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Legislative Reference Library

Attn: Acquisitions Dept.

658 Cedar Street Centennial Office Building

St. Paul, MN 55155-1050

RE: Annual Legislative Appropriation Report for 2023 Minn. Laws Chap. 54 Sec. 20 Subd. 21; Report on progress made to expand the executive function across generations curriculum

Dear Acquisitions Department,

The Family Partnership is very pleased to present this final report for the legislatively approved appropriation for statewide pilots of EGG Toolkit, formerly known as Executive Functioning Across Generations, in early education, home visiting, and parenting programs across the state. This report represents the period from the start of the MDE grant in December 2023 through 2025.

The project proceeded according to plan, and we are so appreciative of the legislature's investment in the development of strong executive function and self-regulation skills in 3-5-year-olds, as these skills are the cornerstone for school readiness.

Regards,

John Everett Till
Chief Strategy Officer
The Family Partnership



Executive Functioning Across Generations Curriculum

2023–2025 Pilot & Expansion Final Report Summary

The Family Partnership’s legislatively-approved appropriation for FY ‘23-24 committed The Family Partnership to implementing EGG Toolkit (originally named in the appropriation as Executive Functioning Across Generations, and subsequently rebranded), our custom early childhood executive functioning curriculum (in any format, including preschool, parenting, and home visiting) in 6 pilot sites across the state. We exceeded the target number of pilot sites by engaging a total of 7 pilot organizations, including 3 Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) programs and 4 preschools.

Those programs were as follows:

Report on progress made to expand the Executive
Function Across Generations curriculum

ECFE Sites – implemented EGG for Parenting Groups with parents and preschoolers in whole family gatherings:

- Osseo ECFE
- Rosemont-Egan-Apple Valley ECFE
- Willmar ECFE

Preschools – implemented EGG for Preschools in preschool classroom settings with 3-5 year-olds:

- Noah’s Ark Preschool (Circle Pines)
- New Horizon Academy (Rochester)
- People Serving People – Center for Excellence and Shelter locations (Minneapolis)
- Wilder Child Development Center (St. Paul)

All locations were provided with teacher/facilitator training in advance of implementation, as well as with ongoing implementation coaching to ensure fidelity to the model.

All three ECFE programs implemented EGG for Parenting Groups with moderate to high fidelity to the curriculum design. ECFE has a very specific whole family approach, so teachers/facilitators modified their implementation of the EGG curriculum for a best fit with their model. All sites also requested and made use of the EGG for Preschools curriculum, borrowing activities and tools from that curriculum for use with child-only and parent-child interaction activities.

Each of the four preschool programs agreed to implement EGG for Preschools in three classrooms with 3-5 year-old children. Three of four preschools achieved this targeted level of implementation, and implemented the curriculum with moderate to high fidelity. One location implemented the curriculum in only one of three targeted classrooms; this was a low fidelity implementation site.

The Center for Early Education and Development at the University of Minnesota compiled evaluation data and prepared evaluation reports representing implementation of both the ECFE and Preschool versions of EGG.

Demographic data include the following:

- A total of 48 early childhood professionals participated in implementation training and coaching on EGG Toolkit.
- 172 children participated in the pilots against a target of up to 300 children/caregivers. While the legislative appropriation was for a two-year period, the volume of new grants for the FY’ 2024-2025 biennium meant that our contract was not executed in the first 5 months of FY’ 2024. This meant that we lost the 2023-2024 school year as a potential opportunity for pilots. All pilots happened in the 2024-2025 school year, with some continuing into the late summer of 2025.
- The majority of children live in households at 200% of the Federal poverty line or below.
- 43% of children came from families that identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC)

- At least 35 children were from Dual Language Learner/English Language Learner households, although this is probably an undercount.
- 12 children had identified developmental delays or disabilities. This is likely an undercount, as two of the pilot sites serve urban populations likely to have higher rates of family trauma.

ECFE Implementation and Outcomes: Developmental and impact evaluations conducted by CEED of the EGG's implementation in ECFE programming showed:

- Strong parent-reported growth in awareness of emotions and executive functioning. 100% of ECFE parents strongly agreed they increased awareness of internal states; 100% reported benefiting from the curriculum.
- ECFE parents reported growth in their children in the following areas:
 - Supporting personal narratives
 - Children sharing narratives
 - Using internal state vocabulary
 - Children's executive functioning skills
- Open-ended parent responses emphasized:
 - Improved parent-child communication
 - Deeper understanding of children's emotional development
 - Increased confidence in emotion coaching
 - Value of peer normalization and community support
 - Mindfulness practices—particularly slow deep breathing—were highly valued, with 100% of respondents identifying breathing strategies as helpful

ECFE parent educators also contributed their perspectives to the evaluation results:

- Parent educators reported frequent use of informational components in the curriculum, and found executive function and internal state content particularly relevant to their work in building parenting skills and support through the ECFE model.

ECFE educators also identified some challenges, including:

- Limited time for parent discussion (the ECFE model tends to emphasize unstructured parent discussion, whereas EGG has specific educational content and skills that it seeks to impart to parents).
- Curriculum pacing that was sometimes information-heavy.
- Activities related to personal narratives felt repetitive for some groups of parents.
- With respect to specific mindfulness activities, there was lower engagement with guided imagery exercises compared to breathing techniques.

Despite these challenges, educators observed increased parental awareness of emotional labeling and more intentional communication strategies over time

Preschool implementation and child outcomes: Across preschool educator interviews and surveys, three components consistently emerged as strengths:

1. Books and Structured Group Times: Interactive children's books reinforced emotional vocabulary and supported transitions. Educators found the structured format easy to integrate.
2. Mindfulness and Breathing: Belly breathing and mindful moments were widely used and easy to implement. Educators reported children independently applying breathing techniques during moments of dysregulation.
3. Feel Wheel and Internal State Words: Children demonstrated improved emotional vocabulary and peer communication. Educators described students as better able to articulate needs and resolve conflicts

Educators also reported increased student confidence, empowerment, and positive peer interactions.

Other EGG preschool outcomes observed in pilots included:

- Statistically significant gains in executive function scores using the Minnesota Executive Function Scale, a Parent Aware-approved gold standard early education assessment in Minnesota. This finding was consistent with prior EGG pilots in Head Start centers operated by Family Service of San Antonio, as well as in pilots in The Family Partnership's own therapeutic preschools. While a comparison group would be required to establish causality, these findings provide encouraging preliminary evidence of executive function growth during curriculum participation.
- Observed improvements in children's communication and self-regulation skills.
- High educator engagement with core curriculum components.

Preschool implementation Challenges and Lessons Learned: Educators working with younger three-year-olds reported greater difficulty with:

- Sustained attention during group time
- Generating detailed personal narratives
- Abstract mindfulness activities

Other challenges for both models:

- Personal narrative work was the most consistently cited challenge in both ECFE and preschool settings. Younger children struggled with story structure, and ECFE educators lacked sufficient one-on-one time for implementation.
- Across settings, educators cited limited instructional time as a key constraint

Curriculum Structure Refinements: Educators had some suggestions for future revisions of the EGG curricula:

- Breaking group times into shorter segments.
- Introducing complex emotional concepts in smaller increments (this is most likely ECFE-specific).
- Expanding open-ended, exploratory activities for ECFE settings

- Providing a digital manual and clearer organization
- Creating a more blended ECFE/preschool adaptation model

Key Insights for Scaling:

- Executive function content fills a gap. Few early childhood curricula emphasize executive function as directly as EGG.
- EGG has a low training burden. EGG can be implemented after 3–4 hours of training, lowering barriers compared to other EF-focused models
- Breathing and emotion vocabulary are high-impact entry points. These components showed consistent engagement and observable change across settings.
- Multi-site data collection requires stronger infrastructure. Consistency in data collection was a significant implementation challenge. Most ECFE and preschool programs lack experience and infrastructure for evaluation activities.

Conclusions:

The FY '23-24 EGG pilot and expansion demonstrate that the curriculum is feasible, well-received, and promising in both parenting and preschool contexts.

Key outcomes include:

- Strong parent-reported improvements in emotional awareness and communication.
- Observed improvements in children's emotional vocabulary and regulation.
- Statistically significant gains in executive function assessment scores.
- Broad educator endorsement of core curriculum components.

With refinements to pacing, narrative implementation, and ECFE alignment, EGG is well-positioned for continued expansion as an accessible, evidence-informed executive functioning curriculum across diverse early childhood settings.