

YWCA of Minneapolis Child Care “Bungalow” Evaluation

The YWCA of Minneapolis Bungalow program is successfully delivering high-quality, bilingual, multi-cultural child care for residents of south Minneapolis and employees at Abbott Northwestern who may not otherwise have access to child care. It has also enhanced the professional development and financial stability of four providers, enabling one provider to launch her own child care business.

Children and families served

In its first five years of operation, the Bungalow Program served 83 families and 123 children (enrolled at age two to three, on average). Of these children, over half live in poverty, two-thirds are from single parent families, and three quarters do not speak English at home.

A large majority of the children in the Somali rooms were from low-income, Somali immigrant families. The Spanish rooms served immigrant, Spanish-speaking families as well as English-speaking families looking for a bilingual child care. Though the program did not anticipate serving this population, they expanded their outreach to these parents after experiencing challenges enrolling Hispanic families due to immigration concerns.

Parent quality rating and satisfaction

The top two reasons parents chose the Bungalow program, from a list of reasons, are the safety of the facility, and stability and reliability of the child care. Parents rated the program highest in cleanliness, the provider’s positive relationships with children, safety and security, and the provider’s education.

All of the parents also reported that provider’s native language was an important reason for choosing the program. Other cultural attributes of the program were rated slightly lower indicating that given the choice of multiple high-quality programs, most parents would likely choose a cultural-based program; however, they may not choose a cultural-specific program if it was unsafe, unreliable, or inconvenient.

About the Bungalow Program and its evaluation

The YWCA of Minneapolis’ Child Care Business Development Program, known as the “Bungalow” Program, aims to create quality early childhood education opportunities for children of new Americans, while empowering women to become entrepreneurs and operate their own culturally-appropriate child care businesses.

In 2006, after conducting a neighborhood needs assessment, the YWCA of Minneapolis opened a child care center with traditional age-based classrooms and four Bungalow classrooms at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. The Bungalow classrooms are staffed by Somali and Latina providers, each with up to 10 children from any age group, who speak Somali or Spanish, decorate their rooms to match their heritage and celebrate traditions unique to their cultures.

In addition to providing culturally-competent child care, the Bungalow program provides support and training for providers to open child care businesses.

Literature indicates culturally-competent child care in a quality setting can strengthen relationships between providers and parents and enhance language development in a child’s native language, as well as in English.

In 2011, Wilder Research conducted an evaluation of the Bungalow Program that included a survey of 24 families, interviews with five Bungalow providers and seven stakeholders, and an analysis of family characteristics, attendance, and child screening data for 35 children.

Parents noted in their comments that they like the program because it builds their child's language and cultural skills, and prepares their child for school. Ninety-two percent of parents expressed overall satisfaction with their choice.

Child development outcomes

Bungalow providers assessed age-appropriate child development with the Ages and Stages Questionnaires™ (ASQ), which screens children up to 66 months for possible developmental delays in the following domains: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. The Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE) was used to screen children ages six to 60 months for social-emotional problems.

- **Most children (80%) were demonstrating age-appropriate skills;** nine percent with two or more screenings improved to meet all domains. A very high percentage (94%) were showing age-appropriate personal-social and gross motor skills. The fine motor domain was weakest overall, with 80 percent at age level.
- **Almost all children (96%) were demonstrating social-emotional competency;** eight percent with two or more screenings improved.

Other benefits for families and the community

The Bungalow model provides high-quality care to children of color that may be underserved by other centers. New Americans may be more comfortable accessing care when it is provided in a home-like setting, with siblings kept together, by a provider from their own culture. Children also learn skills to prepare them for kindergarten. With their children well-cared for during the day in an accessible location, parents are able to get and sustain jobs.

Children learn about other cultures at an early age, which helps children respect people that look different or speak a different language. The Bungalow Program helps children strengthen and maintain their cultural identity and communicate with family members who don't speak English, while also developing their English skills. Providers and stakeholders observe that children have less "culture shock" when they are in a room decorated to reflect their native culture with a provider that speaks their native language. In addition, culturally-specific providers can more easily communicate with parents and are able to help families navigate the child care system in the United States.

Child care business development

Through on-the-job training, mentorship, and formal education, four providers have received significant training and professional experience, as well as financial stability to support their families. However, just one of these women has successfully launched her own child care business.



The providers and key stakeholders identified several economic reasons providers have had difficulty opening their own child care businesses:

- Buying homes has become more difficult due to more stringent lending practices.
- When a provider's spouse is unemployed, she does not have stable income and cannot risk the income fluctuations home-based providers typically experience.
- Retrofitting a home to pass city regulations and buying all the initial start-up materials are costly.

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For more information

This summary presents highlights of the *YWCA of Minneapolis Child Care Business Development Program "Bungalows"*. For more information about this report, contact Jennifer Valorose at Wilder Research, 651-280-2654.

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