



---

# **Collective Impact for Children & Youth Baseline Report**

---

## **Collective Results**

---

**UNC Charlotte Urban Institute**

**January 2013**

---

Summary - Select Pages from the Full Collective Report



# Executive Summary

---

In the fall of 2011, United Way of Central Carolinas opted to adopt a Collective Impact model to move from the loosely coordinated series of investments of prior years to a more concentrated and purposeful funding and supervision model. This decision emerged from a series of research projects stretching across 18 months, including the Community Needs Assessment conducted by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. This study identified education as the greatest need in the region, which led United Way to select education of children and youth as the focus of its initial efforts in Collective Impact.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation, United Way launched the Collective Impact for Children & Youth project in the spring of 2012— a 10-year project, involving 16 United Way-supported agencies (listed below) that provide education related services to children from preschool through high school. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to increase the graduation rate for at-risk, low-performing students served by this group of agencies.

| Academic Workgroup   | Early Learning Workgroup  | Enrichment Workgroup  |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Child's Place</li><li>• Ada Jenkins Center</li><li>• Communities In Schools</li><li>• Right Moves for Youth</li><li>• The Urban League</li><li>• YMCA</li><li>• YWCA</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Care Ring</li><li>• Charlotte Speech &amp; Hearing Center</li><li>• Child Care Resources, Inc.</li><li>• Council for Children's Rights</li><li>• The Learning Collaborative</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Charlotte</li><li>• Boy Scouts, Mecklenburg County Council</li><li>• Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council</li><li>• Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Greater Charlotte</li></ul> |

United Way commissioned the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute (the Institute) to coordinate and maintain a shared measurement system for the Collective Impact initiative. This has included assisting the partner agencies in a long-term outcome evaluation and housing selected shared data in the Institute for Social Capital (ISC) community database.

In this first year of the project, the primary focus was on designing and implementing a shared measurement system. During this time, the Institute consulted with and provided technical assistance to each partner agency to enhance the agency's data collection. Also in this first year, the Institute utilized CMS demographic information and performance indicators from the ISC community database to provide a snapshot of the children and youth being served by these partner agencies. This snapshot establishes a baseline of school performance indicators for participants in the academic year before they started the program(s) they are in.

Agencies submitted a list of participants who received services between March (the start of the project) and September 2012. The list was matched against the ISC database, using name and date-of-birth. For those participants with matching records in the database, their CMS records for the *academic year prior to entering the program* were pulled into a dataset and de-identified. The dataset was approved by the ISC Data Quality Review Committee and analyzed by Institute researchers.

# Key Findings

The study included a collective total of 8,571 unique participants. The vast majority (90 percent) were in only one program. Half of the participants were in Communities In Schools.

## Demographics

- The majority of participants (72 percent) were African American; 17 percent were Hispanic.
- A slight majority (53 percent) were female.
- Half were between the ages of seven and 11 in the year before starting the program.
- 17 percent were designated EC (Exceptional Children).
- Six percent were receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services.
- Nearly 60 percent attended a high poverty school.

## Academic Performance

- Participants were below the district average on both End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) tests.
- On EOGs, participants performed better in math than reading. Only 40 percent of participants were proficient in reading, and 58 percent were proficient in math.
- On EOCs, participants performed slightly better in English than math, with 63 percent proficient in English and 61 percent proficient in math.

## Absences

- Participants had an average of nine absences in the year before entering the program.
- One-third of participants were absent 10 days or more.
- High school participants had more absences than middle or elementary school participants.
- Participants had twice as many unexcused absences as excused absences.

## Suspensions

- Participants spent an average of two days in suspension in the year before entering the program.
- About 23 percent were suspended for at least one day.
- Middle school participants had more suspensions than those in elementary or high school.
- Out-of-school suspensions outnumbered in-school suspensions.

## Workgroups and Multi-Program Participants

- The academic workgroup was the largest and most like the collective, demographically and in academic indicators.
- The enrichment workgroup was more predominantly female (59 percent) and had the highest test scores and fewest absences and suspensions.
- The early learning workgroup was the smallest and demographically differed the most from the others. This group had more White (17%) and fewer African American (66%) participants, was majority male (60%), and, despite its name, had the oldest participants (half ages 12 to 15). Nearly half were designated EC. These participants also posted the lowest test scores and most absences and suspensions of all the groups.
- Participants enrolled in more than one program were more predominantly African American and female than the collective. These participants also had slightly lower test scores and slightly more absences than the collective.

# Introduction

---

In August 2011, the United Way of Central Carolinas' Board voted to adopt a Collective Impact model to move from the loosely coordinated series of investments of prior years to a more concentrated and purposeful funding and supervision model. This new approach was viewed as the best way to realign agency funding towards priority needs identified through the United Way's first-ever Community Needs Assessment that covered all five counties in its service area. Over the long-term, this model is intended to benefit funders, agencies, their clients, and the community at large. More specifically, Collective Impact is a systemic, data-driven approach to solving a complex problem that involves a community-wide group of organizations that share 1) a common agenda, 2) measurement systems, 3) mutually reinforcing activities, and 4) relationships. The result is a more efficient and coordinated use of resources for agencies and funders.<sup>1</sup>

This shift resulted from a series of research projects stretching across 18 months, including the Community Needs Assessment conducted by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute in 2011. One of the primary findings of this study was the identification of education as the greatest need in the region. This led United Way to select education of children and youth as the focus of its initial efforts in Collective Impact.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Wells Fargo Foundation, United Way launched the Collective Impact for Children & Youth project in the spring of 2012 by convening a group of 16 United Way-supported agencies that provide education related services to children from preschool through high school. The United Way agencies involved are:

- A Child's Place
- Ada Jenkins Center
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Charlotte
- Boy Scouts, Mecklenburg Council
- Care Ring
- Charlotte Speech & Hearing
- Child Care Resources, Inc.<sup>2</sup>
- Communities In Schools
- Council for Children's Rights
- Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council
- Right Moves for Youth
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Charlotte
- The Learning Collaborative
- The Urban League Central Carolinas
- YMCA
- YWCA

---

<sup>1</sup> Kania & Kramer, 2011. Collective Impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Child Care Resources, Inc. is participating in strategic planning for the long-term evaluation but not the baseline projects since this agency provides direct support to parents rather than children/youth.

The goal United Way has set for this Collective Impact initiative is to increase the cohort graduation rate (identified by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools as one of the greatest challenges facing our community) for at-risk, low-performing students served by this group of agencies over the next 10 years. Looking at the district as a whole, the 4-year cohort graduation rate<sup>3</sup> for economically disadvantaged students is considerably lower (65%) than that of all students (74%). Through this Collective Impact initiative, United Way ultimately aims to decrease this disparity.

United Way commissioned the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute (the Institute) to coordinate and maintain a shared measurement system for the Collective Impact initiative. This has included assisting the partner agencies in a long-term outcome evaluation and housing selected shared data in the Institute for Social Capital (ISC) community database.

In this first year of the project, the primary focus was on designing and implementing a shared measurement system. During this time, the Institute consulted with and provided technical assistance to each partner agency to enhance the agency's data collection. The Institute also began helping identify a standard set of data across agencies, as well as program-specific data that can be collected over time to help inform long-term agency outcomes.

## **Baseline Project**

Also in this first year, the Institute utilized CMS demographic information and performance indicators from the Institute for Social Capital (ISC) community database to provide a snapshot of the children and youth being served by these partner agencies. This snapshot establishes a baseline of school performance indicators for participants in the academic year before they started the program(s) they are in. This baseline will help determine what effect, if any, program participation had on participants.

This report details the findings from the baseline analysis for the collective of all 15 agencies combined and includes basic numbers of participants, participant demographics, and academic indicators. Also included are these results by workgroup, which groups the agencies into three programmatic areas- academic, early learning, and enrichment. Finally, results are presented for children who have participated in multiple agencies' programs.

Reports will also be prepared for each individual agency, presenting the results for that agency's participants alone. These individual reports are for agencies' internal purposes, and thus are not included in this collective report.

---

<sup>3</sup> The percent of students who started 9<sup>th</sup> grade in a particular year and graduated four years later. This also takes into account students who transferred into or out of the district over the course of the four years.