5 RED Projects for Measurable Change

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014-2015
RED is the Research and Evaluation Division of the UAMS Department of Family and Preventive Medicine.

Our multi-disciplinary teams include physicians, statisticians, social workers, and educators.

We deliver building blocks for strong families and healthy child development.

This year RED projects served 72 out of 75 Arkansas counties.
Community Collaboration

We partner with communities to implement and evaluate programs intended to improve outcomes for families and children. Usually these programs have a mission to support parents and children at risk for poor health and development.

Training & Translational Research

Most of our projects take research-based knowledge and translate it into practice. Our training programs target professionals in community-based settings such as early care and education, mental health, home visits, shelters, and substance abuse treatment.

Program Evaluation

We collaborate with community agencies to provide process and outcome evaluation of the implementation of interventions.

Research & Development

Our research partners our academic expertise with real-world experience to develop assessment tools used in community settings.

RED’s expertise is recognized by the federal and state agencies that fund us:
National Institutes of Health (NIH)
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
Arkansas Dept of Human Services
  Division of Behavior Health Services
  Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
Arkansas Department of Health
Administration on Children and Families
Arkansas Children’s Hospital
Benton Drug Court
Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)

Our funding has doubled over 4 years to $3 MILLION Annually

This year we operated 5 major projects combining educational community outreach and research.
Screen for Adverse Childhood Experiences

The Family Map Inventories, developed by RED, are semi-structured interviews that assess aspects of the home associated with child well-being. This year the project provided training to implement the Inventories and to jump-start parent-teacher relationships in Head Start, home visiting, and community-based early child care programs.

Programs in Arkansas, Arizona, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Delaware used the Family Map Inventories this year.

In Arkansas alone, this year 190 early childhood educators and 62 infant-toddler educators increased their skills in engaging families using our training and tools. These educators provided higher quality family engagement to 248 families of infants-toddlers and 3,800 families of preschool children.

Training pretest data show that early childcare providers lack basic knowledge related to the goals of family engagement. Post-test knowledge increased after each of the 23 training sessions we offered.

Our next goal is to integrate screen data into existing data systems used by early childhood programs, so that administrators can access results faster.

The Family Map identifies family risks to child development and helps families protect against them.

Here are a few risks we shed light on this year.

- 45% children in a North Arkansas Head Start, don’t eat healthy at home.
- 88% children of an Early Head Start Program were exposed to vehicle injury-risk.
- 86% children in an East Arkansas program don’t get enough sleep.
- 59% children in a North Arkansas ABC preschool experience harsh discipline.

thefamilymap.org
Professional Development for Hard-to-Reach Child Care

REACH offers training in managing challenging behaviors and helping children grow in social-emotional development. REACH specifically targets child care centers where specialized training is far away or “hard to reach.”

Our consultants provide training sessions at times that fit a center’s schedule. Child care directors receive toolkits with items to practice the skills and concepts taught and personalized coaching through classroom visits, texts, and email.

In FY 2014-2015, we provided extensive outreach and 3-month follow-up to 30 programs throughout Arkansas.

In satisfaction surveys from these centers, 96% of the teachers and 100% of the directors said they would recommend REACH to other centers.

Using a reliable observation tool before and after the intervention, researchers documented positive changes this year:

- Teachers showed significant increases in warmth and responsiveness.
- Increases in overall sensitivity to children in their classroom.
- Significant increase in number of classrooms with social-emotional books available for children.
- Almost tripled the number of classrooms with visuals for teaching emotions.
- Significant increase in the number using daily schedules in recommended ways (e.g. posted where children can see, in words and pictures and being followed).

familymedicine.uams.edu/reach
Ground-Breaking Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

Project PLAY matches early childhood mental health consultants with early care and education providers in Arkansas. Project Play provides classroom consultation which strives to work with teachers to improve care for the children they serve. Project Play also offers Child-Specific and Program Level consultation designed to serve individual children and parents as well as center/program directors and staff.

This year the project provided a 40-hour basic training for 20 mental health professionals from around the state and then provided 517 technical assistance contacts.

Results from the evaluation study examining 121 teachers who completed consultation show strong evidence of improvements in teacher-child interactions.

- Statistically significant increase in teacher warmth and sensitivity and less harsh and ineffective discipline.
- Significant increases in classroom level prosocial behaviors.
- In 73 classrooms receiving classroom level consultation, we documented significant decreases in the number of incidents involving physical and other disruptive behavior problems among children in the classroom.

Foster Care Project
In Arkansas, over 3,000 children under age 6 are in foster care. Most of these children also attend child care. Unfortunately, most do not attend quality-rated child care, and many experience multiple switches in child care arrangements. This year, Project PLAY

- Provided training for child care providers about provision of trauma-informed child care services.
- Worked with the Division of Children and Family Services to follow establish new protocols.
- Provided community trainings on the importance of high-quality child care for foster children.

familymedicine.uams.edu/projectplay
Innovative Obesity Intervention

Our most recent program development is ready for dissemination!

The WISE intervention models, teaches, and promotes healthy food attitudes in programs that serve children preschool to elementary. Educators use WISE to encourage kids and families to discover fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruits in authentic, developmentally appropriate ways. Through WISE we deliver 3 educational components: Classroom Curricula, Family Engagement, and Educator Training.

Our research shows that WISE participation changes eating habits at home.

- Decreased children’s junk food consumption.
- Increased children’s consumption of 5 of 7 targeted fruits and vegetables.

On average, there was a 56% increase in intake of all 7 targeted foods.

These results were confirmed by parents and by high-tech hand scans before and after the WISE program. The scans measured fruit and vegetable antioxidants in children’s skin.

Educators say that WISE makes their job easier, and parents are surprised that children are asking to eat more healthy foods.

Head Start research partners in rural Arkansas have applied for funds from Conagra and Newman’s Own to pay for additional WISE training and evaluation over the next two years.

Additionally, our team is working on applications to fund secondary analysis of WISE fidelity data, stakeholder input on improvements for WISE implementation supports, and in-depth interviews with previous WISE educators.

windywise.com
On-Demand Parenting Education

The TIPS program for early childhood professionals provides simple but practical strategies for building relationships with parents, responding to parents’ health and development concerns, and tailoring parenting information to individual families. Staff can share tip cards and training to parents on a wide range of topics, from bedwetting and tantrums to alcohol abuse and parent depression.

This year, TIPS developed new tools to help programs sustain TIPS, including My TIPS Guide and TIPS Post-Training Web Animation Modules, that allow staff to watch a sample delivery of a tip to a parent while reviewing training principles.

Over 12 months, TIPS reached all regions of Arkansas. The team conducted 32 TIPS Basic Trainings to train new staff, address turnover, and sustain programs. Each classroom received a TIPS Toolkit, and each center received a TIPS Center Kit to help with marketing TIPS to their parents.

- TIPS recruited and trained 30 new programs, resulting in 202 participants.
- TIPS trained 203 new participants from 82 existing TIPS centers.
- The TIPS Technical Assistance made 254 site visits to ensure proper implementation and sustainability.

Naptime Academy™

To eliminate training barriers for rural and busy childcare providers, the RED TIPS team developed Naptime Academy™, a library of e-learning modules, allowing staff to access training any time by computer or mobile device. The Naptime website, launched in January 2015, includes a proprietary learning management system, e-commerce, and reporting.

tipsforgreatkids.com | naptimeacademy.com
Independent Evaluations

In addition to these five major translational training projects, RED also provided evaluation services for national and state initiatives.

National Home Visiting Initiative
The national Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) project teaches pregnant women and their families skills for raising healthy children. RED is in its fourth year of contracted evaluation for MIECHV in Arkansas. The evaluation team has: 1) trained and provided technical assistance for approximately 200 home-visiting staff in the MIECHV Evaluation and related screening and assessment tools, 2) provided reporting to 45 home visiting programs on their data as part of ongoing quality improvement, and 3) provided evaluation data to HRSA that helped secure ongoing funding for services. We have also disseminated findings related to children’s exposure to adverse experiences in a paper recently accepted by the journal, Child Abuse and Neglect.

Arkansas Quality Rating System for Early Childhood Education
For over six years, RED has provided evaluation and consultation services to the Arkansas Division of Child Care. We gather and interpret data to help the state ensure its system to rate the quality of child care aligns with current research on the health and development of children and is feasible for educators to implement. This year the Division used our recommendations to promulgate new child care licensing regulations through the state legislature.

Drug Courts
RED evaluates activities of Washington County and Benton County Drug Courts. This year we provided trauma-informed care training for Washington and Madison County Probation and Parole. We presented drug court data at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals and Veterans Court Annual Conference.


Publications

The RED team energetically contributes to scientific publications in family medical practice, pediatrics, psychology, and sociology.

This year alone, national peer-reviewed journals accepted 21 articles from RED faculty.


RED’s influence is growing nationally.

We have collaborations in Louisiana, New Mexico, Mississippi, and Arizona to disseminate research findings and intervention success.

Our screening, educational, and professional development programs are being adopted in Michigan, Louisiana, North Carolina, Delaware, Iowa, Connecticut, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, and Texas.

For Fiscal Year 2015-2016, RED Faculty have submitted applications for more than $10 million in new federal funding.

One of these applications, to evaluate UAMS Advanced Practice Nurse Training in Gerontology, has been funded by HRSA.
Goals for FY 2015-2016

- Increase our collaboration with Arkansas programs to improve the health of Arkansas children
- Disseminate interventions to support at-risk families to protect children from Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Support preschool educators to provide high-quality, health-protecting environments.
- Expand our NIH funding to examine the quality of our research-focused interventions
- Expand the knowledge base of our highly qualified workforce

Our projects will continue to help UAMS achieve Vision Goals set for 2020:

- Create an integrated, patient-centered health care environment that effectively and efficiently produces better health outcomes, enhances the patient and family experience, and fosters clinical program growth at UAMS;
- Educate culturally competent health professionals equipped with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to adapt to changes in the health care field;
- Continue to develop and expand nationally recognized, multi-disciplinary research programs aligned with health needs in the state and nation;
- Develop research, educational, and technical assistance expertise in population-health strategies to promote prevention efforts for high-priority health issues and to improve the health of Arkansans; and
- Support the talent-rich environment at UAMS through employee support programs, enhanced organizational communication, and employee development.