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COLORADO EVALUATION
AND ACTION LAB

Colorado Lab Newsletter

June 2021

Featured in this newsletter:

- Colorado Legislature Passes Brain Injury Pilot Program To Reduce Recidivism
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program Expands
- Consultant Opportunity: Early Childhood Research and Analytics

Colorado Legislature Passes Brain Injury Pilot Program To Reduce Recidivism

We are excited to share that the Colorado legislature approved [SB21-138](#), aimed at improving support for individuals in the criminal justice system with a brain injury. The Colorado Lab-supported study [Reducing Recidivism for Justice Involved Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury](#) informed and prompted creation of law.

Our research shows that 25-87% of inmates report having experienced a traumatic brain injury (TBI), compared to 8.5% of the general population. Colorado probationers with TBI have higher rates of prior felony conviction, lower rates of successful probation completion, and are significantly more likely to re-offend than their peers. Female probationers with TBI, who tend to have a history of multiple TBIs from violent circumstances, appear especially vulnerable to poor outcomes.

Reducing Colorado's high rate of recidivism (50%) is critical to relieving the state's overburdened corrections systems. This new law will require the Colorado Department of Corrections to create a pilot program to determine whether a comprehensive brain injury program within the department improves outcomes for offenders.

As we await Governor Polis's signature on this legislation, we want to congratulate our agency partners - Colorado Judicial Branch, Division of Probation Services and Colorado Department of Human Services, MINDSOURCE Brain Injury Network - and the lead researcher, Dr. Kim Gorgens of the University of Denver for their dedication in studying this issue and leadership in moving research findings into meaningful change.

To learn more about this study, contact [Dr. Kristin Klopfenstein](#).

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program Expands to Address Growing Pandemic-related Need



The Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood (OEC), which administers the Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultation Program, announced funding for 47 consultants statewide, an increase of nearly 38% from 2019 (34 consultants). The free and confidential program pairs mental health consultants with the adults who work directly with infants and young children in child care, preschools, homes, and other settings where they learn and grow. Consultants further strengthen the capacity of teachers and caregivers to use evidence-based practices as they support the social, emotional, and behavioral development of children, ages birth to age six.

An additional \$1.4 million for program expansion was made possible through the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA). Nearly all proposals for state funding identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a key reason why more consultants were needed in their community across the state.

Ongoing work by the Colorado Lab supports OEC in identifying continuous improvements to the consultation program and in implementing a thoughtfully standardized approach to drive positive outcomes while retaining regional flexibility. Learn more about the [ECMH consultation program](#), [2021 RFA Awardee Announcement](#), and the [Lab's support](#).

Consultant Opportunity: Early Childhood Research and Analytics

The Colorado Lab is seeking a consultant to support analytics to inform knowledge about Colorado's early childhood workforce and young children's participation in early childhood programs. We are looking for someone with a demonstrated ability to conduct research and analytics in the early childhood field. Successful candidates will have significant experience working with large-scale administrative data and demonstrated quantitative training at least at a Master's level.

The selected consultant will provide 15-20 hours of support each week from July through December 2021, with the potential to extend beyond December. Work can be done locally (Denver) or virtually.

We ask that candidates email a letter of interest and their qualifications to Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf at whitney@coloradolab.org. Please note that the opportunity will close as soon as an applicant is selected.

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