



**BOLD  
THINKERS  
DRIVING  
REAL-WORLD  
IMPACT**

## EDUCATION

*Evidence-Driven Strategies for  
Equitable Learning Outcomes*



For over four decades, Abt has collaborated with policy makers and practitioners to generate, support, and disseminate evidence-driven educational strategies that foster equity for all learners: young children, youth, and adults.

### Relevant Work

Our work spans key content areas including scaling interventions that result in stronger academic and social-emotional outcomes, evaluating and strengthening programs that lead to equitable college access and success, and building capacity for programs that improve educator quality and effectiveness.

#### College Readiness, Access & Success

Earning a college or post-secondary credential is a key pathway to economic mobility, but inequities in readiness, access, and completion persist. Abt studies, identifies, disseminates, and supports evidence-based practices that help students enroll in college, persist, and attain their degree or credential. Our work ranges from testing the effectiveness of text messages on college enrollment in [GEAR UP](#) and [Upward Bound](#). We're also studying whether [Success Boston](#)—a transition coaching program—improved college student outcomes.

As part of [Evaluating Programs and Strategies to Improve Postsecondary Education Access and Success](#), we're identifying and refining promising strategies to increase dual enrollment participation for students traditionally underrepresented among college-going populations that can be rigorously tested.

Roughly two-thirds of students take loans to pay for college, and many have difficulty repaying them. For the Low Cost, Quick-turn Around Evaluations of Federal Financial Aid Information And Delivery Strategies, Abt is [conducting a random assignment evaluation](#) of the effects of additional loan counseling for students. We're also conducting a study to learn how best to implement prison education programs, drawing on the experiences of “early implementer” colleges that participated in the [Second Chance Pell Experimental Sites Initiative](#).

### Safe & Supportive Learning Environments

Fostering a nurturing and supportive environment for students within and outside of school can bolster their learning experience and nurture their social and emotional growth, leading to future success. Abt helps to assess the implementation of programs that seek to advance better and more equitable educational experiences for all students, such as the [Study of Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants](#) (Title IV, Part A), which examines how states and districts are applying the funding. We are also conducting a survey of state Title IV-A coordinators as part of an evaluation of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA)—Stronger Connections grants implementation, which seeks to enhance school safety and mental health supports. The survey aims to understand how quickly and effectively states have distributed the funds and what specific needs they've focused on in the subgrant competitions.

For the SeriousFun Children's Network Family Weekend Project, which serves children living with serious illnesses and their families, we developed a Theory of Change to show how the program leads to positive outcomes for children and youth and included input from family and staff. We also developed an evaluation toolkit for the Network's camps.

Abt is leading the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLCC) Technical Assistance Center needs assessment and evaluation activities. The 21st CCLC program helps state educational agencies (SEAs) and subgrantees provide essential out-of-school time enrichment opportunities for students in underserved communities.

We provided data-related technical assistance for the [Promise Neighborhoods program](#), an initiative designed to improve the educational outcomes of children through linked, holistic, and evidence-based cradle-to-career interventions.

### **Educator Quality & Effectiveness**

Abt is proud to work with local, state, and federal policymakers and practitioners—as well as nonprofits and foundations—to support and evaluate programs that enhance educators' quality and effectiveness, leading to positive outcomes for students. Under the [Teacher Preparation Experiences and Early Teacher Effectiveness Study](#), Abt surveyed nearly 3,300 teachers in 18 states about their experience and estimated teaching effectiveness using value-added modeling.

We are also leading the implementation and impact evaluation of the [Massachusetts Early Childhood Support Organization initiative](#) (MA ECSO), which provides professional supports, resources, and financial incentives to programs. The goal is to empower leadership to support early educators in their provision of high-quality instruction that promotes positive outcomes for young children.

Abt is also evaluating the New School for New Orleans Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Program, which aims to expand and enhance the city's most successful nontraditional education pathway program that increases the number of highly effective educators and supports their growth.

### **Capacity Building & Evaluation Technical Assistance**

Abt helps our clients and partners understand whether the programs and services they provide improve people's lives.

We're helping to support a more evidence-based educational system by evaluating the U.S. Department of Education's 's Regional Educational Laboratories and Comprehensive Centers Program, which provides capacity building to state and local education agencies. Ultimately, this work will shed light on how federal technical assistance efforts can be evaluated, and how the downstream influence of these efforts can be measured.

Abt is providing evaluation technical assistance to [Education Innovation and Research](#) (EIR) grantees. Evaluation findings will provide a substantial contribution to the evidence base about what works for improving student outcomes in a wide range of domains and settings.

The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) serves as a central and trusted source of evidence on best practices in education. As part of the [WWC Tools, Online Assistance, Standards, and Training](#) (WWC-TOAST) project, Abt is supporting the continued development and evolution of WWC standards and procedures.

Abt is also conducting systematic evidence reviews for the WWC Preschool-to-Postsecondary Evidence Synthesis Task Orders (WWC-PESTO), including [studying the evidence](#) on interventions designed to improve social, emotional and behavioral outcomes for K-12 students, and [identifying best practices and delivering resources](#) that educators can use to improve literacy skills of K-12 students.

We are proud to partner with W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Leadership Montgomery to [evaluate their Racial Equity Action Leadership](#) (REAL) Inclusion program which empowers individuals and/or teams from an institution to eliminate systemic racism by training them to apply a racial equity lens to organizational change efforts.

## **For More Information**

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## **Pursuing Equity. Looking for the Intersections. Driving Real-World Impact.**

Abt Associates is a global consulting and research firm that uses data and bold thinking to promote equity and improve the quality of people's lives. From advancing positive health outcomes and just environmental and social policy to crafting digital, data-centric solutions and bolstering economic security, we partner with clients and communities to tackle their most complex challenges.

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