



**BOLD
THINKERS
DRIVING
REAL-WORLD
IMPACT**

Children, Youth, and Families

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR STRONG FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES



For nearly 60 years, Abt Associates has been a global leader in state-of-the-art research, evaluation, and technical assistance. We help answer hard questions that lead to important decisions about what works in public policy and programs. We work to identify effective practices, more responsive programs and behavioral changes that improve the health and economic well-being of children and families, and prepare young adults for adulthood.

Relevant Work

Building Evidence and Determining Effectiveness

Abt is leading the [Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse](#), which was established by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in accordance with the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018. Abt rates programs and services as promising, supported or well-supported practices. These practices include mental health and substance misuse prevention and treatment services; in-home parent skill-based programs; and kinship navigator services.

The [Determining Core Components of Effective Prevention Programs for At-Risk Youth](#) project is supported by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) within HHS. Drawing on an existing database of hundreds of rigorous, controlled studies on a variety of youth-focused programs, Abt used an innovative approach to empirically identify the program characteristics strongly related to positive effects on youth and then translate those effectiveness factors into specific, actionable guidance for improving practice in the field.

Under the **Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE)** study for the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within ACF, Abt implemented a random assignment design of Year Up, a national training program in growth sectors such as finance and information technology for adults 18-24. [Year Up](#) provides six months of technical training followed by a six-month internship. Participants assigned to the study's treatment group, which could access Year Up, had large, positive increases in earnings compared with a control group. Year Up increased average quarterly earnings by \$1,895 in the two quarters after program completion. Large positive effects persisted through the seventh follow-up year. Year Up's earnings impacts are the largest reported to date for workforce programs tested using a random assignment design.

Abt conducted the [Teen Pregnancy Prevention Replication Study](#) for ASPE and the Office of Adolescent Health to test multiple replications of popular school and clinic-based teen pregnancy prevention program models to provide important information about their effectiveness in reducing teen pregnancy and associated risk behaviors. Abt researchers also conducted a [meta-analysis](#) of 44 federally funded evaluations of teen pregnancy prevention programs, the findings from which suggest the need to reexamine assumptions about coed group approaches to program implementation.

Early Childhood and Strengthening Families

Abt and Harvard University researchers are conducting an ambitious study to follow about 5,000 representative 3- and 4-year-olds over time. The [Early Learning Study at Harvard \(ELS@H\)](#) follows children who participated in a variety of early learning settings in Massachusetts. The study examines experiences that can be measured across

all types of care settings. Findings focus on relationships between children's development and early learning experiences and also examine the influence of the pandemic on families and early childhood educators.

In the last 20 years, parental substance use disorder (SUD) has become an increasingly prevalent reason for children to enter foster care. In partnership with OPRE at ACF, Abt is conducting the [Replication of Recovery and Reunification Interventions for Families-Impact Study](#) (R3-Impact). R3-Impact is a multi-site evaluation using experimental and quasi-experimental designs to provide evidence about the effectiveness of two interventions that use peer recovery coaching to support parents' recovery and help keep families together. The evaluation includes a mixed-method implementation study to inform future replication and scaling efforts.

The [Building Capacity to Evaluate Child Welfare Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families Project](#) supports OPRE to advance the evidence around collaborative approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect. Abt provides evaluation technical assistance to grantees and their evaluators and documents, through a process evaluation, the ways each grantee designs and implements its unique community-level child-safety approach.

Trauma and Well-Being

Abt Associates evaluated the Office of Women's Health (OWH) **Trauma Informed Care (TIC) Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Initiative** within HHS. Women and girls report a disproportionate level of exposure to trauma and violence throughout their lives. Abt examined the initiative's training and technical assistance planning, development and administration processes. Abt also evaluated participant satisfaction and outcomes for individual participants and their organizations, which were engaged in the provision of trauma-informed care to promote recovery and foster resiliency.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) within HHS recognizes that bullying among youth is prevalent in the United States, with significant consequences to healthy development. Abt provided communications support to [StopBullying.gov](#), a federal collaborative among 26 partners, and technical assistance to state health departments. We created a prevention assessment capacity tool and change package to help states measure their progress over time.

Youth and Family Homelessness

Administered by the Family and Services Youth Bureau (FYSB) within HHS, the [Transitional Living Program \(TLP\)](#) provides supervised shelter and services to runaway and homeless young people (RHY) aged 16 to 21. Abt has partnered with FYSB and OPRE on three major evaluation activities to shed light on TLP's contributions to positive outcomes for RHY in such areas as housing stability, employment, educational attainment and socio-emotional well-being. Abt's work has included pilot testing randomized controlled trial methods for the TLP/RHY population, a process study to describe the program operations, and the design of a pre-post outcomes study.

Abt Associates conducted the [How TANF Agencies Support Families Experiencing Homelessness](#) project for OPRE. The findings help HHS understand the extent to which Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies across the country are using TANF funds to serve and support families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It also documented the approaches and strategies used by TANF agencies to serve these families.

The [Homeless Families Research Briefs](#) project, led by Abt for OPRE and ASPE, produced a series of 10 research briefs examining children and families affected by homelessness. The project leveraged data already collected by Abt for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Family Options Study. The [Family Options Study](#) collected information from 2,282 families who had spent at least seven days in emergency shelters in 12 communities nationwide.

Since September 2011, the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation** has contracted with Abt to evaluate its [Chronic Homelessness Initiative's](#) strategy to end long-term homelessness in Los Angeles County. Through this evaluation, Abt is helping the foundation improve the system's structure for addressing homelessness and building capacity to address chronic homelessness in Los Angeles.

For More Information

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Bold Ideas. Real Results.

Abt Associates is a global consulting and research firm that uses data and bold thinking to improve the quality of people's lives. From increasing crop yields and combatting infectious disease, to ensuring safe drinking water and promoting access to affordable housing—and more—we partner with clients and communities to tackle their most complex challenges.



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