



Harvard Family Research Project
Harvard Graduate School of Education

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 (OST) 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.

We are now building on our expertise in our three content areas to focus national attention on the importance of *complementary learning*—the argument that these and other non-school supports, when linking purposefully with schools and each other, can better insure that all children are ready to enter and exit from school with the skills they need to succeed as workers, parents, and citizens

Working at the Intersection of Research, Practice, and Policy

We reach out to those in organizations that support children, youth, and families, as well as to those who conduct research and evaluation, fund projects and programs, and create or advocate for better policies. Through initiating 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, and evaluation.

What we do Best

Our work is designed to encourage services to scale up with the commitment to quality, performance management, and accountability that are necessary for positive outcomes for children and youth. Whether we are working within one of our primary areas of expertise, or developing a new idea such as complementary learning, we work passionately to:

- Widely distribute publications with ideas stakeholders can use right away to strengthen their own practice, evaluations, or policy development
- Conduct ground-breaking research projects that include implications for policy and practice
- Test innovative new evaluation approaches and share insights that help our audiences address their own tough evaluation challenges
- Create networks among diverse stakeholders that will help to build and strengthen their fields
- Offer opportunities and tools for professional development that improve practice and enrich careers

Impact

Our strategic leadership and research has supported thousands of people who have used our publications, tools, presentations, and workshops to make programs more effective; document their progress and demonstrate results; develop innovative evaluation strategies to promote learning and continuous improvement; and keep up with the latest research and promising practices.

We connect with our audiences through:

- Frequent electronic announcements of our research, practice, and policy briefs to over 11,000 diverse stakeholders who have opted for receiving our direct email campaigns. We further extend our reach by dispatching our announcements through 294 Listservs and media outlets.
- Partnering with other high-impact organizations to get our message out to their wide audiences. For example, we've worked with the National PTA to educate policymakers about the benefits of family involvement for children's success, and with the Annenberg Institute for School Reform and The Campaign for Educational Equity to increase national recognition and discussion of complementary learning.
- *The Evaluation Exchange*, our quarterly periodical reaching 18,220 print and 6,800 electronic subscribers. 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.
- Serving on national advisory boards and as invited speakers, presenters, and reviewers. Last year alone, HFRP staff participated in over two dozen OST forums and made over a dozen presentations on complementary learning in order to support program and policy development and evaluation.

We also work with nonprofits and foundations on evaluation planning, design, and implementation for social change programs and initiatives. Our approach is unique and dynamic—we help organizations integrate evaluation with strategy development. We believe that evaluation must lead to learning and innovation, in addition to accountability.

Flagship Products

Our audiences regularly look to our flagship products listed below for the latest information and resources:

The Evaluation Exchange contains new lessons and emerging strategies for evaluating programs and policies, particularly those focused on children, families, and communities.

The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) is a bold effort to strengthen family and community engagement in education. FINE is a national network of over 7,500 people interested in promoting strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities.

The Out of School Time Evaluation Database and Bibliography is the only national database that provides accessible and timely information about the evaluation of OST programs and initiatives. It includes narrative profiles of OST evaluations and is searchable on several key criteria. The bibliography is a list of evaluations that we have identified to date.

Storybook Corner

The Storybook Corner on our website offers resources to help educators, families, and others to promote the awareness, discussion, and practice of family involvement in children's education. The Storybook Corner provides a list of storybooks with family involvement themes and tools for using them.

Visit us online to access our publications and resources at www.hfrp.org.