



MidSouth Regional Family Development Credential Program Evaluation

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Family Studies Program

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QUANTITATIVE EVALUATION DATA RESULTS

Evaluation data were gathered in Missouri via survey between 2002 and 2004. Baseline data were collected from a total of 229 respondents. At the completion of FDC classes, we gathered a second wave of data to identify change over time. The following results are for the 167 respondents who completed both surveys: 77 FDC participants and 90 comparison workers.

Description of FDC participants: The average age of the FDC participants is 46; they have been in the social services field an average of 11.6 years and in their current jobs for 4.7 years. Over half (54%) are married, 8 out of 10 (82%) have children, and 13% are male. If an average job=100, they rate their jobs at 172. Seven out of 10 (71%) work for not-for-profit organizations with the balance working for a government agency. Average annual income is \$44,313 and education level is evenly split between some college or less (31%), college graduate (35%), and some graduate school/completed a graduate degree (34%).

CHANGE IN FDC PARTICIPANTS OCCURRING WHILE IN FDC CLASSES

FDC participants report a significant increase in professional self-esteem ($p < .01$) and global self-esteem ($p < .05$) with a trend toward increased mastery ($p < .10$) between the beginning and end of the FDC classes.

FDC participants report a decreased chance of being in the social services field in 2 years, from a mean chance of 87% to 81% ($p < .05$) and in 5 years, from 80% to 74% ($p < .05$).

DIFFERENCES IN CHANGE BETWEEN FDC PARTICIPANTS AND COMPARISON GROUP WORKERS

The change between the two groups in feelings of burnout between the start and finish of the FDC coursework is particularly impressive. At the end of the class, FDC participants feel less burned out in their jobs than when they started the class while on average the workers in the comparison group feel more burned out ($p < .01$).

From the beginning to the end of the FDC classes, we see a significant difference in the amount of change between the two groups on feelings of personal worth. FDC participants report greater, and positive, change in professional self-esteem ($p < .05$), global self-esteem ($p < .05$), and mastery ($p < .01$) than the comparison group workers.

We find significant difference in change in the feeling that “co-workers respect me professionally.” After completing the class, FDC participants report co-workers respect them more than before taking the class while the workers in the comparison group feel that the respect from their coworkers has gone down ($p < .05$).

When analyzing responses between the FDC participants and the comparison group workers, we find no significant differences in job turnover, change in job satisfaction, probability of working a second job, or feelings about supervisor relations.

Comparison Group Description: For the comparison group average age is 45, been in social services field an average of 10.8 years and in current job for 4.7 yrs. Half (51%) are married, three fourths have children (76%), and 18% are male. If an average job=100, they rate their job at 152. Six out of 10 (62%) worked for not-for-profit organizations, one third (33%) worked for a government agency with few (6%) working for profit. Annual income is slightly higher than the FDC group at \$47,143, and education is also slightly higher than the FDCs with fewer reporting some college or less (20%), more graduating college (43%), and slightly more some graduate school/completed a graduate degree (37%). Overall, the groups are fairly comparable.

(For more information on the MidSouth Regional FDC Program Evaluation, please contact Dr. Smith at smithde@umkc.edu.)

QUALITATIVE EVALUATION DATA FROM MIDSOUTH REGIONAL FDC PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

These quotes are from Missouri FDC participants who contributed to focus group discussions in 2002-2005.

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH OF FRONTLINE WORKERS

"I have my FDC Credential on the wall above my desk. It means everything to me. The (program) definitely changed the way I work with my families, NOT cases. And every time I look at that credential, it is a reminder of the work I did and all the things I learned to make my life and the families lives better. I feel it's more than a certificate like we get from workshops. And I think my co-workers feel the same."

"...Especially after this class, I've gained more confidence."

"I feel I am better equipped to work with my families. I am very thankful for having an opportunity to be a part of this class and I know it will help me throughout the rest of my life, not only in my work but also with my own family."

"I think at my home...I feel more like an equal now whereas before I felt like...my decisions didn't matter...Now that has changed."

"(In the FDC class I realized) I wasn't actually listening to my (own family). They would talk and I would shake my head and I really wasn't listening, (but now) when you're talking to me I'm looking at you and I'm listening and I learned to repeat back what they've said so they understood I knew what they were saying. (Because of this change) we don't yell anymore. There's no more yelling."

EMPOWERED FAMILIES

"I learned you can't do the work, make the plans for the family member, they have to do it on their own. They have to find within them the power to rise to the cause and do it. Empowerment means being able to bring out the best in a person."

"Because the planning process (taught in the FDC) is very inclusive, the parent seemed to really take ownership of the plan, she felt the goals were realistic, and attainable, and she felt supported and encouraged by the process."

"I try to encourage (the parents) to take care – and I have had better luck at them keeping their dental appointments this year. The parents have been taking them..., I have not had to. I've set up (the appointment) for them three times already and they've not shown up, (but when) they set it up for themselves they're more apt to show up. That's really critical."

"Just recently I met with one of our residents at the (domestic violence) shelter and I was explaining a little bit about (the family development approach) and she said it was the first time that anyone had ever told her that she could be empowered."

STRENGTHENING AGENCIES AND COMMUNITIES/VALUE OF INTERAGENCY COMMUNICATION

"(Those of us who) took the class have suggested at our agency that every time there's a new class we need at least to have two to four people in that class, so the whole agency is working on one accord."

"My past work experience has not included opportunities for interagency communication when working with clients. Although the FDC (class) hasn't provided conversations about specific clients, it has presented several occasions for me to hear other agencies' perspectives about family support. I understand more clearly various agency approaches and limitations in working with families. As an FDC worker I am comfortable in sharing my positive attitude in strengths-based family support."

"With the FDC offered to a range of support workers representing many agencies (in our community), more of us can work from the same perspective and plan of action. It truly is an opportunity for family support workers to develop a positive attitude together, support, rather than compete with each other, learn to partner with families to share responsibility for their success so we don't have to do everything for them and feel challenged by our work but NOT overwhelmed or hopeless."