

Protective Factor Outcomes

Final Data Report

(March 2021-June 2024)

Partnership for Strong Families' Family Resource Centers

The Partnership for Strong Families operates four Family Resource Centers that are the focus of this report. These include the SWAG Family Resource Center, Library Partnership Resource Center, Cone Park Library Resource Center (all in Gainesville), and the NorthStar Family Resource Center (in Lake City). As part of a broader evaluation study, a sub-group of consenting patrons agreed to complete baseline and follow-up (every 6 months) Protective Factors Surveys, 2nd Edition (PFS-2)¹.

All resource center patrons are given the opportunity to participate in the evaluation. Data collection efforts began in March of 2021 and continued to June 2024. Patrons who received services and supports (prior to the evaluation) were asked to complete (as their first survey) the Retrospective PFS-2 which requests a retrospective rating (prior to receiving services and supports from a resource center) on a series of questions that measure level of *Family Functioning/Resilience, Nurturing and Attachment, Social Supports, and Caregiver/Practitioner Relationship*. All patrons (whether continuing or new patrons) were asked to answer these questions as such applied at the time of survey completion as part of the Retrospective PFS-2 or Tradition (Pre/Post) PFS-2, with additional questions measuring the level of *Concrete Supports* experienced by the patron. Since NorthStar Family Resource Center began operations in 2021, only the Traditional (Pre/Post) PFS-2 was utilized at that location.

Retrospective PFS-2 Data

The Retrospective PFS-2 survey asks patrons (with a history of service with an RC) to rate responses to questions associated with four protective factors prior to (“Before”) their involvement with the resource center. These ratings can be contrasted to current (“Now”) ratings of responses to the same questions. The “Before” time frame is not specified, it may vary based on each patron, and relies on recall. Although potentially informative, utilization of the “Before” ratings/scores have not been validated as an appropriate pre-test measure for analyses purposes. Although a total of 245 continuing patrons consented to participate in the study (106, 43, 40, 56) from the SWAG FRC, LPRC, CPLRC, and NSFRC respectively, complete responses to the Retrospective PFS-2 questions and subscales ranged from 109 to 115 patrons at SWAG FRC, LPRC, and CPLRC (NSFRC began as part of the funded project with no clients with retrospective experiences). Scoring protocols were utilized in generating individual and the final group mean subscale scores. Final scoring can range from 0 to 5 with higher scores representing a stronger measure of presence of each protective factor. There are no normative score threshold standards for interpreting the presence or existence of a protective factor. Change in mean scores are recommended measures for gauging change in each protective factor.

Retrospective Protective Factors Survey Results: Average "Before" and "Now" SubScale Scores				
Family Resource Center	Family Functioning/ Resilience Scores (Before Now)	Social Supports Scores (Before Now)	Nurturing and Attachment Scores (Before Now)	Caregiver Practitioner Scores (Before Now)
SWAG (n=71-75)	2.61 2.88*	2.40 2.56*	2.92 2.86	2.85 3.02*
Library Partnership (n=27-29)	2.26 2.53	2.06 2.35*	3.07 3.05	2.93 3.08
Cone Park (n=11)	2.18 2.81	1.76 2.18	2.80 2.82	2.70 2.79
Total (All FRCs, n=109-115)	2.48 2.79*	2.25 2.47*	2.95 2.90	2.85 3.01*

When the “Before” and “Now” mean scores on each protective factor are examined, a series of paired samples t-tests (two-sided) suggests a significant increase (all patrons considered) in the protective factors associated with Family Functioning/Resilience, Social Supports, and the Caregiver/Practitioner Relationship. These findings were paralleled for SWAG patrons. A significant increase in the Social Supports was reported among Library Partnership patrons. Findings are qualified by limitations with the “Before” measures serving as a valid pre-test measure, the representativeness of the study sample to the broader population of patrons, and the percentage of patrons (for each protective factor) that reported an actual increased in scores (from a low of 15.6% for Nurturing and Attachment to a high of 53.9% for Family Functioning and Resilience).

Retrospective Protective Factors Survey Results: Number and % of Patrons with Increase in Average SubScale Scores				
Family Resource Center	Family Functioning/ Resilience Score Increase (Number %)	Social Supports Score Increase (Number %)	Nurturing and Attachment Score Increase (Number %)	Caregiver Practitioner Score Increase (Number %)
SWAG (n=71-75)	38 50.7%	32 45.1%	12 16.9%	20 27.0%
Library Partnership (n=27-29)	15 51.7%	12 42.9%	3 11.1%	7 24.1%
Cone Park (n=11)	9 81.8%	4 36.4%	2 18.2%	3 27.3%
Total (All FRCs, n=109-115)	62 53.9%	48 43.6%	17 15.6%	30 26.3%

Traditional (Pre-Post) PFS-2 Data: Baseline and Follow-up Measures

Any consenting patron that visited each RC for the first time during the study period was asked to complete the Traditional (Pre-Post) PFS-2. The first application serves as a pre-test. Please note that the “Now” questions affiliated with the Retrospective PFS-2 parallel questions of the Traditional PFS-2 and include measures of all five protective factors. For analyses purposes, the “Now” responses (for the Retrospective PFS-2 given to continuing patrons) and the 1st application of the Traditional PFS-2 (for new patrons) can serve as baseline measures for gauging change in protective factors for all patrons over the course of the formal evaluation. Combined, there are 245 consenting patrons for which baseline PSF-2 measures were completed (in whole or part) across four FRCs. Among these, there are up to 156 patrons for which matched follow-up measures exist (follow-up measures are requested every six months) for at least one subscale. Findings contrast the baseline measures against the latest follow-up measure for each patron.

Baseline and Follow-up Protective Factors Survey Results: Average SubScale Scores (Total and Across Family Resource Centers)					
Resource Center	Family Functioning/ Resilience Scores (Baseline Follow-up)	Social Supports Scores (Baseline Follow-up)	Nurturing and Attachment Scores (Baseline Follow-up)	Caregiver Practitioner Scores (Baseline Follow-up)	Concrete Supports Scores (Baseline Follow-up)
SWAG (n=54-63)	2.93 2.70	2.74 2.48*	2.73 3.02*	3.16 3.09	2.41 2.55
Library Partnership (n=21-22)	2.64 2.47	2.37 2.15	2.94 3.23	2.91 2.79	2.31 2.33
Cone Park (n=26-28)	2.38 2.51	2.26 2.01	2.95 2.94	2.77 2.71	2.53 2.74
NorthStar (n=42-43)	2.66 2.62	2.53 2.26*	3.01 2.94	2.95 3.11	2.85 2.87
Total (All FRCs, n=145-154)	2.71 2.61	2.54 2.28*	2.88 3.01	3.00 2.99	2.54 2.64

* Observed differences in mean subscale scores are significantly different (at $p < .05$, two-sided) using a paired sample t-test.

When the baseline and follow-up mean scores on each protective factor are examined, a series of paired samples t-tests (two-sided) suggests a significant decrease in Social Support protective factor scores for patrons at SWAG FRC and NorthStar FRC and a significant increase in Nurturing and Attachment scores with patrons at the SWAG FRC. There was no meaningful change in any protective factor scores for the remaining FRCs. Findings are qualified by the representativeness of the study sample to the broader population of patrons, the time frame for the data examined and the percentage of patrons (for each protective factor) that reported an actual increased in scores (from a low of 31.1% for Social Supports to a high of 46.5% for Concrete Supports).

Baseline and Follow-up Protective Factors Survey Results: Number and % of Patrons with Increase in Average SubScale Scores					
Family Resource Center	Family Functioning/ Resilience Score Increase (Number %)	Social Supports Score Increase (Number %)	Nurturing and Attachment Score Increase (Number %)	Caregiver Practitioner Score Increase (Number %)	Concrete Supports Scores (Number %)
SWAG (n=54-63)	16 25.8%	19 33.9%	26 48.1%	23 37.7%	30 47.6%
Library Partnership (n=21-22)	7 31.8%	5 23.8%	11 52.4%	7 31.8%	12 54.5%
Cone Park (n=26-28)	12 44.4%	11 39.2%	11 39.3%	10 38.4%	16 59.3%
NorthStar (42-43)	17 39.6%	11 25.6%	14 33.3%	24 57.1%	14 32.6%
Total (All FRCs, n=145-154)	52 33.7%	46 31.1%	62 42.8%	64 42.4%	72 46.5%

Since the latest measure of each Protective Factor subscale score may differ in terms of the length of time each patron was a participant in the study and the number of repeated measures completed, a series of supplemental analyses were done; including (but not limited to) measuring change in average scores considering a stratification of patrons based whether they completed the Retrospective PFS-2 measure or not, and considering only 6 and 12 month post-test measures against baseline measures. These analyses suggest that there was no significant change in any Protective Factor Subscale scores at 6 months and 12 months, apart from a significant increase in Caregiver/Practitioner Relationship scores over the course of 12 months for those that did not complete the Retrospective PFS-2; and a significant increase in Nurturing and Attachment scores over the course of 6 and 12 months for those that did complete the Retrospective PFS-2.

Gauging Representativeness of Existing Study Sample

The number of study participants (n=245) is very low in contrast with the total number of non-duplicate (verified) count of total patrons (2.0% of N=12,343) that received services across all FRCs between 2021 and 2023. Participation was voluntary. The response rate was low despite developed efforts to engage with (including the use of incentives) and inform all patrons seeking services of evaluation efforts, including participation in the collection of outcome data involving survey activities. Limited participation was influenced by a number of factors, including (but not limited to): the impact of COVID upon service delivery and in-person dissemination and engagement efforts, the fact that 48.5% (n=5,991) of total (identified) patrons sought services only once during the three year period, and general resistance/inherent concern of patrons within the communities served (corroborated through qualitative means/interviews) to participate in research/evaluation studies and/or disclosure of personal information to any third party.

Regardless, equivalency tests were conducted to aid in understanding how the study sample differs from the total population on select variables. The percentage of females represented in the study (79.8%) was significantly higher from those patrons that were not in the study (67.5%), with the percentage of males in the study (20.2%) being significantly lower than the proportion of males not in the study (31.9%). Among the three most represented race/ethnic groups, the percentage of patrons in the study versus not in the study that self-identified as Black or African American (non-Hispanic origin) (75.6% and 65.3% respectively) and White (non-Hispanic) patrons (14.0% and 21.7% respectively) were significantly different with an overrepresentation of Black patrons and underrepresentation of White patrons in the study. The observed differences in representation of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin in versus excluded from the study (6.2% and 7.3% respectively) did not differ significantly².

Further, a series of independent samples t-tests (both equal and non-equal variances assumed) found a significant difference in the average age of patrons, where those in the study were (on average) older (Mean=47.13 years) than those not in the study (Mean=39.81 years). Finally, those in the study (see table below) also had a significantly greater average number of service requests at resource centers between 2021 and 2023 for services associated with Concrete Supports, Parental Resilience, Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, Social Connections, and all Protective Factor categories combined. For example, on average, study participants requested 27.24 Concrete Supports and 35.58 total services between 2021 and 2023 in contrast to 3.35 and 5.11 (respectively) from non-study patrons. Study participants had accessed services and supports on an exponentially greater scale than non-participants suggesting a higher level of expressed need and greater contact and familiarity with FRC operations.

Gauging Representativeness of Existing Study Sample

Table 1: Average Number of Service Request Comparisons Between Patrons Enrolled in Outcome Evaluation and Other Patrons (2021-2023)

Protective Factor Service Categories	In Study Group	Mean / Average	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T-Test Statistic (Unequal Variance Assumption)	p-value (two-sided)
Concrete Support in Times of Need	No (N=12,097)	3.35	7.132	0.065	-11.32	<.001
	Yes (N=245)	27.24	32.988	2.108		
Parental Resilience	No (N=12,097)	0.23	0.768	0.007	-7.67	<.001
	Yes (N=245)	2.47	4.552	0.29		
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	No (N=12,097)	0.07	0.599	0.005	-4.3	<.001
	Yes (N=245)	0.53	1.688	0.108		
Social and Emotional Competence of Children	No (N=12,097)	1.16	12.417	0.113	1.04	0.297
	Yes (N=245)	0.9	3.359	0.215		
Social Connections	No (N=12,097)	0.3	4.992	0.045	-2.58	0.01
	Yes (N=245)	4.45	25.127	1.608		
All Categories of Services Combined	No (N=12,097)	5.11	15.831	0.144	-10.07	<.001
	Yes (N=245)	35.58	47.294	3.022		

¹ This project is IRB approved (Advarra IRB: Children's Bureau, Protocol Number PSF-2021-CB). For more detailed information regarding the evaluation protocol and study methodology, please see Perry, R. (2021). *Family Resource Center Model Evaluation*, Protocol Number PSF-2021-CB. Tallahassee: Institute for Child and Family Services Research. For more detailed information regarding the Protective Factors Survey (2nd Edition), Retrospective and Traditional (Pre/Post) versions, please see: FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (2018). *The Protective Factors Survey. 2nd Edition User's Manual*. Chapel Hill, NC: Author. Although some of the specific protective factors measured by the FRIENDS Protective Factor Survey, 2nd Edition (PFS-2) may differ from the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Protective Factor Framework (used by PSF Resources Centers), it was the only tool (at time of study commencement) with established metrics (reliability and validity) for measuring change over time in select protective factor scores with individual respondents/caregivers.

² Z-score calculations for two independent proportions were used. For Black and African American population proportion comparisons $z = -3.34$, $p = .00084$. The result is significant at $p < .05$. For White population proportion comparisons $z = 2.8713$, $p = .0041$. The result is significant at $p < .05$. For Test for Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin population proportion comparisons $z = 0.676$, $p = .4965$. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.



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