Pyramid Plus: The Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion

2014-2015 Annual Report
September 2015

“You all are creating empowered, strong teachers AND children”

~ Certification Candidate, 2015 Certification Institute
The overall goal of the Pyramid Plus Center is to increase the high fidelity use of evidence-based, early childhood social emotional and inclusive practices in early care and education settings through the promotion and integration of:

- the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence of Infants and Young Children - a tiered promotion and prevention model developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI);
- the SpecialQuest Birth-Five Approach to Early Childhood Inclusion of children with or at risk for disabilities
- as well as other related evidence-based inclusion practices

Key initiatives of the Pyramid Plus Center are to:

- Provide a system to prepare, support and certify high quality trainers, coaches and sites in the Pyramid Plus Approach
- Provide training, technical assistance (TA) and resources to programs and communities throughout Colorado
- Facilitate state policy and systems development to plan for sustainability and statewide scale-up

Core Values

Our core values are:

- The content of our TA efforts must be based on the best available evidence and be affordable, feasible, acceptable and effective across diverse populations of children, families, communities and programs, including typical early childhood settings
- The outcomes of TA efforts must be valued by families as well as by the community at large
- Our work must be collaborative, building on and embedding with the work of others
- Families, community leaders, and program personnel including administrators and direct service personnel play a vital role in the design, implementation and evaluation of the Center’s efforts
- Practices intended to improve social, emotional, and behavioral competence and promote inclusion are designed primarily to enhance competencies rather than remediate problems of children, families, and personnel

For more information about the Pyramid Plus program, or to sign up for the Pyramid Plus e-mail newsletter, please visit www.pyramidplus.org.
As we enter our seventh year of operation, again we want to thank all the people, programs, communities, funders, Pyramid State Policy Team members, and other partners for their support. Through these collaborations, the Pyramid Plus Center has learned, adapted, responded, and better served Colorado’s young children, their families, and early childhood professionals who serve them.

Research indicates that both social emotional competence and inclusion are foundational for school readiness. The Pyramid Plus Center was created to address both of these issues. Colorado is the first and still the only state in the nation to fund such a center! We owe a debt of gratitude to our founding Director, Dr. Barbara J. Smith, whose vision, dedication, and hard work brought the dream of a center to a reality in Colorado. Barbara worked tirelessly to ensure the Pyramid Plus Center remained true to its mission and core values and she instilled in the staff the importance of data driven decision making and collaborative leadership strategies when working with programs and communities. Dr. Smith stepped down as Principal Investigator of Pyramid Plus in January, 2015 in a move toward semi-retirement, however her vision remains present in the Center.

The Center’s vision is to build the capacity of communities and early care and education programs state-wide to use evidence-based approaches with fidelity, thereby improving all of Colorado’s young children’s social emotional competence and opportunities for inclusion. In addition to providing trainings state-wide, Pyramid Plus is building the competence of Colorado’s early childhood personnel through a network of certified trainers, coaches, and programs to broaden the reach of the Center. Our goal is to have certified trainers and coaches available to serve every early care and education program throughout Colorado. This year we surveyed our programs and communities to learn their ongoing needs which we will address in a future online learning community format. We are eager to share our outcomes and for the second year, show the longitudinal outcomes of our work.

Our approach reflects best practice in the professional development and implementation science literature including providing opportunities for people to see the practices in action and learn from others (demonstration sites, implementation communities, and programs) and to receive on-site individualized coaching. **Our core value is to build the internal capacity of programs and communities. Everything we do reflects that value.**

We welcome your ideas and participation and value your partnership in making our vision a reality. Together we can improve the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes and inclusion opportunities for all of Colorado’s young children!

*Geneva Hallett*

Geneva Hallett, Director and Principal Investigator

**Pyramid Plus Staff:** Johanna Berry Wasser, Robin Levy, Ben Riepe, Kelly Ragland (joined May, 2015), Kalah Thorson and Kelley Smith Bramlage (joined July, 2015) and Julie Walden.
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*Left to right: Kalah Thorson, Ben Riepe, Kelley Smith Bramlage, Robin Levy, Johanna Berry Wasser, Geneva Hallett, Kelly Ragland*

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*We would like to thank the following organizations for their support of the Pyramid Plus Center:*

[Logos of various organizations related to human services and early childhood development]
1. Summary of Key Accomplishments to Date and Overall Impact (2009-2015)

- Over 2,500 people intensively trained state-wide in the Pyramid Plus Approach. Trainees evaluated the training as being high quality and producing gains in their knowledge and skills. Additionally we have provided: training to trainer and coach certification candidates, webinars and conference sessions to hundreds of people and Pyramid Plus trainer candidates have provided parent trainings in many communities.

- One Hundred Fifteen (115) people certified state-wide as Pyramid Plus Trainers and Coaches, with 29 current candidates expected to complete their certification in 2016.

- Four programs certified as Pyramid Plus Demonstration Sites providing data to the Center on the effects of adopting the Pyramid Plus Approach with high fidelity as well as providing tours and information state-wide so others may replicate their work.

- Seven communities selected as Implementation Communities with their own Pyramid Plus programs, trainers and coaches. They are Summit, Grand, Gunnison, Denver, La Plata, San Luis Valley, and El Paso.

- An interagency, collaborative Pyramid State Policy Team that meets monthly with an average rating of 4.3 on meeting evaluations (out of a possible 5).

- EC personnel showed significant gains on a measure of their high fidelity use of the evidence-based practices.

- Hundreds of children throughout the state benefitting directly from Pyramid Plus programs, trainers and coaches; and thousands more benefitting indirectly from the professionals and families that received training.

“Pyramid was able to show me how to join the children’s world. To show them respect and show them they can make big changes in a big world even when we are so small. Thank you all who have taken the time to find the data, to do the research, also to teach pyramid. Thank you.”

~Theresa Boman, Teacher assistant Fremont County Head Start
II. Our History and Approach

In October 2009, The Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), Divisions of Child Care, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities/Early Intervention Colorado announced a statewide collaborative effort to improve the social, emotional and behavioral competence of all infants and young children and the inclusion of children with disabilities in all early childhood settings. Through a competitive process, The University of Colorado Denver, School of Education and Human Development, was selected to implement the initiative and Pyramid Plus: The Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion was launched.

Pyramid Plus Approach

Our conceptual approach is a tiered model that focuses on: 1) providing all children the support they need to experience social, emotional and behavior success and high quality inclusive services, 2) providing intentional teaching to promote social, emotional and behavioral success and inclusion to those children needing additional support, and 3) providing individualized, intensive interventions for those children with serious, persistent challenging behavior and other learning needs. Our practices integrate the following evidence-based models: the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior in Infants and Young Children, Prevent Teach Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC), the SpecialQuest Birth–Five Approach, and other evidence-based inclusion practices, specifically: Learning Experiences–An Alternative Program for Preschoolers and Parents (LEAP), and Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs, creating the “Pyramid Plus Approach”.
The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices developed by two national, federally-funded research and training centers: The Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI). Based on evaluation data over the last ten years, the Pyramid Model has shown to be a sound framework for early care and education systems.

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) CSEFEL is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5 through the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children. The website includes extensive, user-friendly training materials, videos, and print resources which are available directly from this website to help early care; health and education providers implement this model. www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and creates FREE products and resources related to the Pyramid Model to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day. www.challengingbehavior.org

SpecialQuest Birth–Five focuses on inclusion for children with disabilities ages birth through five and their families. SpecialQuest Birth–Five, builds upon the relationship-based SpecialQuest approach which is designed to touch the “head, heart, and hands” of families and professionals working together to create inclusive communities for young children with disabilities. The website includes information for States and local communities to collaborate to provide high-quality, inclusive services for young children with disabilities and their families. www.specialquest.org

Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs This approach is aimed to increase the competence, confidence and effectiveness of early childhood personnel to include children with disabilities. The book outlines strategies for adapting typical early childhood settings and activities to meet the needs of children with disabilities. This site has a lot of resources for any professional working in early childhood education. http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/sandall-69674/index.htm http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/about

Learning Experiences- An Alternative Program for Preschoolers and Parents (LEAP) The goal of this model is to enhance evidence-based practice through utilizing strategies originally developed to effectively include children with autism in inclusive early education settings. These additional strategies and planned opportunities have been proven effective with all children in promoting engagement, and social emotional skills, while also reducing challenging behaviors. www.pelecenter.org

Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children: The School-based Model of Individualized Positive Behavior Support (PTR-YC) This systematic approach for positive behavior support has shown to be effective. This collaborative approach involves developing skills with all team members. Its prescriptive process provides great consistency and increased child outcomes. http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/dunlap-70151/index.htm

The Pyramid Model Consortium is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that was created to continue the Pyramid Model work after funding for the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) and the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) ended. All future curriculum updates will be posted to the Pyramid Model Consortium Website. www.pyramidmodel.org
III. Certifying Pyramid Plus Trainers and Coaches

The Pyramid Plus Center certifies Trainer and Coach Candidates as a scale-up and sustainability strategy. Certification ensures that Colorado has the capacity to train and coach the Pyramid Plus Approach content and practices with fidelity and over time.

The Pyramid Plus Center enrolled the first individuals for Trainer and Coach Certification in February 2010. Since that time, 115 people have been certified (50 Trainers and 65 Coaches). It is expected that 29 more will be certified by July 2016.

Pyramid Plus has refined its recruitment strategies and certification system. The Center’s current recruitment strategies require infrastructure and vision at the program/community level to support the Candidate’s one year commitment to the certification process. This program/community support allows Pyramid Plus to fully support Candidates during their certification process and ensures the Center’s ability to continue to scale-up across the state.

The Trainer and Coach Certification Handbooks were disseminated to Certification Candidates and Re-Certification Candidates on thumb drives for the second year. This format allows Candidates immediate access to the most updated certification information and supports their ability to support programs and communities as the local “Pyramid Plus experts”.

Training, Supporting, and Certifying Pyramid Plus Trainers

Trainer Certification Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the Pyramid Plus Approach (PPA) Training content as well as proficiency of training skills measured by the “Pyramid Plus 12 Essential Training Skills” (Fowler Becket, Wasser, Levy-Conti, Hallett, Wilson, Smith & Strain, 2011). All Candidates must create a professional development plan and are required to deliver the “Introduction to the Pyramid Plus Center”, a presentation that introduces communities to the PPA training and the Pyramid Plus Center.

Trainer Candidates participate in either the PPA Annual Training or a community PPA training facilitated by a Certified Pyramid Plus Trainer. They also participate in Certification Institute. The

“Pyramid Plus is part of our organization and now part of my personal life. Thank you.” ~ Post PPA Fall 2014 survey response
Trainer Candidate then trains the PPA training in their own program and community and may co-train with a Pyramid Plus Center staff or Certified Pyramid Plus Trainer. The Candidates receive facilitation and/or preparation support from a Pyramid Plus Center Certification Reviewer and feedback on the “12 Essential Training Skills” scoring rubric.

**Training, Supporting, and Certifying Pyramid Plus Coaches**

The Coach Candidates participate in a Pyramid Plus Approach (PPA) Annual Training or a community PPA training facilitated by a Certified Pyramid Plus Trainer. They also participate in Certification Institute. A Pyramid Plus Certified Coach must demonstrate proficiency in PPA training content as well as the coach skills represented in the “Coach Circuit” (Fowler Beckel, Levy-Conti, Stein, Wasser, Wilson, Hallett, Smith & Strain, 2011). All Coach Candidates must create a professional development plan and are required to coach in a setting to demonstrate coaching skills. In addition to early childhood and preschool settings, Coach Candidates work in home-based settings within Early Intervention Colorado and/or Mental Health programs.

The Pyramid Plus coach model is best described as a cognitive-behavioral method that promotes a deep understanding of PPA strategies as well as a prescribed series of coaching activities put together in a teaching progression called the Coach Circuit (Fowler Beckel, et al., 2011). The Coach Circuit begins with a professional development plan followed by five coaching activities and is evaluated using a skill-based scoring rubric. Both the Coach Candidate and the Certification Reviewer from the Pyramid Plus Center score the rubric. Candidates are required to go through the ‘Circuit’ three times receiving Reviewer scores on the rubric of at least 80% each time.

Pre and post scores on the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) collected from Coach Certification Candidates indicate fidelity use of the practices by the providers receiving coaching (coachee) in program based settings.

“I am in awe of the team collaboration, energy and ease of presentation with all of you. To take a huge, ongoing, evolving philosophy and bring it to a group of eager, open...and somewhat anxious... learners, in a fashion we could all wrap our arms around, is nothing less than amazing. Thank you, thank you, for your time and knowledge and dedication. I am so excited to move this outward and upward.” ~ Written on an evaluation from the 2015 Certification Institute
Pyramid Plus 2015 Certification Institute: Frisco, Colorado

Trainer and Coach Certification Candidates who will complete certification in July 2016, gathered for the sixth Pyramid Plus Certification Institute in Frisco, Colorado. The purpose of the Institute was to orient new Pyramid Plus Trainer/Coach Certification Candidates to the certification process and requirements in a four day training format. The presenters included Geneva Hallett, Robin Levy, Johanna Berry Wasser, and Ben Riepe with support from Kelly Ragland, Kalah Thorson, and Kelley Smith-Bramlage. The fourth day was “A Day of Leadership and Celebration” that included the Importance of Collaborative Leadership at the Community and Program Levels (Robin Levy), Effective Strategies and Materials for Facilitating Collaborative Team Meetings (Geneva Hallett), and the Launch of the Pyramid Plus Center’s Online Learning Community (Ben Riepe).

A Celebration of Successes in Colorado were presented by Lucinda Burns and Katherine Orr (Summit County), Jessica Smolleck (Grand County), Priscilla Ortega, Mara Hsu (San Luis Valley), Kelsey Lava (El Paso County), Kelly Sutherland, Sharon Perry (Primetime Children’s Center), Diana Geisler, Lisa Head, Sondra Contreras, Tonya Campbell, and Janice Kidd (Ability Connections), and Cara Principe (Bal Swan). In addition to the Certification Candidates, ten Leadership Team members attended from Denver, Summit, Grand, Alamosa and Broomfield counties.

The evaluations from Certification Institute indicated that Candidates gained an increase of 66% in new content knowledge and they considered the training to be of high quality.

Current Certification Cadre:


Re-Certification

Twenty-four (24) people from the 2010 and 2011 cadres have Re-Certified (12 Trainers and 12 Coaches). It is expected that approximately 20 more will Re-Certify in 2016.

Goals of Re-Certification:

1. To update the Certified Trainers and Coaches with the current Trainer/Coach Certification Model including improvements and modifications made to the Certification process and tools.
2. To ensure that the level of Trainer and Coach skills is sustained in order to support fidelity to the Trainer and Coach certification models and achieve the best possible outcomes for children, families, programs, and communities.
3. To align Certified Trainers and Coaches from earlier cadres with a timeline that is consistent with other Certification Cadres.

Re-Certification is an intense, short-term process. Trainer and Coach Re-Certification Candidates participate in technology based training events and are assigned a Pyramid Plus Re-Certification Reviewer to support their process. Re-certification Candidates have two options from which to choose to demonstrate their knowledge and practice. They are also required to submit a 3 year professional development plan based on their self-reflection, and two letters of support from individuals very familiar with their training/coaching practice.

Certified Trainers and Coaches

Demographic data for Certified Trainers and Coaches is shown in the two charts on page 12. Certified Pyramid Plus Trainers and Coaches are represented in over one-third of Colorado’s 64 counties.

Middle Row: Jessica Smolleck, Melissa Caron, Shelli Johnson, Sharon Perry, Sobia Khan, Anne Conklin, Stephanie Enoch, Kathy Banhagel, Kalah Thorson
IV. Supporting the Sustainability and Scale-up
Pyramid Plus Demonstration Sites

Pyramid Plus supports four programs within the state of Colorado as Demonstration sites. The programs are: (1) Bal Swan Children’s Center in Broomfield, (2) Ability Connections Colorado in Denver/Aurora, (3) Primetime Early Learning Center in Norwood, and (4) Fremont County Head Start in Cañon City. Demonstration Sites exemplify high fidelity Pyramid Plus practices in social and emotional competencies, inclusion, and managing challenging behavior that are program-wide and sustainable. Each program serves children with differing needs including children eligible for free or reduced lunch, children with special needs, and children supported through Head Start, Early Head Start, and Colorado Preschool Program (CPP).

In 2012 all four programs reached criteria for certification as Pyramid Plus Demonstration Sites. This was the end result of a three year partnership with Pyramid Plus that resulted in high-fidelity, program-wide implementation. To be certified as a Demonstration Site, programs must reach the following fidelity standards: 75% of classrooms at 80% fidelity on the TPOT™ or TPITOS (teaching practices measure) and QPI (an inclusion measure), Benchmarks of Quality 90% in place, and an average rating of “4” (out of 5) on Leadership Team meeting evaluations. Additionally, the programs sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) stipulating that they will provide data to Pyramid Plus, provide tours to visitors, and plan for sustaining the effort and scaling-up to their communities. This year saw all programs sustain their excellence. This result is particularly significant since two sites experienced a change in management staff.

Below is enrollment, number of classrooms, and range of ages served in all four demonstration programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Classrooms</th>
<th>Ages Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freemont County Head Start</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3-6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability Connection Colorado</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Birth - 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bal Swan Children’s Center</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2-12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primetime Early Learning Center</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6 weeks - 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1216</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>Birth - 12 years</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“You are a beautiful example of a team with respect for each other and unconditional positive regard…this helps make the Pyramid Model even more impressive. You model by how you treat others.” ~ Written on an evaluation form at the 2015 Certification Institute
Children with a wide range of needs and racial composition are served within each program as shown below.

The goal of Pyramid Plus is to build internal capacity of programs and communities. Our work with programs reflects this goal by having phases of Pyramid Plus staff support that diminish over time as the program’s fidelity of implementation and sustainability becomes self-sufficient. Multiple levels of support are delivered through technical assistance provided by Pyramid Plus staff. Program-wide support is provided to Leadership Teams and administrators. Classroom and individual child supports are provided through Pyramid Plus Certified Coaches and Trainers in the program with guidance from Pyramid Plus staff. This multi-level approach creates a network of support within each program and builds program-wide sustainability.

**Technical Assistance**

Training and technical assistance (T/TA) from Pyramid Plus staff is provided to each Demonstration Site. T/TA as needed includes support for the administrative team to assist in developing sustainable practices, policies, and program expectations including the development of data systems to use data to drive program development, teacher professional development plans, and support for Pyramid Plus practices. T/TA includes assisting candidates through the certification process to support individual classroom teachers upon completion of Certification. Programs receive support in delivering a parent training, developing a tour packet, and for extending Pyramid Plus practices into the community.
Trainers and Coaches

Congruent with Implementation Science and the Pyramid Plus Center goal of internal capacity, programs have their own Pyramid Plus Certified Trainers and Coaches within each program. Currently each program has at least one Pyramid Plus Certified Trainer and Coach to support teachers and staff to reach fidelity on Pyramid Plus practices, and to support program-wide implementation and parent training. Trainers and Coaches within each program are paid by that program. Some programs have as many as six Certified Trainers and Coaches. This infrastructure is necessary to achieve and sustain fidelity high quality practices. Please see the section on Certification for more information.

At the classroom level, each teacher receives feedback from the TPOT™/TPITOS assessment and ongoing coaching support from Pyramid Plus Certified Coaches within the program for continuing professional development. Teachers who exhibit exemplary skills and high fidelity in particular areas are also training and working with their peers and co-teachers to assist them in learning these practices. This develops a strong sense of teaming and professional support within each program.

Classroom Level Effects

Each site collects multiple data measures at the classroom level. This data drives professional development plans, informs program needs and training needs, and tracks teacher progress on using the Pyramid Plus practices accurately.

The Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) and The Pyramid Infant/Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) measure the fidelity with which teachers are implementing social and emotional teaching strategies, behavior strategies, as well as supportive environments and building relationships. Coaches and supervisors complete TPOT™/TPITOS assessments in each classroom at the beginning and end of the school year. Results drive individual teacher development plans, track progress, and provide data that can identify topics for staff trainings. By reaching certification status, all programs demonstrate 80% or higher fidelity on these measures of implementation.

Individual Child Outcome Effects

Data is also collected at the individual child level to demonstrate the effect of high fidelity Pyramid Plus practices on child outcomes. Programs collect child level social emotional data using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional (ASQ-SE).

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional (ASQ-SE) is completed by teachers or caregivers at the beginning and end of each school year. This tool measures the social and emotional competencies of young children from ages 36 to 60 months in eight different age groups. Items on this questionnaire include seven areas of behavior: self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive functioning, autonomy, affect, and interactions with other people. These items are scored on a 3-point scale ranging from “most of the time” to “rarely”. An overall score is computed and compared to a cutoff score depending on the child’s age, to identify children whose social and emotional development is “at risk” and they may need additional support in these areas.

Across the demonstration sites, of the children identified at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year as “at risk” on the ASQ-SE, 75% were no longer “at risk” at the end of the school year after being exposed to the high fidelity Pyramid Plus practices.
V. Providing Training and Technical Assistance

State-wide

The Pyramid Plus Approach Training Curriculum

The goal of the Pyramid Plus Center is to promote the social and emotional development and inclusion of all children, birth through five years, through a collaborative professional development system that fosters and sustains the state-wide, high-fidelity use of the Pyramid Model, SpecialQuest approach, and other related evidence-based practices integrated with relevant Colorado efforts. The Pyramid Plus Approach Training Curriculum (Wasser, Barton, Hallett, Smith, Wilson, Beckel, Levy-Conti, Strain, & Waldbaum, 2011) was finalized in 2012 and integrates these evidence-based models into a 45 hour, 18 session training that covers a variety of learning environments for children birth through five years. Since the center was founded in 2009, over 2,500 people have been intensively trained in the Pyramid Plus Approach state-wide.

In 2015, the Pyramid Plus Approach was revised to update documents, add current research supporting the training content, and add additional videos and photo examples. All Pyramid Plus Certified Trainers and Certified Coaches received the updated training materials along with a support document highlighting the information that was modified per session.

Most Pyramid Plus Approach participants report a gain in skills and knowledge across content areas. In an effort to learn how these gains are applied in programs and communities after the completion of the 18 sessions, The Pyramid Plus Center created an eight question survey which was sent to participants in March, 2015. The survey was completed by 34% of the attendees which was above the average response rate for email surveys.

Results from the survey are as follows:

- 93% of survey participants indicated that attending the Pyramid Plus Approach has benefited colleagues/coworkers, families, AND children in their communities.

- 73% of survey participants have referred to Pyramid Plus Approach Power Point slides, training notes and handouts and disseminated them with others including colleagues (92%), director/supervisor (83%), family members (50%), and community agencies (50%).
Pyramid Plus Approach State-Wide Training

Since 2011, the Pyramid Plus Center has hosted five Pyramid Plus Approach (PPA) trainings. The Pyramid Plus Center has invited all Certified Trainers to present the PPA material with the Pyramid Plus Center staff. This has been beneficial on multiple levels. It has allowed Certified Trainers to observe the content being presented by other trainers; it has given an opportunity for a Certified Trainer to plan and present with Pyramid Plus Staff; and it has provided a variety of presenters for participants.

Below is a chart detailing 2011-2014 Pyramid Plus Approach Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Attendees</th>
<th>Certified Trainers Presented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 25-27 and May 25-27, 2011</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18-20 and May 9-11, 2012</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 19-20 and November 15-17, 2012 (funded by Mile High United Way)</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31-February 2 and February 21-23, 2013</td>
<td>Glenwood Springs, CO</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19-21 and October 10-12, 2013</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23-25 and November 20-22, 2014</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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“The sessions around relationships and the importance of building them with families and co-workers as well as children helped our team. We began doing a lot of specific team building activities to boost morale and keep our spirits up. Little things go a long way to making educators feel valued and supported.” ~ Post PPA Fall 2014 survey response
The following charts show cumulative data for Pyramid Plus Approach Training with participant county and role.
In addition to the Pyramid Plus Center hosting state-wide trainings, we promote and encourage those who request training or technical assistance to visit our website, where we post a list of Certified Pyramid Plus Trainers and Certified Pyramid Plus Coaches, grouped by region, who are available across the state to contract independently of the Pyramid Plus Center. The web page contains a list of trainers and coaches including a brief description of their certification, experience, contact information, and agency.

For more information, go to the website (www.pyramidplus.org).

Positive Solutions for Families Trainers
In spring 2014, the Pyramid Plus Center conducted a Train-the-Trainer for 42 participants on facilitating CSEFEL's Positive Solutions for Families. A new webpage was created on the Pyramid Plus Center website to post available parent trainers across the state. Similar to the Certified Trainers and Certified Coaches webpage, information is provided on each parent trainer who is available to be individually and directly contacted by community agencies and/or programs who are interested in hosting the Positive Solutions for Families training.

For more information, go to the website (www.pyramidplus.org).

In addition, Positive Solutions for Families Training (in English and Spanish) and/or Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI) was offered in each of the Pyramid Plus Center Implementation Communities.

Top of the Pyramid: Prevent Teach Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC)
In 2014-2015, the Pyramid Plus Center began offering more intensive trainings on working with children at the “Top of the Pyramid” using the manual and content from Prevent Teach Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC). PTR-YC is a highly effective, user-friendly, and practical model of positive behavior support that describes with a high level of specificity what teachers, coaches, and other program personnel can successfully do to create behavior intervention plans.

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) Reliability Workshop
Pyramid Plus Center staff, Robin Levy and Johanna Berry Wasser attended an intensive 2 day train-the-trainer Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) Reliability Workshop at the annual NTI Addressing Challenging Behavior Conference. This reliability training allows them to offer TPOT™ Reliability Workshops in Colorado. This workshop prepares attendees to assess preschool teacher implementation of the Pyramid Model practices using the published version of the TPOT™ tool. Participants who successfully complete the workshop and meet reliability standards receive a Certificate of Reliability stating they are certified as a reliable observer in the use of the TPOT™ in preschool classrooms.
Additional Training

Pyramid Plus staff presented at the following state and national conferences:

- Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) Fall Conference in Denver
- 12th Annual National Training Institute (NTI): Addressing Challenging Behavior in Florida
- Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Conference (RMECC) in Denver

Looking Ahead

The Pyramid Plus Center will continue to offer high quality state-wide trainings. In 2015-2016, we have added three (3) TPOT™ Reliability Workshops and three (3) PTR-YC Trainings to our “Upcoming Training” schedule. These include Denver (August 2015), Colorado Springs (December 2015), and Montrose (February 2016).

We are pleased to announce the 2nd Bi-Annual ‘Beyond the Basic Conference’ to be held in May 2016 in Denver. This unique conference will offer three full days of training including a variety of presentation sessions. The content of the conference is geared toward supporting the Pyramid Plus Approach work “beyond” the 18 Sessions.

VI. Partnering with Implementation Communities

One of the goals of Pyramid Plus is to build capacity and create sustainability throughout Colorado in Implementation Communities and their programs. Work begins in each Implementation Community with community-wide Leadership Teams, training the Pyramid Plus Approach 18 sessions, coaching in classrooms, and collecting community-wide and program data. We have learned the importance of this work from the first Implementation Communities and are excited to expand to other communities throughout the state.

“The pyramid strategies have worked in my classroom, because they can be individualized so that all children can understand, apply and master expectations. The consistency and respectfulness of the expectations give children the tools to feel safe and confident at school and hopefully all parts of their lives.”

~ Kim Norris Teacher
Fremont County Head Start
In this fifth year of the Implementation Community Initiative, the Pyramid Plus Center again issued a state-wide request for applications (RFA). The RFAs were reviewed by the Pyramid Plus staff and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with El Paso. San Luis Valley received a second year of technical assistance. Denver Early Childhood Council and La Plata received a third and final year of technical assistance, and an online learning community was created to continue to support Summit, Grand, and Gunnison.

"With the Pyramid Plus strategies used throughout my classroom, behaviors challenges have dropped exponentially!" ~ Cindy Leonard Teacher Fremont County Head Start.

Each Implementation Community agrees to:

- Support 2 trainer & 2 coach certification candidates
- Establish a community-wide Leadership Team
- Deliver the Pyramid Plus Approach 18 sessions in the community
- Select a Community Implementation Program
- Coach the Pyramid Plus Approach in at least 1 classroom in the Implementation Program
- Collect data from the Implementation Community and Implementation Program

Pyramid Plus provides each Implementation Community:

- Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) to the trainer and coach certification candidates
- Technical Assistance to the Community Leadership Team
- Support to provide the 18 Pyramid Plus Approach sessions in the community
- Coordinate data from the Implementation Community & Implementation Program

Below is a table showing enrollment, number of classrooms, and the range of ages in the 2014-2015 Implementation Community Programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Community Program</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Classrooms</th>
<th>Ages Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Birth – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6 weeks – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3 – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunnison</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4 months – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Plata</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 weeks – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Luis Valley</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2 months – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6 weeks – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Birth – 5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children with a range of needs and racial composition are served within the Implementation Community Programs.
Individual child social emotional outcomes for Implementation Community programs are gathered using the ASQ-SE as a pre and post measure (see Demonstration Site section for a description of this tool). By the end of the year, 75% of the children whose ASQ-SE scores at the beginning of year indicated they were at “at risk”, scored in the typical range.

Each Implementation Community established a Leadership Team that meets monthly to guide their community work. The Leadership Teams scored themselves on the Benchmarks of Quality, once in the fall and again in the spring, then annually to measure and track the critical elements necessary for implementation of evidence-based practices. All items on the Benchmarks are scored on a rating scale that ranges from 0 (not in place), to 2 (in place). Items addressed drive goals and actions. After the fall evaluation, the Leadership Teams set goals for their work and steadily moved toward accomplishing those goals. The result of three year Benchmarks of Quality for Summit, Grand Gunnison, Denver, and LaPlata are shown below and indicate that the Teams made significant progress.

Connecting with other state-wide initiatives related to young children’s social, emotional and behavioral competence and inclusion is an integral part of our work. These initiatives, individuals, programs, and communities include:

- Blue Ribbon Policy Council for Early Childhood Mental Health
- Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC)
- Colorado Coaching Consortium
- Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Pyramid Model work in School Districts
- Colorado Office of Early Childhood
- Colorado Shines -Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS)
• Early Childhood Councils work group to map the Pyramid Model with other ECMH efforts
• Early Childhood Professional Development Advisory Committee
• Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants and Specialists
• Early Intervention Colorado
• Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care
• Family Child Care Association
• Healthy Child Care Colorado
• Invest in Kids/Incredible Years
• Office of Early Learning and School Readiness

Additionally, Pyramid Plus staff members are key faculty and collaborators with the national centers: CSEFEL, TACSEI, ECTAC, and Pyramid Consortium.

“I would highly recommend Pyramid to everyone in the field. Not only did it help show me how communication is important but that it is vital to everyone involved with the child. When you have a team of people wanting the very best for children, the Pyramid is the best model. It can organize all those individuals and it truly brings out the best in us all. I love using Pyramid and seeing the difference it can make to a child, a family and the team of educators and specialists. I seriously think they should add this to the curriculum for future teachers.” ~ Anne Skelly Teacher Assistant, Fremont County Head Start.

VIII. Facilitating State Policy Work

From the beginning, the Pyramid Plus Center has had a focus on state policy work to ensure that the Pyramid Plus Approach, Pyramid Model, SpecialQuest Approach, and other evidence-based practices are available to programs and children state-wide. These efforts include the following: working with a team of state leaders to build the systems and procedures to sustain current efforts while scaling-up state-wide, preparing policy materials, preparing data reports on need and effective strategies, connecting and building on other initiatives, engaging in public awareness, and creating initiatives for building sustainable supports for programs and communities to improve children’s social emotional competence and inclusive opportunities.

Facilitating a State Policy Team

Prior to 2009 when the Center was funded, there were two state teams related to this work. One focused on implementation of the Pyramid Model and the other on SpecialQuest. The Teams joined together in 2009 to work with the Pyramid Plus Center for sustainability and scale-up of the Pyramid Plus Approach, which combines these initiatives.

In 2013, the Team adopted a broader vision and mission than focusing only on the Pyramid Plus Center and revised their title, vision, mission, objectives and action plans. This broader vision recognizes the Pyramid and Inclusion work of the Department of Education and others. The Team is co-chaired by the Department of Education and the Pyramid Plus Center. The State Policy Team for the Pyramid Model and Inclusion Practices meets monthly. The productivity of each meeting is measured by a meeting evaluation completed by each team member. Team members’ evaluation of their monthly meetings has remained high (over “4” on a 5 point scale). Members of the State Policy Team are listed on page 24.
State Policy Team for the Pyramid Model and Inclusion Practices
2014-2015

Penny Dell, co-chair
Preschool Special Education (619)
Coordinator
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-6720
Dell_P@cde.state.co.us

Sarah Davidon
Director of Community Education
JFK Partners
University of Colorado School of Medicine
13121 E. 17th Avenue, C-234
Aurora, CO 80045
(303) 724-7635
Sarah.davidonhoover@ucdenver.edu

Erin Fairbairn
Private Occupational Therapist
Rep: parent involvement
4430 Fireweed Trail
Broomfield, CO 80023
(303) 955-5311
Erin.pf@me.com

Connie Fixsen
Early Childhood Specialist
Division of Community and Family Support
CO Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman St., 1st Floor
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-4393
connie.fixsen@state.co.us

Heather Frenz
Director
Healthy Child Care Colorado
Qualistar Colorado
3607 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Denver, CO 80205
(303) 339-6822
hfrenz@qualistar.org

Geneva Hallett, co-chair
Director & PI, Pyramid Plus:
The Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion
1380 Lawrence Street, Suite 628
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 315-6264
geneva.hallett@ucdenver.edu

Sheila Groneman
Head Start State Collaboration Liaison
Office of Early Childhood
1575 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-4804
Sheila.groneman@state.co.us

Kristin Habicht
Chair, Early Childhood Education
Arapahoe Community College
(303) 797-5924
kristin.habicht@arapahoe.edu

Alyson Jiron
Parent Educator
Bal Swan Children’s Center
3581 W. 112th Circle
Westminster, CO 80031
(720) 314-1433
alyjiron@yahoo.com

Laura Merrill
Training and Personnel Development Coordinator
Early Intervention Colorado
Division of Community and Family Support
CO Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman St., 1st Floor
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 866-3903
Laura.merrill@cde.state.co.us

Geneva Hallett, co-chair
Director & PI, Pyramid Plus:
The Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion
1380 Lawrence Street, Suite 628
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 315-6264
geneva.hallett@ucdenver.edu

Sheila Groneman
Head Start State Collaboration Liaison
Office of Early Childhood
1575 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-4804
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kristin.habicht@arapahoe.edu

Alyson Jiron
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3581 W. 112th Circle
Westminster, CO 80031
(720) 314-1433
alyjiron@yahoo.com

Laura Merrill
Training and Personnel Development Coordinator
Early Intervention Colorado
Division of Community and Family Support
CO Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman St., 1st Floor
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 866-3903
Laura.merrill@cde.state.co.us

Sondra Ranum
Early Childhood Professional Development
Training/Credential Manager
Office of Early Learning and School Readiness
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-3903
Ranum_s@cde.state.co.us

Elizabeth A. Steed, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Early Childhood Special Education
University of Colorado Denver
1380 Lawrence Street Center,
Suite 627
Denver, CO 80217
(303) 315-2159
elizabeth.steed@ucdenver.edu

Kathi Wagoner
Licensing Supervisor
Division of Early Care and Learning
CO Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman St., 1st Floor
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 866-5188
Kathi.wagoner@state.co.us
State Team Vision, Mission and Objectives

- **Vision:** All early childhood settings support the social and emotional development and inclusion of all children birth through five.
- **Mission:** To foster and sustain the statewide, high fidelity use of the Pyramid Model and SpecialQuest Inclusion approach with other related evidence-based practices within a coordinated early childhood professional development system.

**Objective 1:** To develop an infrastructure that supports the high fidelity, sustained, statewide implementation of the Pyramid Model and SpecialQuest Inclusion Approach with other related evidence-based practices.

**Objective 2:** To ensure the Pyramid Model and SpecialQuest Inclusion Approach with other related evidence-based practices are embedded in all early childhood and related interdisciplinary higher education and professional development initiatives.

**Objective 3:** To ensure the public recognizes the Pyramid Model as a set of evidence-based practices that promotes the healthy social and emotional development of infants and young children, and the SpecialQuest Inclusion Approach as an effective approach to promoting the inclusion of infants and young children with disabilities.

**Objective 4:** To ensure families have access to programs and communities that implement the Pyramid Model and SpecialQuest Inclusion Approach with other related evidence-based practices as well as resources in their communities that enhance the families’ knowledge and skills.

**Objective 5:** To demonstrate Colorado as the national leader for statewide implementation of the Pyramid Model and SpecialQuest Inclusion Approach with other related evidence-based practices.

To facilitate the work of the Team, the Pyramid Plus Center staff in collaboration with CDE staff, provide administrative support and team facilitation, develop policy, scale-up, and sustainability materials for the Team, implement the state plan in concert with the Team, and prepare reports and other policy materials.
Policy Related Materials

To support the work of the State Team as well as others engaged with the Center, Center staff and partners prepare policy-related materials. These initiatives have included:

- Conducted and summarized a follow-up to the 2006 study on removal of children from programs due to challenging behavior (http://www.pyramidplus.org/about)
- Prepared a fact sheet on how the Center uses Implementation Science principles (http://www.pyramidplus.org/about)
- Prepared a fact sheet on outcomes related to high fidelity implementation of the Pyramid Plus Approach (http://www.pyramidplus.org/about)
- Prepared with Penny Dell (CDE), a fact sheet on coordinating the CDE Pyramid Model work with the Pyramid Plus work at the local, community and state level (http://www.pyramidplus.org/about)
- Prepared fact sheets on research and legal provisions related to preschool inclusion. (http://www.pyramidplus.org/resources/tech_assist)

IX. Ensuring Public Awareness, Sustainability and Scale-up

The Pyramid Plus Center works with the State Policy Team on the public awareness objective: To ensure the public recognizes the Pyramid Model as a set of evidence-based practices that promotes the healthy social and emotional development of infants and young children, and SpecialQuest as an effective approach to promoting the inclusion of infants and young children with disabilities.

Pyramid Plus Website

The Pyramid Plus website (www.pyramidplus.org) continues to be a useful resource for families, providers, and community members. Since its launch, the website has received over 280,000 visitors, and averages about 68 unique visitors per day a 40% increase over 2013-2014. Content on the website continues to be updated to reflect current events, recent news, and other announcements.

One resource to highlight on the Pyramid Plus Center website is the Find a Coach/Trainer (http://www.pyramidplus.org/content/find-coachtrainer). This page contains a map and a list of Certified Coaches and Trainers available for contract, organized by region. Certified individuals are contacted through this page and provide Pyramid Plus Approach coaching and training throughout Colorado.
Use of the Pyramid Plus Website continues to grow each year.

Reference the adjacent chart to view website growth since 2009. This website continues to be a resource to so many involved with social and emotional competence and inclusion of young children.

Social Media

The Pyramid Plus Center maintained an active presence on Facebook this year, receiving a total of 4,515 post views from 329 followers.

Post content included event photos, relevant research, quotes on inclusion, plus journal articles and other resources related to social-emotional competence and inclusion.

Pyramid Plus eNews

The Pyramid Plus eNewsletter has maintained a consistent fan base with almost 800 subscribers. Six eNewsletters were sent to subscribers in 2014-15, with a total reach of 1,328 (totaling individual opens from each issue sent).

Each newsletter contains updates pertaining to the Pyramid Plus Center in addition to Upcoming Trainings, Trainer/Coach Bios, Tips and Tools, and Resource Highlights for practitioners.

Pyramid Plus Facebook Followers by Year

Pyramid Plus Website Growth by Year

* Post reach is the number of people who have seen your post
April 2015

Community Corner

Community News

Lemons to Lemonade, Sorrow to Celebration - Summit County Demonstrates How it Can be Done!
When Summit County’s Pyramid Leadership Team experienced the loss of a dedicated team member and dear friend, Mary Lou Taylor, they turned their sorrow into celebration. The Mary Lou Taylor Award was created to honor the Champions of Early Childhood Social Emotional Wellness in Summit County. The first recipient of the award was The Carriage House Learning Center. This beautiful plaque which represents the spirit and life of Mary Lou is awarded annually with each recipient’s name and the year added. It is a lasting tribute to a woman who contributed tirelessly to the Early Childhood Community in Summit County.

- Geneva Hallett Takes Over the Helm of Pyramid Plus: the Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion
- Celebration of Life to Mr. Vic
- APPLY by MAY 15, 2015 for the 2016 Certification Cadre
- Pyramid Plus Fundraiser Breakfast and Top of the Pyramid Training Review February 23, 2015
- Implementation Community News
- PCC Trainer and Coach Files
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Resource Highlights
- Did You Know?

Geneva Hallett Takes Over the Helm of Pyramid Plus: the Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion

Geneva Hallett is the new Director and Principal Investigator of the Pyramid Plus...
Plan for Sustainability and Scale-up

The goal of The Pyramid Plus Center is to build the capacity of programs and communities state-wide to use evidence-based practices for improving children’s social, emotional and behavior outcomes as well as inclusion opportunities. The major initiatives used to reach this goal are as follows: provide training and technical assistance, certify Trainers and Coaches state-wide, partner with communities and programs, and build state infrastructure. For instance, certifying Trainers and Coaches is an ambitious, state-wide effort to ensure quality assurance. These professionals are located throughout the state and engage in sustaining and scaling-up the effort for years to come.

The Pyramid Plus Center staff worked with the State Policy Team to develop a sustainability plan focused on garnering the funding, staffing, and other resources to meet the needs of Colorado’s programs and communities. Part of that sustainability plan is to maintain or expand the current level of funding and to expand “fee for service” offerings. The Center maintained both funders and funding levels this year.

This report represents The Center’s value of using data to improve outcomes and to assist in sustaining and scaling up the work.

The procedure is to: 1) measure needs in programs and communities, 2) evaluate outcomes of the certification process for trainers and coaches, 3) evaluate the effects of the Pyramid Plus practices on child, teacher, and program outcomes, and 4) evaluate the impact and value of trainings and technical assistance.
Pyramid Plus Work Across Colorado

Pyramid Plus in Colorado by County
As of June 30, 2015
For more information, please contact:

Pyramid Plus: the Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion
CU Denver, SEHD
1380 Lawrence Street, Suite 629
Denver, CO 80204
pyramidplus@ucdenver.edu
www.pyramidplus.org

Join us on Facebook

We would like to thank the following agencies and organizations for support of the Pyramid Plus Center: