



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education  
Colorado State Library

## **Growing Readers Together Evaluation Findings**

**Year Two**

**August 2018**



*Research & Evaluation Department*

## Background

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Growing Readers Together is an early literacy initiative designed and supported through the Colorado State Library (CSL), a unit within the Colorado Department of Education. The vision for the Growing Readers Together (GRT) program was conceived and expanded in partnership with the Buell Foundation who funded the first implementation of the project in 2016—2017, and provided a second year of funding for 2017—2018. The purpose of the program is to expand early literacy programming access to family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) providers across Colorado. This evaluation report will focus on the second year of Growing Readers Together activities.

The CDE Library provided sub-grants to local library systems across the state, including the Alamosa Public Library, Aurora Public Library\*, Burlington Public Library\*, Canon City Public Library, Conejos Library District, East Morgan County (Brush)\*, John C. Fremont Library District, La Veta Public Library\*, Lamar Public Library, Lincoln County Bookmobile\*, Pikes Peak Library District, Pines & Plains Libraries, Pueblo City-County Library District, and Walsenburg Public Library. The asterisked libraries were new in Year Two. Four libraries that participated in Year One did not continue in Year Two: The Combined Community Library, Limon Memorial Library, Security Public Library, and the West Custer County Library District.

The project goals and objectives were the same across project years. CSL stated that: *“Growing Readers Together will build FFN partnerships/networks, increase FFN caregiver/librarian interactions to impart early literacy training and modeling for caregivers, and expand early literacy materials in libraries and FFN caregiver homes. Because local libraries and other agencies serve unique communities, each of the goals, objectives, and activities will result in customized programs that fit the unique communities and the FFN caregivers identified locally. The approach is not one size fits all, yet CSL staff will work closely within each community to ensure consistent use of evidence-based practices for early literacy activities, training, collections, services, and evaluation.”* (For more information see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/growingreaderstogether>).

CSL re-contracted with the Clayton Early Learning Research and Evaluation (Clayton R & E) Department to conduct an evaluation of the Growing Readers Together (GRT) in Year Two. This report documents the successes, challenges, and accomplishment of the statewide project goals in the second year and, for those libraries who received two years of funding, provides an opportunity to reflect on progress made compared to the first year.

Two members of Clayton R & E met with Joyce Johnson, the GRT Coordinator at CSL, regularly to monitor progress. Clayton R & E staff, with the participation of Joyce Johnson and Pamela Mejia de Rodriguez, presented individualized Webinars with PowerPoints for sub-grantee library sites in mid-March into early April 2018 to introduce Clayton’s GRT evaluation team, to review the background and purpose of the GRT evaluation and the methods to be used (i.e.,

child care provider surveys and interviews, library patron activity feedback forms, and monthly site reports), and how the results would be shared.

### *Evaluation Questions*

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The following evaluation questions remained the same for Year Two and were aligned with the project goals mutually developed by CSL and the Clayton GRT evaluators (please see the evaluation plan in Appendix A).

- How do GRT program activities affect FFN provider knowledge, skills, attitudes, and resources?
- What strategies with FFN providers were employed by public library staff and how did these change as a result of the GRT program?
- How has the Colorado State Library impacted state-level infrastructure related to FFN providers and early literacy?
- What were the library and FFN early literacy opportunities for children birth to 5 in southeast Colorado?

### *Evaluation Methods*

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A variety of approaches were used to gather data to answer the evaluation questions. These are summarized in Appendix A. The methods included surveys and phone interviews used during the previous year, in addition to a new “Brief Library Activities Feedback Form” developed for the current year to help identify all library patrons who came to the library to participate in a specific activity. We continued our review of sites’ monthly reports.

**Surveys** to assess aspects of the FFN experience were made available in both Spanish and English. A six-page survey (see Appendix B) was delivered by sites to FFN program participants (i.e., mostly those receiving early literacy bags for the providers) to assess details about the care situations children experience in FFN care. This included questions regarding the number and ages of children in care, language spoken, and providers’ early childhood work experience. The survey also examined the provision of literacy materials, literacy activities, library interactions, and experiences with Growing Readers Together.

**Phone Interviews** were conducted after surveys came in with childcare providers who indicated they were interested in participating in a follow-up conversation. End-of-year phone interviews were also conducted with local library GRT coordinators and CSL and community stakeholders in August to explore their experiences in striving to meet GRT project goals. They were also asked to share perspectives on approaches to reaching this population of providers and children.

**Monthly Site Reports** were reviewed for the numbers of activities libraries conducted, the FFN providers they reached, and stories about the impact the initiative was having on the FFN community. In early May 2018, the evaluators provided GRT Interim Reports to each library,

summarizing the survey/interview completions to date and offering suggestions for GRT outreach in the summer months. A report of the Year Two preliminary findings was provided to the CSL in June 2018. Summative findings were presented to the GRT librarians and the CSL stakeholders at a luncheon celebration in Fountain, CO on August 20<sup>th</sup>.

## *Evaluation Findings*

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### **Family, Friend and Neighbor Survey Results**

#### ➤ **Data Collection Response Rates**

We would like to preface this section of the report by acknowledging the challenges that GRT librarians had in identifying and engaging Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers in their communities. FFNs were among the patrons of these libraries and participated in both regular and GRT-supported activities, but the ability to reach out to them individually varied based on staffing and other circumstances. Some of those identified as FFNs changed their status (e.g., an aunt caring for a niece or nephew may have returned to work), so the intended audience often shifted depending on circumstances. Outreach to FFNs also varied based on which of the library partners were actually connected with FFNs. As evaluators we were only able to confirm that respondents were FFNs when respondents answered a question in the interview or feedback form about their relationships to children in their care. Therefore, we report the number of FFN respondents as we were able to confirm below, but for the remainder of the report all child care provider respondent data is combined and are all titled as FFN providers.

During the 2017-2018 grant period, library patrons, including Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers (FFN) participating in their local library's Growing Readers Together, were asked through their local libraries or their partners to answer a survey to learn more about how in-home child care providers throughout Colorado were involved with their local libraries. We received a total of 84 FFN provider surveys in Year Two ( $n=70$  paper copies sent to Clayton through the US mail, plus  $n=14$  completed through an online survey system).<sup>1</sup> These providers attended Growing Readers Together sessions in 13 libraries and one bookmobile across Colorado (Alamosa Public Library ( $n=7$ ), Aurora Public Library ( $n=1$ ), Burlington Public Library ( $n=3$ ), Canon City Public Library ( $n=5$ ), Conejos Library District ( $n=19$ ), East Morgan County Library District ( $n=7$ ), John C. Fremont Library District ( $n=3$ ), La Veta Library ( $n=5$ ), Lamar Public Library ( $n=1$ ), Lincoln County Bookmobile ( $n=1$ ), Pikes Peak Library District ( $n=10$ ), Pines & Plains Library District ( $n=5$ ), Pueblo City-County Library District ( $n=12$ ), and Walsenburg (Spanish Peaks Library District) ( $n=1$ ).<sup>2</sup>

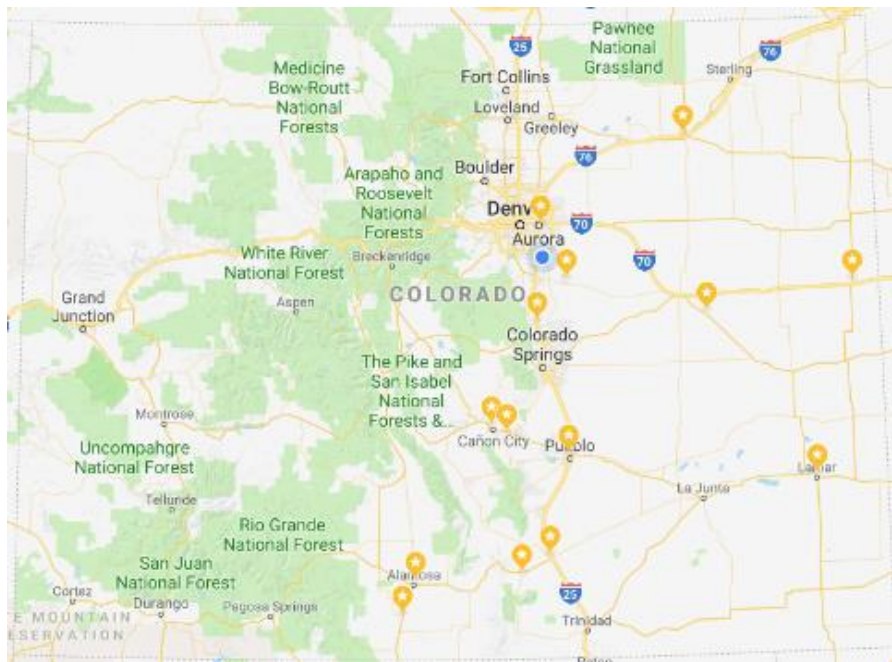
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<sup>1</sup> Most FFN providers who identified themselves on their survey were different in Year One than in Year Two. Only one FFN provider was confirmed as participating in the survey in both years.

<sup>2</sup> Three surveys were submitted in 2018 by Security Public Library ( $n=2$ ), and West Custer County Library District ( $n=1$ ). As these GRT sites discontinued in Year Two, their data were not included in our analyses.

Additionally, within the larger group of respondents who completed the GRT - Child Care Provider Survey, 61 responded they would like to speak in more detail about their experiences with their library and the Growing Readers Together program through a follow-up phone interview conducted by the Clayton GRT evaluators. We completed 43 of these (one of which was completed in Spanish, and two of which were interviews with respondents from Security Library Public Library, a Year One site. The evaluators were able to identify 24 (55%) interviewees as FFN providers.

Analytic results are also provided by library location aggregated by size of population in library service area. Examining FFN provider responses by the size of population of their library service area allows for trends potentially related to cultural and economic differences to be explored. Relevant demographic information for each library area or county is included in appendix F.



Libraries in a large urban area include: Aurora Public Library, Pikes Peak Library District, and Pueblo City-County Library District. Libraries in a medium rural area include: Alamosa Public Library, Burlington Public Library, Canon City Public Library, East Morgan County, John C. Fremont Library District, Lamar Public Library, and Lincoln County

Bookmobile. Libraries in a small rural area include: Conejos Library District, La Veta Library, Pines & Plains Libraries, and Walsenburg (Spanish Peaks Library District).

Table 1. Site-Size Sample Sizes by Data Collection Type

Site-Size Classification	# of Sites	FFN Provider Survey	FFN Provider Interview	Brief Libraries Activities Form
<b>Small Rural</b>	4	37	13	25
<b>Medium Rural</b>	7	23	14	32
<b>Large Urban</b>	3	24	17	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>76</b>

➤ **Description of *Growing Readers Together* Family, Friend, and Neighbor Provider Participants and the Children in their Care**

FFN providers responding to the survey reported taking care of children in their home, on average, for 5 years, 9 months. Some FFN providers reported providing care for children in their home for as long as 30 years and as little as one month. FFN providers in medium rural areas reported, on average, the longest experience working with children in their home 8 years, 0 months, with the providers in the small rural areas reporting the least average length of time caring for children 4 years, 8 months.

The average number of children in an FFN care arrangement was reported to be 2.8 children, with the greatest number in any one arrangement being 11 and the fewest reported as 1. FFN providers in medium rural areas reported, on average, caring for the greatest number of children (slightly more than four children). FFN providers in small rural and large urban cared for an average of 2.5 children. The most frequently reported age of the children in FFN care was 3 to 4 year olds (69%), followed by children ages 1 to 2 (45%), and then by children ages 5 to 6 (40%). This reflects a difference from findings in Year One when, on average, the most commonly reported ages of children in care of an FFN provider was 1 to 2 years old.

Primary spoken languages of children participating in GRT are summarized in Table 2. English was the primary language for nearly all of the FFN providers and children participating in the GRT survey. Languages other than English varied to include Spanish and additional languages noted below in Table 2. In Year One, languages spoken by FFN providers were presented without accounting for FFN providers reporting being bilingual in English and Spanish.

*Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of FFN Providers and Children in their Care (Provider Survey, n=84)*

Languages Spoken	Child Care Providers	Children
<b>Monolingual English</b>	65.5%	75.0%
<b>Monolingual Spanish</b>	13.1%	6.0%
<b>Bilingual English / Spanish</b>	21.4%	19.0%
<b>Additional languages – Spanish, Africanz, German, Quanjobal, American Sign Language</b>	2.4%	3.6%

FFN providers were asked about their previous experience working with children in other roles; 27% of the respondents said they had previous experience as a teacher in a classroom setting, 7% said they had previously been a licensed childcare provider, and 8% had been teacher aides.

FFN providers in large urban areas were less likely (17%) to report previously working as a teacher in a classroom setting when compared with providers in small (30%) or medium rural

areas (35%). Other reported experience working with children included babysitting, providing unlicensed childcare, caring for children in a church setting, serving as a teacher aide in a local Head Start classroom, and volunteering with 4H and Boy and Girl Scouts groups.

### ➤ **FFN Provider Care and Experience with Growing Readers Together**

We examined factors related to children’s experience with home-based care environments and provider experience with the Growing Readers Together program. The quality of home-based care relationships, the availability of books, and engagement in reading and enrichment activities all play an important role in children’s overall development and readiness for kindergarten. Anderson, Atkinson, Swaggerty, and O’Brien (2018) found shared book reading (SBR) frequency was associated with better emerging literacy outcomes<sup>3</sup>. Saracho (2017) found the quality, not just the quantity of reading matters<sup>4</sup>. Many FFNs expressed appreciation for the way the librarians modeled reading during Story Times.

**Access to Literacy Materials.** Literacy rich environments that highlight approaches to learning through the use of language, shared reading with age appropriate materials, and access to materials used for writing are essential to the acquiring skills necessary for developing language skills. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1999)<sup>5</sup>. The following literacy materials are considered important in promoting a literacy enriched environment. The list below reflects the proportion of caregivers who reported that as they care for children in their home, the children have access to:

- Books that teach the alphabet (100%).
- Books that include rhyming words or stories (99%).
- Books that range in difficulty level (94%).
- Books that include factual information (82%).
- Recorded books/stories (49%).
- Crayons, pencils, and paper for writing and drawing (99%).
- Toy letters such as cut-out or foam letters, fridge magnets, letter puzzles, blocks, etc. (95%).
- Word cards with names and familiar words (78%).

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<sup>3</sup> Anderson, K. L., Atkinson, T. S., Swaggerty, E. A., & O’Brien, K. (2018). Examining relationships between home-based shared book reading practices and children’s language/literacy skills at kindergarten entry. *Early Child Development and Care*, 194, 1-16. DOI: [10.1080/03004430.2018.1443921](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2018.1443921)

<sup>4</sup> Saracho, O. N. (2017). Parents’ shared storybook reading - learning to read. *Early Child Development and Care*, 187, 554-567. DOI: [10.1080/03004430.2016.1261514](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2016.1261514)

<sup>5</sup> Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (2001). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. National Research Council. 2001. *Early Childhood Development and Learning: New Knowledge for Policy*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. DOI: [10.17226/10067](https://doi.org/10.17226/10067)



Responses for many of the above items did not vary substantially by size of population in library service area. However, FFN providers in small rural areas were slightly less likely (78%) than FFN Providers in other areas to read books that included factual information (medium rural = 87%; large urban = 83%). They were also slightly less likely (71%) to report having word cards with names of familiar words than providers in other areas (medium rural = 78%; large urban = 87%).

### Book Access, Reading Frequency and Behaviors.

Early childhood educators, including FFN providers, promote cognitive development by intentionally planning activities and experiences that optimize conditions for children to acquire positive attitudes, skills, and knowledge about language and literacy.



Neuman, Copple, and Bredekamp (2000) highlighted a caregiver's role as critical to a child's learning and that caregivers can inspire children to read, write, and learn through thoughtful planning and developmentally appropriate literacy instruction.<sup>6</sup>

Nearly 85% of surveyed FFN providers reported reading aloud to children in a group setting frequently, while over 75% of FFN providers reported reading aloud to children on an individual basis *often* or *always*. FFN providers (92%) reported setting aside a special time each day to read to the children in their care. FFN providers in small rural areas were the least likely to report, on average, reading to children in a group setting<sup>7</sup> and they were slightly less likely to report often reading to children on an individual basis<sup>8</sup>.

Yeo, Ong, and Ng (2014) stated that "...caregiver-child engagement in reading is the strongest predictor of children's emerging reading abilities and their reading motivation (p. 807)."<sup>9</sup> The proportion of FFN providers who reported frequently participating in literacy promoting reading behaviors are as follows:

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<sup>6</sup> Neuman, S., Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (2000). *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

<sup>7</sup> Percentage of FFN providers who responded reading aloud to children in a group setting often or always: Small Rural – 48.6%, Medium Rural – 72.8%, Large Urban – 78.3%

<sup>8</sup> Percentage of FFN providers who responded reading aloud to children in an individual setting often or always: Small Rural – 70.3%, Medium Rural – 82.6%, Large Urban – 83.3%

<sup>9</sup> Yeo, L. S., Ong, W. W., & Ng, C. M. (2014). The home literacy environment and preschool children's reading skills and interest. *Early Education and Development*, 25(6), 791-814. DOI: [10.1080/10409289.2014.862147](https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2014.862147)



- Read aloud a variety of different books (85%).
- Reread favorite books (86%).
- Talk with children about books read together (50%).
- Ask children questions about the books as we read or after we read (68%).
- Talk with children about new or unfamiliar words while reading books together (67%).

FFN providers in small and medium rural sites were less likely to report participating in literacy promoting reading behaviors when compared to their colleagues in larger populations<sup>10</sup>. This suggests a particular area of focus when working with FFN providers in these areas.

Additionally, FFN providers were asked about their facilitation of print awareness. Over 80% of surveyed FFNs reported frequently providing children with the opportunity to look at books and other printed materials on their own. More than half of FFN providers (60%) said they frequently spent time teaching children about different features of a book (e.g., front and back cover, top and bottom, pointing out and describing the responsibility of the author and illustrator). Nearly two-thirds of the FFNs (65%) reported teaching children that printed letters and words run from left to right and across the page and from top to bottom. One-third of FFN providers reported rarely engaging in this activity with children in their care. Responses did not vary substantially by the size of population in the library service area. This reflects an increase in FFN providers reporting promoting print awareness from the findings in Year One when, on average, less than one third of FFN providers reported teaching children about different features of the book and slightly more than half of providers reported teaching children about print orientation in books.

FFN providers also reported their frequency of participating in letter knowledge and phonological awareness activities with the children. Nearly 85% reported practicing saying the alphabet with the children often. Over 80% of FFN reported singing songs that feature letter sounds, such as the alphabet song, every day. Additionally, 82% of FFN reported teaching children to recognize the letters of the alphabet. FFN providers in medium rural areas reported reviewing the alphabet with children more frequently than providers in small rural and large urban areas.<sup>11</sup> Findings such as these indicate many FFN providers are exploring several avenues to introduce children to the first steps of language.

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<sup>10</sup> Talk about books: Small Rural – 67.5%, Medium Rural – 65.2%, Large Urban – 83.4%

Ask children questions about the books: Small Rural – 66.6%, Medium Rural – 60.9%, Large Urban – 79.1%

Talk with children about new or unfamiliar words: Small Rural – 55.9%, Medium Rural – 65.2%, Large Urban – 83.3%

<sup>11</sup> Practice saying the alphabet: Small Rural – 80.6%, Medium Rural – 95.6%, Large Urban – 79.2%

Sing songs that feature letter sounds: Small Rural – 75.7%, Medium Rural – 87.0%, Large Urban – 83.4%

Teach children to recognize letters: Small Rural – 71.7%, Medium Rural – 91.3%, Large Urban – 73.4%

## ➤ FFN Providers' Library Interactions

### FFN Provider Perceptions of Outcomes of Participating in Growing Readers Together.

FFN providers were asked about their perceptions of the outcomes resulting from their participation in the Growing Readers Together initiative at their library.

FFN providers mentioned the following features as a benefit to participating in GRT:

- You learned something you can share with the children in your care (89%).
- You feel more confident to help the children in your care to learn (84%).
- You will spend more time interacting with the children in your care (e.g., read, talk, sing, write, play; 90%).
- You are more aware of available resources and services provided by the library (87%).
- You will visit the library more often with the children in your care (85%).

Nearly 90% of FFN providers from small rural areas reported becoming significantly more aware of resources and services provided by the library through their participation in GRT. A similar level of the same FFN providers (87%) from small rural areas also anticipated visiting the library more often with children in their care in the future. FFN providers in medium rural and large urban also expressed high rates of wanting to visit their local libraries more frequently because of their interactions in GRT (medium rural = 96%; large urban = 83%).

When looking at the differences in these items from the previous year, FFN providers in Year Two reporting of the benefit to participating in GRT as quite similar (within 2%) from FFN providers in Year One. Two items with a notable decrease from Year One were in FFN providers' response to how participating in GRT helped increase of their confidence to help the children in their care (YR 1: 89%). Additionally, fewer FFN providers in Year Two reported participating in GRT helped them become more aware of library resources and services (YR 1: 94%).

FFN providers were asked about their experiences with the materials provided by their GRT participating libraries. When asked about the tips and ideas shared by the Growing Readers Together librarians, over 90% of FFN providers strongly agreed the suggestions were helpful in building literacy experiences for their children. Again, nearly 95% of FFN providers thought the experiences with GRT were appropriate for the age of the children in their care and a similar number of FFN providers reported the tips and guidance provided through GRT efforts were easy to use. Over 50% reported the literacy building guidance and activities were generally new to them. A majority of FFN providers (91%) said they would continue to use the ideas offered through the GRT program when spending time with the children in their care. FFN providers did not vary substantially by size of population in library service area with regard to their supportive responses regarding their experiences with the tips, ideas, and materials provided by their library through GRT.

## FFN Provider Perceptions of Brief Interactions with the Library and/or Growing Readers Together.

Similar to the one-page Family, Friend, & Neighborhood Childcare Provider Survey used by some sites in Year One, we hoped to encourage all library patrons accompanied by young children to provide feedback about their experiences about library events and activities. The libraries were asked to distribute a short five-question survey titled “Growing Readers Together – Brief Library Activities Feedback Form.”

This brief survey was intended to provide feedback about engagement in planned activities for families that may have attended only one session and to give insight to who is participating in all the offerings the libraries included in their work plans. Additionally, by using this brief form, we hoped to gain insight from library patrons accessing these activities who may not have been inclined to fill out the longer FFN Provider Survey or who may be participating in very brief interactions (like offerings at outreach Story Times facilitated at farmer’s markets or kindergarten roundups).

We received a total of 76 Brief Library Activities Feedback forms in Year Two (all were completed on paper). Brief Library Activities Feedback forms were returned from activities, events, or GRT sessions in seven libraries (Canon City Public Library ( $n=23$ ), East Morgan County Library District ( $n=9$ ), La Veta Library ( $n=7$ ), Pikes Peak Library District ( $n=14$ ), Pines & Plains Libraries ( $n=12$ ), Pueblo City-County Library District ( $n=5$ ), and Walsenburg (Spanish Peaks Library District) ( $n=6$ ).

Respondents completing the form were comprised of a mix of visitors including Child care Providers ( $n=4$ ), Grandparents ( $n=8$ , who may or may not consider themselves FFN providers), Parents ( $n=30$ ), Nannies ( $n=4$ ), Informal Childcare providers ( $n=7$ , whom we would consider FFN providers), and high school students visiting as part of classwork for a child development class ( $n=17$ ).<sup>12</sup> Most frequently, the activities occurring during these sessions were Story or Music Time within the library ( $n=72$ ). Other activities included Art Time and Literacy Kit handout events.

Individuals completing the Brief Library Activities Feedback form reported the following in relation to the event they attended:

- The tips and ideas shared were helpful (82%).
- The experience was appropriate for the age of the children in their care (95%).
- The tips and guidance provided were easy to use with children in their care (97%).
- The literacy building guidance and activities were generally new to them (71%).
- They would continue to use the ideas with children in their care (96%).

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<sup>12</sup> An additional six forms were completed by respondents who did not share their relationship to the child attending the event with them.

Individuals completing the Brief Library Activities Feedback form did not vary substantially in their supportive responses regarding their experiences with the tips, ideas, and materials provided by their library through GRT by size of population in library service area nor did they differ significantly in their responses from FFN providers answering the same questions in the longer FFN Provider survey.

### ***Family, Friend and Neighbor Interview Results***

Using an open-ended phone interview, FFN providers were asked what they were doing differently in their interactions with the young children in their care, in the literacy materials they were using, and in their physical home environments to support children's early language and literacy development as a result of their participation in GRT. They were asked what they liked most and least about their participation in the activities and events hosted by their local libraries as part of the Growing Readers Together program. FFN providers were also asked for their thoughts about what programs they'd like to see their library offer.

*"We slow down, sit down, and read more often. Reading is more interactive."*

A major impact of GRT was a reported increase in reading frequency and variety and changes in children's access to books. One FFN commented that "Speaking with them got us very excited about literacy. We keep going back for more books and they give us ideas about crafts that go along with the book. It has been motivating and made me more creative." FFN providers reported placing more books within reach of the children in their care so they can help themselves whenever they want. One FFN provider stated, "I've been using the library more to get new and different books for him." Several FFNs reported that instead of buying books, they were borrowing books from the library and taking advantage of the GRT free book giveaways and the library book sales. Another provider said she involves the children more when doing things in the kitchen, like measuring. A retired teacher and grandmother now provides a ready stock of supplies like markers, crayons, and paper so the children can draw and practice writing. A full-time nanny said, "I thought this was an amazing project, I love it. I feel the most helpful

*"Just [good] to know that I can go over and talk to [the librarians] if I have any questions about development, and they're usually really good at answering my questions."*

thing for me is the e-mails they provide me almost daily from GRT with ideas and activities to do with [kids]. They offer good insight on how to interact with them and to communicate with them a lot better." And numerous FFNs appreciated the feeling of community that the GRT program helped develop. "I think [the library] gives you a place to meet other childcare providers to learn from each other; gives us a little break to recharge and talk to each other." The library summer reading programs were very popular, and as the number of patrons increased, it became the busiest time of the year for the librarians.

FFN providers mentioned the following features they liked most:

- Story Times (and the activities that usually followed, like arts and crafts).
- Summer Reading and other programs like "1,000 Books Before Kindergarten".

- Spending time with and learning from other caregivers.
- Socialization opportunities at the library for the children, especially during the summer when they are out of school.
- Attending library events outside of the library (e.g., playgrounds, farmer's markets, malls).
- Librarians as a resource for families.

While most FFN providers indicated there was nothing about the GRT program or the library they disliked, some shared their thoughts for improvement. Improvement ideas that FFN providers reported:

- *"It would be better if they had Story Time at different times of the day and for different age groups."*
- *"Vary things up so they are not the same each week; a little more effort in changing up the activities."*
- *"Some of the activities were not as well organized as they could be."*
- More access to Spanish books and resources or dual language (English and Spanish) books and bilingual literacy tools.

One grandparent remarked, "I've been out of parenting for so long, and there are new things arriving with the internet that my age group doesn't understand..." This comment reflects lessons learned about FFNs in the community who lacked access to computers and/or the Internet at home. It also revealed concerns about the potential risks online activities pose to the children in their care. With this in mind, the library was viewed even more importantly place to safely access web resources.

An often-heard comment, particularly in small rural communities, was the difficulty in getting to the library events, especially when caring for multiple children. However, the difficulty was not so much on transportation itself, but on their ability to take care of several children at once at the library.

Some providers shared their ideas about additional workshops the library could offer. One suggested having more workshops geared to adults (e.g., parenting ideas, healthy cooking), while another said that a workshop on handwriting (e.g., cursive) is important since children are "not getting enough practice at school these days."

### ***Local Library Site Interview Results***

Clayton conducted brief 15-20 minute phone interviews with librarians in late February and early March to discuss site plans and highlight any particular challenges or exciting developments, such as the establishment of key partnerships. Longer end-of-year phone interviews (30-45 minutes) were conducted in August to learn about their overall experiences with implementing the GRT program in their communities during the past year. The interview

yielded perceptions of the most-successful strategies in identifying FFNs. We learned what worked best to inform them of the importance of early literacy practices and what steps they took to enhance their libraries' children's areas and their access to books. The librarians spoke to the activities that were most effective in attracting and engaging FFNs (Goal 2 of the grant). Interviews were conducted with all 14 Year Two public libraries: Alamosa, Aurora, Burlington, Canon City, Conejos, East Morgan (Brush), John C. Fremont (Florence), La Veta, Lincoln County Bookmobile, Pikes Peak, Pines & Plains (Elbert Co.), Pueblo City-County, and Spanish Peaks (Walsenburg). Findings are described below.

### ➤ **Effective FFN Early Literacy Outreach Strategies**

As was true last year, local library sites agreed that an effective outreach strategy was to go out to the places and events, like farmer's markets, the mall, health fairs, and food distribution sites where FFN providers usually go, as a majority of FFN providers were not all likely to go to the library.

**Home Visits.** Only one GRT site specifically listed home visits in their annual plan (Spanish Peaks LD in Walsenburg). Two other sites mentioned site visits as strategies in their plans, but more informally, for example "visit FFNs in own environment" (Lamar) and "recruiting retired professionals (seniors) to visit the homes of families that received the reading packs. They will also model reading aloud to the children..." (Conejos). Based on the monthly reports from Spanish Peaks, no home visits took place. Overall, home visits were a less effective strategy because, as one librarian in a medium rural location reported, "None of them wanted a home visit or any extra lesson plan, but they loved the materials." Librarians in large urban areas in particular said it was not practical to go door to door where people don't know each other. The Conejos librarian reported that she tried to engage high school students in early literacy outreach, but it was considered a poor fit by high school administrators. More success was found by the Conejos librarians' collaboration with retired professionals. The Conejos seniors who volunteered to be in-home readers quickly grew to love the experience and most plan on continuing indefinitely.

**Library staff most effectively located FFNs through partnerships with local organizations and by attending a variety of venues and events.** Partnerships with organizations already trusted in the community provided access to more potential FFNs than librarians would encounter through library walk-ins. This list of organizations included those providing services related to health, housing, food, and early childhood intervention, care, and education (e.g. Alliance for Kids, American Diabetes Association, Catholic Charities, Rocky Mountain SER Head Start, Early Steps to School Success, HIPPI, and the Nurse Family Partnership). Librarians attended events or reached out at food giveaways, holiday events (e.g., "Trunk or Treat"), churches, senior centers, playgroups (Catholic Charities), health clinics, doctor offices, and farmer's markets.



They organized “Story Walk in the Park” and “Pop-up Story Time” at the mall. Other libraries had success reaching out to their Early Childhood Councils.

One librarian reported that participation in *child-focused* public events was especially important, such as “Strolling Thunder” at the Capitol, a rally sponsored by Clayton Early Learning and Colorado Children’s Campaign in partnership with Zero to Three was most effective. (The website describes the purpose of this family-friendly rally as “to encourage policymakers to Think Babies™ in support of stronger families, vibrant communities and prosperity across the country!”)<sup>13</sup> At each event or location, the librarians would attempt to identify FFN providers by starting conversations with any people with children and would hand out early literacy bags and calendars at these events. Librarians had to become more outgoing to be able to ask people outside of the library, “Do you take care of other people’s kids?” and be able to accept that not everyone would be interested. Smaller and/or child focused events were generally more effective.

One example of an important partnership was one that arose between the Department of Human Services and the Canon City Library. The DHS approached the librarian about having a weekly Story Time for mothers working to regain custody of their children. It was a huge success, and in November Adam Gonzales was awarded “Community Partner of the Month.” At the GRT celebration luncheon in Fountain, CO, Mr. Gonzales reported that two mothers had successfully regained custody of their children—a wonderful outcome.

**Connections with FFNs at the Library.** When FFNs did come to the library, staff members would do their best to connect with them individually about GRT. How successful they were depended upon numerous factors, including what was happening at the library, whether or not staff were available, and the receptivity of the FFNs being approached. By observing the interactions between caregivers and children, the librarians gained some indication of whether the FFNs were aware of and using best early literacy practices. One librarian mentioned that an FFN was reluctant to take out books because she wasn’t sure when she would be able to return them to the library. In response, the librarian relaxed the rules about due dates (“Just call us,” she would tell the patron.)

Local library site coordinators described numerous other non-profits and government agencies providing other types of services that welcomed supporting GRT program goals. In some cases, the partner organizations would deliver the literacy materials on behalf of the local library and in other instances the librarians distributed them at partners’ events. Although numerous parents were reached, rather than specifically FFNs, the librarians recognized the importance of getting the word out about early literacy to everyone in their communities.

**Communication strategies** that librarians used to inform the community about GRT, the library’s role in early literacy, and other library services included:

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.coloradokids.org/join-us-may-8-for-strolling-thunder-a-march-rally-and-giant-infant-toddler-playdate/>

- Ads on public TV, PSAs on public radio, and local newspaper articles\*.
- Flyers and posters in places families go (bus stops, schools, malls, court houses/city hall).
- Bookmarks, state literacy calendars, library event flyers in literacy bag giveaways.
- Use of social media (Facebook, library website, e-mail distribution lists)
- Invited speakers (e.g., at GRT nights) to talk about the five early literacy skills & other topics.
- Distribution of GRT materials through partners' contact and e-mail lists.

\*As local newspapers go out of business, access to print media, especially in smaller communities, has become very limited.

### ➤ Reported Completion of Local Library Plans

The consensus from library sites was that they were either satisfied with their progress towards their goals or had achieved the goals they set forth in their site plans. This was the second year of GRT funding for 10 of the 14 GRT Sites. One librarian reported that their "...second year took off and was a success because of the work from last year." All agreed that the first year was devoted to exploring the possibilities that the GRT grant money provided. Flexibility was one lesson learned in setting goals and in deciding what approaches to use to meet them. A first year librarian said, "It went very smoothly and [CSL] provided a lot of meetings and it was important for me to meet up with the librarians who had done it last year and have some time to share ideas." They all agreed they had reached people who care for children who they had not had contact with before. Overall, the local library staff expressed the value in experimentation to learn how to most effectively reach FFN providers to improve early literacy among children in their care.

### ➤ Reported Plan Modifications and Budget Satisfaction

Librarians were asked whether they needed to make many modifications to their original plans to accomplish their goals. Many had to modify their expectations about how many FFNs were in their community and how many they would be able to recruit. Several library staff in smaller rural areas said they were surprised at how many

**One librarian created a comfortable "Three Little Bears" den under the staircase where the children could read. Another purchased a rocking chair for two.**

FFNs resided in their communities and how great their needs were, while others in larger communities found fewer FFNs than anticipated. In response, librarians needed to adjust how they spent their budgets. Many agreed that recruitment and outreach strategies varied depending on which FFN providers they needed to reach and that not all GRT offerings resonated with all FFNs. Plans also changed in some cases when partnerships did not develop as originally hoped. If funds could not be used as allocated (e.g., if far fewer early literacy bags were needed), the librarian invested the funds in books, materials, and other items for GRT future needs.

The librarians were grateful for the GRT funding and most considered their budgets more than adequate. They worked hard to make the best decisions possible about GRT purchases. They were happy with the flexibility of the grant in terms of being able to shift funds across line items to accommodate necessary changes over the course of the project. “We are very satisfied with the [GRT] program and the added money was a gift from heaven.” One librarian said it was important that branch managers be knowledgeable and supportive of the aims and goals of the project as the managers made decisions about the budget and what purchases could be made.

### ➤ **FFN Provider Engagement**

Some librarians knew the exact numbers of FFN providers they had reached, while others were unsure. As mentioned above, it was more difficult to tell how many actual FFNs were reached when community partners helped distribute materials. The preliminary data based on the interviews and surveys were provided to sites in the interim reports. This helped librarians more concretely understand of how many FFNs participated. Still, librarians were pleased that, regardless of whether a caregiver was a parent or an FFN, important learning about child literacy was shared.

### ➤ **Improvements in FFN Provider Confidence and Literacy Behaviors as a Result of GRT**

FFNs often consider themselves to be “babysitters.” Librarians were faced with the challenge of empowering informal or occasional caregivers to acknowledge the important role they play in the early literacy development of the children in their care. It might be simply reinforcing the fact that it is important to read, and to read as often as possible. During Story Time, librarians demonstrated reading and engagement techniques that FFNs could easily adopt and use on their own. The positive improvements in FFN behaviors were confirmed during the follow-up phone interviews. For example, one person said, “They do demonstrations on how to read to the child, ask questions, and they have an activity (songs, puppet play) related to the story they are reading.” Another said, “We actually read more. We are reading a lot.” Librarians also modeled how easy and inexpensive it is to incorporate music, movement, crafts, and other learning activities into the reading experience.

### ➤ **Evidence of Positive Outcomes for Children**

Library staff shared lovely examples of the impact GRT had on children in their community:

- *“A little boy...had never been to the library until his daycare provider who is a homeschooler [brought him]. He’s four and our poster child – he says ‘I love the library’. He insisted that his mother sign him up so he could [check] things out. I think hearing that kids loved it from the providers was great. I think that means they are taking the time to enjoy what’s in the bag.”*
- *“We wanted to connect more closely with those families, and I felt that we did.”*
- *“We took one of our alcoves and are turning it into a toddler corral with toys and board books. We hadn’t planned for it, it just developed.”*

- *“In the last 6 months, I’ve seen the older two girls’ language and literacy blossom. They were really shy and now they are coming out of their shell.”*

### ➤ **Local Library Perceptions of Partnering with CSL**

Many positive words were used by librarians to describe the CSL staff and what it was like to partner with them. “Well, the State’s awesome. They’re great. They are all about equipping you with everything. They are all wonderful to work with.” Another said, “It’s been cool.”

Librarians shared many other adjectives to describe the CSL staff: really helpful, supportive, responsive, and awesome.

Additional comments included: *“They offered to come help and man booths; very helpful in giving information and offering legwork.”* and *“Joyce made [understanding what I could and couldn’t spend money on] easy and tutored me all the way through.”*

At least one librarian mentioned how helpful the CSL webinars were. These webinars supported peer learning and information sharing since their communities were so far apart geographically.

### ➤ **Positive Outcomes and Other Key Lessons Learned for Local Libraries**

GRT funding provided opportunities for enhancements to library reading and play spaces and resources. Most sites reported they spent funds for new or reupholstered furniture to provide more comfortable seating for both children and adults, and they created areas for younger children separate from those for older children. These changes encouraged caregiver/child engagement in reading, and fostered dialogue and language use among them. Librarians bought books (and more board books), colorful rugs, lower shelving and “browser bins”, toys (e.g., Legos, manipulatives, sensory materials, balls), art and craft supplies, and even a puppet theatre.

Early literacy bags were created for outreach to FFNs, and librarians were very creative about literacy themes and purchasing the appropriate materials to support those themes (e.g., CD with songs about the alphabet or numbers and the manipulatives to go along with that, like magnetic letters). Handouts with ideas for activities to do

***“I’ve been asking for a puppet theatre and I finally just bought one ...I’ve seen ...so many kids play with that and increase their development. [One] child also played alone with our puppet collection and it was interesting to hear her use her own story words...”***

with the materials in the literacy bag were included.

***“If you are open to new ideas and new ways of doing it, the community organizations are going to be there to support you with it. I thought I’d have to do it all myself.”***

One librarian enthusiastically described a positive outcome of GRT funding as a kind of stimulus, saying, “We are reinventing our library after 25 years of not much programming for kids. We are starting from scratch, and not just in terms of GRT.” A key lesson learned was that not all partnerships were successful,

or worked the way they were originally anticipated, but that the effort was worthwhile. Regardless of whether a partner actually reached FFNs, the word got out to the community about the importance of applying early literacy practices with young children. The shared goal of having the caregivers' and children's best interests in mind helped build trust and nurtured cooperation.

### ➤ **Libraries Fostering Early Literacy at the Community Level**

Library staff reported that they were beginning to observe, and wanted to continue to promote, early literacy practices as an essential library service in their communities. Many hoped to duplicate successful strategies used by other libraries to attract FFNs (e.g., a regularly occurring GRT night scheduled at the same day of the week and time of day built up a loyal and large following in Canon City).

A librarian from a small rural community reported that "It's hard to put that into words. I think I saw a lot of positive engagement. I didn't even really understand or know what the five practices were – it was all new to me – and more than just a poster put on the wall that they might read or not or understand, it was great to actually see the caregivers understand that information. [They say things like], 'Oh, I didn't realize that doing manipulative things with them would prepare them to write someday.' It was great to see how they realized that almost all the interactions prepare them for literacy and are all connected."

### **CSL Stakeholder Interview Results**

Four key Colorado State Library staff members involved in GRT were interviewed to understand their perspectives on the accomplishments of the grant project at both the community and the state level. A summary of their views is provided below.

### ➤ **Goal Accomplishment**

CSL staff agreed that a planning year needs to be built into the GRT grant program. It takes time to identify who the FFNs are in each community, to determine what outreach efforts work, and to build lasting relationships between librarians and FFN providers. Over the course of that first year, the community librarians become more familiar with the needs of the FFN providers and they become more comfortable delivering the GRT program. Some Year Two librarians built upon the positive connections they made with FFNs in the first year, and continued to engage them in GRT and/or encouraged them to help reach out to other FFNs.

The continued role of Joyce Johnson as the Growing Readers Together Coordinator was listed as critical to the success and the expansion that occurred in Year Two.

*"So, I would say you need to build trust with them. If you can do just one thing, do that! Active listening with intention to learn from what they are saying and try to build a solution. Most of the time they are doing amazing things..."*

The bilingual Regional Early Literacy Specialist, Pamela Mejia de Rodriguez, provided essential outreach support to the Alamosa library, for example, by connecting the librarian with Migrant Education in the hopes of engaging the Guatemalan community (a work in progress).

To ensure success, one stakeholder said, “I would say that the state should have direct contact with the library director – you need to train your personnel on different aspects. It can be more knowledge in early literacy. For the state library to evaluate, everybody needs to train on this thing. It needs to feel like something more official. It sounds strict, but if you want something to happen, you have to have the energy. It needs to be something bigger for big change.”

Other important CSL comments about progress made and areas to focus on in the future included:

- *“Even though we reached out, [we need] more relationships with formal child care and councils in the community. Lots of people want child care, but what’s happening with the kids who can’t get into child care?”*
- *“In my opinion, all library systems are vastly underfunded for what they are trying to do and the responsibilities they have taken on and understaffed across the board...Trying to be a problem-solver and make resources available to the libraries. It’s important to give them space to figure things out, as opposed to throwing resources at them.”*
- *“Persistence is one of the lessons we learned. Especially in the first year it was slow to get started and engage this audience, but [the librarians] kept at it and tried different methods, and it happened eventually.”*
- *“The other goal in which I feel we’ve made a lot of progress and are really meeting the goals, I feel like the library staff that have been involved with the project have gained not only building confidence and resources, but also a deeper commitment. Some were really reticent and not sure about reaching out, and thinking differently about how to reach out, and they shifted their way of talking about it, and the confidence they have once they began to see successes, and they talk with their peers about their strategies.”*
- *“For me there is the question to what extent, especially when their involvement with GRT ends, will [the library practices] remain in place? We haven’t imbedded the changes in practice as much as it’s been ‘this is what we have to do for the grant’.”*

### ➤ **Establishing FFN and Community Connections**

CSL staff and community stakeholders agreed that it is very important to have in person meetings with the librarians. Librarians felt supported and heard, and CSL staff could see for themselves the circumstances of each library and offer customized suggestions. Regular communications, whether by webinar, e-mail lists, or conference calls were also essential. In making connections with FFNs, one CSL staff member indicated that “Another lesson is quality over quantity. We didn’t have huge numbers reached in some, but the quality is really critical for underserved audiences.” In terms of assisting libraries with making connections to local partners, it might be as simple as encouraging them to go outside the library and see what is



out there—in other words, using “a grassroots strategy”. One stakeholder posed the question, “Have they thought about going to the local swimming pool or the dance studio to find FFNs?”

### ***Community Similarities and Differences***

The second year of GRT funding reinforced the understanding from the first year that library sites/communities are different and have different needs. CSL staff members continued to observe many differences and similarities during their engagements with the sites, and many of those that became evident last year were still true into the second year.

#### **Community Differences:**

- Size, population composition, and location (especially accessibility) matters.
- A librarian’s attitude, perception of the work, and willingness to try is more important than the resources made available to them by GRT, and varied by site.
- Larger libraries may have more staff, but they also have more competing priorities to handle.
- Each librarian will approach the GRT project differently based on their personality, education and prior experiences.

#### **Community Similarities:**

- Librarians from all communities share a common culture that library resources are intended for everyone. This provided some challenges when focusing on outreach to only a subset of the community, the FFNs, but many found creative ways to provide early literacy materials to all patrons.
- Approaching potential FFNs and asking if they cared for other people’s children was uncomfortable at first for the majority of librarians.
- Finding FFN providers in a way that is not intimidating to them or invades their privacy is challenging.
- It is always best to partner with a trusted local organization that is already working with this population.
- FFN providers seem to like to learn in groups.

### ***Community Stakeholder Interview Results***

This year we interviewed Laura Carlson, the Project Manager for GRT at the Buell Foundation. The phone interview focused on the same topics addressed by CSL staff, including to what extent the project goals were accomplished, the key differences and similarities across sites of different classifications and the extent to which GRT impacted state infrastructure and connection to other statewide organizations. Laura was pleased with how much the GRT

libraries had accomplished, and noted that libraries were more successful in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in explaining the GRT project and have become more comfortable in approaching the public.

In terms of the differences between communities, she commented that in small rural libraries, one librarian tackles the entire job, which raises questions about how GRT fits into their very busy and diverse work schedule, compared with the larger libraries, which have bigger infrastructure, but which also have many competing priorities.

For the future, she expressed the need for “a more formal approach in hooking libraries together, especially in small rural communities,” and finding ways to reach folks who are “off the grid.” She echoed what one CSL staff member said about whether or not GRT practices have been embedded in the libraries, by stating her hope that a longer term evaluation will look at how “institutionalized” these early literacy practices have become. For example, we may explore whether libraries still use the materials and the lessons learned from their participation in GRT.

➤ **Where are we as a state with reaching out to FFN providers and what are the needs and recommendations for future?**

It is the case that in many of these communities there are very few licensed child care options, so a majority of children are in FFN care or cared for by their parents. One stakeholder said, “We know at some level that there will never be one particular way to find and support this group. The group is fluid – you can be an FFN provider one day and not the next. It’s challenging to make broad statements about them.”

It was evident from CSL staff that an advisory committee and/or a mentor group of librarians who had experienced GRT would be very useful in promoting GRT activities in the future. One stakeholder remarked, “We did a pilot with a smaller number of libraries, but now all of the libraries around the state are seeing the value and wanting to reach out seeing that their peers have had success. It’s about statewide adoption.”

### ***Project Activities and Implementation***

Participating library districts were asked to report their progress towards their proposal goals through a monthly online report submitted to CSL. A total of 157 monthly reports were completed by the 14 library districts participating in the Growing Readers Together initiative<sup>14</sup>. These monthly online reports gave the libraries an opportunity to share lessons learned,

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<sup>14</sup> Total monthly report submitted by site: Alamosa Public Library = 11; Aurora Public Library = 11; Burlington Public Library = 12; Canon City Public Library = 11; Conejos Library District = 9; East Morgan County (Brush) = 12, John C. Fremont Library District = 11, La Veta Public Library = 12, Lamar Public Library = 11, Lincoln County Bookmobile = 11, Pikes Peak Library District = 12, Pines & Plains Libraries = 12, Pueblo City-County Library District = 11, and Walsenburg (Spanish Peaks) Public Library = 11.

strategies used, and materials purchased and distributed to support the work of the library and efforts towards reaching FFN providers in their communities.

### ➤ **Library Partnerships**

Libraries were encouraged to promote the GRT program throughout their communities through partnerships with other local organizations. From September 2017 to August 2018, libraries reported establishing partnerships with 248 individual organizations and/or individuals to support the work of GRT. The partnership organizations varied from early childhood specific partners (e.g., local Head Start schools, HIPPIY, Alliance 4 Kids), to local governmental agencies/supports (e.g., Police Departments, Parks & Recreation Departments), and to organizations supporting community-level resources (e.g., early childhood councils, local non-profits). The level of partnerships remained fairly consistent over time with libraries reporting working with two partners each month, on average.

### ➤ **Information Sharing & Distribution of Materials**

Funds from the Growing Readers Together program could be used to share information with library patrons and potential FFN providers. Purchases included: promotional materials (e.g., brochures, flyers, or posters created to promote specific activities or events); early literacy informational materials (e.g., GRT Tip Sheets, newsletters, or hand-outs for parents on literacy practices or other parenting issues); and Kits for FFN providers (e.g., materials purchased to direct distribution to FFN providers). Between September and August, libraries reported distributing over 52,000 promotional items, over 4,700 materials on early literacy, and over 1,800 kits to FFN providers.

### ➤ **FFN Events and Consultations with FFN Providers**

Between September and August, libraries participating in GRT hosted 233 in-library events (e.g., Story Time programs, early literacy workshops) for 913 FFN providers and 1,426 children. Additionally, GRT libraries provided representation at 84 events outside of the library (e.g., health fairs, preschool roundup, and farmer's markets) for 1,786 FFN providers and 3,245 children. Libraries provided 725 in-library consultations and 462 out of library consultations with FFN providers.

## *Summary of Findings*

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This evaluation report describes learnings from the 2017-2018 second year implementation of the Growing Readers Together program through the Colorado State Libraries funded by the Buell Foundation. The program successfully reached its goals and set the stage for future engagements with Family, Friend, and Neighbor Providers statewide focused on early literacy development among the children in their care. The following summary of findings is provided by each evaluation question and explores the variability across community libraries that may have implications for future program implementation.

## **How are GRT program activities affecting FFN provider knowledge, skills, attitudes, and resources?**

In Year Two, GRT participating libraries worked directly with library patrons, community partners, and other early childhood organizations to identify and attract FFN providers to a variety of offerings within and external to their libraries. Creativity and diligent effort in these strategies were noted both by librarians as well as the FFN providers they attracted. FFN providers interviewed noted coming to the library for scheduled Story Times and leaving with a new appreciation for the opportunities and resources offered by the library.

FFN providers had a variety of experiences prior to taking care of the children with them at the library. FFN providers reported professions, roles, and experiences including: stay-at-home parents, retired grandparents, teachers, workers in the medical field, and HIPPIY home visitors. FFN providers were asked about their previous experience working with children in other roles, 42% of the respondents said they had previous experience in a classroom setting (Teacher = 27%, licensed childcare provider = 7%, Teacher Aide = 8%). FFN providers in large urban areas were less likely (17%) to report having previously worked as a teacher in a classroom setting when compared with providers in small (30%) or medium rural areas (35%).

Nearly 90% FFN providers from small rural areas reported becoming significantly more aware of resources and services provided by the library through their participation in GRT. A similar level of the same FFN providers (87%) from small rural areas also anticipated visiting the library more often with children in their care in the future. FFN providers in medium rural and large urban also expressed high rates of wanting to visit their local libraries more frequently because of their interactions in GRT (medium rural = 96%; large urban = 83%).

FFN providers mentioned the following features as a benefit to participating in GRT:

- You learned something you can share with the children in your care (89%).
- You feel more confident to help the children in your care to learn (84%).
- You will spend more time interacting with the children in your care (e.g., read, talk, sing, write, play; 90%).
- You are more aware of available resources and services provided by the library (87%).
- You will visit the library more often with the children in your care (85%).

## **What strategies with FFN providers are employed by public library staff and how do these change as a result of the GRT program?**

The GRT program shined a spotlight on FFN providers, bringing them to the attention of librarians in new ways, both inside and outside of the library. The GRT funding allowed the librarians to develop resources, such as early literacy bags and calendars, and to hold adult nights with speakers on topics related to early literacy, to expose FFNs to early literacy development best practices, and to become familiar with how to use and be creative with the

early literacy tools with the children in their care. Of course, devoting their time to this subset of the regular library patrons created its own challenges in terms of staffing/time, and in terms of the inherent culture of libraries whose goal is to serve everyone in the community. Understanding that libraries are commonly understaffed, when inclement weather or seasonal illnesses interfered, the outreach efforts were necessarily reduced—events were poorly attended or had to be cancelled.

The efforts required to identify and engage FFNs in the different communities was significant. In large urban settings where one might expect to find a large number of FFNs, librarians reported it was actually more difficult because librarians typically do not know their patrons well or may only see them once. Larger communities also have more offerings in terms of activities for families, so the library is in competition with those. In smaller rural settings where everyone knows each other for the most part, it may have been easier to determine if a person was an FFN or not, but the target population turned out to be even smaller than anticipated. Typically, there were fewer opportunities for activities for families, so in this respect the smaller community libraries had an advantage. This year, one large urban (Aurora) two medium rural (Burlington and East Morgan County), and one small rural (La Veta) libraries were added as GRT sites. Through the joint meetings and communications between the “new” and the “old” librarians provided by CSL staff, there was helpful sharing which assisted the “new” in understanding who an FFN is and getting off the ground faster with outreach than had been possible for the Year One libraries.

Libraries, as last year, depended upon the support of local organizations that already had an established connection with community members, many of whom are FFNs. However, the availability of these organizations varied by site, and not always by community size. Some small communities have been targeted for assistance and have many more competing opportunities available to the residents. These included programs such as HIPPPY, Head Start, Nurse Family Partnership, Early Steps to School Success, and Catholic Charities. Even though many parents were “captured in the nets cast” by these partners, this was perceived as a good thing by the librarians—“the more folks in our community who know about the importance of early literacy, the better for our community”.

Almost every library in the GRT program reported making physical improvements to their children’s areas to enhance youngsters’ independent access to reading materials, and to create more comfortable child and caregiver-friendly spaces for reading and other literacy-related interactions such as playing and talking. In addition, patrons appreciate the fact that the traditional library atmosphere of “silence” has been relaxed and caregivers don’t have to worry so much about the children being quiet or sitting still.

In summarizing the advantages and disadvantages of large and small communities, we found results consistent with those in Year One:

- Staffing capacity is limited in all library settings, but particularly in smaller rural areas.

- The pool of potential hires to staff libraries, and their level of education, tends to be less than in larger communities.
- Librarians have different strengths, but a positive, can-do attitude is key.
- Library contexts, including size, hierarchy, and staff knowledge and support of the goals of the project.
- The numbers of Spanish-speaking FFN providers varied from site to site. Some had many, others had none, and some learned that not all Spanish-speakers wanted their children to have access to Spanish books. They were more concerned about their children learning English.
- Transportation to the library is a persistent issue in smaller communities, but so is the ability to effectively supervise a group of kids of varying ages in the library for all sites.
- Smaller communities continue to have a more personal relationship with the FFNs in their communities.
- In larger communities, communication within the library system itself was reported as more complex with more staff and needed to be more formal compared to that of smaller library branches.

### **How has the Colorado State Library impacted state-level infrastructure related to FFN providers and early literacy?**

All stakeholders agreed that, in its second year, the GRT project has become more well-known. The Colorado Department of Education website and the GRT program has begun to attract the attention of other states who want to start their own FFN outreach program (e.g., California). They said that working with the Buell Foundation and the support they provided was “phenomenal”. Having a dedicated and strong individual in the CSL GRT Coordinator position was essential in partnering and serving on committees with other state agencies and non-profits. Many organizations were brought to the table (e.g., Cooking Matters is interested in being more involved with libraries).

This year, CSL staff were able to coordinate more with the Colorado Governor’s office and with the Commissioner in charge of Health and Human Services. By traveling around the state with these leaders, CSL staff members were able to visit childcare centers, talk about the amount of informal childcare that is occurring in Colorado, and encourage them to reach out to their local libraries. One stakeholder said, “I am able to frame at a statewide level and particularly with other libraries who haven’t been involved, the early indicators of the impacts that [GRT is] having and I feel pretty good about recruiting libraries for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year.” Also, having a dedicated staff member on this project enhanced the dissemination of information through statewide webinars and through more contact with Early Childhood Councils and other organizations across Colorado and in neighboring states like Wyoming and Texas. Everyone acknowledged the importance of GRT outreach and the benefits still to be derived from its implementation.



## *Appendices*

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Appendix A. Growing Readers Together Evaluation Plan

Appendix B. Family, Friend, and Neighbor Provider Survey

Appendix C. Growing Readers Together – Brief Libraries Activities Feedback

Appendix D. Growing Readers Together – FFN Interview Questions

Appendix E. Growing Readers Together – Librarian & GRT Stakeholder Interview Questions

Appendix F. Growing Readers Together – Community Profiles

## Appendix A. Growing Readers Together Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Question	Aligned with Project Goal	Measures	Timeline	Evaluation Activity Detail
How are GRT program activities affecting FFN provider knowledge, skills, attitudes, and resources?	1	FFN Provider Survey FFN Provider Interviews	Data collection follows key points of service delivery (provision of resource or outreach) customized for each site.	Data Collection: Library Sites distribute surveys following key project activities. Surveys invite participation in follow-up interviews. Analysis: Clayton analyzes survey data to address eval question, plus examines for subgroup and community differences.
What strategies with FFN providers are employed by public library staff and how do these change as a result of the GRT program?	2	Library Staff Interviews Library Monthly Activity Reports	Ongoing data collection with final interviews at the end of the grant period.	Data Collection: Clayton staff will conduct 1-2 interviews per site during the project period. CDE provides Clayton with monthly activity reports on an ongoing basis. Analysis: Clayton provides qualitative analysis of interview findings identifying major themes and lessons learned. Tallies of monthly activities are computed from databased reports. May employ a case study evaluation report format.
How has the Colorado State Library impacted state-level infrastructure related to FFN providers and early literacy?	3	Key Stakeholder Interviews including state staff, and community	Interviews conducted near the end of the grant period.	Data Collection: Clayton staff will conduct 30-45 minute interviews with each stakeholder during the project period. Analysis: Clayton provides qualitative analysis of interview findings identifying major themes and

		leaders working in the FFN arena		lessons learned.
What are the library and FFN early literacy opportunities for children birth to 5 in SE Colorado?	4	FFN Provider Survey FFN Provider Interviews Library Staff Interviews	Ongoing data collection through library sites during the grant period.	Data Collection: Library Sites distribute surveys following key project activities. Surveys invite participation in follow-up interviews. Clayton conducts library site interviews.  Analysis: Clayton will provide quantitative and qualitative evidence to support understanding of these opportunities.

**Appendix B. Family, Friend, and Neighbor Provider Survey**

**Growing Readers Together – Child Care Provider Survey**

(Also available in Spanish)

*First, we'd like to know more about children you care for in your home.*

**A. Children You Care For in Your Home**

- How many children are in your care? \_\_\_\_\_

- How many children are in your care in each of the following age ranges? Please write the number of children on the line for each age range.

\_\_\_\_\_ Under 1 year of age

\_\_\_\_\_ 7 – 8 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 – 2 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 9 – 10 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 3 – 4 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 11 - 12 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 5 - 6 years old

\_\_\_\_\_ 13+ years old

- What languages are spoken by you and any other adults working with you? **Please check all that apply.**

English

Spanish

Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- What languages are spoken by the children in your care? **Please check all that apply.**

English

Spanish

Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- Have you had previous experience working with children in other roles? **Please check all that apply.**

A teacher in a classroom setting

A licensed childcare provider

Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- How long have you provided childcare in your home? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

For the next two sections, please think about the things you do with the children you care for to support their literacy development.

## B. Literacy Materials

Look around your home and think about the materials you have for children to use in their play. If the statement on the checklist is true, place a check in the "true" column. If the statement is false, place a check in the "false" column.

When I am caring for children in my home, they can play with...	Mark one answer for each statement	
	True	False
1. Books that teach the alphabet (e.g., Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault).		
2. Books that include rhyming words or stories (e.g., One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish, by Dr. Seuss).		
3. Books that range in difficulty level (e.g., books with no words, others with paragraphs on each page, books with simple language, others with more sophisticated language).		
4. Books that include factual information (e.g., science, math, or health-related books).		
5. Recorded books/stories.		
6. Crayons, pencils, and paper for writing and drawing.		
7. Toy letters such as cut-out or foam letters, fridge magnets, letter puzzles, blocks, etc.		
8. Word cards with names or familiar words.		

### C. Literacy Activities

Please think about the literacy activities you do with children in your care. Circle how often you do each of the following activities using the scale provided.

When I am caring for children in my home, I/we...	Circle an answer for each statement				
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Read aloud to children in a group setting.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Read aloud to children on an individual (one-on-one) basis.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Set aside a special time each day to read to the children.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Read aloud a variety of different books (e.g., rhyming books, alphabet books, counting books, picture books).	1	2	3	4	5
5. Reread favorite books.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Talk about books that we've read together.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ask children questions about the books as we read (or after we read).	1	2	3	4	5
8. Talk with children about new or unfamiliar words while reading books together.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Provide opportunities for children to look at books and other printed materials on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
When I am caring for children in my	Circle an answer for each statement				



home, I/we...	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
10. Teach children about different features of a book (e.g., front and back cover, top and bottom).	1	2	3	4	5
11. Teach children that printed letters and words run from left to right and across the page and from top to bottom.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Practice saying the alphabet with the children.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Sing songs that feature letter sounds, such as the alphabet.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Teach children to recognize letters of the alphabet.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Teach children to distinguish between uppercase and lowercase letters.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Help children learn the sounds that each letter can represent.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Teach children to write letters of the alphabet.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Help children learn to write their names.	1	2	3	4	5

### D. Library Interactions

Please think about your interactions with your library during your participation in the Growing Readers Together program. Circle how much you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale provided.

As a result of participating in your library's Growing Readers Together program...	Circle an answer for each statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. You learned something you can share with the children in your care.	1	2	3	4	5
2. You feel more confident to help the children in your care to learn.	1	2	3	4	5
3. You will spend more time interacting with the children in your care (e.g., read, talk, sing, write, play).	1	2	3	4	5
4. You are more aware of available resources and services provided by the library.	1	2	3	4	5
5. You will visit the library more often with the children in your care.	1	2	3	4	5

### E. Your Experiences with Growing Readers Together

We would like to know more about your experiences with the Growing Readers Together program. The tips provided by your library as part of Growing Readers Together aim to help you engage children in your care with literacy activities (e.g., pre-reading, pre-writing). Circle how much you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale provided.

The tips, ideas, and materials provided by your library through Growing Readers Together are:	Circle an answer for each statement				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. Helpful?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Age-appropriate for children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Easy to use with children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Generally new-to-you?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ideas you will continue to use with children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5

As part of the evaluation study, we would like to talk in more detail about your experiences with your library and the Growing Readers Together program. May we contact you in the near future to conduct a 15 minute phone interview? As a thank you for your participation, you will receive a \$15 gift card upon completing the phone interview.

- Yes, feel free to contact me for a phone interview (please be sure to provide phone number below).
- No, please do not contact me for a phone interview.

**Thank you for completing this survey! As a thank you, we would like to send you an electronic \$5 gift card. Please provide your contact information below to receive the gift card.**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to receive a physical gift card instead, please also provide your mailing address below.

- Street: \_\_\_\_\_
- City / Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix C. Growing Readers Together – Brief Libraries Activities Feedback**

**Growing Readers Together – Brief Library Activities Feedback Form**

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Library Hosting Today's Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., Story Time, Books & Babies, Library Playdate)

**What is your relationship to the children you brought to today's activity? (Please check all that apply)**

- Primary Caregiver (e.g., parent, grandparent or other family member with custody)
- Informal Caregiver (e.g., grandparent, other relative, friend, neighbor)
- Childcare Provider (i.e., licensed center or home-based):
- Other relationship                      Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Library Activity Feedback:**

*Please think about your participation in today's library activity. Circle how much you agree or disagree with the following statements using the scale provided.*

The tips, ideas, and materials provided by your library at today's activity were:	<i>Circle an answer for each statement</i>				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. Helpful?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Age-appropriate for children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Easy to use with children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Generally new-to-you?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Ideas you will continue to use with children in your care?	1	2	3	4	5

**Thank you for helping us learn more about your experience with our program offerings! For more information about the Growing Readers Together program, please contact your local librarian.**



## Appendix D. Growing Readers Together – FFN Interview Questions

### Growing Readers Together – Follow-up Child Care Phone Interview

Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with Clayton Early Learning. Our Research and Evaluation department is working with the Colorado Department of Education to evaluate the Growing Readers Together program. I am calling you because when you completed the GRT Child Care Provider survey, you agreed to participate in a follow-up call about your experiences with your library and the Growing Readers Together program. As a Family, Friend, and Neighbor child care provider your input is very important. A Family, Friend, and Neighbor can be a person who is a relative, friend or neighbor or a babysitter.

I would like to schedule the brief phone interview with you. It should take about 15 minutes and as a thank you for your time, you will receive a \$20 gift card (\$5 for the survey and \$15 for the phone interview).

Do you have time now to complete a short 15-minute interview about your experience? (*If not, ask what day/time would be better?*)

1. First, what is your current occupation? **Prompt:** How do you spend the majority of your time?
2. Do you remember what brought you to the library or which library activity you were attending when you received the survey about GRT?
3. When you received the survey, did you have the opportunity to speak with anyone about early literacy?
  - a. If you received materials from your library from the GRT program, did you talk about the materials and if so, what did you talk about? (Usually they spontaneously tell you what they received, e.g. what books and activities were in the bag). **Prompt:** did they make suggestions as to how to use them with the children?
4. Have you changed the way you interact with the children in your care after learning about GRT at your library?
  - a. Have you made any changes in the physical environment where you care for the children (e.g. at home)? **Probe for:** to improve children's access to literacy/language materials **Prompt, if needed, for:** furnishings (e.g. furniture, rugs, bookshelves),
  - b. How has your day-to-day routine changed when you are caring for the children?
5. Have you purchased new materials related to language and literacy since you learned about the GRT program?
  - i. Books? What kind of books? (e.g., alphabet books, non-fictional, recorded stories)

- ii. Writing materials (e.g. crayons or markers, art supplies, dry erase boards)?
6. Have you had conversations with other Child Care Providers about the GRT program?  
Probe for: Remember this could be anyone you know who is taking care of children, like a relative, friend, or neighbor:
  - a. Did you talk about the GRT Program?
  - b. If you received recommendations or referrals for services for you or the children in your care, have you shared them with **other FFN providers (people other than library staff)**:
    - i. To support children's language development – if so what?
    - ii. Other community activities – if so what?
7. Have you returned to the library since completing the Child Care Provider survey? (If yes, ask the following:
  - a. What kind of additional information did you seek out for yourself? **Probe for:** child development, literacy development
  - b. What kind of specific library programs did you seek out? **Prompt, if needed:** Story Times, Special Events, etc.
  - c. What kind of supplemental materials did you seek out to use with the children in your care?
8. What do you think the children in your care are getting out of the GRT program?  
**Prompt:** What have been their reactions to the materials and activity suggestions?
9. What do you like most about the GRT Program at your library?
10. What do you like least about the GRT Program at your library?
11. What other materials or activities would you like your library to provide to help foster language and literacy for the children in your care?

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions. You will be receiving a \$20.00 gift card for your time. May we e-mail you an electronic gift card or would you prefer that a physical gift card be mailed to you? If physical: Do you prefer an Amazon card or a Walmart card? **Confirm email address and/or mailing address!**

## Appendix E. Growing Readers Together – Librarian & GRT Stakeholder Interview Questions

### GRT Interview Questions for Library Sites

#### Library Site Coordinators/Staff

- What have been the most effective early literacy outreach strategies you used in your community with funding from the GRT project? ***IF this is the library site's second GRT year, ask*** Were there new strategies that your site tried with Family, Friend, and Neighbor Child Care providers that were different from those you used last year? ***IF first year site,*** did you use strategies with FFNs that were different from what you've used in the past?
- Did you need to develop new strategies for non-English speaking community members? IF so, what were they and were they effective?
- To what extent have you accomplished your goals in your original work plan?
- How helpful was the GRT Webinar you participated in for clarifying the goals and data collection procedures?
- Did you need to modify the plan or do any different activities to meet your goals?
- Did the May Interim Reports from the Clayton Early Learning Research and Evaluation Team help you assess your progress and/or impact your decision-making about outreach methods for the remainder of the year?
- What was your impression of the adequacy of your budget allocation?
- Approximately how many FFN providers was your site able to engage with in the past year? Were you pleased with this number? Do you have any suggestions for how you might gain more program and evaluation participation from FFNs in the future? [Also ask if they have better evaluation suggestions.]
- What were you able to observe in terms of providers' engagement with the outreach and literacy activities and resources you were able to provide?
- Please share a few anecdotes regarding providers and children's early literacy experiences with your library's program.
- What evidence do you have of positive outcomes for providers and the children in their care?
- What has it been like to partner with the state library system?
- What are some key lessons learned for your community around this type of program? What else does your library/community need to foster early literacy?



## **GRT Interview Questions for Stakeholders**

### **State Stakeholders**

- To what extent do you believe the project accomplished its goals as stated in the original Buell proposal?
- What were lessons learned in establishing connections with these communities? Are you aware of any specific challenges or success that arose in the past year?
- What did you discover were some of the key differences and similarities across sites of different classifications (small rural, medium rural, large urban) and sizes? What outreach and early literacy activities were most likely linked to positive outcomes for FFN providers and the children in their care?
- To what degree have you impacted state infrastructure and connection to other statewide organizations?
- What is essential in maintaining effective communications and partnerships with library sites?
- What have you learned at a state level about outreach to FFN providers in these communities?
- What do we still need to know?
- How would you approach a project like this in the future? Local sites and other statewide organizations?

## Appendix F. Growing Readers Together – Community Profiles

The following community profiles give context on the specific locations of the fourteen Growing Readers Together Library sites in Colorado and were generated by compiling information from the U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts tool (2017). Population estimates for all sites are recent as of July 1, 2017.

<b>ALAMOSA COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	16,551
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	87.7%
Black or African American	2.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	5.2%
Asian	1.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Multi-Racial	3.2%
Hispanic or Latino	45.7%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	48.7%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.8%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.7%
Persons under 18 years	24.0%
Persons 65 years and over	13.1%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	24.8%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	24.8%

<b>CITY OF AURORA DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	366,623
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	61.8%
Black or African American	15.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.8%
Asian	5.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Multi-Racial	5.6%
Hispanic or Latino	28.5%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	46.1%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	51.2%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	7.4%
Persons under 18 years	26.3%
Persons 65 years and over	10.4%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	14.7%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	32.1%

<b>KIT CARSON COUNTY (BURLINGTON) DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	7,158
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	95.5%
Black or African American	0.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.1%
Asian	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%
Multi-Racial	1.7%
Hispanic or Latino	18.4%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	78.6%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.9%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.9%
Persons under 18 years	25.4%
Persons 65 years and over	19.1%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	14.3%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	14.8%

<b>CANON CITY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	16,530
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	95.5%
Black or African American	1.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%
Asian	0.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Multi-Racial	1.3%
Hispanic or Latino	9.2%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	87.1%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.8%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	5.4%
Persons under 18 years	21.8%
Persons 65 years and over	23.2%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	21.3%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	4.4%

<b>CONEJOS COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	8,184
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	91.5%
Black or African American	0.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	4.0%
Asian	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%
Multi-Racial	2.5%
Hispanic or Latino	52.1%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	44.9%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.7%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.8%
Persons under 18 years	26.5%
Persons 65 years and over	18.9%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	22.7%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	34.1%

<b>MORGAN COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	28,192
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	92.3%
Black or African American	3.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.7%
Asian	0.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Multi-Racial	1.6%
Hispanic or Latino	36.3%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	58.7%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.5%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	7.5%
Persons under 18 years	26.0%
Persons 65 years and over	15.4%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	11.7%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	26.8%

<b>FREMONT COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	47,559
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	91.3%
Black or African American	4.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.8%
Asian	0.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Multi-Racial	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	13.3%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	79.1%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	42.2%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	4.1%
Persons under 18 years	16.4%
Persons 65 years and over	21.2%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	17.5%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	8.8%

<b>HUERFANO COUNTY (LA VETA &amp; WALSENBURG) DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	6,662
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	89.1%
Black or African American	1.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	5.3%
Asian	1.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Multi-Racial	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	34.5%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	61.3%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	48.9%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	3.5%
Persons under 18 years	16.0%
Persons 65 years and over	31.5%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	21.9%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	10.9%

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<b>CITY OF LAMAR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	7,601
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	95.5%
Black or African American	0.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%
Asian	0.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Multi-Racial	1.8%
Hispanic or Latino	39.0%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	59.0%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	50.5%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.4%
Persons under 18 years	25.9%
Persons 65 years and over	14.6%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	23.1%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	16.1%

<b>LINCOLN COUNTY DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	5,546
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	90.2%
Black or African American	5.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.4%
Asian	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Multi-Racial	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	13.8%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	77.9%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	42.3%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	5.4%
Persons under 18 years	20.1%
Persons 65 years and over	17.8%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	18.1%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	8.7%

<b>CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS (PIKES &amp; PEAKS LIBRARY DISTRICT) DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	464,474
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	78.8%
Black or African American	6.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.5%
Asian	3.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
Multi-Racial	5.4%
Hispanic or Latino	17.4%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	69.1%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	50.3%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.7%
Persons under 18 years	24.0%
Persons 65 years and over	12.3%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	12.8%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	13.3%

<b>ELBERT COUNTY (PINES &amp; PLAINS LIBRARY) DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	25,642
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	94.9%
Black or African American	1.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.9%
Asian	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%
Multi-Racial	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	7.1%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	88.8%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	49.5%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	4.5%
Persons under 18 years	21.3%
Persons 65 years and over	15.8%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	6.0%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	4.6%

<b>CITY OF PUEBLO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</b>	
<b>Population Estimate</b>	111,127
<b>Race and Ethnicity (percent)</b>	
White	73.2%
Black or African American	2.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	3.8%
Asian	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Multi-Racial	4.8%
Hispanic or Latino	52.1%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	42.5%
<b>Female (percent)</b>	51.0%
<b>Age of population (percent)</b>	
Persons under 5 years	6.5%
Persons under 18 years	23.0%
Persons 65 years and over	17.0%
<b>Persons living in poverty (percent)</b>	25.1%
<b>Language other than English (percent)</b>	17.4%



