



# UNIVERSITY *of* DENVER

COLORADO EVALUATION  
AND ACTION LAB **5** YEARS

## Colorado Lab Newsletter

November 2022

### Featured in this newsletter:

- **Runaway Foster Youth: Child Protection Ombudsman Task Force**
- **Early Childhood Evaluation Hub Launches**
- **Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf Appointed to Early Childhood Leadership Commission**

## Runaway Foster Youth: Child Protection Ombudsman Task Force

The Timothy Montoya Task Force to Prevent Children from Running Away from Out-of-Home Placement was established by House Bill 22-1375 for the purpose of analyzing the root causes of why children run away from out-of-home placement.

The Colorado Lab is conducting focus groups with children in out-of-home placement and young adults under 22 who have aged out of the child protection system. An additional series of focus groups with out-of-home placement providers will also be conducted to determine what conditions lead children to run away from out-of-home placement, the provider efforts to locate children who have run away, and the services provided to a runaway child upon the child's return. Focus group findings will be shared with the Task Force to inform their work to develop a consistent, prompt, and effective response to recover missing children, and address the safety and well-being of a child upon the child's return to out-of-home placement.



Elizabeth Montoya's 12-year-old son, Timmy, was killed after running away from Tennyson Center for Children and being struck by a car. (Anna Hewson, 9News; courtesy [Colorado Sun](#))

To learn more, please contact [Dr. Kristin Klopfenstein](#).

## Early Childhood Evaluation Hub Launches

Between 2021 and 2022, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) received over \$465 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and ARPA Child Care and Development Fund supplemental discretionary award funding. This stimulus funding is focused on strategies to strengthen and expand the early

childhood sector in Colorado and support families and the workforce to ensure all children have access to high-quality child care. CDEC awarded a \$4.8 million contract to the Colorado Lab in September 2022 to serve as the early childhood evaluation hub for this stimulus funding, based on our experience and expertise in government, research partnerships, and evaluation.

The Colorado Lab is contracting with local evaluation partners including ECE Insights, Brodsky Research and Consulting, the Butler Institute at the University of Denver, MDRC, and Diana Schaack at the University of Colorado Denver to support this work. We also are seeking an additional evaluation partner (see boxed information).

The expertise of these partners, and the Colorado Lab's management of partners across diverse streams of work, provides CDEC with the confidence that high-quality research and evaluation will be accomplished and removes the burden of managing this complex work within state government.

To learn more, please contact [Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf](#).

### Early Childhood Evaluation Hub: Contract Evaluation Opportunity

The Early Childhood Evaluation Hub is looking for an evaluation partner to study CDEC's grants for employer-based child care and its Emerging and Expanding grant program. Both of these efforts are designed to increase the availability of licensed child care in Colorado. These grants were awarded in June 2022 and must be spent by the end of September 2023. The work will involve:

- Systems-level analysis of the grant programs' goals, implementation design, and success in targeting applicants to achieve the goals.
- Grantee-level purposeful sampling to examine the implementation experience.

The evaluation work will begin in February 2023 and be completed by June 2024. If you are interested, please complete the [Call for External Research Partners questionnaire](#) and email Ellen Witt at [ellen@coloradolab.org](mailto:ellen@coloradolab.org).

## Congratulations to Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf on Appointment to ECLC

Our congratulations to Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf, Director of Data Integration & Analytics for the Colorado Lab, on being appointed by the Governor to serve on the [Early Childhood Leadership Commission](#)! Together with Susan Steele, Dr. LeBoeuf co-chairs the Data Subcommittee which aims to promote the sharing and use of data for planning and accountability by state programs and agencies that support young children. We recognize Dr. LeBoeuf's deep knowledge and expertise in the early childhood field and value her support for community efforts that align with the Colorado Lab's focus on identifying data-informed solutions to our most pressing social problems.



Dr. Whitney LeBoeuf

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University of Denver  
Frank H. Ricketson Law Building  
2255 E. Evans Ave  
Denver, CO 80208

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