



# 2020 Project Calendar



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Project Title* + Report	Agency	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall /Winter 2020
<b>2Gen Child Support Transformation Project</b>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Support Services			
Impact Study		X		
<b>Denver Runaways</b>	Colorado Department of Human Services Denver Collaborative Partners Denver Police Department Governor’s Office of Information Technology			
Interim Annual Report and Final Report		X		
<b>Early Childhood Education Workforce</b>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood			
Final Report		X		
Tableau Dashboard		X		
<b>Postsecondary Participation of Youth Formerly in Foster Care</b>	Colorado Department of Education Colorado Department of Higher Education Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare			
Final Report		X		
<b>Reducing Recidivism for Justice-Involved Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury: Determining the Efficacy of a Screening, Identification, and Referral Model</b>	Colorado Judicial Branch, Division of Probation Services Colorado Department of Human Services, MINDSOURCE Brain Injury Network			
Final Report		X		
<b>Family First: Evaluation Support for Colorado's Prevention Services Plan</b>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare			
Prevention Services Plan			X	
<b>Addressing Food Insecurity by Improving Referral Systems between Medical and Social Services Providers in Mesa County</b>	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			
Final Report				X
<b>Characteristics of Former Foster Youth Receiving Homelessness Services: A Colorado Trails/HMIS Data Linkage Analysis</b>	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare, Metro Denver Homeless Initiative			
Final Report				X

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

Project Title* + Report	Agency	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall /Winter 2020
Child Support Churn Study	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Support Division			
Final Report				X
Does Concurrent Enrollment Program Improve Time-To-Degree and Wages? A Study to Inform the Scale-up of Colorado’s Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act	Colorado Department of Education Colorado Department of Higher Education Colorado Department of Labor and Employment			
Policy Brief			X	
Fostering Opportunities	Governor’s Office (Pay for Success) Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Jefferson County School District			
Annual Interim Reports and Final Report				X
Inventory and Analysis of Brightfields in Colorado to Aid in Future Siting and Development of Renewable Energy Resources	Governor’s Office Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration, Office of the State Architect			
Web Mapping Application				X
Potential Health Care Cost Savings of Dual-Enrollment in Medicaid and SNAP	Colorado Department of Human Services			
Final Report				X
Prenatal Substance Exposure and Improving Family Health	Colorado General Assembly			
Final Report				X
Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System: Evaluating and Addressing Issues in Prosecution	Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice Denver District Attorney’s Office			
Final Report				X
Systems Mapping Phase II	Colorado Department of Corrections			
Final Report				X
Multisystem Utilizers	Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing			
Child Welfare Presentation of Findings and Technical Report		X		
Medicaid Final Report			X	
*To learn more about a project, click the title				

# 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*



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# Denver Runaways

Denver Collaborative Partnership is taking an upstream preventative approach to serving youth who run away and their families. A rapid response team is meeting the youth and families where they are and connecting them to evidence-based services (e.g., Multi-Systemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy) aimed at preventing juvenile justice involvement and the need for out-of-home care. The Lab will conduct a rigorous evaluation of the project.

The Denver Runaways project is funded by Pay for Success.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services; Denver Police Department; Denver Collaborative Partners; Governor's Office of Information Technology*

*Research Partners: Linked Information Network of Colorado; University of Denver - Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab*



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# Early Childhood Education Workforce

Organizations working to improve conditions for the early childhood workforce need data to inform their decision-making. However, state government often has insufficient capacity to make sense of the data they collect, and organizations holding key data to complete the early childhood workforce picture are siloed. The Colorado Lab is partnering with the Colorado Department of Human Service's Office of Early Childhood to improve their data utilization capacity and to routinely share meaningful metrics on the early childhood workforce that is so critical to the wellbeing of Colorado's young children.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood*

*Research Partners: University of Denver - Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab*



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# Postsecondary Participation of Youth Formerly in Foster Care

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*



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# 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*



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# Family First: Evaluation Support for Colorado's Prevention Services Plan

Family First Prevention Services Act is sweeping child welfare legislation. This legislation authorizes federal reimbursement to states for the delivery of evidence-based programs aimed at preventing foster care. Colorado will be among the first states to submit a "Prevention Services Plan." This plan describes what evidence-based prevention services Colorado will request reimbursement for, and it details how implementation fidelity will be monitored and effectiveness evaluated.

The Colorado Lab is supporting the development and implementation of Colorado's "Prevention Services Plan." The Lab is reviewing evidence of specific prevention programs to inform reimbursement requests. The Lab is drafting the evaluation section of the plan. The Lab is advising the state on resources needed to monitor program implementation fidelity and support continuous quality improvement.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare*

*Research Partners: University of Denver - Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab*



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

This project was originally designed to mitigate food insecurity in Mesa County by optimizing and testing an electronic data system called the Community Resource Network (CRN) that links patients/clients, medical providers, and social services agencies. In the year 1, the research team engaged 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). However, the rollout of CRN was delayed so the year 2 scope of work was revised based on the learnings from the first year. The goal in year 2 is to develop an intervention to increase awareness and knowledge of food insecurity and increase the likelihood of successfully connecting patients/families with resources. To this end, the research team will explore the needs of medical providers and staff and school staff around being able to effectively connects patients and families with food resources. The intervention will be testable via an RCT in 2021.

*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*



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# Characteristics of Former Foster Youth Receiving Homelessness Services: A Colorado Trails/HMIS Data Linkage Analysis

The goal of this project is to inform prevention services for youth at-risk for experiencing homelessness after aging out of foster care. Cluster analysis will be used to describe combinations of characteristics of former foster youth who access homelessness services in metro Denver as young adults.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Welfare; Metro Denver Homeless Initiative*

*Research Partners: Linked Information Network of Colorado; University of Colorado Anschutz (Kempe Center)*



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# Child Support Churn Study

In collaboration with the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Colorado Lab will describe the feasibility of using routinely collected administrative data to identify employment-related reasons that relate to churn for the cohort of Child Support cases that opened in 2015. Churn for the purposes of this study is defined as changes in payment behavior (e.g., paying prior months, then skipping a month). This study will assess the quality of employment-related data routinely collected in ASCES through review of the data and discussion with CDHS program and/or data services staff.

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

*Research Partners: University of Denver - Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab*



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# Does Concurrent Enrollment Program Improve Time-To-Degree and Wages? A Study to Inform the Scale-up of Colorado's Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act

Colorado has invested significantly in the state's Concurrent Enrollment Program, which provides high school students the opportunity to enroll tuition-free in postsecondary courses and earn college credits that are transferable to any Colorado public university. Concurrent enrollment is seen as a strategy for helping Colorado meet its goal of 66 percent postsecondary credential attainment among adults age 25-34 by 2025. Using data from the Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Higher Education, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and the National Student Clearinghouse, this study serves to inform the state's understanding of the Concurrent Enrollment Program as a driver of efficiency in terms of on-time credential completion and improved earnings. Governor Polis champions concurrent enrollment as an effective strategy that levels the playing field. This project provides empirical evidence to guide the "smart policy tweaks" the Governor recognizes will take place as Colorado scales-up its Concurrent Enrollment Program.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Education; Colorado Department of Higher Education; Colorado Department of Labor and Employment*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado Boulder*



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# 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*



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# Inventory and Analysis of Brightfields in Colorado to Aid in Future Siting and Development of Renewable Energy Resources

Colorado has set ambitious goals related to renewable energy generation. While most renewable energy development has been focused on large projects sited on open, primarily agricultural, land, the State's new goals will eventually require the development of smaller projects that are closer to electricity demand with minimal, if any, requirements for transmission upgrades. Many brownfield sites can offer a number of attributes that make them attractive for renewable energy development including proximity to population centers and utility infrastructure, the potential to make productive use of property that has restrictions on development, and the opportunity to integrate economic development and habitat improvement. This project builds on federal and state efforts to more completely identify suitable renewable energy development sites within Colorado and make that information easily accessible to stakeholders.

*Agencies: Governor's Office; Colorado Department of Personnel and Administration, Office of the State Architect*

*Research Partners: Convergence Associates LLC; Colorado State University; Bright Rain Solutions*



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# Potential Health Care Cost Savings of Dual-Enrollment in Medicaid and SNAP

This study will identify potential health care cost savings resulting from dual-enrollment in Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) among eligible Colorado residents. If health care savings are identified, the goal will be to encourage increased enrollment in SNAP among those who are eligible.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Human Services; Colorado Department of Health Care Financing and Policy*

*Research Partners: University of Colorado Denver*



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# Prenatal Substance Exposure and Improving Family Health

The goal of this data linkage project is to inform efforts to strengthen families affected by substance use during a pregnancy and substance exposure of a newborn. The meaningful ways we define dyads of mothers and substance exposed newborns can bring into focus opportunities for prevention, treatment, and support. This project will examine a comprehensive set of definitions for substance exposed newborns in order to understand which mothers and children are at greatest risk for vulnerable life experiences in the prenatal and infant years.

In year one of the project, we will generate baseline information on trends in substance exposed newborns. In year two, we will describe – separately for each definition – how dyads of mothers and children engage in the child welfare, health, mental health, substance use, public benefit, and related systems beginning the year prior to the birth and continuing through a year postpartum. Babies born between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2017 will be included in the study.

The short-term goal of this project is to establish a baseline for how dyads engage with a given system and baseline data on health outcomes and mortality rates. The long-term goal is to understand how newborn substance exposure relates to patterns of cross-system engagement and life outcomes in order to provide insight into opportunities to strengthen families.

*Agencies: Colorado General Assembly*

*Research Partners: Center for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention; Illuminate Colorado;  
University of Denver - Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab*



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# 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*



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# Systems Mapping Phase II

In 2018, the Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) Division of Adult Parole partnered with the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab (Colorado Lab) and Mathematica to examine and document pre- and post-release services provided to formerly incarcerated individuals in Colorado and the frequency of recidivism for those who receive reentry support (Department of Corrections System Mapping). As a part of this work, Mathematica developed an individual-level linked data set incorporating information from four data systems, generated measures of reentry program contact, and conducted a quantitative descriptive analysis to examine reentry program contact among people returning to the community from prison.

As the DOC moves forward with program improvement efforts, the newly linked dataset offers a unique opportunity for DOC staff and administrators to continue learning about the reach of reentry services in the state of Colorado and how they might better serve individuals leaving prison. Under phase two of this project, Mathematica in partnership with CDOC and Colorado Lab will leverage the existing data set to further examine ways to target reentry services so that they can best help reduce incarceration across the state. We will examine which reentry services might best help reduce incarceration across the state and achieve greater benefits for incarcerated individuals, utilizing an existing dataset. The project will include three analyses: (1) defining groups of individuals with particular characteristics that would benefit most from specific services based on their Level of Service Inventory risk score, (2) predicting the impact of WAGEES services on expanding this promising program to a larger pool of individuals reentering the community, and (3) identifying improved methods for targeting reentry services to decrease technical parole violations. Each analysis will yield a summary of lessons learned and guidelines that CDOC can use independently moving forward to more efficiently and effectively target delivery of reentry services.

*Agencies: Colorado Department of Corrections*

*Research Partners: Mathematica Policy Research*



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# 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*



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