



## About Harvard Family Research Project

Since 1983, we have helped stakeholders develop and evaluate strategies to promote the well being of children, youth, families, and their communities. We work primarily within three areas that support children’s learning and development—early childhood education, out-of-school time programming, and family and community support in education. Underpinning all of our work is a commitment to evaluation for strategic decision making, learning, and accountability.

Building on our knowledge that schools cannot do it alone, we also focus national attention on complementary learning. Complementary learning is the idea that a systemic approach, which integrates school and non-school supports, can better ensure that all children have the skills they need to succeed.

### What we do best

By distilling information we learn through our own pioneering research and evaluation projects, and by synthesizing the work of others, we have one overarching goal: to provide practical information that will stimulate innovation and continuous improvement in policy, practice, research, and evaluation. To this end, we:

- Create research publications on the most timely and relevant issues facing our audiences, including practical information they can use to strengthen policy and practice.
- Conduct original research and analyses on key issues to promote best practices and inform policies that support learning and development.
- Develop and support collaborations, networks, and convenings that contribute to national, state, and local efforts to improve program quality, evaluations, and programs.
- Test and refine innovative evaluation approaches that build the capacity of non-profits to use data for continuous improvement and accountability.
- Build evaluation and program capacity by developing easy-to-use tools and “how to” guides.

### How we can help you

Our work has supported thousands of people who have used our publications, tools, and workshops to make programs more effective, demonstrate results, learn to navigate tough evaluation challenges, read the latest promising practices, and shape the direction of research projects.

**Learn more about HFRP and browse hundreds of resources for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and evaluators at [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).**

### Subscribe to our free resources

*Visit our website to find these and other valuable resources:*



#### **The Evaluation Exchange**

A periodical on emerging strategies in evaluation.



#### **Family Involvement Network of Educators**

Become part of a community of educators committed to family involvement in education.

**Subscribe to these and other resources at [www.hfrp.org/subscribe](http://www.hfrp.org/subscribe)**



## Flagship Products from Harvard Family Research Project

In addition to publishing several high-quality research reports and tools for practice and evaluation each year, our audiences regularly look to us for the most up-to-date and practical information found in each of our flagship products below.



### **The Evaluation Exchange**

Our one-of-a-kind periodical that contains new lessons and emerging strategies for evaluating programs and policies, particularly those focused on children, families, and communities. Since it was launched over 10 years ago, The Evaluation Exchange has become an internationally known and significant force in helping to shape evaluation knowledge and practice.



### **OST Program Research & Evaluation Database & Bibliography**

We maintain the only national database and bibliographies of OST research and evaluation studies. They provide accessible information about research and evaluation work to support the development of high quality evaluations and programs in the OST field.



### **The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)**

FINE is a strategic effort to strengthen family and community engagement to support children's learning and development. FINE brings together thousands of educators, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers dedicated to strengthening family-school-community partnerships. Members get the latest information about family involvement research, as well as the opportunity to connect with others in the field.



### **Storybook Corner**

The Storybook Corner, found on our website, offers resources to help educators, families, and those who work with families promote the awareness, discussion, and practice of family involvement in children's education in a wide range of settings. Launched in partnership with Reading Is Fundamental, Storybook Corner provides a list of storybooks with family involvement themes and tools for using the storybooks.

**Learn more about HFRP and browse hundreds of resources for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and evaluators at [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).**

### **About Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)**

Since 1983, we have helped stakeholders develop and evaluate strategies to promote the well being of children, youth, families, and their communities.

**To be notified  
when new resources  
are available,  
join our email lists at  
[www.hfrp.org/subscribe](http://www.hfrp.org/subscribe)**



## Complementary Learning

### About Our Work in Complementary Learning

Educators, policymakers, and families increasingly agree: schools cannot do it alone. Children need multiple opportunities to learn and grow—at home, in school, and in the community. Complementary learning is a comprehensive strategy for addressing all of these needs and ensuring success for all children and youth. Complementary learning is the idea that a systemic approach—which intentionally integrates both school and nonschool supports—can better ensure that all children have the skills they need to succeed.

#### A complementary learning approach provides and aligns these beneficial opportunities:

- Effective schools
- Supportive families and opportunities for family engagement
- Early childhood programs
- Out-of-school time activities (including sports, arts, mentoring programs, etc.)
- Health and social services
- Community-based institutions (including community centers, faith-based institutions, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, and partnerships with the business community)
- Colleges and universities

#### We are working to stimulate national discussion and build knowledge about complementary learning. To this end, we:

- Profile examples of complementary learning, highlighting lessons and insights for others in the field
- Help policymakers, foundations, and school leaders develop complementary learning strategies
- Organize conferences and present in national forums
- Create tools to help professionals build connections among families, educators, out-of-school time staff, early childhood providers, and other complementary learning stakeholders
- Examine and share approaches to evaluating linked services

Complementary learning is a core principle of our work, and is reflected in our projects in out-of-school time, family involvement, and early childhood education. To learn more about complementary learning connections within and among these areas, visit [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).

#### Related Resources

Visit [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org) to find these valuable resources:

##### **Complementary Learning in Action**

This series documents the ways that diverse cities, counties, and states are employing complementary learning approaches to serve children across ages and across settings.

##### **The Evaluation Exchange: Complementary Learning**

This spring 2005 issue introduces and explores the concept of complementary learning.

##### **The Evaluation Exchange**

Recent issues focus on complementary learning and its components: Building and Evaluating Out-of-School Time Connections (Fall 2006), and Building the Future of Family Involvement (Spring 2008).





## Family Involvement

### About Our Work in Family Involvement

We are committed to meeting the growing demand for information on effective ways to support family involvement in children's learning and development. We promote strategies that support children's learning in school, at home, and in the community.

As part of this effort, we:

- **Synthesize** our own and others' research to provide our audiences with the latest and best information about family involvement.
- **Produce** engaging, research-based publications that include practical ideas designed to help our audiences right away in their own family involvement work.
- **Facilitate** the exchange of ideas and insights among the members of the Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)—a community of thousands of higher education faculty, school personnel, researchers, and parents, and community members.
- **Disseminate** useful, research-based information about family involvement, including teaching tools, training materials, and research reports, in our FINE newsletters.
- **Build** the family involvement field by testing innovative evaluation methods and strategies and providing professional development and preservice training resources, such as teaching cases and syllabi.

Our standard for high quality policies, practices, and initiatives, centers around three key components:

- **Family involvement must reach across time** –Family involvement matters for children at every stage of development but it must adapt over time to meet the changing needs of children and youth from birth through adolescence;
- **Family involvement must reach across contexts** – Family involvement not only takes place in school and in the home but in other settings as well, including out-of-school time programs and a variety of community institutions;
- **Family involvement must be co-constructed** – Family involvement must be based on mutual responsibility and trust among all the stakeholders involved.

Learn more about family involvement and subscribe to resources at [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).

#### Family Involvement Resources

Visit [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org) to find these and other valuable resources:

#### Family Involvement Makes a Difference

This series of three research briefs provides evidence of family involvement's importance for children of all ages, as well as direct recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers.

#### *The Evaluation Exchange:* Building the Future of Family Involvement

This issue redefines family involvement within a complementary learning framework, which recognizes the critical role of families and other non-school supports in children's success.

#### Join the Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)

Become part of a growing community of educators, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers interested in strengthening family-school-community partnerships.





## Family Involvement

### About The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)

The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) brings together thousands of stakeholders committed to promoting strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities. The majority of FINE members are K-12 school staff, workers from youth-serving institutions outside of schools, researchers and higher education faculty. Parents, school and district consultants, students, and policy advocates are also members of FINE.

#### Vision

Harvard Family Research Project launched FINE in November 2000 to serve as a hub of resources for family engagement in children's education, and to enable colleagues in the field to connect and communicate with one another. FINE believes that engaging families and communities in education is essential to achieving high-performing schools and successful students. It envisions:

- School leaders and teachers adequately prepared to build partnerships with families and communities
- Creative approaches to family educational involvement based on family strengths, mutual respect, trusting relationships, and parent empowerment
- Collaborative school-community partnerships that enrich children's development and learning in school and community contexts

#### As a member, you will:

- Get the latest and best information about family involvement, including teaching tools, training materials, and research reports.
- Receive a free subscription to the FINE email newsletter, which regularly highlights new resources for strengthening family, school, and community partnerships.
- Exchange ideas and insights with a diverse group of higher education faculty, school personnel, researchers, community groups, and parents.
- Learn about evaluation methods and professional development strategies to support continuous improvement in family involvement practice.

Become part of a community of educators committed to family involvement in education.

Learn more about FINE and browse family involvement resources at  
[www.hfrp.org/FINE](http://www.hfrp.org/FINE).

#### The FINE Newsletter



The FINE Newsletter shares the newest and best family involvement research and resources from HFRP and other field leaders.

All members receive a free subscription.

Join FINE at  
[www.hfrp.org/subscribe](http://www.hfrp.org/subscribe)  
It's free!







## Evaluation

### About Our Work in Evaluation

We believe that evaluation is essential to improving and maintaining the quality of all programs, services, and organizations. It can also ensure accountability and build a case for future investments. Recognizing its importance across all of our research areas and beyond, we have made evaluation a core focus of our work since our inception in 1983. To this end, we:

- **Distribute publications that keep our audiences up to date in the field of evaluation.** For over a decade, we've shared field-wide innovative trends, strategies, and techniques through our periodical, *The Evaluation Exchange*. Policymakers, practitioners, and evaluators depend on its engaging articles to find new ideas that will improve policy and practice and for tools that will help them frame decision-making conversations.
- **Work with nonprofits and foundations on evaluations that continuously inform their strategies.** Our evaluation approach is unique and dynamic—we believe that evaluation must lead to learning and innovation in addition to accountability. We link evaluation design directly to strategy, develop a data collection and reporting schedule that regularly informs that strategy, and engage evaluation stakeholders in an ongoing dialogue about what we are learning and the implications.
- **Test and refine innovative evaluation approaches with a diverse set of issues, initiatives, and organizations.** Our evaluation experience is substantively rich, and includes early childhood, family involvement, out-of-school time, advocacy, communications, and policy change initiatives. We specialize in the evaluation of complex initiatives that involve multiple organizations and are spread out across multiple sites.
- **Support collaborations that build and strengthen the evaluation field.** We help build the evaluation field by facilitating dialogue, collaboration, and networking among evaluators with like-minded interests. We led the founding of the American Evaluation Association's affinity group on advocacy and policy change evaluation and are helping to build this emerging area of practice by working collaboratively with other foundations, evaluators, and advocates.
- **Offer tools that strengthen evaluation practice.** We develop "how to" tools and briefs in easily accessible language and formats that are of particular use to evaluation practitioners. For example, we have tools on logic models and theories of change that instruct users on how to use these approaches to strengthen evaluation practice.

#### The Evaluation Exchange



*The Evaluation Exchange* is a one-of-a-kind periodical that contains new lessons and emerging strategies for evaluating programs and policies, particularly those focused on children, families, and communities.

Since it was launched in 1995, *The Evaluation Exchange* has become a nationally known and significant force in helping to shape evaluation knowledge and practice.

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# Evaluation

## About *The Evaluation Exchange*

*The Evaluation Exchange* is a one-of-a-kind periodical that contains new lessons and emerging strategies for evaluating programs and policies, particularly those focused on children, families, and communities. Since it was launched in 1995, *The Evaluation Exchange* has become a nationally known and significant force in helping to shape evaluation knowledge and practice.

### Our Vision for *The Evaluation Exchange*

We publish *The Evaluation Exchange* based on the belief that policies and programs must be grounded in continuous and actionable learning. Evaluation is one crucial tool in this learning process, and its power to inform and transform needs to be shared broadly.

### Short, Engaging Articles Filled With Usable Ideas

*The Evaluation Exchange* delivers the quality and integrity of a professional journal, but is written in a format that includes take-away ideas that are designed to help our audiences right away in their own work.

### What's Inside

- Articles written by some of the most prominent evaluators and practitioners in the field.
- A national forum for the exchange of ideas about the evaluation of programs and policies.
- An interactive forum where the best minds in the field come together to address tough evaluation issues
- The timely discussion of current evaluation issues, innovative evaluation methods, and evaluation news and resources

### In-Depth Discussions of Leading-Edge Topics

Each issue covers a different topic or theme, including outcomes and accountability, continuous improvement, evaluation in family support and out-of-school time, strategic communications, advocacy and policy, and performance measurement. Authors include evaluators, practitioners, funders, and policymakers.

Learn more about *The Evaluation Exchange* at  
[www.hfrp.org/EvaluationExchange](http://www.hfrp.org/EvaluationExchange)

### *The Evaluation Exchange*



### Recent issue topics include:

- Building the Future of Family Involvement
- Advocacy and Policy Change
- Building and Evaluating Out-of-School-Time Connections
- Professional Development

Subscribe for free at  
[www.hfrp.org/subscribe](http://www.hfrp.org/subscribe)



# Out-of-School Time

## About Our Work in Out-of-School Time

All of our work in out-of-school time (OST) is geared toward promoting the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of OST programs and activities across the nation. As part of this effort, we:

- **Map the OST field and synthesize the latest OST research and evaluation information to provide in-depth coverage of key topics in OST evaluation and practice.** For example, we publish in-depth examinations of important OST topics through our *Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation* series.
- **Strengthen OST evaluation practice by scanning and distilling the latest information on evaluation methodology.** For example, we produce short, accessible *OST Evaluation Snapshots* and *Research Updates*, which highlight evaluation methods and findings culled from our OST Program Research and Evaluation Database.
- **Conduct original research on and analysis of “hot topics” in OST and apply those findings to improve OST policy and practice.** For example, our Study of Predictors of Participation in Out-of-School Time Activities revealed a significant pattern in who participates in OST, allowing us to make practice and policy recommendations for improving access to OST activities and programs.
- **Network, convene, and collaborate with local, state, and national organizations and intermediaries to promote best practices in OST evaluation and program practice.** In order to maximize our reach, many of our OST conference presentations are available in the Publications & Resources section of our website.
- **Build evaluation and program capacity through the development of tools and “how to” guides.** For example, our guide to engaging families in OST programs, *Focus on Families! How to Build and Support Family-Centered Practices in After School*, contains practical information and advice on how to strengthen after school programs’ family engagement practices.

### Stay up-to-date!

We make it easy for you to stay informed on the newest research, information, publications, and news from HFRP. Visit our website to sign up for the email updates that are the most useful to you.

**Learn more about our OST work and subscribe to  
free resources at [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org).**

### A Sample of Our OST Resources

Visit [www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org) to find these and other valuable resources:



**Issues and  
Opportunities  
In OST Evaluation**



**OST Evaluation  
Snapshots**



**Research Updates:  
Highlights from  
The OST Database**

