



# 2019 Project Calendar



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Project Title* + Report	Agency	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall /Winter 2019
<u><a href="#">The Outcomes and Return on Investment of Concurrent Enrollment in Colorado</a></u>	Colorado Department of Higher Education			
		X		
			X	
<u><a href="#">2Gen Child Support Transformation Project</a></u>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Support Services			
		X		
			X	
<u><a href="#">Fostering Opportunities</a></u>	Governor's Office (Pay for Success) Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Jefferson County School District			
			X	
				X
<u><a href="#">Social Determinants of Health in Colorado: Spatial Analysis of Housing Affordability, Health Issues, and Health Care Accessibility</a></u>	Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing			
			X	
				X
<u><a href="#">Analyzing Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) Data to Inform Prevention and Early Intervention</a></u>	Colorado Department of Public Safety, Divisions of Criminal Justice and Probation Services Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Prevention Services			
			X	
				X
<u><a href="#">Postsecondary Foster Youth</a></u>	Colorado Department of Education Colorado Department of Higher Education Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare			
			X	
				X

\*To learn more about a project, click the title

Project Title* + Report	Agency	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall /Winter 2019
<u><a href="#">Learning from the State of Colorado's Recent Performance and Efficiency Initiatives</a></u>	Lieutenant Governor's Office (initiated under Hickenlooper administration)		X	
<u><a href="#">The Impact of Denver's Multidisciplinary Response Teams on Caregiver Engagement and Child Outcomes following Child Abuse and Neglect</a></u>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Denver Police Department			X
<u><a href="#">Reducing Recidivism for Justice-Involved Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury: Determining the Efficacy of a Screening, Identification, and Referral Model</a></u>	Colorado Judicial Branch, Division of Probation Services Colorado Department of Human Services, MINDSOURCE Brain Injury Network			X
<u><a href="#">Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System: Evaluating and Addressing Issues in Prosecution</a></u>	Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice Denver District Attorney's Office			X
<u><a href="#">Multisystem Utilizers</a></u>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing			X
<u><a href="#">Addressing Food Insecurity by Improving Referral Systems between Medical and Social Services Providers in Mesa County</a></u>	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Nutrition Services Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Security Mesa County WIC, SNAP, and Public Health			X

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# The Outcomes and Return on Investment of Concurrent Enrollment in Colorado: A Researcher-Practitioner Partnership to Improve Postsecondary Access and Success

The goals of this project are to:

- build the capacity of the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) for evaluating policies aiming to increase college attainment;
- conduct a preliminary assessment of the student outcomes, costs, and economic benefits of concurrent enrollment in the state of Colorado; and
- develop a robust, state-level research agenda for improving college outcomes.

The study follows five cohorts of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who attended a Colorado secondary school, starting in the 2009-10 school year through the 2015-16 school year.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Higher Education*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado at Boulder; Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates Consulting; National Center for Higher Education Management Systems*

# 2Gen Child Support Transformation Project

Describing program implementation fidelity is an essential component of the impact study, as it will identify threats to the internal validity of the study and document what intervention activities actually occurred. Ten key indicators of 2Gen Child Support Services are operationalized in a rubric. The evaluation team will use data from site visits, direct observations of caseworkers, and program data to inform ratings.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Support Division*

*Research Partners: Center for Policy Research*

# Fostering Opportunities

Fostering Opportunities is an innovative student engagement program for middle school and high school students who have experienced foster care. The goal of the program is to help youth who have experienced foster care to be successful in school and ultimately earn a high school credential.

The program has three key components: (1) Child Welfare and Education Systems Alignment; (2) The Role of the Specialist; and (3) A Database to Track Students Across Placements and Schools. Child welfare and education systems must be in alignment for the successful implementation of the program. Once the program is up and running, specialists, the individuals working with students, play a critical role in motivating students and advocating for their needs. A database is the final critical component and it is necessary to ensure that information can be shared with the student's network to motivate students.

*Agencies: Governor's Office (Pay for Success); Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare; Jefferson County School District*

*Research Partners: JeffCo Public Schools; Jefferson County Human Services*

# Social Determinants of Health in Colorado: Spatial Analysis of Housing Affordability, Health Issues, and Health Care Accessibility

A burgeoning area of cross-systems research focuses on the social determinants of health (SDoH): “the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.” Despite a known relationship between housing and physical/mental health and the importance of health care accessibility, the geographic context of this link is less explored. Using statewide data at the census-tract level, this study will employ Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to investigate the spatial relationships between asthma prevalence, lead exposure, and mental health (defined as suicide mortality, alcohol consumption, and substance overdose) as compared to availability of affordable housing and medical/mental health care accessibility. These relationships will be assessed using spatial analytic techniques, including multivariate analysis. This study will result in a series of maps that can assist the state and other governmental partners to more effectively implement affordable housing and health care accessibility strategies that better address disparities in SDoH.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Housing*

*Research Partners: University of Northern Colorado*

# Analyzing Colorado Juvenile Risk Assessment (CJRA) Data to Inform Prevention and Early Intervention

Juvenile justice system-involved youth are a subset of the general youth population. As such, strategic and data-informed planning for community-based prevention and intervention services can be strengthened by better understanding the profiles of risks and assets particular to this population group in a given community. This project will examine the feasibility of creating local, aggregate risk/need profiles of the juvenile justice population in order to strategically inform local prevention and early intervention service planning with a more direct and intentional focus on delinquency prevention, diversion, and recidivism reduction. Specifically, this project will be to aggregate the data at the school-district level in order to connect risk/needs profiles across domains. These data profiles can be utilized by county/local prevention and intervention practitioners and planners to paint a more precise picture of how some youth matriculate into the juvenile justice system and the common characteristics (preventable precursors of delinquency) of that population. The results of this study will be utilized by local Communities That Care prevention coalitions and Collaborative Management Programs throughout the state to inform local prevention and early intervention service planning with a more direct and intentional focus on delinquency prevention, diversion, and recidivism reduction.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Public Safety, Divisions of Criminal Justice and Probation Services;*

*Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare; Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Prevention Services*

*Research Partners: Colorado State University*



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## Postsecondary Foster Youth

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to describe how experiences during middle school, high school, and the transition to adulthood influence the participation of former foster youth in postsecondary education. Thirty former foster youth will be invited to describe their journey during high school and beyond and the experiences that shaped their postsecondary participation. Ten years of administrative records from Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Human Services, and Colorado Department of Higher Education will be used to describe the relationships between academic achievement, school moves, and child welfare placement changes during middle school and high school and the likelihood of entering postsecondary education within three years of earning a high school credential, as well as the amount of time it takes these students to enter postsecondary education. Information on programs of study and institutions attended will also be generated. The goal of this research is to inform policy solutions for youth currently or formerly in foster care who aspire to pursue postsecondary education.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Education; Colorado Department of Higher Education; Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare*

*Research Partners: University of Northern Colorado*

# Learning from the State of Colorado's Recent Performance and Efficiency Initiatives

Drawing on publicly-available Colorado state employee surveys and interviews with key performance leaders and stakeholders across state agencies, we aim to: 1) better understand and publicize the various efforts made from 2010 to 2018 to improve the performance and quality of Colorado state government, 2) consider how the various efforts to measure, manage, and improve performance evolved and fit together, 3) highlight aspects of the state's existing work that promote sustainability, continuity, and success of performance improvement initiatives, and 4) identify behavioral and structural factors that support continuous, customer-driven, data-based decision-making.

*Agencies: Lieutenant Governor's Office (initiated under Hickenlooper administration)*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado Denver*

# The Impact of Denver's Multidisciplinary Response Team (MDT) on Caregiver Engagement and Child Outcomes following Child Abuse and Neglect

Following child abuse or neglect reports to law enforcement, children and their families can become involved in investigations that span multiple government systems including child welfare, criminal justice, and health agencies. In the face of this complex investigative process, caregivers may become confused, intimidated, or alienated, which can decrease engagement and negatively affect child outcomes. Meeting with a multidisciplinary team (MDT) following the report may help mitigate these challenges for caregivers. MDTs are comprised of representatives from Child Welfare, the Police Department, and the Denver Health Family Crisis Clinic who work to ensure that caregivers understand the investigation process and can participate fully in efforts to meet their children's needs to prevent out-of-home placements.

This project will examine variation in program referral to the MDT using administrative data and propose a strategy for leveraging that variation to design a causal evaluation of MDT efficacy. Surveys of caregiver engagement along with the results of a causal evaluation of MDT will inform programmatic decisions in the City of Denver. The results will also be positioned to inform state-level policy decisions around the expansion of Denver's approach to MDT across the state.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare; Denver Police Department*

*Research Partners: University of Denver*

# **Reducing Recidivism for Justice-Involved Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury: Determining the Efficacy of a Screening, Identification, and Referral Model**

The goal of this project is to inform how CDHS and the Colorado Division of Probation Services tailor recidivism reduction services to individuals with traumatic brain injuries (TBI). This work builds on a federal grant launched by MINDSOURCE – the Brain Injury Network housed within CDHS, which focused on ensuring that justice-involved individuals with TBI were properly screened, identified, and referred for support. In the current project, the research team will link the previously collected MINDSOURCE data to Colorado Division of Probation Services data to determine if there are consistent risk factors and/or vulnerabilities across individuals who screen positive for TBI and to determine whether or not the referral model is associated with successful completion of probation and/or reductions in recidivism. If consistent risk factors can be identified and the model increases successful completion, this information can be used to guide probation, county jails, and the Colorado Department of Corrections in the development of screening, support, and referral policies statewide.

*Agencies: Colorado Judicial Branch, Division of Probation Services; Colorado Department of Human Services, MINDSOURCE Brain Injury Network*

*Research Partners: University of Denver*

# Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System: Evaluating and Addressing Issues in Prosecution

In collaboration with the Denver District Attorney's Office, this project aims to evaluate racial and ethnic disparities in the application of prosecutorial discretion. Prosecutors play a central role in punishment outcomes and exercise a wide degree of discretion. Drawing on administrative data, case files, and interviews with prosecutors, this research will identify the central pathways by which disparities occur by investigating prosecutorial guidelines, evidentiary materials, and other case characteristics. The results are anticipated to improve justice equity across the state of Colorado by modeling prosecutorial transparency, broadening data collection and use, and identifying means of ameliorating racial and ethnic disparities in criminal justice.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice; Denver District Attorney's Office*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado Denver*

## Multisystem Utilizers

The Colorado Lab is responding to the need for high quality administrative data by leveraging the expertise of its research network, CARAN, to create practice and research-informed metrics of system utilization for CDHS, HCPF, and CDLE to routinely maintain in their data systems. The goal is to repurpose the valuable administrative data in these systems to produce high-quality, validated indicators of how much and how well Coloradans are interacting with the services and programs provided by the state. System utilization metrics are being created for healthcare billed to Medicaid, mental health and substance abuse treatment, unemployment benefits and workforce programs, and child welfare services.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare; Colorado Department of Labor and Employment; Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing*

*Research Partners: Colorado State University, Colorado School of Public Health at CU Denver, Mathematica Policy Research*

# **Addressing Food Insecurity by Improving Referral Systems between Medical and Social Services Providers in Mesa County**

This project aims to mitigate food insecurity in Mesa County by optimizing and testing an electronic data system called the Community Resource Network that links patients/clients, medical providers, and social services agencies. The research team will engage in an iterative, community-engaged process to uncover the factors that prevent people from enrolling in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and/or the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The project team will learn from the Community Resource Network piloting process how medical providers and SNAP/WIC agency staff can leverage this electronic platform to address food insecurity. The information gained from this project can be leveraged beyond Mesa County to address food insecurity more broadly and to improve medical providers' referral practices for other social determinants of health.

The Community Resource Network is an initiative of Quality Health Network (QHN), a regional health information exchange. QHN strives to improve the referral process without placing additional burdens on medical providers and food insecurity program staff. To achieve the goals of this project, the research team will be using data from the Community Resource Network system related to food insecurity screenings and referrals and SNAP/WIC enrollment rates, and they will also conduct interviews with food insecure individuals and providers.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Nutrition Services; Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Security; Mesa County WIC, SNAP, and Public Health*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado, Quality Health Network*