

EVALUATION FACT SHEET

In 2019-2020, Harder+Company Community Research conducted a mixed-methods evaluation of the First Connections Program. Since 2014, the Program implements innovative approaches for community-based providers to embed developmental screening and strengthen referral processes within their practices.

PARTNERS:



SCREENING:



52,656
Screenings
Collected
During Apr 2014
to Dec 2019

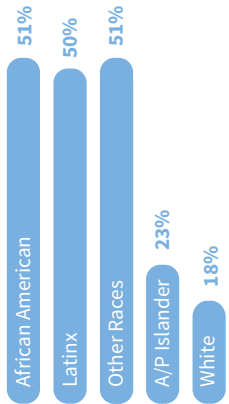
TOOLS:

The Ages & Stages Questionnaire®

- Third Edition (ASQ®-3)
- Social Emotional (ASQ®-SE)
- The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHAT)



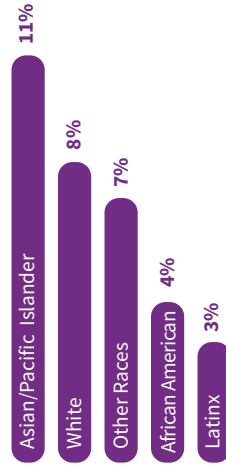
OF REFERRALS RESULTED IN LINKAGES TO AT LEAST ONE EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES, LIKE REGIONAL CENTERS AND EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START



REGIONAL CENTER SERVICES REFERRALS

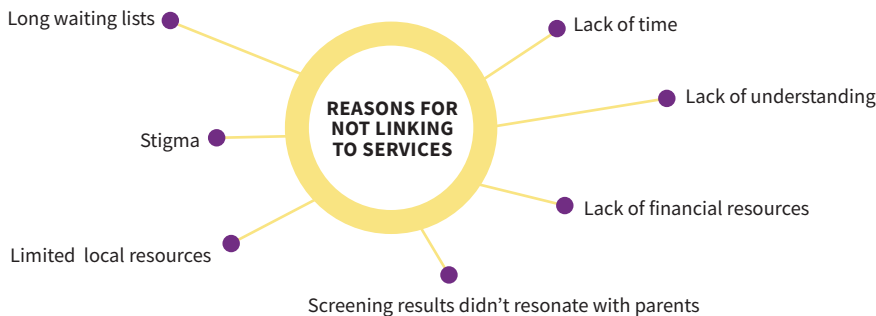
African American, Latinx and children of other races had the most referrals

“ I think he'll just do better academically in school because he had an early start, and we were able to address his needs early ”
- Parent



HEALTH INTERVENTION SERVICES REFERRALS

Asian and White children had the most referrals to services like occupational and physical therapy



FOCUS AREAS KEY FINDINGS



Family Access, Knowledge, and Support

Parents reported:

Increased knowledge of child developmental supports and resources

Improved communication and social skills among children

Overcoming the stigma associated with special needs



Technical Assistance (TA) & Provider Capacity

TA Team:

Facilitated over 60 trainings with First Connections grantees

Approach included:

- Developing workflows & algorithms
- Supporting parent education offerings
- Developing relationships between providers
- Developing referral pathway strategies



System Learnings & Implications

Grantees:

- Shifted their outreach strategies to better engage children of diverse backgrounds
- Developed approaches to providing bridging services when services gap existed
 - Telephone education
 - Developmental homework

Major barrier:

- Experienced challenges engaging children and families of diverse cultural and linguistic needs
- Inability to share data and receive timely follow-up information from referral organizations