



SIXPENCE EARLY LEARNING FUND

2019-2020 EVALUATION REPORT HIGHLIGHTS (SEPTEMBER 2020)

Sixpence supports prevention throughout quality environments and services.

HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the Sixpence Early Learning Fund 2019-2020 Evaluation Report (September 2020), an evaluation report prepared by The University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute. For a copy of the full report, [CLICK HERE](#).

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The Sixpence Early Learning Fund is a public-private partnership providing grants to school districts across Nebraska. Sixpence supports the healthy growth and development of infants and toddlers (prenatally to age 3) through home-based services to families, center-based infant and toddler care, and partnerships between school districts and local child care providers.

The evaluation report examines both the original Sixpence offering center-based and home visitation services and the newer Sixpence Child Care Partnerships program that partners local child care providers with school districts. Readers of the report should note that this year was not typical due to the arrival of COVID-19. Most center-based programs closed temporarily in the spring of 2020 and most home visiting programs provided virtual rather than in-person services. Some analyses could not be completed because of the small number of assessments collected in the spring.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation report contains recommendations to further improve center-based programs and home visitation practices. It also recommends enhancement of practices to build children's—especially boys'—vocabulary-related language skills, and further support for breastfeeding and smoking cessation. See the report for a full list of next steps.

WHAT THE EVALUATION REPORT FOUND

During the evaluation year, 31 school district grantees located in 31 of Nebraska's 93 counties participated in Sixpence. A total of 1,038 children and 886 families were served in rural (41%), urban (32%), and mid-sized (27%) communities. By statute, children enrolled in Sixpence must meet at least one of the following criteria: 1) eligibility for free or reduced lunch, 2) premature birth, 3) home residence where the primary language spoken is one other than English, 4) parents younger than 20, and 5) parents who have not completed high school. Eligibility for free or reduced lunch—the proxy for living in a low income household—was the most common qualifying factor, applying to nearly 100% of the population served. Most of the children served were White (39%) or Hispanic (36%). Additionally, 54 child care programs across nine communities—serving over 925 children—participated in Sixpence's Child Care Partnerships program. Providers received coaching two to four times a month, attended trainings on high quality early childhood practices and enrolled in the Nebraska Department of Education's Step Up To Quality Initiative.

Three levels of data were collected to understand the quality and impact of Sixpence-supported work. First, at the program level (i.e. center-based child care and home visitation services), data show that Sixpence services provided to families and children were high quality. Sixpence classrooms were especially strong in the area of teacher-child relationships with 100% of classrooms meeting the program goal. Home visitation practices were also high quality with 74% of home visitors consistently using best practices to support families. Second, child-level data show that, overall, the language scores of children in Sixpence remained constant. Additionally,



100%
of Sixpence classrooms
met the overall benchmark
for high quality practices

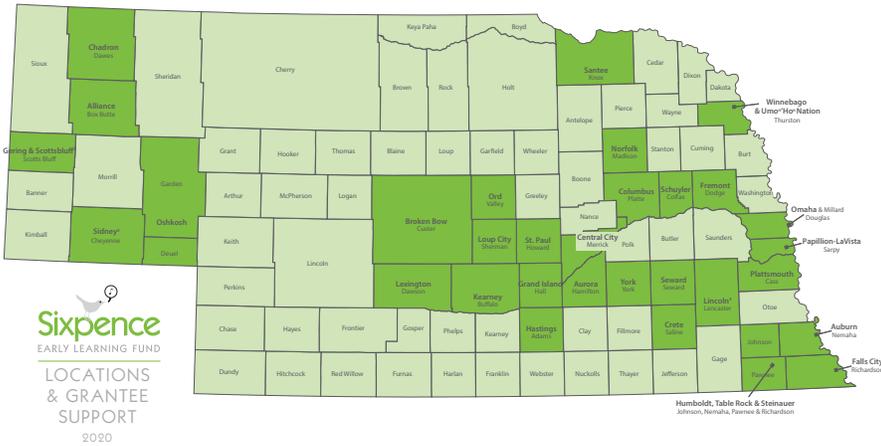
data show that the distribution of the children's expressive and receptive language scores generally follow a bell curve distribution, with nearly half of the children meeting or exceeding the Sixpence program goals; this is a strong finding when accounting for the additional challenges that the children enrolled in Sixpence—as a population—face as compared to the population on which the language tool results are based. Third, family outcome data show that over 90% of families have a medical home, immunize their children, and use car seats. An area for improvement is providing a smoke free environment; 12% of children are exposed to second-hand smoke at home. Parents strongly agree that Sixpence providers helped them increase their parenting skills.

For Sixpence's Child Care Partnership program, data show that after a year in CCP, programs demonstrate higher quality practices. Child care providers were highly satisfied with their experience in CCP. They had supportive relationships with their coaches and they felt they were better providers because of the program.

NEXT STEPS

Sixpence programs will be supported through technical assistance in using their evaluation data to improve practices. This ensures that Sixpence-funded programs continue to meet the statutory and administrative requirements defined by the Nebraska Legislature, state agency partners and private investors.

31 SCHOOL DISTRICTS PARTICIPATED IN SIXPENCE AND 54 CHILD CARE PROGRAMS PARTICIPATED IN CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS DURING 2019-2020.



“

This has been the best experience I have ever had in my 11 years of being open! I will forever be grateful for everything the program has done for our daycare, employees and children”

- A CCP Provider

SIXPENCE SUPPORTS THE HEALTHY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS (PRENATALLY TO AGE 3).

“

I like the support you get from it — especially during school where we met up for Teen Parent; that played a huge part in my support as well as Family Night and not feeling like I was the only one pregnant as a young mom.”

- A Sixpence Parent

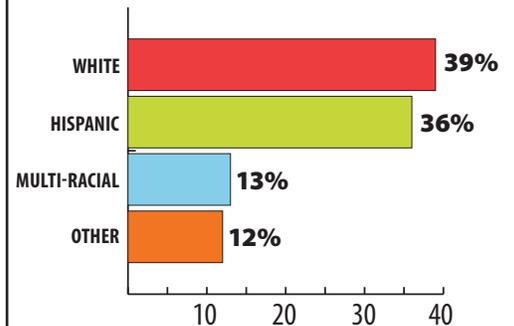


1,038

children served across 886 families

RACE/ETHNICITY

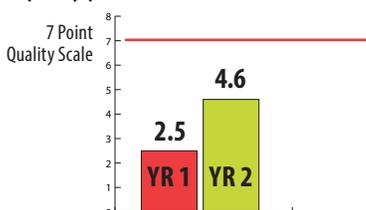
Most participants identified as white.



THE SIXPENCE COMMUNITIES IMPLEMENTED CENTER-BASED CARE, FAMILY ENGAGEMENT HOME-BASED SERVICES, AND PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.

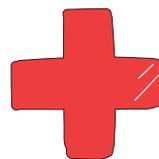
CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS

Year 2 classrooms showed higher quality practices than Year 1 classrooms



100%

of Sixpence classrooms met the overall benchmark for high quality practices



92%

of children met nearly every Sixpence health indicator



48%

of children met the goal for Receptive and Expressive Language