

Building Evidence for Family First Programs and Services: *Trust-Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI) - Caregiver Training*



Background

The [Family First Prevention Services Act](#) incentivizes child welfare approaches that prioritize keeping kids safe and families together. This legislation authorizes federal reimbursement to states for the delivery of evidence-based programs and services that prevent the need for foster care. In October 2022, the Administration for Children and Families approved Colorado's bold [Five-Year Family First Prevention Services Plan](#) (Colorado's Plan) to maximize prevention investments in child welfare that help Colorado's children, youth, and families thrive, together.

The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) partnered with the Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab (Colorado Lab) to serve as the [Family First Evidence-Building Hub](#). In this role, the Colorado Lab ensures strategic investments in evidence building for Family First programs and services. The Hub coordinates evaluations that are designed to both meet Colorado-specific learning goals and advance [Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse](#) (Clearinghouse) evidence designations.

Why TBRI® - Caregiver Training?

[TBRI - Caregiver Training](#) is a service designed for caregivers of children and youth (ages 0 to 17) who have experienced abuse, neglect, or other trauma. The interactive intervention aims to provide caregivers with tools to meet the needs of these children and youth by focusing on building trust and positive relationships. TBRI® was prioritized to bolster Colorado's [mental health service array](#) and reach a wider age range of children and youth. [Raise the Future](#), Colorado's sole TBRI ambassador organization, offers TBRI - Caregiver Training to over 600 caregivers each year in regions across Colorado. [CASA of Larimer County](#) offers TBRI - Caregiver Training to parents, professionals, volunteers, and other caregivers in the Eighth Judicial District.

Evidence Building for TBRI® - Caregiver Training

TBRI - Caregiver Training has received a "promising" evidence designation from the Clearinghouse and is not yet in Colorado's Plan. Aligned with Step 5 on the [Steps to Building Evidence](#), the [Social Work Research Center at Colorado State University](#) (CSU) is conducting a randomized controlled trial (RCT) with the goal of TBRI - Caregiver Training achieving a "well-supported" evidence designation.



The study explores the effects of TBRI - Caregiver Training on child safety, child permanency, and child well-being (behavioral, emotional, and social functioning) outcomes, such as peer relationships and prosocial behavior.

[Current research evidence](#) on effectiveness is limited to adoptive caregivers, and its application with communities of color is under-researched. This study includes foster, kinship, biological, and adoptive caregivers and explore potential differences in outcomes by socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity. The study began in July 2024 and is expected to run through December 2027.

The evaluation is being conducted by CSU on behalf of CDHS, under the coordination of the Colorado Lab's Family First Evidence-Building Hub.

