects?
- To what extent did Parent Leaders put into practice the skills learned at the training?
- To what extent did the teams work collaboratively?
- To what extent did the service projects align with protective factors?
- Were resources available for parent teams to continue the projects?
- How many community members participated in community service projects?
- To what extent were the Parent Cafés successful?

Research questions about **the program's effectiveness**:

- To what extent did Parent Leaders increase protective factors: parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and emotional competence of children?
- To what extent were Parent Leaders able to implement any protective factors they acquired in training into strengthening their own families?

Literature review

In 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that state and local child protective services received an estimated 3.5 million reports of child maltreatment (child abuse and neglect) for 6.4 million children. In federal fiscal year 2013, the U.S. had 678,932 reported victims of child abuse and neglect, approximately nine victims per 1,000 children in the population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2013). According to the CDC, child abuse is deliberate action or speech that causes harm, potential harm, or the threat of harm to a child. Child neglect is the failure to provide for the basic physical, emotion, or education needs of a child or a failure to protect a child from harm or potential harm (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

Effects of child maltreatment

According to the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study, child maltreatment is the most common harmful childhood experience (Sacks, Murphey, & Moore, 2014). According to the ACE study, adults who suffered childhood maltreatment experience significant and sustained losses to subsequent health-related quality of life compared to adults who were not maltreated as children, including increased susceptibility to cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, anxiety disorders, depression, substance abuse, and perpetrating violence (Corso, Edwards, Fang, & Mercy, 2008). In addition, child victims of maltreatment are 1.5 to six times more likely to be delinquent and 1.25 to three times more likely to be arrested in adulthood than those who have not been victims of child maltreatment (Children's Defense Fund, 2005). Exposure to violence adversely affects children's physical health and safety, including psychological adjustment, social relations, and academic achievement and effects can be long-lasting (Morgolin & Gordis, 2000).

In the U.S., the estimated total, lifetime, economic burden resulting from child maltreatment is \$124 billion (Fang, Brown, Florence, & Mercy, 2012). Costs included in the total economic burden include adult and child medical costs, productivity losses, child welfare costs, criminal justice costs, and special education costs. The average estimated lifetime economic burden per person is \$1.3 million, and the average lifetime nonfatal cost for childhood health care is \$32,648 per person (Fang et al., 2012).

Risk factors for child maltreatment

Poverty is the single strongest predictor of child maltreatment, but child maltreatment can happen to individuals at all income levels (Children's Defense Fund, 2014). Risk factors for child abuse include the perpetrator's having been abused, lack of familial support, parental alcohol abuse, living in impoverished communities, parental stress or mental disorders, parental aggression, use of corporal punishment, and child behavioral problems (Black, Heyman, & Smith, 2001).

Youth with a lack of strong parental connections may be influenced by their peer's negative behavior and at risk for violence and aggression (Ferguson, San Miguel, & Hartley, 2009). Youth

from unstable or unsafe homes have lower social-emotional and academic functioning than youth from stable homes (Gorman-Smith & Tolan, 1998). Parental involvement is associated with reduced conduct problems (Pearce, Jones, Schwab-Stone, & Ruchkin, 2003). Parent support is positively associated with youth resilience for those who encounter community violence (O'Donnell, Schwab-Stone, & Muyeed, 2002). Delinquent peers, however, are negatively correlated with resilience to substance abuse and misconduct in school (O'Donnell et al., 2002).

Protective factors to reduce child abuse and neglect

Be Strong Families, the agency leading the Parent Program, is grounded in the research-based and evidence-informed Strengthening Families' protective factors framework. The framework established by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, incorporates five protective factors to promote healthy families and reduce child abuse and neglect: 1) increasing parental resilience, 2) building the social connections of parents, 3) increasing knowledge of parenting and child development, 4) providing concrete supports in times of need, and 5) supporting the social and emotional competence of children. Be Strong Families developed a family strengthening and violence prevention program that focuses on training parents on the Protective Factors Framework to encourage engagement and sharing with the surrounding community.

Strategies to reduce child maltreatment

Parenting education and support

Parenting programs to prevent child maltreatment are based on improving parents' understanding of child development and child management techniques to in order to reduce child maltreatment (Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2003). A study by the Center for the Study of Social Policy found an approach "organized around evidence-based protective factors that programs can build around young children by working differently with their families" (Horton, 2003, p.52). Parent-led programs promote parental resilience and inter-parent connections. By increasing connections and support for parents, these programs seek to reduce child maltreatment and violence.

Community-based approach

Community-based approaches to reducing child maltreatment involves families and community stakeholders and leader to provide needed resources for families, strengthen families, and provide support for families (Zaff & Butler, 2008; Prevent Child Abuse America, n.d.). Community-based approaches reflect "a growing awareness of the links between healthy communities and healthy families" (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010). Community engagement can increase awareness of services, integrate services, reduce redundancy in services, track families between agencies, and involve community leaders to widen audiences (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010). Youth with a stronger sense of connectedness to their community, such as school or family, show significantly lower rates of violent behavior, depression, emotional distress, and substance use (Zeldin, 2004).

To use a community-based approach, implementing agencies should determine the history of partnership in the community, if there is sufficient willingness and capability to partner within the community, if there are community leaders to promote the partnership, and if there is sufficient trust among stakeholders (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010). To increase program efficacy, programs should coordinate with partner agencies to make policies similar between agencies while respecting the different needs of the partner agencies and communities (Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, 2010).

About the Parent Program

The 2014 Parent Program provided funding for approximately 1,000 parents in 20 communities. Parents received training on parenting and program orientation and then acted as parent leaders for various community projects that promote protective factors for child maltreatment. The Parent Program was one of three program components offered through the Community Violence Prevention Program (CVPP). Also part of CVPP were the Youth Employment Program and the Reentry Program. CVPP components work to empower and support youth, as well as strengthen parent leadership within communities.

The Youth Employment Program (YEP) provided approximately 1,800 young people between the ages of 16-24 in 23 Chicago area communities with job readiness training, mentoring, and part-time employment. Employment was offered through partnering local businesses and organizations for nine weeks in summer 2014. All wages were subsidized by the CVPP state grant program without cost to employers. YEP was designed to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors associated with violence and strengthen social skills.

The Reentry Program funded case managers who linked youth and young adults on parole in 23 Chicago communities to services to help them transition back to their communities and reduce recidivism.

The Illinois General Assembly approved a \$15 million grant for CVPP in state fiscal year 2014.

ICJIA disbursed violence prevention grant funds to the following organizations in SFY14 to operate CVPP.

- A Safe Haven Foundation
- Albany Park Community Center
- Alliance of Local Service Organizations
- Black United Fund of Illinois, Inc.
- Chicago Area Project
- Chicago Commons
- Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois
- Community Assistance Programs
- Corazon Community Services
- Fellowship Connection
- Goodcity
- Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
- Healthcare Consortium of Illinois
- Proviso-Leyden Council for Community Action
- Pilsen-Little Village Community Mental Health
- Sinai Community Institute
- Southland Healthcare Forum
- Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network (UCAN)
- Woodlawn Children’s Promise

CVPP was implemented in 23 Chicago area communities—19 in Chicago and four in suburban communities—selected based on high poverty and violent crime. Families with children living in low income communities have greater need for economic and social opportunities due to lower-quality schools, insufficient education, lack of employment opportunities, and exposure to

violence which cause physical and psychological harm and skill deficiencies (Koball et. al., 2011).

Twenty of the 23 CVPP communities participated in the Parent Program. These communities were also encouraged to expand to neighborhoods adjacent to their community which included West Town, Near West Side, New City, Chatham, South Chicago, and West Pullman.

The Parent Program communities are in bold.

- **Albany Park**
- Auburn Gresham
- **Austin**
- **Brighton Park**
- **Cicero****
- **East Garfield Park**
- **Englewood**
- Grand Boulevard
- **Greater Grand Crossing**
- **Hermosa/Belmont-Cragin**
- **Humboldt Park**
- **Logan Square**
- **Maywood***
- **North Lawndale**
- **Pilsen/Little Village**
- **Rich/Bloom Township****
- **Rogers Park**
- **Roseland**
- **South Shore**
- **Thornton/Bremen Township****
- **West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn)**
- West Garfield Park
- **Woodlawn**

*Indicates West suburban community

**Indicates South suburban communities

Data indicate that poverty may be the best predictor of maltreatment. Children living in households with an annual income less than \$15,000 are 22 times more likely to be abused or neglected than children in households with incomes over \$30,000 (Children's Defense Fund, 2005).

ICJIA staff analyzed data from the City of Chicago's data portal at <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2>. Rates were derived by calculating the sum of all violent index offenses (homicide, criminal sexual assault, robbery, battery, ritualism, and assault) then dividing by neighborhood populations calculated using census tract data from the 2010 census. Offense rates were not available for townships. The FBI Uniform Crime Reports for 2011 were used for the cities of Cicero and Maywood, but they may not label the same offenses as "violent" as the Chicago data. *Table 1* indicates rates of violent offenses per 100,000 population reported to police in the CVPP communities for 2013.

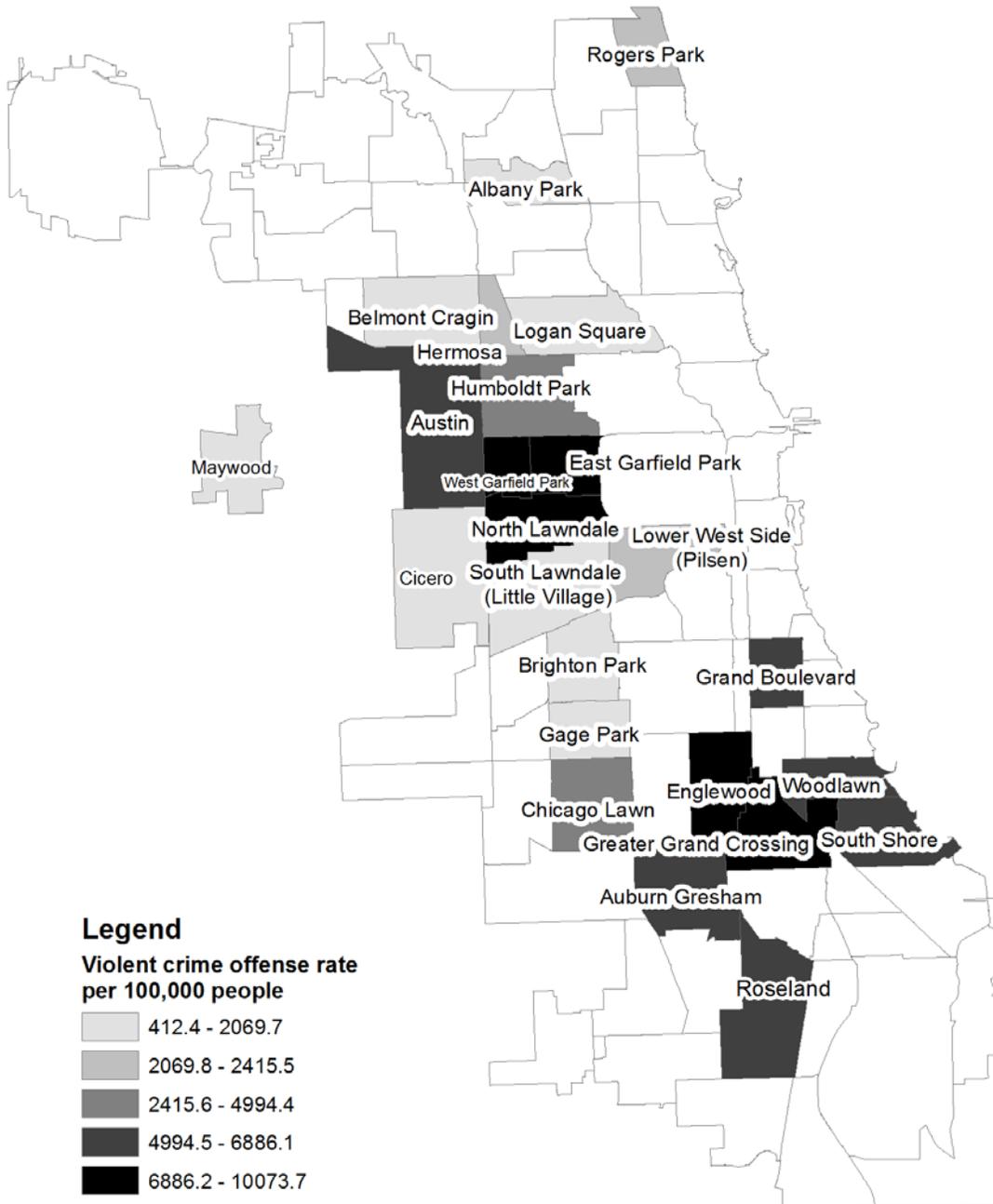
Table 1
Violent offense rate in CVPP communities per 100,000 population, 2013

Community Name	Violent offense rate
Albany Park	1,507.5
Auburn Gresham	6,060.4
Austin	6,066.1
Belmont Cragin	1,946.8
Brighton Park	1,723.7
Chicago Lawn	4,188.5
Cicero	412.4
East Garfield Park	9,072.8
Englewood	10,073.7
Gage Park	1,922.6
Grand Boulevard	6,169.9
Greater Grand Crossing	8,327.7
Hermosa	2,311.1
Humboldt Park	4,994.4
Logan Square	1,886.0
Maywood	859.3
North Lawndale	8,264.6
Rogers Park	2,413.1
Roseland	5,988.5
South Lawndale	2,069.7
South Shore	6,886.1
West Garfield Park	9,338.4
Woodlawn	6,073.2
City of Chicago	3,168.5

Source: ICJIA analysis of Chicago Police Department and U.S. Census Bureau data.

Note: Offense rates were not available for townships.

Map 1
Violent offense rate in CVPP communities, 2013



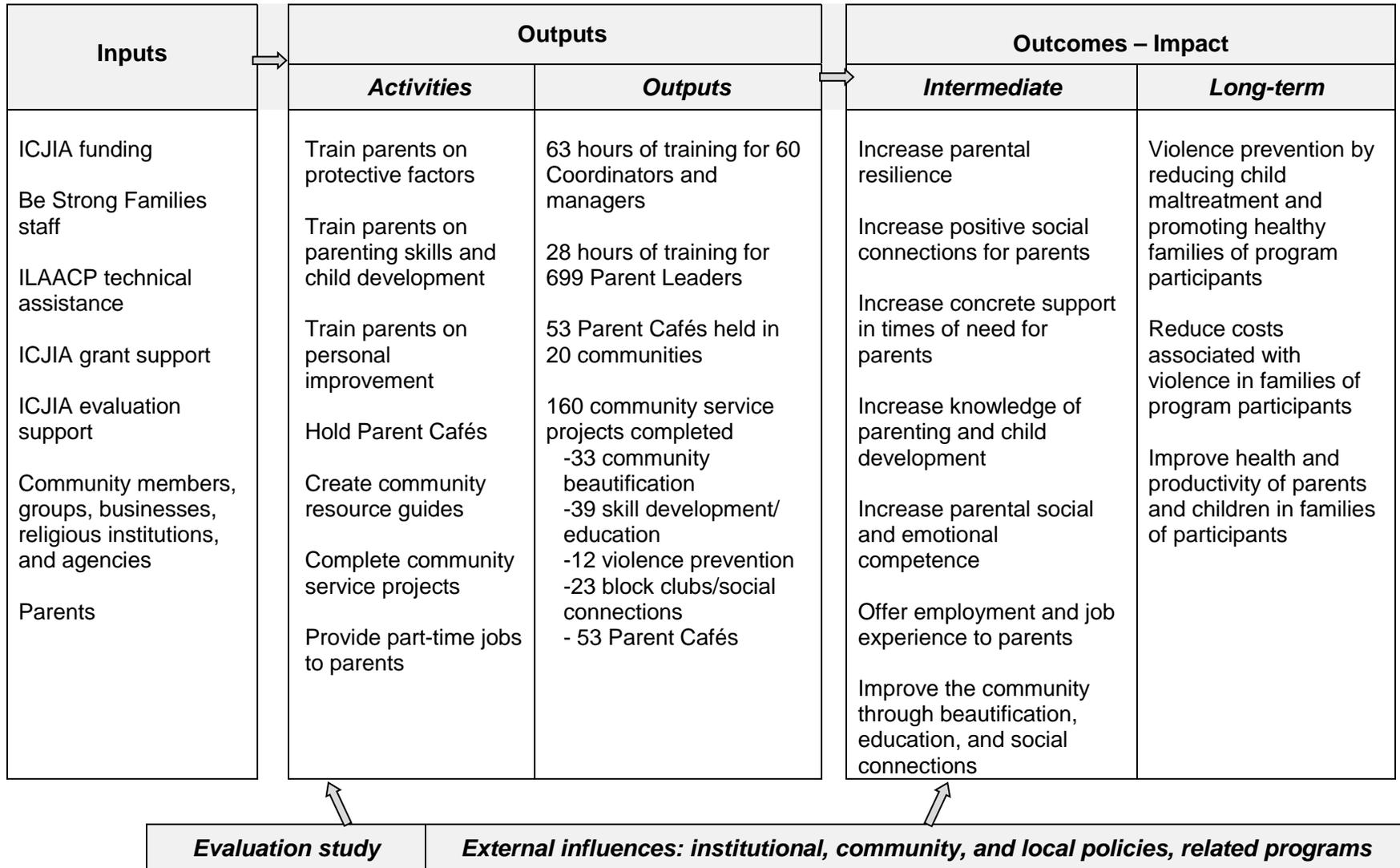
Violent crimes for Chicago community areas consist of person offenses from the City of Chicago Data Portal crimes database available at <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2>. Violent crimes for Maywood and Cicero are 2013 UCR person index offenses.

Parent Program goals

The 2014 CVPP Parent Program had two goals. The first goal was to build protective factors in families with the objective to employ and train about 1,000 individuals (roughly 50 in each community) as parent leaders. The second goal was to increase protective factors in communities. Under that goal was the objective to build five teams of 10 parent leaders to implement a minimum of five service projects in each community (two projects in south suburban communities). The number of community projects implemented varied based on funding.

Figure 1 depicts a logic model of the Parent Program providing linkages among program resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the program (McCawley, 2010).

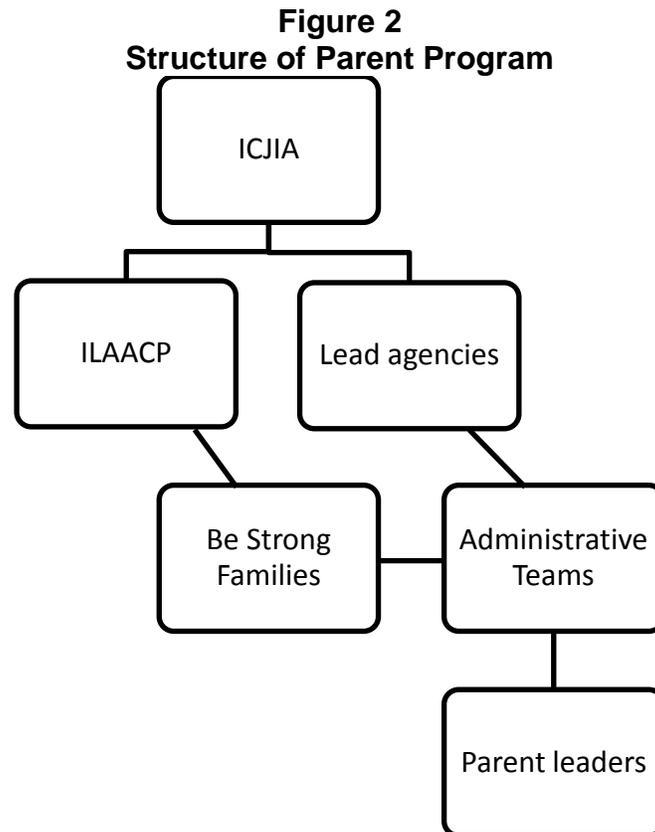
**Figure 1
Parent Program logic model**



Staff structure

ICJIA administered and monitored the grant funds. ICJIA provided both external and internal websites to enhance program administration within the communities. The Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention (ILAACP) coordinated training and provided technical assistance and logistical support to ICJIA and lead agencies to build connected, informed, and engaged communities, enhancing capacity to deliver services. ILAACP is a statewide membership-based charitable organization that strengthens prevention systems, policies and programs in communities through research, training, and advocacy.

Be Strong Families¹ (BSF) was contracted to develop, coordinate, and facilitate the program. BSF is a Chicago-based non-profit organization with a mission “to strengthen families from the inside out to achieve positive outcomes for all.” BSF grew out of a child abuse prevention collaboration called Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI), active between 2005 and 2012. Six BSF staff served as technical assistance providers for the Parent Program. Each served three to four communities. *Figure 2* indicates the structure of the Parent Program.



¹ For more information visit the Be Strong Families website at <http://www.bestrongfamilies.net>

Lead agencies in each of the 20 Parent Program communities were responsible for performing background checks, conducting interviews, and selecting the administrative team members and Parent leaders.

Each administrative team consisted of a manager (working 28 hours per week for 19 weeks) and two coordinators (working 16 hours a week for 19 weeks). Each CVPP community was responsible for hiring and employing 50 parent leaders (20 in south suburbs) to work eight hours per week for 13 weeks. Administrative teams were hired in April 2014 and parent leaders were hired in June 2014.

Below is the job description for the program manager. Their activities included the following:

- Participating in all required meetings, site visits, and events convened by the supervisor.
- Responding to all communications and requests for information by the supervisor.
- Providing supervision for program coordinators.
- Assisting program coordinators in the recruitment, orientation and selection of the parent leader staff.
- Participating in all orientation and staff development training.
- Providing training delivery (in partnership with program coordinators) of parent program topics to parent leader staff.
- Keeping organized project/employee files for each parent leader staff member.
- Maintaining files on all service projects which will include documentation and results.
- Participating in weekly meetings with BSF technical assistance team which will include weekly reporting on parent leader service project implementation activities.
- Being a technical assistance liaison for one service project team in their community.
- Tracking and processing payroll.
- Preparing quarterly fiscal and program narrative reports as required.

Below is the job description for the program coordinator. Their activities included the following:

- Working with administrative team on the recruitment, orientation and selection of the parent leader staff.
- Keeping organized project/employee files.
- Facilitating weekly meetings with parent leaders to support service project planning.
- Participating in all orientation and staff development training.
- Providing training delivery (in partnership with administrative team) of parent program topics to parent leaders.
- Tracking and monitoring activities, progress and results of service projects.
- Maintaining files on all service projects, including documentation and results.
- Participating in weekly meetings with be strong families technical assistance team and reporting on parent leader service implementation activities.
- Serving as a technical assistance liaison for two service project teams in their community.

Each community employed 50 parent leaders. The positions were posted centrally by ICJIA, and the candidate information was sent to the 20 different CVPP community agencies on a weekly

basis. The primary criteria to be hired as parent leaders were their passion, desire, and enthusiasm for making positive changes in their family and community. There were no age restrictions, and all community residents who considered themselves caregivers were eligible for employment, including teen parents, grandparents, foster parents, and non-custodial fathers. Previous experience with and training by Strengthening Families Illinois was considered a plus.

Below is the job description for the parent leader. Their activities included the following:

- Attendance at orientation, staff development training, Parent Cafés, and other events.
- Reflecting upon and actively applying information from training into their family life (e.g. Living the Protective Factors).
- Weekly technical assistance meetings with Administrative Team liaisons.
- Ongoing meetings with Service Project teams to debrief project implementation.
- Form teams with other parent leaders who will be responsible for developing Service Projects.

Trainings

BSF provided a train-the-trainer model of training to administrative teams to support their training delivery to parent leaders. BSF provided an implementation manual with a step-by-step, week-by-week agenda and all administrative forms necessary for implementation of the Parent Program for the administrative teams and parent leaders.

Administrative team orientation and training

Eight BSF trainers conducted sessions for three regional administrative team trainings (train-the-trainer) in different locations within the CVPP communities. BSF elected to keep the training group sizes to less than 30 people to enhance training effectiveness. Administrative teams were paid to attend 63 hours of training over the course of six weeks in April and May 2014. The purpose was to build protective factors in the administrative team members and teach them the curriculum to train parent leaders. The *Developing Parenting Communities Leadership Training* consisted of:

- Orientation (5 hours, full group).
- Vitality training (4 hours, full group)—designed to build a foundation for health and wellness and includes basic lifestyle practices to be a strong parent and create a strong family.
- Wake up! to Your Potential, Module 1: Maximizing Positive Energy to Direct Your Life (7 hours)—helps participants learn who they are and learn what kind of person, parent and leader they want to become.
- Wake up! to Your Potential, Module 2: Clarifying Your Vision and Setting Your Goals (7 hours).
- Wake up! to Your Potential and Vitality Train-the-Trainer (7 hours)
- Living the Protective Factors (7 hours).
- Parent Café Training Institute (12 hours)—Parent Cafés are guided small group conversations on parent-related topics.

- Living the Protective Factors Workshop (2 hours).
- Parent Café Planning (6 hours, full group).
- Parent Program Overview (6 hours, full group).

Parent leader training

Parent Leaders orientation, training, and planning took place over five weeks in June and July 2014. Some trainings were provided in Spanish. All training consisted of:

- Protective Factors training through Parent Café Delivery (10 hours or five, two-hour sessions).
- Leadership Training (8 hours).
 - Vitality.
 - Wake Up! To Your Potential.
 - Community Service Project Development.
- Living the Protective Factors workbook, self-study (3 hours).

The Protective Factors training used Parent Cafés, or small group conversations, to educate parents on each of the protective factors and to model café delivery for those parents who would later be a part of the Parent Café Community Service Project Teams. The Parent Cafés were used for the training on how to build teams, encourage sharing, and promote meaningful connections among participants. Each two-hour café focused on one of the five protective factors to promote healthy families and reduce child abuse and neglect:

- 1) Increasing parental resilience.
- 2) Building the social connections of parents.
- 3) Increasing knowledge of parenting and child development.
- 4) Providing concrete supports in times of need.
- 5) Supporting the social and emotional competence of children.

In addition, the training modeled aspects of Parent Cafés such as creating a space conducive to Parent Cafés and how to encourage discussion around the protective factors. Parents who were a part of the Parent Café Community Service Project Team received more in depth training on table hosting and set up in the following weeks.

Community service projects

Once parent leaders were trained, they were assembled in teams of 10 to design and implement service projects to build protective factors in their community. Parent Cafés were a mandatory service project for each community.

Parent Cafés

BSF Parent Cafés are a parent engagement strategy that uses small group conversations to facilitate self-reflection, peer-to-peer learning, support, and education on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors. The Parent Cafés are adapted from the World Café process

developed in 1995 by Juanita Brown and David Issacs for a small group meeting of business and academic leaders in California (The World Café, n.d.). World Cafés have been used around the world to facilitate groups to collaborate and discuss issues (Brown, 2001). A café host guides the process and at each table while participants rotate among groups sitting at tables (like a café) to link what was learned by each group (Brown, 2001).

The World Café has seven design principles (The World Café, n.d.)

1. Set the context by considering the goals and purpose of the café.
2. Create hospitable space that is welcoming, safe, inviting, and comfortable.
3. Explore questions that matter and that are relevant to the concerns of the group.
4. Encourage participation to gain everyone's ideas and perspectives, but allow those who wish to only listen to do so.
5. Connect diverse perspectives by allowing people to move around, meet new people and connect to each other, and learn new insights and perspectives.
6. Encourage people to listen and pay attention to themes, patterns, and insights.
7. Share collective discoveries from small group conversations with the larger group.

The World Café has five components (The World Café, n.d.).

1. Setting- an environment modelled after a café with small tables with chairs.
2. Welcome and introduction- The Café Host welcomes and introduces the café process.
3. Small group conversations- Three rounds of conversations take place for about 20 minutes. At the end of the time period, each member moves to a different table.
4. Questions- Each conversation is prefaced with a question on the content and purpose of the session. For Parent Cafés, the questions center on parenting to increase protective factors.
5. Harvest- After the rounds of conversations with small groups, individuals are invited to share insights from their conversations to the larger group.

Parent leaders that were a part of this service project were responsible for planning and implementing at least five Parent Cafés before the end of the program period (August 30, 2014). To support their delivery of Parent Cafés in the community, each community's administrative team was provided with three "Parent Café in a Box" question card sets with 200 discussion questions on the protective factors for café discussions.

Parent Program Parent Cafés themes included:

- The protective factors
- Family communication
- Family support
- Family resilience
- Relationships
- Parenting skills
- Nutrition
- Community violence
- Gangs
- Bullying

Other community service projects

Parent leaders worked on community service projects with community members to increase individual and community protective factors. According to program data, 160 community service projects were completed by the 20 communities. Over 4,400 community members worked with parent leaders to develop and conduct community service projects. The program reported that parent leaders dedicated over 5,800 hours to their community service projects.

Parent Program community service projects fell under four categories:

- Violence prevention.
- Social connections/block clubs.
- Community clean-up/beautification.
- Skill development/education.

Violence prevention projects ranged from broad to community-specific. Several communities trained parent leaders to be “violence prevention ambassadors” and go into communities to give presentations and talk with community members about violence prevention. Other communities started support groups for parents who lost children to violence. Communities also raised awareness of bullying and domestic violence.

Communities held workshops on job skills development. They also offered resources on community parenting, anger management, and holistic health.

Several communities initiated clean-up/beautification projects. Communities cleaned up streets, lots, and parks. They also decorated their neighborhoods with wall murals and established community gardens.

Parent leaders also started block clubs and held social activities to increase social connections.

Methodology

The evaluation was a process and outcome evaluation. The surveys of staff and participants provided information on how the program operated. The evaluation used a validated measure of changes in protective factors of child maltreatment.

ICJIA researchers utilized administrative data and developed four surveys to evaluate the Parent Program. Surveys included one pre- and post-survey of program effects, one training evaluation survey, and two exit surveys for parent leaders and coordinators and managers. All forms were available in English and Spanish. Translations into Spanish were completed by an agency offering these services. Data was collected between May and August 2014.

ICJIA researchers evaluated the first year of the Community Violence Prevention Program (CVPP) in 2013 (Reichert, 2014). The 2014 evaluation included three additional surveys due to a much larger final sample size of 3,708, an increase of 86 percent from 2013. *Table 2* compares the sample sizes for the 2013 and 2014 evaluations.

Table 2
Sample sizes by survey 2013 and 2014

Survey	2013	2014
	n	n
Coordinator and Manager training survey	N/A	45
Parent leader training evaluation survey	708	427
Parent Café evaluation survey	N/A	1,288
Pre-survey	613	817
Post-survey	276	388
Parent leader exit survey	349	514
Administration exit survey (online)	48	27
TOTAL SAMPLE	1,994	3,506

Protective factors survey

A paper survey form was given to parent leaders in the program as a pre-survey (Time 1, before programming began) and a post-survey (Time 2, after programming ended). The purpose was to measure participants' changes in protective factors of child abuse and neglect because the main goal of the Parent Program was to build those protective factors.

The questions were taken from the caregiver portion of the Protective Factors Survey (PFS) developed by the University of Kansas Institute for Educational Research & Public Service in partnership with the FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention. PFS is free and in the public domain (see *Appendix A*).

PFS measures protective factors in four areas:

- *Family functioning/Resiliency* (5 items): Measures having adaptive skills and strategies to persevere in times of crisis, as well as family's ability to openly share positive and negative experiences and mobilize to accept, solve, and manage problems.
- *Social and concrete support* (6 items): Measures perceived informal support (from family, friends, and neighbors) that helps provide for emotional needs, in addition to perceived access to tangible goods and services to help families cope with stress, particularly in times of crisis or intensified need.
- *Nurturing and attachment* (3 items): Measures the emotional tie along with a pattern of positive interaction between the parent and child that develops over time.
- *Child development/Knowledge of parenting* (6 items): Measures the understanding and utilization of effective child management techniques and having age-appropriate expectations for children's abilities.

The four scales of the PFS demonstrate high internal consistency. Content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity were examined and indicated the PFS is a valid measure of multiple protective factors against child maltreatment (Counts, Buffington, Chang-Rios, Rasmussen, & Preacher, 2010). In two separate studies, the PFS subscales were found to be negatively related to stress, depression, and risk for child maltreatment, and positively related to adaptive coping and caregiver health (Counts, et al., 2010).

The pre- and post-survey asked program participants to respond to 20 statements about them and their family, using a seven-point frequency or agreement scale (1=Strongly disagree/never and 7=Strongly agree/always). The survey took about 10 minutes to complete. Six statements were reverse coded items so that increases in mean scores were all positive responses. Scores were created for each statement and protective factor area averaged for the pre-survey (Time 1) and post-survey (Time 2).

A unique identification code was used as a way to maintain the anonymity of respondents while allowing researchers to connect the pre-survey with a post-survey. The instructions asked respondents to create a unique ID code using the first letter of their first name and the first letter of their last name followed by their month and day of birth. For example, John Smith, born January 1, 1995, would be ID# JS 01-01.

The principal investigator instructed and reminded lead agencies about distribution of the pre- and post-surveys both in person and through emails. A handout was provided to program staff administering the survey to provide to participants. Completed forms were collected in a single manila envelope and sent by mail to ICJIA researchers. Data was entered into an Access database and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Of 982 parent leaders, 1,205 completed pre- and/or post-surveys—817 completed pre-surveys (83 percent) and 388 completed post-surveys (40 percent). Researchers matched the pre- and post-surveys from the same adult participant by unique identification code and community. (Community and agency were derived from the return mail addresses). A total of 300 individuals were matched who completed both pre- and post-surveys, or 31 percent of all parent leaders.

Twelve Parent Program communities had matched pre- and post-tests (Brighton Park, Cicero, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Greater Grand Crossing, Hermosa/Belmont Cragin, Logan Square, Pilsen-Little Village, Rich/Bloom Township, South Shore, West Chicago (Gage Park/Chicago Lawn), and Woodlawn) and eight communities did not have any matched surveys (Albany Park, Austin, Humboldt Park, Maywood, North Lawndale, Rogers Park, Roseland, and Thornton/Bremen Township); therefore, the sample may be biased.

Exit surveys

Parent leader exit survey

Surveys were administered to parent leaders at the end of the program to gain feedback on program implementation and their satisfaction with the program, as well as learn their suggestions for programmatic improvements. A paper survey form was given to all the parent leaders at the end of the program. The principal investigator instructed and later reminded the parent program managers on the distribution of the exit surveys in person, through regularly scheduled online meetings, and by email. BSF assisted in reminding and encouraging the coordinators and managers to administer and return surveys.

The coordinators and managers distributed surveys to 514 parent leaders in person. A total of 514 completed surveys were submitted for a 52 percent response rate. Data was entered into an Access database and analyzed in Excel and SPSS.

Respondents were parent leaders representing of 13 Parent Program communities (Austin, Brighton Park, Cicero, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Hermosa-Belmont Cragin, Logan Square, Maywood, Rich/Bloom Township, South Shore, Thornton/Bremen Township, West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park), and Woodlawn) and there were no respondents from seven communities (Albany Park, Greater Grand Crossing, Humboldt Park, North Lawndale, Pilsen-Little Village, Rogers Park, Roseland); therefore, the sample may be biased.

Coordinators and Manager exit survey

When the program ended, the principal investigator of the evaluation study sent the lead agencies an email with a link to an online survey for the administrative team (coordinators and managers). The surveys obtained feedback on program implementation and their satisfaction with the program, as well as suggestions for programmatic improvements. The principal investigator reminded coordinators and managers to submit their responses in-person at an event and through reminder emails to the lead agency. A total of 27 of the 60 coordinators and manager completed surveys. The response rate was 45 percent, which is good as the average online response rate is 30 percent (University of Texas, 2007). Data was exported from Survey Gismo to Microsoft Excel and analyzed using Excel and SPSS.

Respondents to the survey were representatives of 12 Parent Program communities (Albany Park, Brighton Park, Cicero, East Garfield Park, Greater Grand Crossing, Humboldt Park, Maywood, North Lawndale, Rich/Bloom Township, Roseland, West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park), and Woodlawn) and there were no respondents from eight communities (Austin,

Englewood, Hermosa-Belmont Cragin, Logan Square, Pilsen-Little Village, Rogers Park, South Shore, Thornton/Bremen Township); therefore, the sample may be biased.

Community service

At the beginning of the program, the lead agencies were asked to submit their proposed community service projects; 19 of the 20 communities submitted plans for 93 community service projects. Roseland did not submit plans for approval. At the end of the program, 10 communities submitted sign-in sheets collected at locations of 202 community service projects. A total of 4,420 people signed-in at projects held between June 2, 2014, to September 21, 2014. All information was compiled and analyzed in Excel.

Parent Cafés

All communities were required to hold Parent Cafés as part of their community service projects. Fifty-three Parent Cafés were held in the 18 communities that reported their administrative data. At the end of the Parent Cafés, parent participants were asked to complete a paper survey to determine participant demographics, topics covered, and how Parent Cafés could be improved. The surveys had 11 questions and took about 10 minutes to complete. A total of 1,394 attendees at Parent Cafés in 16 communities completed the surveys (seven surveys did not specify community). All data were entered into an Access database and then analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

Training evaluation surveys

Coordinator and manager training

The Principal investigator distributed a paper survey to all coordinators and managers of the CVPP Parent Program. The evaluation survey obtained feedback to gauge the quality of the training, satisfaction of the training, and what was learned at the training. The one-page hard copy survey had 11 questions and took about five minutes to complete. A total of 45 of the 60 Coordinators and managers completed the surveys (75 percent). All data was entered into an Access database and then analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Researchers coded by hand the open-ended responses.

Parent leader training

The same evaluation survey used for the coordinator and manger training was given to parent leaders. Approximately 1,000 participants were accepted into the program, 699 parent leaders completed the training, and 427 completed an evaluation form (61 percent). Both English and Spanish forms were available; 115 of the evaluations were in Spanish. After collection, program staff returned forms by mail to ICJIA researchers. All data was entered into an Access database and then analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Researchers coded by hand the open-ended responses.

Limitations

A limitation was that this study did not have client-level data of all participants in the program, such as demographics, and relied on aggregate administrative program data from the community sites. In addition, the pre- and post-surveys were matched on less than one-third of participants and not all the communities returned surveys. However, the surveys were voluntary due to the guidelines by the Institutional Review Board which protects human research subjects. The ethical principles governing research dictates that human subjects cannot be required or forced to respond to survey questions.

Findings: Administrative program data

Eighteen out of 20 communities submitted administrative data at the end of the program about the number of parents trained, number of participants on service project teams, and community events at the beginning and end of the program. Administrative data was missing from Cicero and Thornton/Bremen Township.

Participation in the Parent Program

Each community was responsible for hiring and employing 50 parent leaders, 20 in the South suburbs. According to respondents, a total of 982 parents were accepted to participate in the program, an average of 55 parents per community. In 17 communities, a total of 699 parents were trained as parent leaders, an average of 41 parents, and a range of 26 to 53 parents per community.

The programs were required to have at least six training sessions—five, two-hour sessions on protective factors training through Parent Café delivery and eight hours of leadership training. The Parent Program had a total of 206 training sessions, an average of 11 sessions per community, and a range of five to 25 training sessions per community.

Community service projects

Trained parent leaders created teams of individuals to conduct service projects to build protective factors in their community. In 18 responding communities, Parent Programs formed a total of 86 teams, an average of five teams per community. Sixteen communities reported a total of 5,793 total hours spent on service projects.

The communities reported a total of 160 service projects completed. There were up to five teams for each project. Community service projects included, but were not limited to:

- *Parent Cafés* (n=53).
- *Skill development/education*: Parents held workshops and discussions on job skills development, community parenting resources, anger management, and holistic health (n=39).
- *Community clean-up/beautification*: Parents improved communities by cleaning up parks and streets. Neighborhoods were decorated with wall murals and community gardens (n=33).
- *Social connections*: Parents revitalized or started block clubs and reached out to community members through social activities (n=23).
- *Violence prevention*: Parents became violence prevention ambassadors, began support groups for parents who lost children to violence and raised awareness of bullying and domestic violence (n=12).

Findings: Protective factors survey

The protective factors survey was distributed to Parent Leaders and was used to measure family functioning and resiliency; social and concrete support; nurturing and attachment; and child development/ knowledge of parenting. *Family functioning and resiliency* questions measured adaptive skills and strategies in times of crisis; higher average scores indicate higher family functioning/resiliency levels. *Social and concrete support questions* measured perceived informal and tangible support in times of need; higher average scores indicate higher social and concrete support levels. *Nurturing and attachment* questions measured emotional connections and positive interactions with children; higher scores indicated more nurturing and attachment between parent and children. *Child development and knowledge of parenting* questions measured the use of age-appropriate, child management techniques; higher scores indicated a greater understanding of child development and parenting.

The survey was administered to parent leaders at two points in time—(Time 1) the start of program participation, prior to training, and (Time 2) after the program ended or at program disenrollment. The mean scores were compared at Time 1 and Time 2 to determine increases or decreases in knowledge of the four measures of protective factors. The responses used a seven-point frequency or agreement scale (1=Strongly disagree/never) and (7=Strongly agree/always) (see *Appendix A*).

Respondents

A total of 1,205 surveys were received—817 pre-surveys and 388 post-surveys. All 20 communities returned pre-surveys and 12 returned post-surveys. There were 300 participants with matched pre- and post-surveys.

Table 3 depicts the survey respondents by community of both the pre- and post-survey, pre-surveys only, post-surveys only, and those matched by pre- and post-survey.

Table 3
Survey respondents by community

	All surveys		Pre (before)		Post (after)		Matched	
	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent
Albany Park	28	2.3%	28	3.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Austin	38	3.2%	38	4.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Brighton Park	97	8.0%	54	6.6%	43	11.1%	68	11.3%
Cicero	75	6.2%	35	4.3%	40	10.3%	52	8.7%
East Garfield Park	73	6.1%	50	6.1%	23	5.9%	38	6.3%
Englewood	80	6.3%	49	6.0%	30	8.0%	50	8.3%
Greater Grand Crossing	61	5.1%	30	3.7%	31	8.0%	50	8.3%
Hermosa/Belmont Cragin	78	6.5%	46	5.6%	32	8.2%	32	5.3%
Humboldt Park	35	2.9%	35	4.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Logan Square	108	9.0%	61	7.5%	47	12.1%	90	15.0%
Maywood	49	4.1%	49	6.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
North Lawndale	44	3.7%	44	5.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Pilsen-Little Village	75	6.2%	41	5.0%	34	8.8%	48	8.0%
Rich/Bloom Township	59	4.9%	39	4.8%	20	5.2%	38	6.3%
Rogers Park	41	3.4%	41	5.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Roseland	21	1.7%	21	2.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
South Shore	76	6.3%	50	6.1%	26	6.7%	48	8.0%
Thornton/Bremen Township	20	1.7%	20	2.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
West Chicago (Gage Park/Chicago Lawn)	70	5.8%	41	5.0%	29	7.5%	32	5.3%
Woodlawn	77	6.4%	45	5.5%	32	8.2%	54	9.0%
TOTAL	1,205	100%	817	100%	388	100.0%	600	100%

Matched pre- and post-surveys

Researchers matched the pre- and post-surveys from the same participants by unique identification code and community matched 300 survey pairs. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Each response is given a score of Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neither = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5. There was a slight increase in mean scores from the pre-survey to post-survey on all the measures. The greatest change in mean scores was in the measure of *family functioning and resiliency*. A combined measure was created that incorporates all the protective factors; there was an increase in combined mean score of .10. Each measure is described in detail below. *Table 4* indicated the results of the matched pre- and post-surveys by measure.

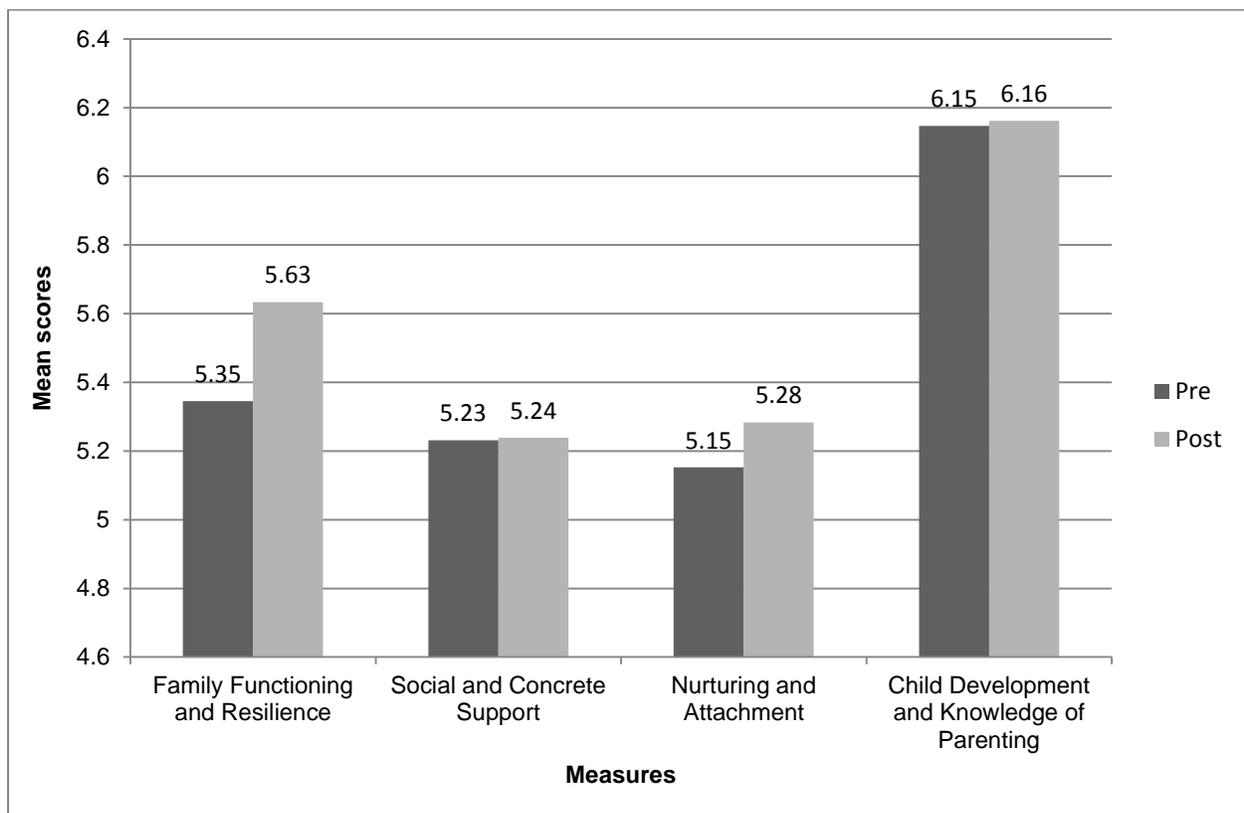
Table 4
Results of matched pre- and post-survey scores by measure

	<i>n</i>	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means	t	Sig	Effect size
Family functioning and resiliency*	300	5.35	1.18	5.63	1.23	.28	-3.68	.000*	-.24
Social and concrete support	300	5.23	1.23	5.24	1.13	.01	-.12	.907	-.01
Nurturing and attachment	300	5.15	1.24	5.28	1.20	.13	-1.80	.073	-.11
Child development and knowledge of parenting	300	6.15	.92	6.16	.82	.01	-.34	.736	-.02
Combined measures	300	5.52	.81	5.62	.76	.10	-2.36	.019	-.13

*Statistically significant

Figure 3 graphically depicts the changes from pre- and post-survey by measure.

Figure 3
Change in pre- and post-survey by measure (n=300)



Family functioning and resiliency

A paired sample t-test ($n=300$) was conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-survey of family functioning and resiliency. The t-test showed an increase from Time 1 (pre-survey) ($M = 5.35$; $SD = 1.18$) to Time 2 (post-survey) ($M = 5.63$; $SD = 1.23$, $t = -3.68$ $p = .000$). The change in means was an increase of .28. The difference between the average pre- and post-survey scores was statistically significant.

Cohen's d evaluates the degree (measured in standard deviation units) that the mean of the difference scores is different from zero. If the calculated d equals 0, the mean of the difference scores is equal to zero. However, as d deviates from 0, the effect size becomes larger. Effect size provides a measure of the magnitude of the difference expressed in standard deviation units from the first survey. Therefore, the effect size can indicate how large the relationship really is between the variables and how big an effect we can expect from the program. A $d=0.2$ is considered a "small" effect size, 0.5 is a "medium" effect size and 0.8 is a "large" effect size. An estimate of the effect size ($d = -0.24$) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in all five questions on family functioning. The largest increase in mean scores was for the statement, *In my family, we talk about problems*. Time 1 had a mean of 5.45 ($SD = 1.45$), and Time 2 had a mean of 5.99 ($SD = 3.81$). Table 5 shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 5
Family functioning and resiliency questions of matched pre- and post-surveys

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
In my family, we talk about problems.	300	5.45	1.45	5.99	3.81	.54
When we argue, my family listens to "both sides of the story."	300	4.93	1.63	5.30	1.42	.37
In my family, we take time to listen to each other.	300	5.25	1.45	5.49	1.33	.24
My family pulls together when things are stressful.	300	5.58	1.47	5.72	1.37	.14
My family is able to solve our problems.	300	5.51	1.40	5.67	1.26	.16

Social and concrete support

A paired sample t-test ($n = 300$) was conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-survey of social and concrete support. The t-test showed a slight increase from Time 1 (pre-survey) ($M = 5.23$ $SD = 1.23$) to Time 2 (post-survey) ($M = 5.24$; $SD = 1.13$, $t = -.12$, $p = .91$). The change in means was .01. The difference between the average pre- and post-survey scores was not statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size ($d = -0.01$) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in three social and concrete support questions. The largest change in mean scores was an increase in agreement with the statement, *If there is a crisis, I have others I can talk to*—a change of .11. Time 1 had a mean of 5.75 ($SD = 1.51$) to Time 2 had a mean of 5.86 ($SD = 1.35$). The second largest change in mean scores was a decrease in disagreement with the negative statement, *I would have no idea where to turn if my family needed food or housing*—a change of -.08 (reverse coded). Time 1 had a mean of 4.84 ($SD = 2.25$), and Time 2 had a mean of 4.76 ($SD = 2.24$). Table 6 shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 6
Social and concrete support questions of matched pre- and post-survey

	<i>n</i>	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
I have others who will listen when I need to talk about my problems.	300	5.86	1.39	5.92	1.24	.06
When I am lonely, there are several people I can talk to.	300	5.69	1.49	5.76	1.22	.07
I would have no idea where to turn if my family needed food or housing.*	300	4.84	2.25	4.76	2.24	-.08
I wouldn't know where to go for help if I had trouble making ends meet.*	300	4.73	2.16	4.68	2.19	-.05
If there is a crisis, I have others I can talk to.	300	5.75	1.51	5.86	1.35	.11
If I needed help finding a job, I wouldn't know where to go for help.*	300	4.51	2.16	4.47	2.16	-.04

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Nurturing and attachment

A paired sample t-test ($n=300$) was conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-survey of parental nurturing and attachment to children. The t-test showed a slight increase from Time 1 (pre-survey) ($M = 5.15$; $SD = 1.24$) to Time 2 (post-survey) ($M = 5.28$; $SD = 1.20$, $t = -1.80$, $p = .073$). The change in means was .13. The difference between the average pre- and post-survey scores was not statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size ($d = -.11$) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in all three questions on nurturing and attachment. The largest increase in mean scores was an increase in disagreement with the negative statement, *My child misbehaves just to upset me* (reverse coded). Time 1 had a mean of 5.00 ($SD = 1.99$) and Time 2 had a mean of 5.17 ($SD = 1.88$). The change in means was .17. Table 7 shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 7
Nurturing and attachment questions of matched pre- and post-surveys

	<i>n</i>	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
There are many times when I don't know what to do as a parent.*	300	4.65	1.94	4.76	1.93	.11
I know how to help my child learn.	300	5.81	1.51	5.92	1.52	.11
My child misbehaves just to upset me.*	300	5.00	1.99	5.17	1.88	.17

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Child development and knowledge of parenting

A paired sample t-test ($n=300$) was conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-survey of child development and knowledge of parenting. The t-test showed a slight increase from Time 1 (pre-survey) ($M = 6.15$; $SD = .92$) to Time 2 (post-survey) ($M = 6.16$; $SD = .82$, $t = -.34$, $p = .74$). The change in means was .01. The difference between the average pre- and post-survey scores was not statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size ($d = -.02$) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in three out of six questions on child development and knowledge of parenting. The largest increase in mean scores was increased agreement with the statement, *My child and I are very close to each other*. Time 1 had a mean of 6.28 ($SD = 1.37$), and Time 2 had a mean of 6.48 ($SD = .89$). The change in means was .20. Table 8 shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 8
Child development and knowledge of parenting questions of matched pre- and post-surveys

	<i>n</i>	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
I praise my child when he/she behaves well.	300	6.07	1.39	6.04	1.39	-.03
When I discipline my child, I lose control.*	300	5.83	1.50	5.67	1.71	-.16
I am happy being with my child.	300	6.52	1.18	6.50	1.21	-.02
My child and I are very close to each other.	300	6.28	1.37	6.48	.89	.20
I am able to soothe my child when he/she is upset.	300	6.15	1.20	6.16	1.15	.01
I spend time with my child doing what he/she likes to do.	297	6.02	1.24	6.11	1.11	.09

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Combined measures

All four measures—family functioning and resiliency, social and concrete support, nurturing and attachment, child development, and knowledge of parenting—were combined and averaged into one measure. A paired sample t-test ($n=300$) was conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-survey of the combined measures from Time 1 ($M = 5.52$; $SD = 0.81$) to Time 2 ($M = 5.62$; $SD = 0.76$, $t = -2.36$, $p = .02$). The change in means was .24. The difference was statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size ($d = -.13$) suggests a small effect.

Unmatched pre- and post-surveys

The results of the pre- and post-surveys that were unmatched indicated small increases in the average scores of all four measures— family functioning and resiliency, social and concrete support, nurturing and attachment, and child development/ knowledge of parenting—and a combination of all four measures (*Table 9*).

Table 9
Results of pre- and post-surveys by measure (un-matched)

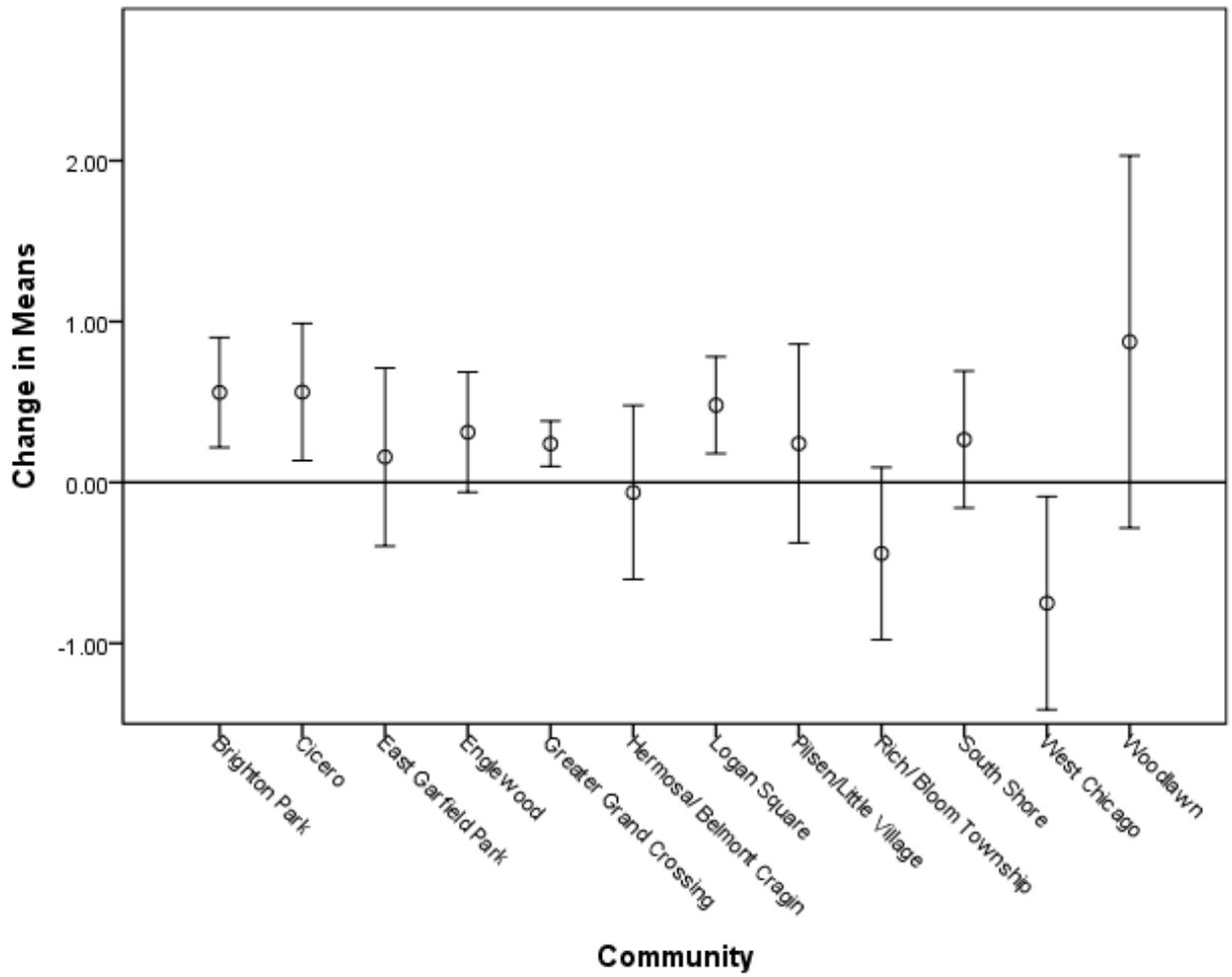
	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	N	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in Means
Family functioning and resiliency	816	5.41	1.19	389	5.62	1.19	.21
Social and concrete support	816	4.50	1.01	389	4.59	1.08	.09
Nurturing and attachment	816	3.94	1.18	389	3.97	1.16	.03
Child development and knowledge of parenting	816	5.52	.70	389	5.58	.65	.06
Combined measures	816	4.95	.62	389	5.05	.60	.10

Mean scores by community

The differences in mean scores in matched samples by community were examined. There were positive increases in mean family functioning and resiliency scores in nine communities. Woodlawn had the highest increase. Three communities had reductions in mean scores—Hermosa/Belmont Cragin, Rich/Bloom Township, and West Chicago.

Figure 4 depicts the change of mean scores on family functioning and resiliency and 95% confidence interval by community.

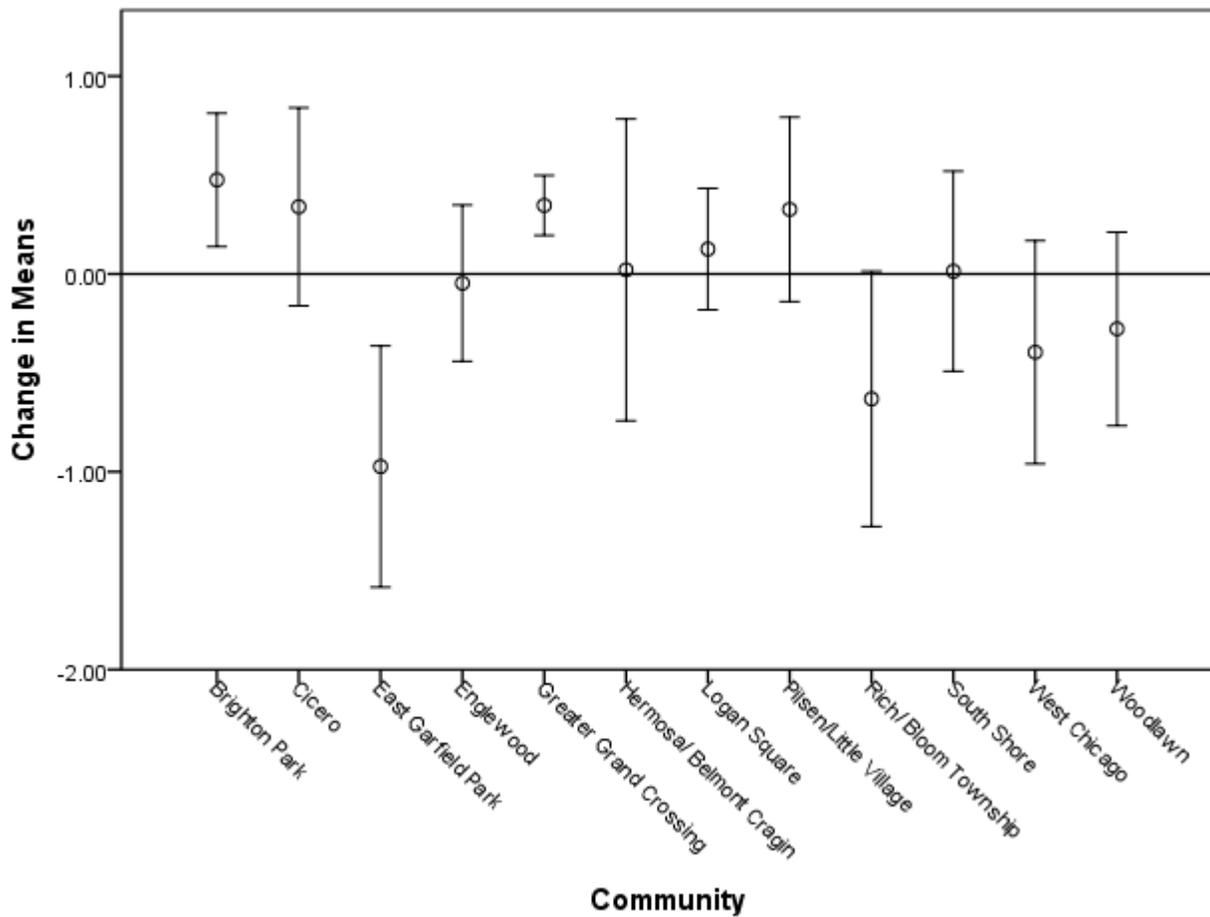
Figure 4
Change of mean scores on family functioning and resiliency by community



Note: Brighton Park, Greater Grand Crossing, Logan Square, and Rich/Bloom Township statistically significant at $\alpha < .005$.

There was a positive increase in mean scores on social and concrete support in seven communities—Brighton Park had the highest increase. There were slight decreases in five communities. *Figure 5* depicts the change of mean scores and 95% confidence interval by community.

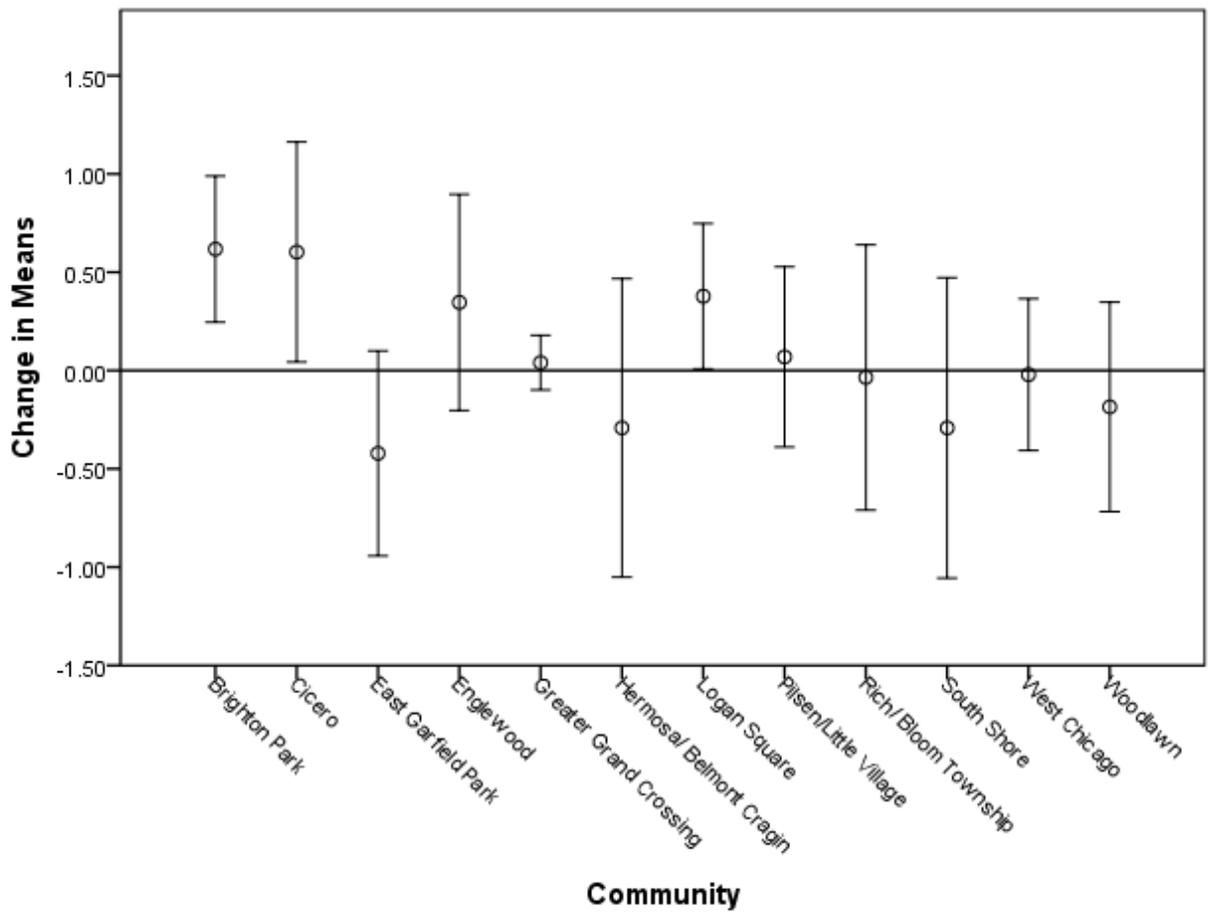
Figure 5
Change of mean scores on social and concrete support by community



Note: East Garfield Park and Greater Grand Crossing at $\alpha < .005$.

There were positive increases in mean scores in nurturing and attachment in six communities—Brighton Park had the highest increase. There were slight mean decreases in six communities. *Figure 6* depicts the change of mean scores in nurturing and attachment and 95% confidence interval by community.

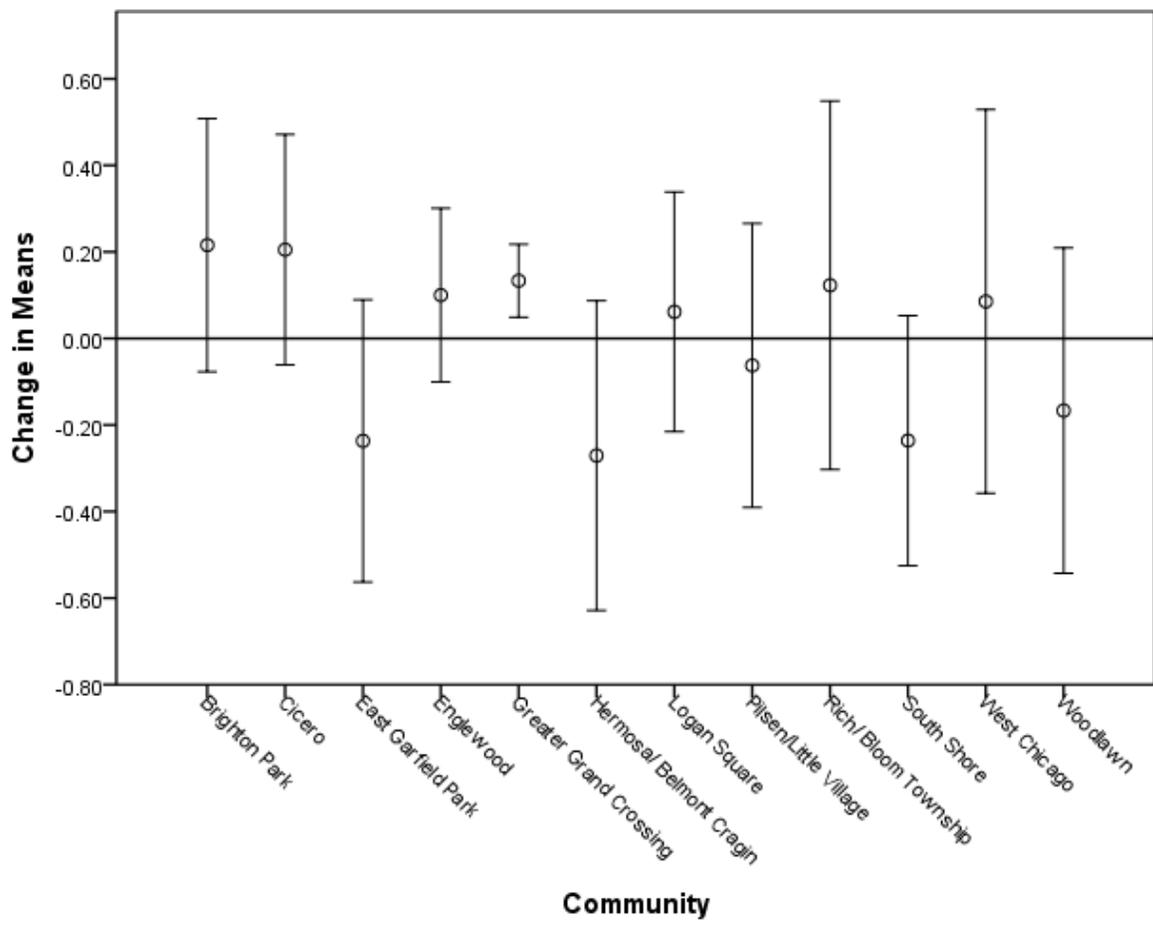
Figure 6
Change of mean scores on nurturing and attachment by community



Note: Brighton Park statistically significant at $\alpha < .005$.

There were positive increases in mean scores on child development and knowledge of parenting in seven communities—Brighton Park had the highest increase in mean scores. Five communities had decreases in mean scores. *Figure 7* depicts the change of mean scores on child development and knowledge of parenting and 95% confidence interval by community.

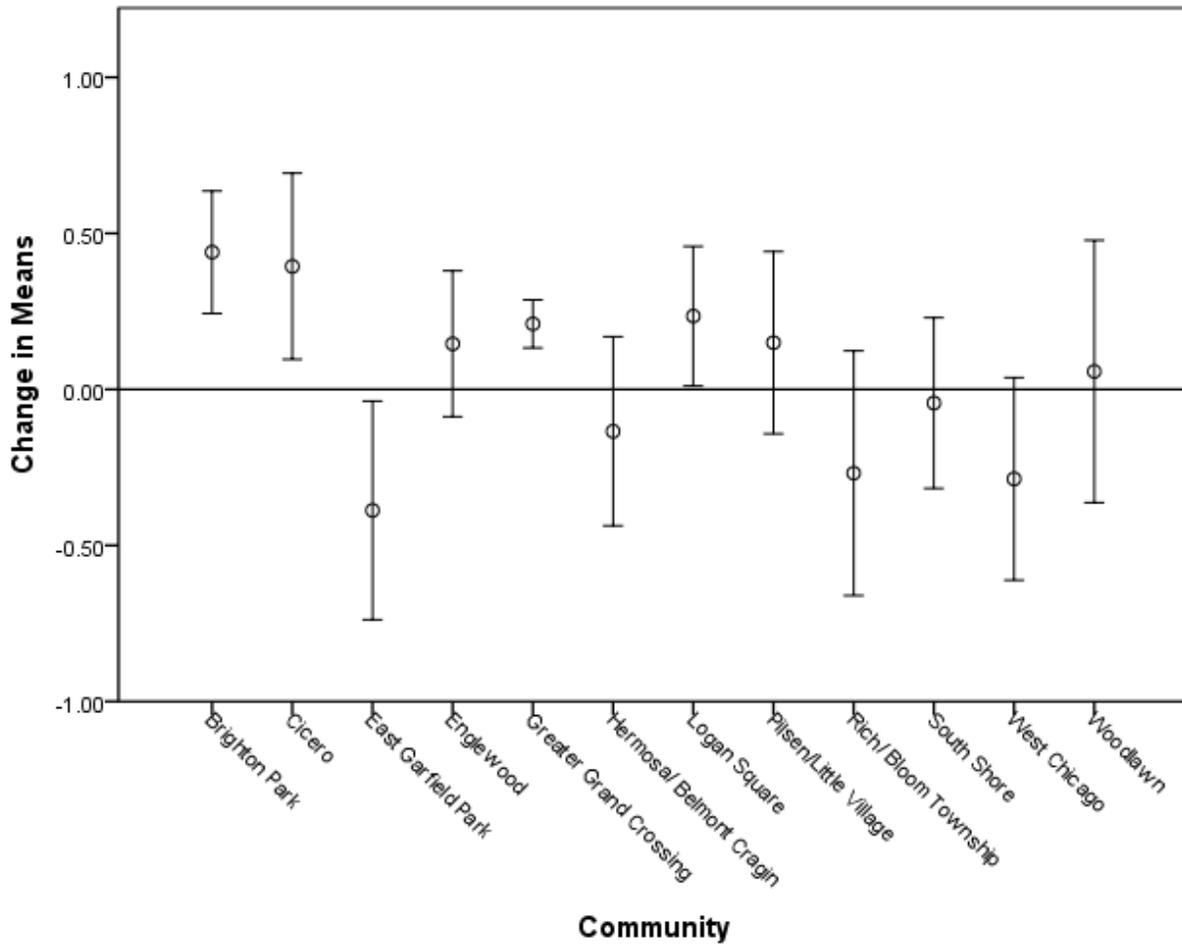
Figure 7
Change of mean scores on child development and knowledge of parenting by community



Note: Greater Grand Crossing statistically significant at $\alpha < .005$.

There were positive increases in mean scores on the combined score in seven communities—Brighton Park had the highest increase in mean scores. Five communities had decreases in mean scores. *Figure 8* depicts the change of mean scores on combined score and 95% confidence interval by community.

Figure 8
Change of mean scores on combined score by community



Note: Brighton Park and Greater Grand Crossing statistically significant at $\alpha < .005$.

Conclusions from pre- and post-surveys

The largest change in means was an increase of .28 for the mean score on *family functioning and resiliency*, which was statistically significant. The combined score for all protective factors had the second highest increase of .10, but it was not statistically significant. However, two of the four measures had changes in means less than .10 (*social and concrete support*; *child development and knowledge of parenting*). Therefore, there is room for improvement in those areas of the program’s instruction.

There were increases in mean scores on 14 of 20 statements and small reductions in mean scores on six statements. These statements related to the protective factors of *social and concrete support, nurturing and attachment*, and *child development and knowledge of parenting*. The statements were:

- *I would have no idea where to turn if my family needed food or housing.* (reverse coded)
- *I wouldn't know where to go for help if I had trouble making ends meet.* (reverse coded)
- *If I needed help finding a job, I wouldn't know where to go for help.* (reverse coded)
- *I praise my child when he/she behaves well.*
- *When I discipline my child, I lose control.* (reverse coded)
- *I am happy being with my child.*

In addition, there were some increases in mean scores in certain communities but not in others. However, it is uncertain why they had more positive outcomes. Brighton Park, Cicero, Greater Grand Crossing, Logan Square, and Pilsen/Little Village had increases in all four measures of protective factors; Englewood had increases in three out of four measures. This difference could be attributed to characteristics of the parents in the program, how the program was operated, or attribute(s) of the communities themselves.

Findings: Exit surveys

Surveys were administered to coordinators and managers and parent leaders at the end of the program to learn how the program was implemented, ascertain the level of satisfaction with the program, and gather suggestions for programmatic improvements.

Parent Leader exit survey

A total of 514 parent leaders completed surveys at the end of the program providing feedback on the program. The respondents were representatives of 13 Parent Program communities.

- Austin (n=32)
- Brighton Park (n=48)
- Cicero (n=41)
- East Garfield Park (n=28)
- Englewood (n=37)
- Hermosa-Belmont Cragin (n=60)
- Logan Square (n=62)
- Maywood (n=71)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=29)
- South Shore (n=27)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=13)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=32)
- Woodlawn (n=34)

Respondent demographics

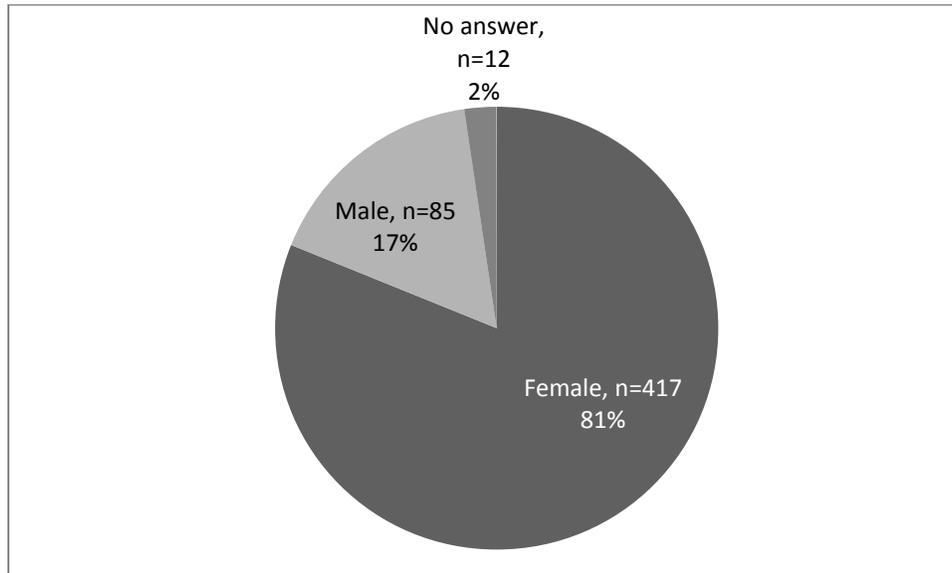
A total of 495 respondents provided birth dates (96 percent). The average age was 42.5 and the range was 17 to 79. About half of the participants were between the ages of 30 and 49 (51 percent). A quarter of Parent Leaders were between the ages of 50 and 59, and few were between 20 and 29 (14 percent). *Table 10* shows the participant’s ages.

**Table 10
Age of Parent Leaders**

Age	n	Percent
17-19	7	1.4%
20-29	73	14.2%
30-39	123	23.9%
40-49	141	27.4%
50-59	126	24.5%
60-69	30	5.8%
70-79	2	0.4%
Unknown	12	2.3%
Total	514	100%

The majority of the parent leaders (81 percent) were female; 17 percent were male. *Figure 9* shows the gender breakdown of the program.

Figure 9
Gender of Parent Leaders (n=514)



The survey defined “primary caregiver” as the parent/guardian with the “main responsibility for the child.” The most participants indicated that they were the primary caregiver for one child (27 percent), two children (20 percent), and three children (13 percent). Few parent leaders indicated that they were not a primary caregiver by the definition of this survey (10 percent). Few respondents did not answer this question (16 percent). *Table 11* indicates the number of children of Parent Leaders.

Table 11
Number of children as primary caregiver (n=514)

Number of children	n	Percent
None	50	9.7%
1	140	27.2%
2	104	20.2%
3	67	13.0%
4	40	7.8%
5	17	3.3%
6+	13	2.5%
Unknown	83	16.1%

Community descriptions

Parent Leaders were asked to rate the seriousness of certain problems in their community. Some Parent Leaders noted that violent crime was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (34 percent). Many Parent Leaders answered that shootings were a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (42 percent). Some participants indicated that violence among community members

was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (40 percent). *Table 12* depicts ratings of violence in their communities.

Table 12
Ratings violence in communities

	n	Percent
Violent crime (like people being beaten, robbed, assaulted)		
A very big problem	91	17.7%
A big problem	85	16.5%
Average	157	30.5%
A small problem	68	13.2%
A very small problem	75	14.6%
No response	38	7.4%
Gunshots and shooting		
A very big problem	130	25.3%
A big problem	84	16.3%
Average	139	27.0%
A small problem	57	11.1%
A very small problem	66	12.8%
No response	38	7.4%
Violence among community members		
A very big problem	112	21.8%
A big problem	91	17.7%
Average	137	26.7%
A small problem	67	13.0%
A very small problem	71	13.8%
No response	36	7.0%
TOTAL	514	100%

Many participants stated that non-violent crime was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (41 percent). About half of the Parent Leaders stated that people selling drugs was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (53 percent). Some participants stated that an inability to walk safely in the neighborhood was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (28 percent). Many respondents indicated groups of people hanging around causing trouble was a “*big problem*” or a “*very big problem*” (44 percent). *Table 13* shows the ratings of community problems.

Table 13
Ratings of seriousness of non-violent problems in communities

	n	Percent
Non-violent crimes (like theft, vandalism, drug sales)		
A very big problem	121	23.5%
A big problem	88	17.1%
Average	156	30.4%
A small problem	72	14.0%
A very small problem	48	9.3%
No response	29	5.6%

Table 13 continued

People selling drugs		
A very big problem	159	30.9%
A big problem	115	22.4%
Average	125	24.3%
A small problem	29	5.6%
A very small problem	49	9.5%
No response	37	7.2%
Unable to walk safely on the streets of your neighborhood		
A very big problem	71	13.8%
A big problem	74	14.4%
Average	165	32.1%
A small problem	87	16.9%
A very small problem	79	15.4%
No response	38	7.4%
Groups of people hanging around the neighborhood and causing trouble		
A very big problem	110	21.4%
A big problem	118	23.0%
Average	137	26.7%
A small problem	55	10.7%
A very small problem	52	10.1%
No response	42	8.2%
TOTAL	514	100%

A violence scale was compiled for each community using participant ratings of problems featured in *Table 13* from 1=a very small problem to 5=a very big problem by community. Parent Leaders rated Woodlawn 4.12 out of five—the highest average violence score. Parent Leaders from Rich/Bloom Township rated their community the lowest (1.94) on the violence scale.

A non-violent problems scale was compiled for each community using items featured in *Table 14*. Again, Parent Leaders from Woodlawn gave the highest average ratings for non-violent problems (4.15), and Rich/Bloom Township gave the lowest (2.34).

The community problems scale included items from the violence scale and non-violence scale. Parent Leaders from Woodlawn had the highest average community problem score (4.13 out of 5). Parent Leaders from Rich/Bloom Township had the lowest average score (2.16).

Table 14 shows the ratings of problems—non-violent, violent, and both— by community.

Table 14
Parent Leader average ratings of problems by community (n=514)

Community	n	Violence scale	Non-violent problems scale	Community problems scale
Austin	32	3.76	3.70	3.73
Brighton Park	48	2.91	3.24	3.10
Cicero	41	2.80	3.04	2.94
East Garfield Park	28	3.77	3.68	3.71
Englewood	37	3.40	3.54	3.48
Hermosa-Belmont Cragin	60	3.15	3.21	3.19
Logan Square	62	2.98	3.06	3.03
Maywood	71	3.32	3.46	3.40
Rich/Bloom Township	29	1.94	2.34	2.16
South Shore	27	3.58	3.47	3.51
Thornton/Bremen Township	13	2.48	2.75	2.69
West Chicago	32	3.22	3.49	3.39
Woodlawn	34	4.12	4.15	4.13

Learned about program

Respondents were asked how they learned about the program. Almost half of respondents learned about it from a friend or relative(49 percent), and 25 percent wrote “*community agency*” (n=128). A few of the respondents said “*other*” (10 percent); of those 14 had previously participated in the program, 11 learned about the program at church, 11 learned at their child’s school, four participants learned of the program at their places of employment, four individuals became aware of the program in a newspaper, and 2 respondents each learned from libraries, a phone call, and a social worker. *Table 15* shows the ways participants learned about the program.

Table 15
How Parent Leaders learned of the program

	n	Percent
Friend or relative	252	49.0%
Community agency	128	24.9%
Other	49	9.5%
Flyer	46	8.9%
Online, website	23	4.5%
No response	16	3.1%
Radio	0	0.0%
TOTAL	514	100%

Reasons for participation in the program

Participants were asked why they accepted the parent leader position and were able to select as many answers as they chose from a list of four options. Most parent leaders answered that they wanted to learn more about parenting (69 percent). A majority of respondents stated that they wanted to give back to the community (78 percent); some took the position for a part-time job or the salary (39 percent). *Table 16* shows the answers the respondents selected.

Table 16
Why accepted the Parent Leader position (n=514)

Responses	n	Percent
Give back to the community	402	78.2%
Learn more about parenting	357	69.5%
A part-time job, money	204	39.7%
Other	48	9.3%

Parent Leaders who selected “*other*” were able to write in their reason for accepting the position. Of the 48 respondents who provided reasons, 16 said they wanted to help parents and their communities, and 14 said they wanted to “learn new skills” or to “become better people.” Six respondents participated because they liked the program, and four stated that they wanted to share their stories, ideas, and skills with other people. Three respondents answered that they participated to “keep busy,” and three said they wanted to meet other adults.

Program ratings

Parent leaders were asked to rate the quality of support from their coordinators and managers on scale from 1=very poor to 5=very good. Almost all (82 percent) indicated that support was good or very good (average of 4.66 out of five). Parent Leaders were asked to rate the quality of materials or resources to complete service projects; 87 percent indicated good or very good (average rating of 4.50). The survey asked respondents to rate the quality of the training for their role of Parent Leader; almost all (95 percent) responded good or very good (average rating 4.69). Finally, respondents were asked to rate how successful the Parent Program was, and 91 percent chose successful or very successful (average rating 4.48). *Table 17* indicates Parent Leaders’ responses.

Table 17
Parent Leader ratings of aspects of Parent Program

	n	Percent
Quality of support from managers and coordinator		
Very good	388	75.5%
Good	87	16.9%
Average	25	4.9%
Poor	3	0.6%
Very poor	7	1.4%
No response	4	0.8%

Table 17 continued

Materials or resources to complete service projects		
Very good	332	64.6%
Good	117	22.8%
Average	41	8.0%
Poor	9	1.8%
Very poor	7	1.4%
No response	8	1.6%
Training for your role of Parent Leader		
Very good	379	73.7%
Good	110	21.4%
Average	15	2.9%
Poor	4	0.8%
Very poor	7	0.6%
No response	3	0.6%
Overall, how successful do you think the Parent Program was?		
Very Unsuccessful	293	57.0%
Successful	175	34.0%
Neutral	35	6.8%
Unsuccessful	2	0.4%
Very unsuccessful	4	0.8%
No response	5	1.0%
TOTAL	514	100%

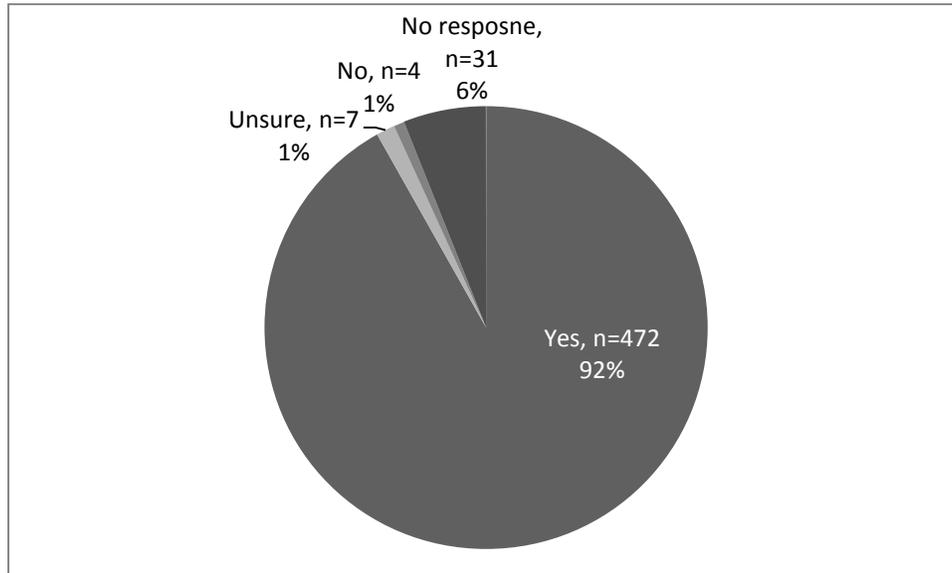
Parent leaders were asked what they might change about the Parent Program. Parent leaders could select one or more responses from the list of eight. *Table 18* shows the parent leaders' responses.

Table 18
What to change about the Parent Program (n=514)

Responses	n	Percent
Extend program (longer duration and/or more paid hours)	281	54.7%
Increase community participation in program	160	31.1%
Involve more men/fathers in program	153	29.8%
Nothing	123	23.9%
Improve program communication	80	15.6%
Improve program organization	70	13.6%
Set a fixed location and time for service projects	69	13.4%
Other	20	3.9%

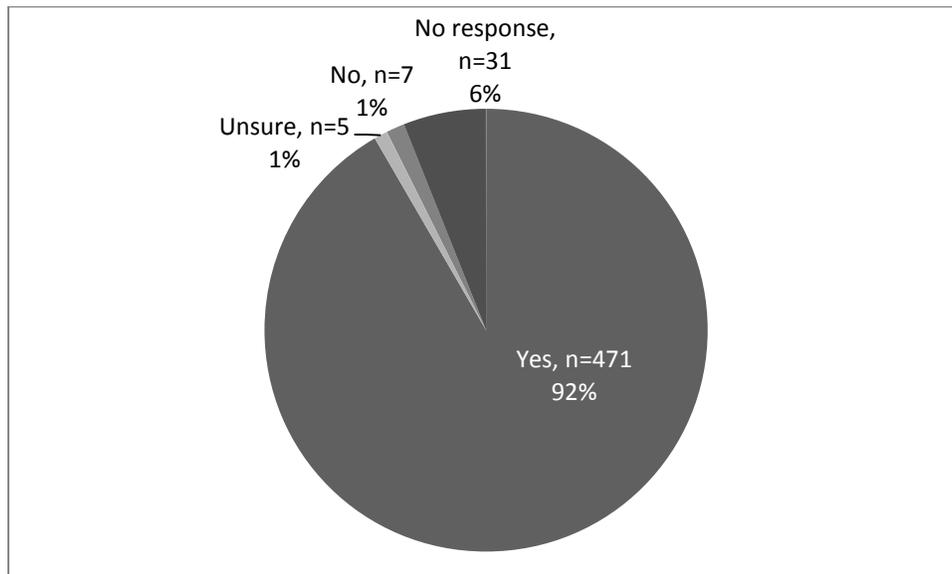
Respondents were asked to indicate if they used what they learned in training during their participation in the Parent Program. Almost all (92 percent) said “yes” and 1 percent said “no” (6 percent no response). *Figure 10* depicts the responses.

Figure 10
Use what learned in training during the Parent Program? (n=514)



Respondents were asked to indicate if they had begun to incorporate what they learned in the Parent Program in their everyday life. Almost all (92 percent) said “yes,” and 1 percent said “no” (6 percent offered no response.) *Figure 11* depicts the responses.

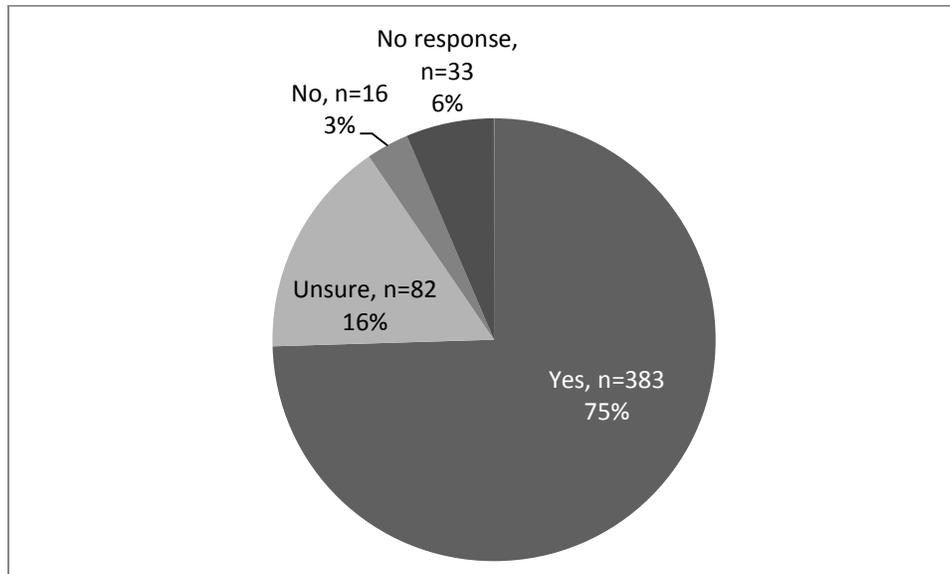
Figure 11
Incorporate what learned in Parent Program in your everyday life? (n=514)



Community service projects

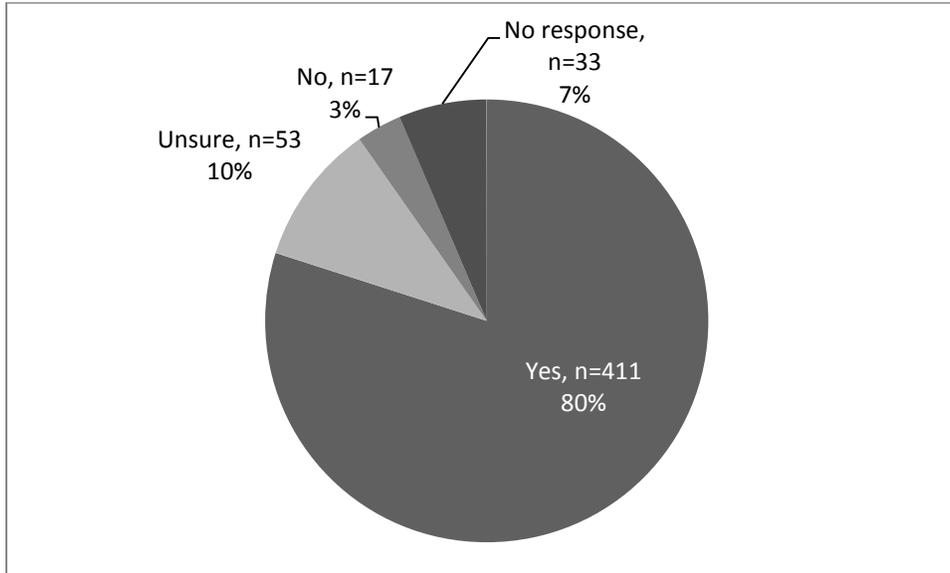
Parent Leaders were asked if they believed their community service project improved the community. A majority (75 percent) said “yes,” 3 percent said “no,” and 16 percent were “unsure” (6 percent unknown). *Figure 12* shows the responses.

Figure 12
Service projects improved the community? (n=514)



Parent Leaders were asked whether their service project increased protective factors. Almost all (80 percent) said “yes” and 3 percent said “no,” and 10 percent were unsure (7 percent unknown). *Figure 13* presents the responses.

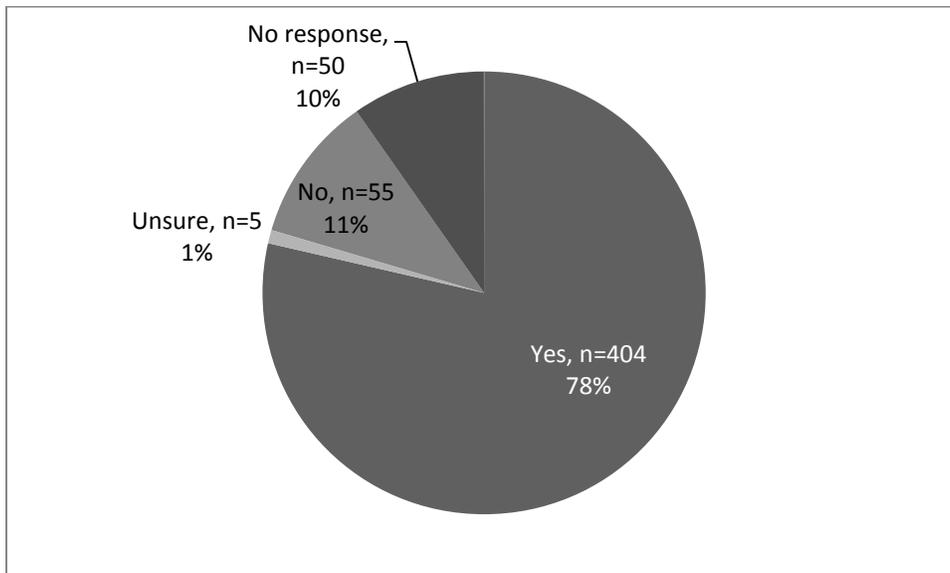
Figure 13
Service projects increased protective factors? (n=514)



Parent Cafés

Most Parent Leaders (78 percent) stated that had participated in Parent Cafés, and 11 percent had not participated (10 percent gave no response). *Figure 14* shows the Parent Leaders’ responses.

Figure 14
Participation in Parent Cafés (n=514)



A total of 430 parent leaders rated the helpfulness of the Parent Cafés. A majority of respondents (89 percent) found the Parent Cafés “*extremely helpful*” and “*moderately helpful*”. Only one

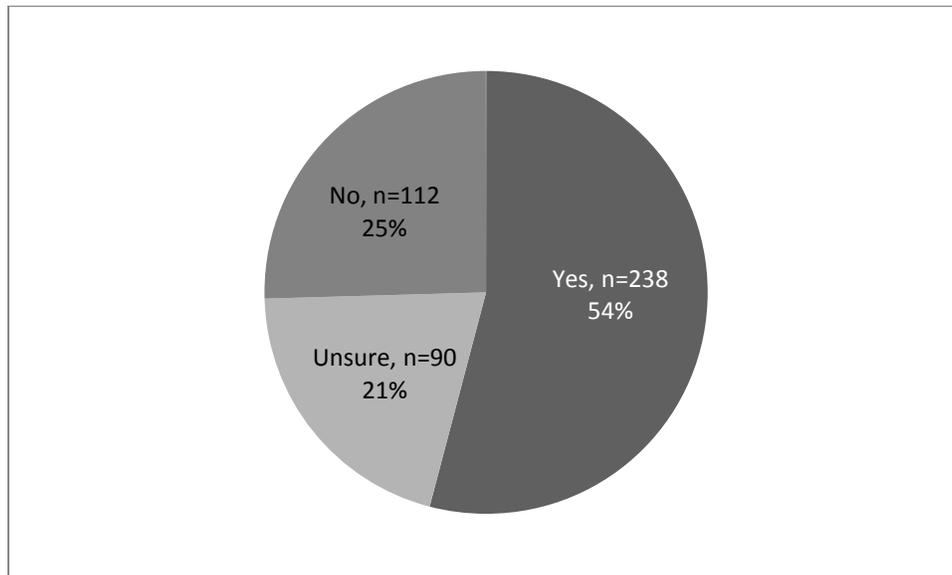
respondent indicated that the Parent Cafés were not helpful. *Table 19* shows the Parent Leaders’ responses.

Table 19
Helpfulness of the Parent Cafés

Response	n	Percent
Extremely helpful	319	74.2%
Moderately helpful	65	15.1%
Slightly helpful	5	1.2%
Somewhat helpful	40	9.3%
Not at all helpful	1	0.2%
TOTAL	430	100%

The parent leaders who participated in the Parent Cafés were asked if they could be improved; 440 parent leaders answered. Of those, 54 percent of all respondents said the Parent Cafés could be improved, and 25 percent did not (21 percent unsure). *Figure 15* shows the Parent Leaders’ responses.

Figure 15
Could Parent Cafés be improved? (n=430)



Parent leaders who stated that the Parent Cafés could be improved were able to write in what they would improve. Of the 180 responses, 42 recommended extending hours of Parent Cafés and offering more cafés. The second most common suggestion was increasing the number of participants (n=29). The next most common suggestion was increasing community involvement (n=17).

Conclusions on Parent Leader exit survey

Many parent leaders reported violence and other problems in their communities. More than one-third of participants rated the following as big problems or very big problems in their communities: violent crime, gunshots or shootings, violence among community members, non-violent crimes, selling drugs, and groups of people hanging around and causing trouble. Parent leaders from Woodlawn gave the highest average rating for violent and non-violent problems, and Rich/Bloom Township gave their community the lowest.

Almost half of the parent leaders heard about the program from a friend or relative, while 25 percent learned about it from a community agency. They rated highly the support from their administrative team, materials, resources, and training. Almost all respondents rated the program as successful or very successful and said that they used what they learned in the training during the program in their daily lives. Three-fourths thought that the service project improved the community, and 80 percent thought the service projects increased protective factors of child maltreatment. Many comments suggested expanding the program and making it a year around program.

Coordinator and manager exit survey

Parent program administrative teams consisted of 60 coordinators and managers and 27 of them returned exit surveys about the program. Most were coordinators (70 percent, n=19), and 30 percent were managers (n=8). The following 12 communities completed surveys (one community name was unknown).

- Albany Park (n=2)
- Brighton Park (n=1)
- Cicero (n=3)
- East Garfield Park (n=3)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=3)
- Humboldt Park (n=1)
- Maywood (n=1)
- North Lawndale (n=1)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=2)
- Roseland (n=3)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=3)
- Woodlawn (n=3)

Program ratings

Almost half (48 percent) indicated that support from ICJIA was good or very good (average of 3.5 out of five) and 82 percent rated support from Be Strong Families as good or very good (average rating of 4.41). Most thought support from their lead agency was good or very good (average rating 4.30) and a majority rated training for their role in the program as good or very good (average rating 4.00). Most responded that parent leaders were prepared or very prepared for their roles.

Table 20 indicates coordinators and manager exit survey responses.

Table 20
Coordinators and managers' ratings of aspects of Parent Program

	n	Percent
Quality of support from ICJIA		
Very good	3	11.1%
Good	10	37.0%
Average	10	37.0%
Poor	3	11.1%
Very poor	0	0.0%
No response	1	3.7%
Quality of support from BSF Technical Assistance Team		
Very good	17	63.0%
Good	5	18.5%
Average	4	14.8%
Poor	1	3.7%
Very poor	0	0.0%
No response	0	0.0%

Table 20 continued

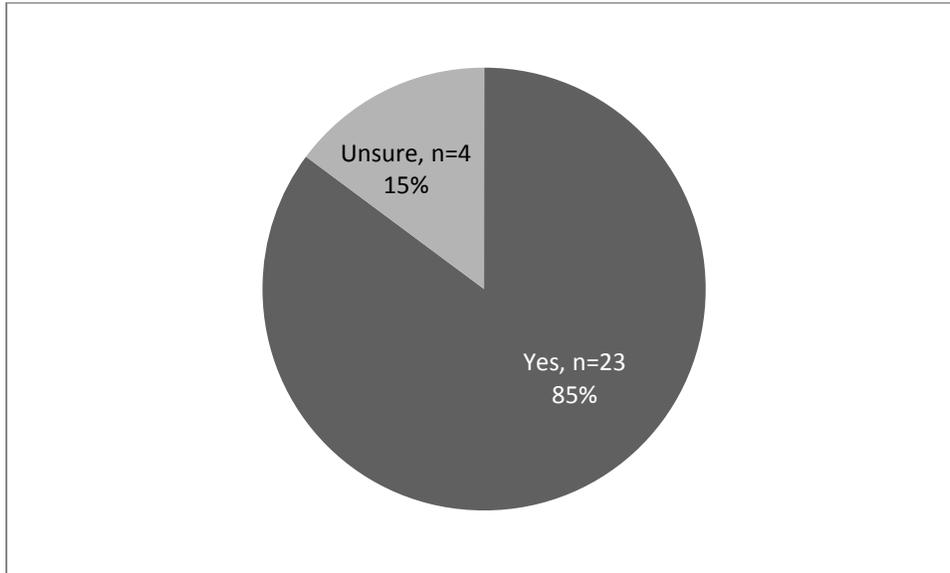
Quality of support from Lead Agency		
Very good	13	48.1%
Good	9	33.3%
Average	5	18.5%
Poor	0	0.0%
Very poor	0	0.0%
No response	0	0.0%
Quality of training for your role as Coordinator or Manager		
Very good	13	48.1%
Good	6	22.2%
Average	4	14.8%
Poor	3	11.1%
Very poor	1	3.7%
No response	0	0.0%
Preparation of Parent Leaders for their roles		
Very prepared	8	29.6%
Prepared	13	48.1%
Neutral	3	11.1%
Unprepared	3	11.1%
Very unprepared	0	0.0%
No response	0	0.0%
TOTAL	27	100%

Coordinators rated a number of items higher than the managers including ICJIA support (3.61 versus 3.25); the Be Strong Family team (4.58 versus 4.00); and training for their role (4.05 versus 3.88). However, managers rated lead agency assistance higher than coordinators (4.63 versus 4.16). Both groups rated the parent leaders’ preparation about the same (3.95 compared to 4.00).

Parent program

The coordinators and managers were asked, *Do you think the Parent Program may have contributed to a reduction in violence in the community?* Most respondents (85 percent) answered “yes” and four respondents were “*unsure*” (15 percent). *Figure 16* depicts the responses regarding violence reduction contributable to Parent Program.

Figure 16
Did the program reduce violence in the community? (n=27)

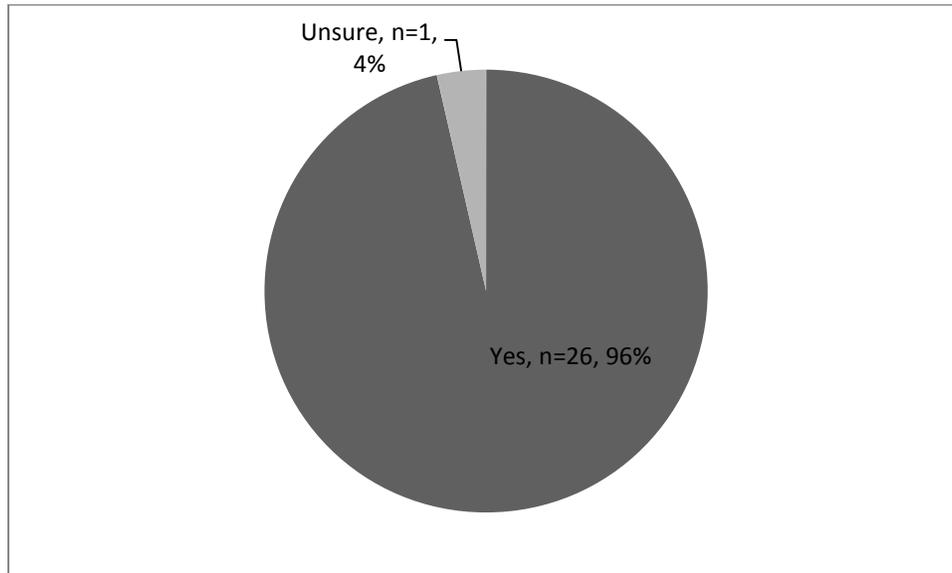


Of those who were “*unsure*,” one explained that his or her uncertainty stemmed from lack of information about crime statistics. Two asserted that it was too soon to know if the program was effective.

Community service projects

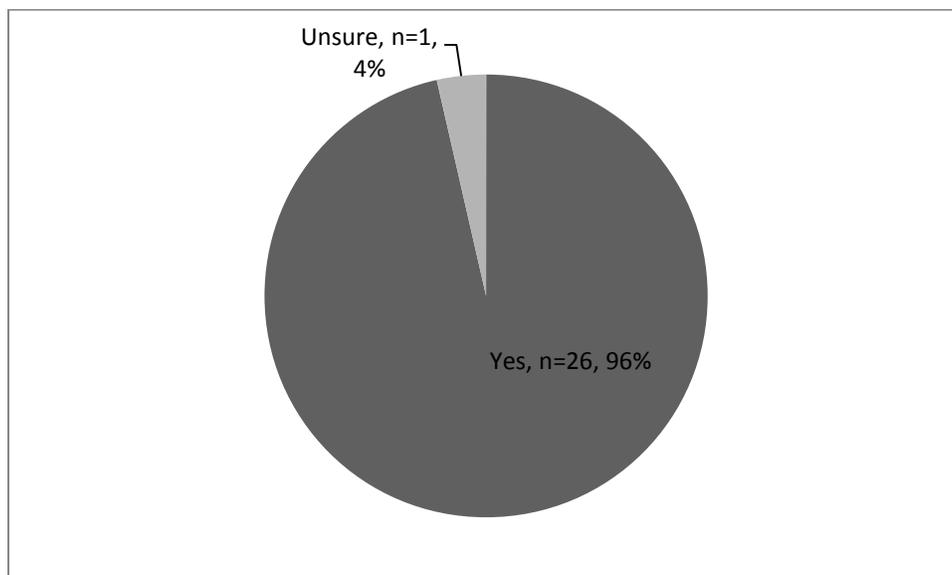
The coordinators and managers were asked if they thought the service projects improved the community. Almost all respondents (96 percent) responded “yes,” and only one person indicated “*unsure*” (4 percent). *Figure 17* depicts the responses on service projects improving the community.

Figure 17
Did service projects improve the community? (n=27)



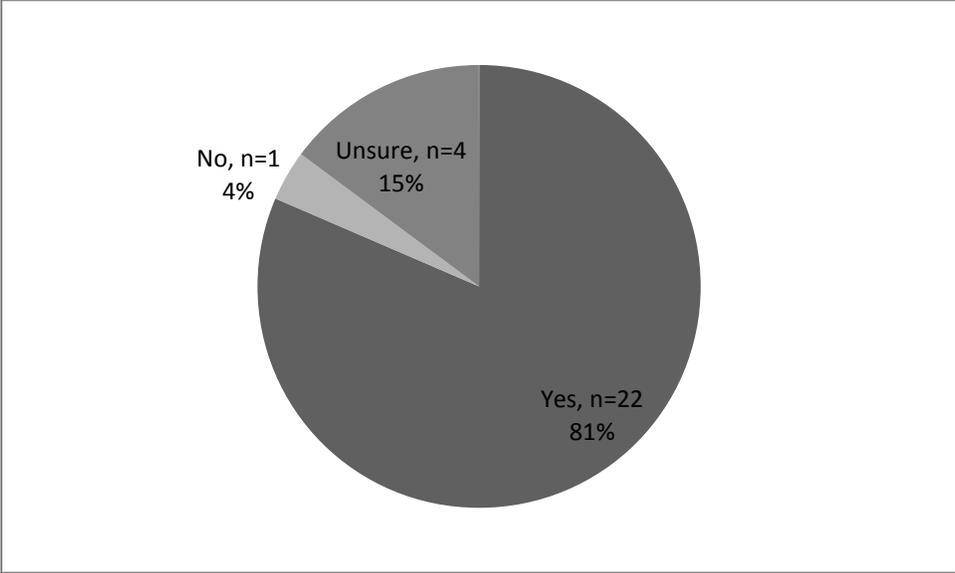
Coordinators and managers were asked if the community service projects increased protective factors and almost all (96 percent) answered “yes,” and one person said “unsure.” *Figure 18* depicts the responses on service projects and protective factors for child maltreatment.

Figure 18
Did service projects increase protective factors? (n=27)



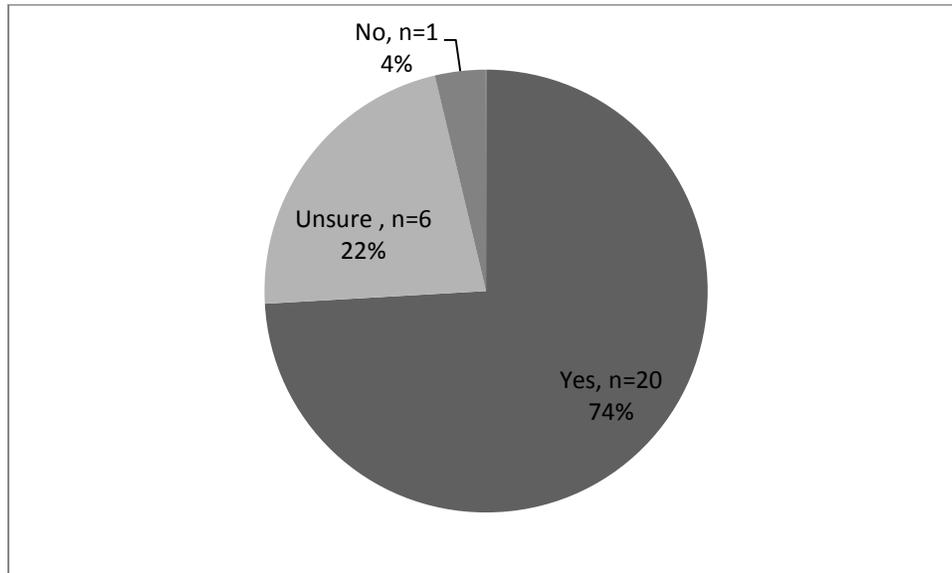
A majority of coordinators and managers (81 percent) thought the service projects contributed to a reduction in violence in their community, while 4 percent did not. *Figure 19* depicts the responses regarding service projects and reducing violence in the community.

Figure 19
Did service projects reduce violence in the community? (n=27)



Coordinators and managers were asked if their agency planned on continuing any of the community service projects that were started. A majority (74 percent) responded “yes,” 22 percent were “*unsure*,” and 4 percent said “*no*.” *Figure 20* depicts respondents’ plans to continue service projects.

Figure 20
Plan to continue service projects (n=27)



Of those that planned to continue the community service projects, 16 team members planned to continue the Parent Cafés. Eleven individuals stated they would continue a project other than the Parent Cafés. Other projects fell into the following categories:

- Area beautification programs (n=2);
- Community outreach (n=3);
- Distribute public educational material (n=3);
- Workshops including life skills, job readiness, computer literacy, resume writing, health, and financial literacy (n=8); and
- Peace/Restorative justice programs (n=2).

Additional comments

A total of 18 coordinators and managers provided additional comments. Most of the comments were positive (n=13).

Conclusions on coordinator and manager survey

Overall the coordinators and managers rated the program positively; however, respondents indicated there was room for improvement regarding training for managers, coordinators, and parent leaders. Most coordinators and managers thought the program made some positive impacts in the community; however, respondents thought that the program could be improved by increasing its duration, improving integration in the communities, and targeting community-specific goals.

Findings: Training evaluations

Parent Leader training

A training evaluation form was distributed to all parent leaders. The evaluation form covered the three parts of the parent leader training: protective factors training and delivery, leadership training, and living the protective factors workbook. A total of 427 parent leaders completed an evaluation form representing 12 out of the 20 communities, including:

- Brighton Park (n=73)
- Cicero (n=31)
- East Garfield Park (n=28)
- Englewood (n=43)
- Hermosa/Belmont Cragin (n=37)
- Logan Square (n=29)
- Maywood (n=48)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=28)
- South Shore (n=27)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=13)
- West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn) (n=36)
- Woodlawn (n=34)

Parent leaders were asked to rate their agreement with eight statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Across all eight statements, participants strongly agreed with the positive statements provided about the training seminar. Almost all of the agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well-designed, an average rating of 4.40. Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the trainers were knowledgeable and helpful; the materials provided useful information ; and the protective factors (for child abuse and neglect) were adequately covered in the training.

Parent leaders were asked to indicate what they learned during the training. Almost all (agreed or strongly agreed that they learned ways to strengthen their own families (average rating 4.59); 89 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they learned ways to strengthen their own community (average rating 4.46). A majority of respondents (86 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they learned how to form parent teams (average rating 4.40)—parent leaders were charged with forming teams to complete community service projects. Eighty-four percent of parent leaders agreed or strongly agreed that they learned how to create and/or implement community service projects (average rating 4.37). *Table 20* depicts the ratings of their agreement about statements on the training seminar.

Table 20
Ratings of Parent Leader training

The training was well-designed	n	Percent
Strongly Agree	239	56.0%
Agree	135	31.6%
Neutral	38	8.9%
Disagree	6	1.4%
Strongly disagree	6	1.4%
Unanswered	3	0.7%
Trainer(s) were knowledgeable and helpful		
Strongly Agree	280	65.6%
Agree	114	26.7%
Neutral	28	6.6%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	4	0.9%
Unanswered	1	0.2%
Materials provided useful information		
Strongly Agree	270	63.2%
Agree	121	28.3%
Neutral	27	6.3%
Disagree	3	0.7%
Strongly disagree	4	0.9%
Unanswered	2	0.5%
Protective factors were adequately covered in training		
Strongly Agree	282	66.0%
Agree	107	25.1%
Neutral	27	6.3%
Disagree	4	0.9%
Strongly disagree	5	1.2%
Unanswered	2	0.5%
I learned ways to strengthen my own family		
Strongly Agree	483	66.3%
Agree	115	26.9%
Neutral	21	4.9%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	4	0.9%
Unanswered	4	0.9%
I learned ways to strengthen my community		
Strongly Agree	250	58.5%
Agree	128	30.0%
Neutral	40	9.4%
Disagree	3	0.7%
Strongly disagree	3	0.7%
Unanswered	13	0.7%

Table 20 continued

I learned how to form parent teams		
Strongly Agree	238	55.7%
Agree	129	30.2%
Neutral	50	11.7%
Disagree	3	0.7%
Strongly disagree	4	0.9%
Unanswered	3	0.7%
I learned how to create, implement community service projects		
Strongly Agree	232	54.3%
Agree	128	30.0%
Neutral	54	12.6%
Disagree	3	0.7%
Strongly disagree	5	1.2%
Unanswered	5	1.2%
TOTAL	427	100%

Training likes/dislikes

Parent leaders were asked to indicate what they liked best about the training from a set list from which they could select multiple items. Between half and two-thirds of parents selected each option. The most selected option was sharing, communicating, and interacting (66 percent), while the least selected option was the Parent Café section (55 percent). *Table 21* shares the items that participants liked best.

Table 21
Liked best about training (n=427)

What did you like best about the training?	n	Percent
Sharing, communicating, interacting	280	65.6%
The training information, materials	262	61.4%
Protective factors	256	60.0%
Fellowship, teamwork, companionship	255	59.7%
Personal improvement	250	58.5%
Parent Café	233	54.6%
Other	37	8.7%

Suggestions to improve the training

Participants in parent leader training were asked to offer suggestions to improve the training. The question was open-ended which led to a myriad of responses. Many of the suggestions stated that there was nothing that could improve the training and used positive words to describe the training such as “good,” “perfect,” “fine,” “excellent,” “awesome,” and “great” (n=98, 37 percent).

However, multiple training participants suggested alterations to the training. Almost one-fourth of respondents wanted the program to run longer or for the program to continue (22 percent). Fifteen respondents expressed interest in more hours during the program (6 percent). Twelve responses suggested the program should be more interactive (5 percent). Eleven respondents (4 percent) were interested in more information and more materials. Three responses indicated a need for greater Spanish-language integration.

Additional comments on training

Participants in parent leader training were given the opportunity to write any other comments they had about the program. Most of the comments were positive (n=107, 53%), using words like “*great,*” “*good,*” “*enjoyed,*” “*liked,*” and “*loved.*” Fifteen percent (n=30) suggested that the program run for a longer duration, continue in subsequent years, and offer more hours during the program. One comment suggested using more Spanish-language materials.

Conclusions on parent leader training

Overall, the series of parent leader trainings were well received. The majority of participants who completed an evaluation form agreed with the positive statements on the training, trainers, and what they learned. Most participants enjoyed sharing, communicating, and interacting with others, especially other parents during the training and many gained knowledge about parenting. Some participants suggested that the program should be developed so that it is longer in duration.

Coordinator and manager training

A training evaluation form was distributed to all Coordinators and managers of the CVPP Parent Program. The training was led by Be Strong Families, a group hired to train the Coordinators and managers who would then go on to train Parent Leaders in the Parent Programs in their various communities. A total of 45 Coordinators and managers responded to the survey. Participants indicated affiliation with 19 CVPP communities. There was an average of two representatives from each community completed surveys:

- Albany Park (n=2)
- Austin (n=2)
- Brighton Park (n=2)
- Chicago Lawn (n=3)
- Cicero (n=3)
- East Garfield Park (n=3)
- Englewood (n=3)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=2)
- Hermosa/Belmont-Cragin (n=2)
- Humboldt Park (n=2)
- North Lawndale (n=3)
- Logan Square (n=2)
- Maywood (n=3)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=3)
- Rich-Bloom Township (n=3)
- Rogers Park (n=2)
- South Shore (n=1)
- Thornton Township (n=1)
- Woodlawn (n=2)

The evaluation form asked participants to respond to eight statements about the training from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5. For all eight statements, nearly all participants strongly agreed with the positive statements provided about the training seminar. Almost all of the participants (98 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well-designed, including the pacing and adequacy of time for questions and answers. The average rating of agreement about the strength of the design of the training was 4.6 out of 5. All agreed or strongly agreed that the trainers were knowledgeable and helpful (average rating of 4.82). Ninety-eight percent agreed or strongly agreed that the materials and handouts provided useful information (average rating of 4.78).

Almost all participants (98 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the protective factors for child abuse and neglect were adequately covered in the training (average rating 4.82). Nearly all respondents (98 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the training helped them learn ways to strengthen their own family, with an average rating of 4.78 out of 5. When asked if the training assisted coordinators and managers in learning ways to strengthen their communities, ninety-eight percent agreed or strongly agreed, producing an average rating of 4.82, one of the highest strength of agreement for the survey. Those surveyed overwhelmingly tended to agree or strongly agree (98 percent) that the training helped them to learn how to form parent teams, with an average rating of 4.78. Finally, almost all coordinators and managers (96 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the training taught them how to create and implement community service projects, creating an average rating of 4.71. *Table 22* indicates the ratings of the training.

Table 22
Ratings of train-the-trainer training

The training was well-designed (pacing, adequate time for Q&A, etc.)	n	Percent
Strongly agree	29	64.4%
Agree	15	33.4%
Neutral	0	0.0%
Disagree	1	2.2%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Trainer(s) were knowledgeable and helpful		
Strongly agree	37	82.2%
Agree	8	17.8%
Neutral	0	0.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
The materials and handouts provided useful information		
Strongly agree	36	80.0%
Agree	8	17.8%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
The protective factors were adequately covered in training		
Strongly agree	38	84.4%
Agree	6	13.4%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
I learned ways to strengthen my own family		
Strongly agree	36	80.0%
Agree	8	17.8%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
I learned ways to strengthen my community		
Strongly agree	38	84.4%
Agree	6	13.4%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
I learned how to form parent teams		
Strongly agree	36	80.0%
Agree	8	17.8%
Neutral	1	2.2%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%

Table 22 continued

I learned how to create, implement community service projects		
Strongly agree	34	75.6%
Agree	9	20.0%
Neutral	2	4.4%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
TOTAL	45	100%

Best aspect of the training

Coordinators and managers were asked to indicate the best aspect of the training. Six options were given with an opportunity to indicate “*other*.” Of all of the provided responses, protective factors was the answer chosen most often, with 89 percent of respondents indicating that this was one of the best parts of the training. Personal improvement was also an answer chosen with high frequency— 84 percent of coordinators and managers noted that this was one of their favorite aspects of the training.

The following are responses of the participants:

- Protective factors (n=40).
- Personal improvement (n=38).
- The training information and materials (n=36).
- Parent Café (n=36).
- Sharing, communicating, interacting (n=35).
- Fellowship, teamwork, companionship (n=34).

Those surveyed also had an option to indicate “*other*” and write-in an aspect of the training as the best aspect of the training. Additional aspects included the trainers (n=2), the energy of the training (n=3), a welcoming and loving environment (n=2), networking opportunities (n=1), and the training of trainer sessions (n=1). Three individuals noted that the energy was very positive and invigorating, making the training enjoyable and productive.

Suggestions to improve the training

Participants in the training were asked to offer suggestions on how the training might be improved, and 29 responded to the question. Some participants indicated that they felt the training needed no improvement, commonly noting that the training was “*great*” or “*perfect*” and “*should continue*” (n=9). A suggestion by respondents was better use of time, such as spending more of the allocated training time on hands-on training and interactive sharing and communicating instead of simply relaying information. Many felt that each individual training session was too long, which made it difficult to absorb all the information. Some suggested that Spanish materials be provided or that the modules use simplified language.

Additional comments of the training

After the suggestions, the coordinators and managers were asked to give any additional comments of their overall training experience. Out of the 45 participants the majority (64 percent, n=29) provided mostly positive comments. Five of the 29 comments were either negative or more suggestive. Overall, the Parent Leader participants were satisfied with the training according to the comments.

Conclusions on coordinator and manager training

Overall, the series of trainings provided by BSF to coordinators and managers was well received. The majority of participants who completed an evaluation form agreed with the positive statements on the training, trainers, and what they learned. A few noted that the materials and structure of the training were helpful. Many indicated that the training programs provided personal improvement and that there was an excitement on behalf of coordinators and managers to train and share their knowledge and experiences with parent leaders in their own training sessions.

Findings: Parent Café evaluation

A total of 1,394 attendees at Parent Program-hosted Parent Cafés completed surveys on their experiences. The respondents represented 16 communities. Individual communities were not indicated on seven surveys.

- Austin (n=44)
- Brighton Park (n=115)
- Cicero (n=148)
- East Garfield Park (n=168)
- Englewood (n=100)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=59)
- Logan Square (n=121)
- Maywood (n=36)
- North Lawndale (n=50)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=253)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=29)
- Roseland (n=45)
- South Shore (n=14)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=95)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=86)
- Woodlawn (n=24)

Most of the Parent Café survey respondents (77 percent) were female, and 21 percent were male. Thirty-seven surveys (3 percent) did not state the attendee’s gender. Participants’ age ranged from 13 years old to 82 years old with an average age of 39 years old. Almost all participants were age 18 or over (92 percent; n=1,282); 4 percent were under 18 (n=58). About half of the attendees were between 20 and 39 (52 percent; n=580). A few attendees did not answer this question (4 percent; n=54).

Attendees were asked to state the number of children under age 18 for whom they were the primary caregiver. The survey defined “primary caregiver” as the parent/guardian with the “main responsibility for the child.” The most common responses were one child (25 percent; n=350), two children (19 percent; n=266), and three children (13 percent; n=177). Few attendees (13 percent; n=186) indicated that they are not a primary caregiver by the definition of this survey. A few participants (20 percent; n=273) did not answer this question. *Table 23* indicates demographics of attendees.

Table 23
Demographics of Parent Café attendees

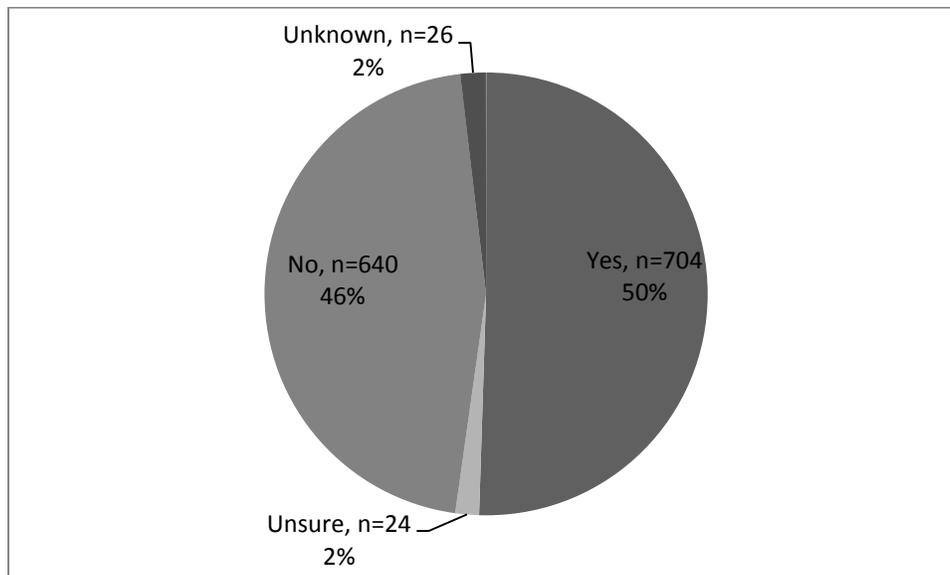
Gender	n	Percent
Female	1,067	76.5%
Male	290	20.8%
Unknown	37	2.7%
Age	n	Percent
Teens	91	6.5%
20s	241	17.3%
30s	339	24.3%
40s	383	27.5%
50s	229	16.4%
60s	45	3.2%
Unknown	4	0.3%

Table 23 continued

Number of children as primary caregiver	n	Percent
None	186	13.3%
1	350	25.1%
2	266	19.1%
3	177	12.7%
4	86	6.2%
5	27	1.9%
6+	29	2.1%
Unknown	273	19.6%
TOTAL	1,394	100%

About half of the attendees indicated that they had participated in a Parent Café before (50 percent; n=704); 46 percent had not; and 2 percent were unsure. Twenty-six respondents did not answer this question. Figure 21 shows the attendees' answers.

Figure 21
Previous participation in a Parent Café (n=1,394)



Parent Café themes

Participants were asked to share the theme of the Parent Café, and 1,288 responses were provided. Many participants (45 percent) mentioned all or some of the protective factors (n= 583). The five protective factors to reduce child maltreatment are parent resilience; knowledge of parenting and child development; social and emotional competence in children; social connections; and concrete support in times of need.

A total of 137 participants stated that the Parent Café theme was “taking care of yourself.” Other common responses were building strong relationships or strong families (n=80) and better parenting or “superhero” parents (n=90). Seventy-eight respondents stated the Parent Café theme

centered on stopping or reducing violence, 58 said balancing full-time employment with full-time parenting, and 37 respondents said stress.

Twenty-nine respondents stated the Parent Café focused on learning and educating parents and children. Other themes included staying positive for you and your kids, as well as parenting in the age of new technology.

Parent Café outreach

About half of the respondents stated that they learned about the Parent Cafés from a friend or relative (49 percent; n=685); 23 percent by a community agency (n=316); 12 percent saw a flier (n=173), and 4 percent were notified online (n=54). Nine percent (n=128) chose the option “other,” which included “walk in,” “school,” “work,” “church,” “CVPP staff,” and “prior participant.” Thirty-eight surveys did not indicate how the attendee learned about the program (3 percent).

What parents learned

The Parent Café participants indicated one or more things they learned during the Parent Café from a list of the five protective factors. A majority learned how to rebound from difficult situations (64 percent); slightly more than half learned how friends and relatives around them could help them respond to parenting problems (59 percent). Half of the attendees indicated that they learned to teach children how to share their feelings and 49 percent learned how to guide their children. Some respondents (40 percent) learned how to find help in a crisis or fulfill basic needs. *Table 24* shows the attendees’ responses.

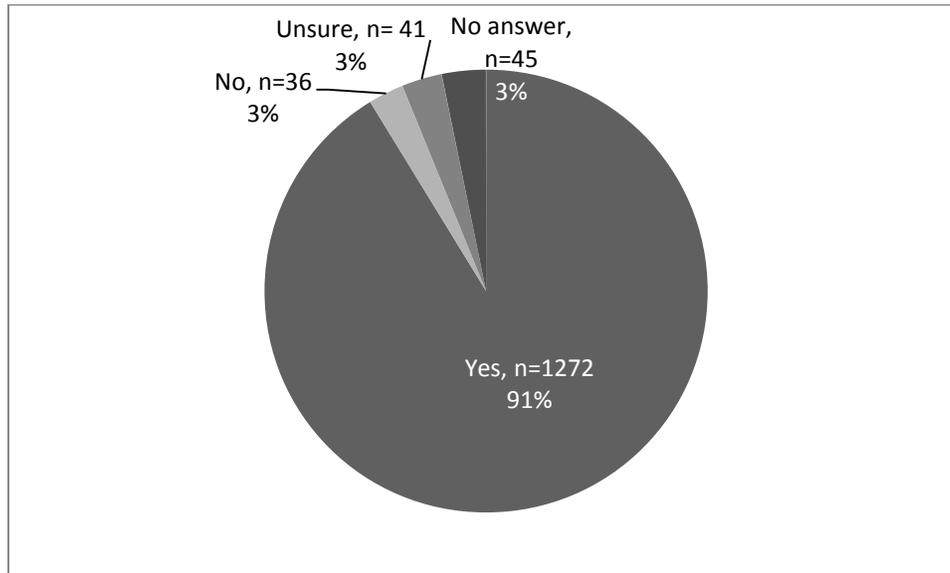
Table 24
What learned in the Parent Cafés (n= (n=1,394)

Topic	n	Percent
How to bounce back from difficult situations	887	63.6%
How friends, relatives, and neighbors can help you solve parenting problems	821	58.9%
Teach children how to share their feelings	700	50.2%
Tools to guide children in their stages of growing up	685	49.1%
Where you can find help in a crisis or get basic needs	554	39.7%

Helpfulness of Parent Cafés

Almost all participants (91 percent) indicated that the information they received during the Parent Café was helpful. Three percent stated that the information was not helpful, 3 percent were unsure, and 3 percent did not answer this question. *Table 22* shows the attendees’ responses.

Figure 22
Helpfulness of Parent Cafés (n=1,394)



Additional comments about the program

Of the 704 comments made by participants, the majority were positive statements about the Parent Cafés (78 percent; n=555). The most common suggestions were to expand the program into other communities and to increase the length, frequency, and duration of the Parent Cafés (11 percent; n=81). One participant suggested expanding the program to include parallel “youth cafés.”

The most common concerns included program structure, some requested either more or less one-on-one time and writing exercises (n=19), and other Parent Café participants (n=12) dominating discussion.

Conclusions from Parent Café surveys

Overall, the parent experiences were positive. The most commonly requested improvement of the program was community expansion and an increase the length and frequency of the cafés. Almost all participants found the information helpful; a few parents suggested adding information about technology and social networking for parents who are not experienced with the technology their children use frequently.

Findings: Community service project data

Community service approval forms

At the start of the program, all 20 Parent Program communities were asked to submit forms indicating what community service projects (in addition to Parent Cafés) that the Parent leaders would work on. Once submitted, ICJIA would approve or deny the service projects. A total of 19 communities submitted forms.

According to the forms, the communities planned to execute 93 events in the following categories:

- *Fairs/Community resources*: These community events feature games, activities, parties, food, and resources such as help finding a job/financial management, etc. (n=19).
- *Community clean-up*: Events that gather the people of the community to engage in neighborhood beautification by cleaning streets and parks (n=16).
- *Youth and parent connections*: Events designed to help parents communicate with their children and to properly educate children on certain topics (n=9).
- *Anti-violence*: Events that revolve around various issues such as anti-bullying, domestic violence, gang violence, neighborhood security (n=13).
- *Health and wellness*: Activities to promote healthy living lifestyles (n=10).
- *Senior citizen events*: Resources and activities to help senior citizens particularly in retirement homes (n=3).
- *Online*: Forums and blogs held online for anonymous feedback (n=6).
- *Parent Cafés*: Community gatherings to discuss and solve local issues (n=17).

The first community project was scheduled to start on June 2, 2014, and the last project was scheduled to end on September 21, 2014. The length of the events ranged from 1 day to 91 days, and the average length of service projects was 33.7 days. Communities anticipated a total of 2,631 days working on the different service projects.

The Parent Program held events in diverse settings, often having multiple locations per event. The following are the categories of the locations that held events (n=93):

- Community centers or streets (n=70).
- Parks or gardens (n=8).
- Church (n=2).
- Schools (n=4).
- Nursing home (n=3).
- Online (n=6).

The events focused on addressing certain issues in the community including:

- Lack of knowledge of community resources.
- Addressing violence at home and school.
- Lack of community child care.
- Lack of activities for youth and parents.
- Youths not attending school or work.
- Understanding the body/lack of knowledge on healthy lifestyles.
- Dirty neighborhoods/ lack of community gardens.
- Addressing gang violence/ community safety/ negativity.
- Members being disconnected from community/ lack of communication.
- Lack of communication between parents and children.
- Addressing senior citizen issues such as loneliness and lack of activities.
- Addressing community issues anonymously/ lack of feedback.

Community service sign-in sheets

The following 12 communities submitted 202 sign-in sheets for various community service projects:

- Austin (n=6)
- Brighton Park (n=10)
- Cicero (n=41)
- East Garfield Park (n=12)
- Englewood (n=12)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=66)
- Maywood (n=19)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=14)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=4)
- Thornton/Bremen (n=6)
- West Chicago (n=1)
- Woodlawn (n=11)

A total of 4,420 people signed in at the 202 community service projects held from June 2, 2014, to September 21, 2014. The sign-in sheets asked for demographics such as age, gender, and program role (staff, participant, or community member). The average age of those who specified it (n=1,630) was 32.2 years old. Ages ranged from one to 74. Of those who specified gender (n=3,497), 78 percent were women (n=2,734). Of those who specified their role (n=4,420), 55.3 percent were Parent Program participants (n=2,444), 25.3 percent were community members (n=1,118), and 19.4 percent were staff (n=858).

Implications for policy and practice

Established by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, five protective factors promote healthy families and reduce child abuse and neglect: 1) increasing parental resilience, 2) building the social connections of parents, 3) increasing knowledge of parenting and child development, 4) providing concrete supports in times of need, and 5) supporting the social and emotional competence of children. The largest improvement was on the protective factor of *family functioning and resiliency*, which was statistically significant. There were increases in mean scores on 14 of 20 statements and small reductions in mean scores on six statements.

Increase protective factor of social and concrete support

There were reductions in on three statements on the protective factor of *social and concrete support* measuring perceived informal support (from family, friends, and neighbors) and perceived access to tangible goods and services to help families particularly in times of crisis or intensified need. The statements were:

- *I would have no idea where to turn if my family needed food or housing.* (reverse coded)
- *I wouldn't know where to go for help if I had trouble making ends meet.* (reverse coded)
- *If I needed help finding a job, I wouldn't know where to go for help.* (reverse coded)

These findings suggest that program administrators should offer more information on resources for tangible goods and services to help families cope with stress.

Increase protective factor of knowledge of parenting and child development

There were very small reductions in mean pre- and post-test scores on three statements measuring the protective factor of *parenting and child development*. The protective factor measures the understanding and utilization of effective child management techniques and having age-appropriate expectations for children's abilities.

The statements were:

- *I praise my child when he/she behaves well.*
- *When I discipline my child, I lose control.* (reverse coded)
- *I am happy being with my child.*

The fact that program participants were less likely to praise children who do well or feel happy being with their child after the program suggests that these issues need to be discussed further. Parent surveys indicated that some Parent Cafés were opportunities for parents to discuss and vent with each other and share their own experiences. Program administrators can further guide those discussions to promote the understanding and expectations for their children.

Recruit younger parents, primary caregivers

Based on responses to the participant surveys, only 17 percent of program participants were in their 20s and 7 percent of participants were in their teens. Children of younger parents are more at risk of abuse and neglect, poor cognitive and behavioral skills, and placement in foster care than children of older parents (Center for Law and Social Policy, 2007) and parenting programs often prove more effective for younger parents (Kellermann, Fuqua-Witley, Rivara, & Mercy, 1998). As such, recruiting a younger population would have a greater impact. However, the program needs to be prepared to meet the special needs of this population.

For program eligibility, “parent” was defined loosely and was not restricted to primary caregivers of a child. Thirteen percent of surveyed participants indicated they were not the primary caregiver of any minor children. In addition, there were no age restrictions on the program. Parents with grown children or those with little contact with their children could still participate. In the future, the program should ensure all participants are primary caregivers to increase likelihood that the program will help reduce child maltreatment and strengthen families.

Increase participation of fathers

It is unknown how many fathers participated, but a handful of parent leaders recommended increasing male participation. Only 21 percent of participants in the program indicated that they were male. Fathers have a direct impact on the well-being of their children—negatively, they may be perpetrators or contributors of child maltreatment; positively, their presence may be a protective factor (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). In poor, urban communities, fathers’ relationship with mothers, their own childhood experiences, or views of manhood can prevent them from getting involved in raising their children (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). However, a father’s involvement in the life of a family is associated with lower levels of child maltreatment, even in families facing other risk factors, such as unemployment and poverty (Marshall, English, & Stewart, 2001). Therefore, the program should make efforts to recruit male parents so as to increase men’s involvement in their families in line with the standards of the program.

Increase use of Parent Cafés

The most common suggestion from program participants was to increase the length, frequency, and duration of the Parent Cafés. They also suggested increasing the number of dedicated participants. These adjustments would increase the number of people impacted by the training and could increase the rate at which the information is absorbed.

Collect additional data

Additional data should be collected to learn more about the program operations and to be able to make improvements. In particular, it is important to learn more about the parent leaders. Additional data about program participants include:

- Age of Parent leaders
- Ages of children
- Status as primary caregiver

Knowing the parents' ages would help understand the relative responses to the protective factors training by age. This information is relevant insofar as the program is targeting younger parents and knowing in which demographics the program is most effective. Program leaders should also encourage participants to fill out surveys in their entirety.

There was a lack of data on the community service projects and how they fit into the overall program goal of violence prevention by reducing child maltreatment and promoting healthy families. Parent leaders were trained for five weeks of the 13-week program primarily on protective factors and personal development and it is unclear whether their training prepared them for non-family-related community service projects, such as community beautification. Additional data to collect about service projects include:

- How the projects relate to, and increase, protective factors.
- Community member feedback on the service projects.
- Duration of service project.
- Impact of the community service projects.

By knowing more about the service projects, researchers will be able to learn which projects fit best into the program's goals, as well as which were well attended and received by community members outside of the program.

Conclusion

Nearly 1,000 parents were accepted to the Parent Program to serve as parent leaders and nearly 700 were trained. They participated in 160 community service projects. Parent Cafés or violence prevention activities were the most common community service projects completed by program participants.

Overall, the series of parent leader trainings were well-received by the participants. Parent leaders suggested that the training should be more interactive and offer more information. A majority of parent leaders reported using what they learned in the training during the program. Almost all coordinators and managers agreed that their training was well-designed and that the information was useful. Coordinators and managers rated the protective factors the best part of training.

The mean scores on pre- and post-survey revealed an improvement in measures of the protective factors to reduce child maltreatment in the parent participants before and after the program. There was at least a slight increase in mean score in each of the five protective factors. Only three statements on the protective factor of *social and concrete support* and three statements on the protective factor of *knowledge of parenting/child development* had very slight decreases in mean scores. According to the pre-/post-tests, seven communities experienced improvement in the overall mean score. Brighton Park, Cicero, Greater Grand Crossing, Logan Square, and Pilsen/Little Village had increases in all four measures of protective factors; in addition, Englewood had increases in three out of four measures.

Overall, the coordinator and manager responses about the program were favorable. Most coordinators and managers believed that the program contributed to reduced violence in their community. Almost all coordinators and managers thought the community service projects improved their community and increased protective factors. A majority of Coordinators and managers reported planning to continue the community service projects. Some coordinators and managers thought the program could be improved by being longer in duration.

Parent leaders indicated the program was well-conducted and successful. Most enjoyed sharing, communicating, and interacting with other parents. Many parent leaders suggested that the Parent Cafés and group discussions be longer. A majority of participants thought that the community service projects increased protective factors to prevent child abuse and neglect and improved their community. Some suggested increasing community participation in the program.

Suggestions for programmatic improvement include increase protective factors of *social and concrete support* and *knowledge of parenting/child development*, recruit younger parents and primary caregivers, and increase participation of fathers. Based on data collected through the evaluation, the CVPP's Parent Program achieved its goals. It built protective factors in families by employing and training to almost 1,000 community members as parent leaders and built protective factors in communities through the completion of community service projects.

References

- Black, D. A., Heyman, R. E., & Slep, A. M. S. (2001). Risk factors for child physical abuse. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 6*(2), 121-188.
- Brown, J. (2001). The world café: Living knowledge through conversations that matter. *The Systems Thinker, 12*(5), 1-5.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). *Child Maltreatment: Definitions*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childmaltreatment/definitions.html>.
- Center for Law and Social Policy. (2007). *Early head start and teen parent families: Partnerships for success*. Retrieved December 12, 2013 from http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications_archive/files/0210.pdf.
- Center for the Study of Social Policy. (2003). *Strengthening families through early care and education*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources/body/LiteratureReview.pdf>.
- Children's Defense Fund. (2005). *The state of America's children*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Children's Defense Fund. (2014). *Child Welfare*. Retrieved from http://www.childrensdefense.org/library/state-of-americas-children/documents/2014-SOAC_child-welfare.pdf.
- Counts, J.M., Buffinton, E.S., Chang-Rios, K., Rasmussen, H.N., & Preacher, K.J. (2010). The development and validation of the protective factors survey: a self-report measure of protective factors against child maltreatment. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 34*(10), 762-772.
- Corso, P. S., Edwards, V. J., Fang, X., & Mercy, J. A. (2008). Health-related quality of life among adults who experienced maltreatment during childhood. *American Journal of Public Health, 98*(6), 1094-1100.
- Fang, X., Brown, D. S., Florencea, C. S., & Mercy, J. A. (2012). The economic burden of child maltreatment in the United States and implications for prevention. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 36*(2), 156-165.
- Ferguson, C. J., San Miguel, C., & Hartley, R. D. (2009). A multivariate analysis of youth violence and aggression: the influence of family, peers, depression, and media violence. *The Journal of Pediatrics, 155*(6), 904-908.
- Gorman-Smith, D., & Tolan, P. (1998). The role of exposure to community violence and developmental problems among inner-city youth. *Development and Psychopathology, 10*(1), 101-116.

- Horton, C. (2003). *Protective factors literature review: Early care and education programs and the prevention of child abuse and neglect*. Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy.
- Kellermann, A. L., Fuqua-Witley, D. S., Rivara, F. P., & Mercy, J. (1998). Preventing youth violence: What works? *Annual Review of Public Health, 19*, 271-292. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.publhealth.19.1.271
- Koball, H., Dion, R., Gothro, A., Bardos, M., Dworsky, A., Lansing, J., Stagner, M., Korom-Djakovic, D., Herrera, C., & Manning, A.E. (2011). *Synthesis of research and resources to support at-risk youth*, OPRE Report # OPRE 2011-22. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.
- Margolin, G., & Gordis, E. B. (2000). The effects of family and community violence on children. *Annual Review of Psychology, 51*, 445-479.
- Marshall, D. B., English, D.J., & Stewart, A. J. (2001). The effect of fathers or father figures on child behavioral problems in families referred to child protective services. *Child Maltreatment, 6*(4), 290-299.
- McCawley, P. (2010). *The logic model for program planning and evaluation*. Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho. Retrieved from <http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/extension/LogicModel.pdf>
- O'Donnell, D. A., Schwab-Stone, M. E., & Muyeed, A. Z. (2002). Multidimensional resilience in urban children exposed to community violence. *Child Development, 73*(4), 1265-1282.
- Office on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children's Bureau. (2010). Community partnerships: improving the response to child maltreatment. *Child Abuse and Neglect User Manual Series*. Retrieved from <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/partners.pdf>
- Pearce, M. J., Jones, S. M., Schwab-Stone, M.E., & Ruchkin, V. (2003). The protective effects of religiousness and parent involvement on the development of conduct problems among youth exposed to violence. *Child Development, 74*(6), 1682-1696.
- Prevent Child Abuse America (n.d.). *Ten ways to help prevent child abuse*. Retrieved from <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/images/docs/tenwaystohelppreventchildabuse.pdf>.
- Reichert, J. (2014). *Evaluation of the 2013 Community Violence Prevention Program's Parent Program*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.
- Rosenberg, J., & Wilcox, W.B. (2006). *The importance of fathers in the healthy development of children*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Administration on Children, Youth and Families Children's Bureau, Office on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Sacks, V., Murphey, D., and Moor, K. (2014). Adverse childhood experiences: National and state-level prevalence. *Child Trends*, 1-11.

University of Texas at Austin (2007). *Instructional assessment resources*. Retrieved from <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar>.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2013). *Child maltreatment 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cm2013.pdf#page=10>.

The World Café (nd). Retrieved from <http://www.theworldcafe.com>.

Zaff, J.F., & Butler, D. (2008). Whole children, whole families, whole communities. *The Evaluation Exchange*, 14(1&2). Retrieved from <http://www.hfrp.org/var/hfrp/storage/original/application/510c455b5997fc6af0ed14c03143dc96.pdf>.

Zeldin, S. (2004). Preventing youth violence through the promotion of community engagement and membership. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 32(5), 623–641.

Appendix A: Protective factors survey

PARENT PROGRAM Pre- and Post- Protective Factors Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: Please create a unique ID number using the first letter of your first name and the first letter of your last name followed by your month of birth and day of birth. For example, *John Smith born January 31, 1995* would be *J – S – 01 – 31*.

First letter of first name	First letter of last name	Month of birth	Day of birth
_____	_____	_____	_____

Please indicate:

CVPP Community: _____

Today's date: _____

- Pre/Before program start Post/After program disenrollment
 New to program Prior participant
 Male Female

Please circle the response that best describes how often the statements are true for you or your family.

About family ...

		Never	Very Rarely	Rarely	About half the time	Frequently	Very Frequently	Always
1.	In my family, we talk about problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	When we argue, my family listens to "both sides of the story."	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	In my family, we take time to listen to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	My family pulls together when things are stressful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	My family is able to solve our problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

About social connections and support...

		Strongly disagree	Mostly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I have others who will listen when I need to talk about my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	When I am lonely, there are several people I can talk to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I would have no idea where to turn if my family needed food or housing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	I wouldn't know where to go for help if I had trouble making ends meet.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	If there is a crisis, I have others I can talk to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	If I needed help finding a job, I wouldn't know where to go for help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

About parenting ...

		Strongly disagree	Mostly disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Mostly Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	There are many times when I don't know what to do as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	I know how to help my child learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	My child misbehaves just to upset me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

About your child and family ...

		Never	Very Rarely	Rarely	About half the time	Frequently	Very Frequently	Always
1.	I praise my child when he/she behaves well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	When I discipline my child, I lose control.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I am happy being with my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	My child and I are very close to each other.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	I am able to soothe my child when he/she is upset.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I spend time with my child doing what he/she likes to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

300 W. Adams Street, Suite 200

Chicago, Illinois 60606

Phone: 312.793.8408

Fax: 312.793.8422

TDD: 312.793.4170

www.icjia.state.il.us