



Proud Parenting 2018-2021

Imperial County Probation Department

Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC)

Local Evaluation Report

Imperial County Local Evaluation Report

I. Program Summary

In 2018, the Imperial County Probation Department received a third cohort of Proud Parenting Program funds funded by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC). This grant allowed the Department to provide resources and training to young parents within the County in need of parent training and collateral services and who were historically underserved, vulnerable at-risk, and aligned with the State's goal of breaking the intergenerational cycle of violence and delinquency.

Imperial County is a region with serious economic and social needs. One of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in California is compounded by high unemployment and poverty. The need for parenting interventions is significant, and solutions have been contemplated through collaborative work of previous county agencies and commissions.

Imperial County Probation and its community-based partners Rite of Passage Adolescent Treatment Centers and Schools Inc. (ROPATCS) were committed to providing parenting services to 150 (50 annually) young parents or expectant parents between the ages of 14 to 24. Participants eligible for Proud Parenting presented considerable hardships such as a depressed socio-economic indicator, unemployed, system involvement and/or criminogenic factors. The services were provided in three of the highest population centers of the County and benefited nearly 102 young parents, 95 children between the ages of 0-5 and 7 unborn infants over the course of the three years the program was implemented.

The program's general oversight was performed by Imperial County Probation Division Manager and the day-to-day services were performed and managed by ROPATCS Program Manager. Quarterly meetings were held with program stake holders and assigned CBO to ensure the fidelity of implemented services, review the programs outcome performance, and provide necessary technical assistance and/or support.

Through a thoughtful implementation of services in collaboration with public partners, the three goals of the program were realized. These goals included: improve parenting skills and knowledge, improve anger management skills, and promote healthy families. These goals were met, as indicated by an analysis of the results.

The three-year results conclude that 102 young parents initially attended *Nurturing Parenting* sessions, an evidence-based parenting curricula in which a total of 64 parents successfully completed their modules. 80% of parents demonstrated an increase in knowledge based on their pre and post test results. Additionally, the exit survey concluded that 79% of parents claim to have reduced their parenting stress and felt more confident in addressing their children's unwanted behaviors and establish safe disciplinary regimens.

Additionally, Anger Replacement Training and supportive services (e.g., case management, transportation, employment preparation) demonstrated enhanced self-sufficiency and 78% of young parents claimed to have improved their anger management skills and have learned to

interpret their anger cues and de-escalate to avoid negative reactions.

The Proud Parenting program was effective. The program served as a resource and a catalyst for many young parents to fully access their own abilities to become successful parents, as well as link into other services the County offered to sustain positive relationships. By providing training and resources to young parents now, the program has created a better future for the family members and for the next generation of parents.

Rite of Passage's Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

In 2019, the global Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic overwhelmed our country, communities' businesses, and organizations. The lives of our students, families, staff, and community members were impacted and led to challenging times for many. Through the uncertainty, Rite of Passage remained committed to the health, safety and well-being of their staff, families, community members and youth.

Rite of Passage implemented a comprehensive COVID-19 plan to respond to the pandemic in ways that were selfless, vigilant professional and lead to operating effective treatment and educational programs. Rite of Passage developed protocols, procedures, training and maintained staff and students highly alert and responsive when following the COVID-19 practices, therefore leading to safe and productive programming and treatment.

Rite of Passage's COVID-19 responses are guided not only by the CDC, WHO, and local and state mandates, but by the expert consultation of our agency's Medical Authority consultant: Dr. Paul Adler, DO; FACEP; MBA; CHCQM. Dr. Adler is a vital part of the Rite of Passage team: in addition to reviewing all of our medical policies, procedures, and best practices on a weekly basis, he also serves as our 24/7 infectious disease resource.



Dr. Adler is a leading expert on infectious diseases in confined populations, having served as a Health Authority and Medical Director for patients in multiple care settings, including hospitals, residential programs, and state correctional institutions in both California and New York. Notably, Dr. Adler serves as the Senior Correctional Consultant for the Orange County Health Authority and Jail System; he has also served as the Medical Director for the Ventura Jail System, the Ventura Forensic Medical Group, and the Westchester County Department of Corrections-based Correct Care Solutions group. He is the President of the Western States chapter of the American Correctional Health Services Association and has a strong background in emergency medicine.

Dr. Adler provided and continues to provide strong, consistent expertise during these difficult time. Our policies, systems—and most importantly, the youth in our care—have all benefited by his work with our agency. We wish to recognize his dedication and invaluable contributions to our comprehensive COVID-19 protocol and prevention measures.

As essential service providers, our programs provide critical care services to our youth and their families. We recognize that the youth and families we serve continue to have needs and therefore we will continue to support them during these unrepresented times.

Just as there is uncertainty, there is also hope and accomplishments to celebrate. This report will provide you some examples of the services, activities and preventative measures Rite of Passage implemented and accomplished during the 2019-2021 pandemic.

II. Introduction

In Imperial County, parents often face significant social and economic barriers which amplify family dysfunction and hardship. Located in southeast California – along the Mexico border – Imperial County is one of the most economically disadvantaged areas in the State. Imperial County has an average per capita income of \$18,800—an amount that is nearly half of the national average and marginally surpasses the 2019 poverty rate (which is \$17,420) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

Between 2019-2021, approximately 18.1% of the county’s population fell below the poverty level, compared to the national average of 11.8% (U.S. Census Bureau CB21-151.) This, alone, places Imperial County youth at risk for teen pregnancy.

In the state of California, teen pregnancy has decreased by 61 percent with the average teenage birth at 15.7 per 1,000 girls (CDPH) Given the data, it is no surprise that the County continues to have one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the state (33.4 per 1,000 female population aged 15-17 as compared to the statewide average of 38.8 per 1,000 females (CDC).



With the implementation of parenting education and skills trained by ROPATCS and in collaboration with the Imperial County Probation Department, over 102 young parents received positive youth development, parenting education and family planning during the 2018-2021fy.

III. Project Design and Outcomes

The program was designed to improve parenting skills, foster resiliency, improve anger management skills, and promote healthy families. Imperial Probation received funding for staff, assessments, and curriculum to provide culturally appropriate parenting skill and education services to a specific group of young parents within the County.

Target Population

Services targeted parents (male or female) aged 14-24 who were within the County’s probation or social service system, and/or are considered at-risk and vulnerable including parents who are also

students referred by the Imperial County Office of Education. The program served the primary population centers of the County (El Centro, Calexico and Brawley). The Department and its partners also worked with parents that may be isolated from resources or marginalized due to socio-economic conditions. 51% of parents served during this 2018-2021fy were first time parents and 49% had 2-3 children. 93% of were of Hispanic/Latino decent, 1% were American Indian, 5% were White and 1% claimed other.

The program was designed to serve 50 parents annually, with approximately 50-75 children who were also be positively impacted by parenting services for a total of 100-125 served either directly or indirectly each year. In total the program provided services to over 102 young parents, 7 who were expecting their first child and overall, 95 children benefited from their parents participating in the program.

Multi-Agency Approach

Coordinated and managed by Imperial Probation, the primary community-based organization providing services was ROPATCS. In addition, other collaborating agencies and stakeholders that contributed to the success of the program included the County's Department of Social Services, the Imperial County Office of Education, Family Resource Centers, Imperial Valley College, and Imperial County Jail. These agencies collaborated with Probation and ROPATCS to provide referrals as well as continue to provide supportive services when necessary.

The Proud Parenting Program received a total of 109 referrals during the 2018-2021fy. Of the incoming referrals 6 were referred by school institutions, 4 were referred by Social Services, 4 were currently on Probation, 44 were referred by the Imperial County Sheriff's Department and 51 were referred by Community Partners.

Using a multi-agency approach the Imperial County Probation, Stake Holders and ROPATCS worked simultaneously in developing the programs infrastructure and identifying targeted population and needs. Through quarterly meetings, the program was evaluated, and program adjustments were coordinated if necessary. In addition, ROPATCS participated in annual quality assurance (QA) audits to maintain the program in compliance with company policy and quality standards. The QA included a full evaluation of the programs day to day performance, evaluation databases, policies, and overall facility. The QA report provided an analysis report that included the programs status, best practices and identified areas of improvement.

Design Overview

After an intake interview and assessment, a specific program was designed for each young parent. With parenting classes as the primary service delivery, there were other services provided including aggression replacement training, service coordination/brokerage, life skills training, as well as job skills and job search.

Proud Parenting was staffed by two full-time employees (2.0 FTE) and one in-kind site Program Manager from ROPATCS, including one Bachelors-level Program Manager, Project Coordinator, and a Service Coordinator. These staff were dedicated solely to the operation of the Proud Parenting program. Supportive services were provided by the Department, such as the evaluator

and general program oversight performed by the Division Manager.

Services were available five days a week, with parenting sessions conducted five days a week within the facility in El Centro, in the school and in the parents' homes. In the 2018-2021fy Proud Parenting staff conducted over 503 house visits, made 3,640 telephone calls, and facilitated over 408 parenting sessions in *Nurturing Parenting* and 282 sessions in *Aggression Replacement Training*. Over 1,035 hours were dedicated in facilitating a total of 690 combined sessions.

The program operated with three central goals: increase parenting knowledge, improve anger responses, develop healthy parenting habits, and promote healthy families through case management and linkage to community resources. In particular:

1. Increase parenting skills and knowledge - ROPATCS provided services to enhance parenting knowledge and skills through *Nurturing Parenting* skills a family-centered trauma-informed curriculum established in 1983. The activities that supported the goal included:

- Pre-and-post-test/assessments
- Participant attendance and participation in the instruction of *Nurturing Parenting*

Parents who participated in *Nurturing Parenting* working on building their parenting skills and discovering alternatives to abusive, neglecting and child-rearing practices. The *Nurturing Parenting* components are designed to meet family's needs based on their current parenting strengths and weaknesses. The nurturing philosophy focuses on the development of empathy, self-worth, self-awareness, empowerment, discipline with dignity, appropriate family roles and age-appropriate expectations of children's development.

Proud Parenting conducted a total of 408 parenting sessions and delivered over 612 dosage hours of parenting sessions. Although 102 participants completed a pre-test, 64 participants successfully completed the program (62%) and based on their pre-post test results demonstrated an 81% knowledge gained. 79% of parents expressed to have less parent related stressors and felt the skills provided, taught them how to establish healthier habits and responses when dealing with parent related stressors.

2. Improve Anger Management Skills - ROPATCS provided parents with a stress and anger management course, with the implementation of *Aggression Replacement Training (ART)*, an evidence-based, proven-effective approach for working with anger challenged youth and young adults. The activities that supported the goal included:

- Pre-and-post-test/assessments
- Participant attendance and participation in *Aggression Replacement Training (ART)*

Parents who participated in *ART* explored the theories behind anger interventions and focused on building social skills, gaining control of their anger, and developing moral reasoning responses. Through *ART* parents received assistance in replacing antisocial behaviors with positive alternatives, responding to anger with nonaggressive responses, rethinking anger-provoking triggers and increase their level of fairness, justice and concern for the needs and rights of others.

Proud Parenting conducted a total of 282 *ART* sessions and delivered over 423 dosage hours of *ART* sessions. Although 102 participants successfully completed a pre-test, 64 participants successfully completed a post-test (62%). Based on their pre-post test results 78% demonstrated knowledge gained and 79% of parents expressed to have a better understanding of their internal and external triggers, warning signs, physical cues and implemented preventative measures when addressing difficult situations and/or unwanted behaviors.

3. Promote Healthier Families - ROPATCS provided individualized case management services. Through case management services, parents completed individual risk barrier assessments, goal planning, skill facilitation, evaluation, advocacy, and linkage to community resources, which included referrals and assistance with medical care, immunization, substance abuse, job searching, interview preparation and supportive services.

Between 2018-2021, Proud Parenting provided over 94 supportive services which included the distribution of cribs, car seats, hygiene products, diapers, formula, themed activity baskets, bi-weekly in-home activities, and arts & crafts. In addition, parents received linkage to Behavioral Health, Women Heaven, low-income housing, WIC, TANF and Parenting Prevention services.

Program Model

The Department and ROPATCS followed researched, evidence-based curriculum and strategies to improve parenting practices and enhance parenting skills. As an overall framework the provision of services, implemented to *Principles of Effective Intervention*, as espoused by Dr. Latessa of the University of Cincinnati which include risk, needs, treatment and fidelity.

Risk. Proud Parenting services began with a brief orientation process in which program staff learn more about the parent and their family dynamics. This can take place in detention, in the school, our partner's central office, or in the young parent's home.

In addition, our services begin by considering input from the participant, other assessments and official records (where applicable). Imperial Probation or its partner, ROPATCS, have utilized The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment which is a functional assessment tool developed to support decision-making, including treatment planning, facilitating quality improvement initiatives, and monitoring the outcomes of service.

Needs. Through the initial pre-test, services and interventions were prioritized on the greatest needs. Service goals were established as well as the specific delivery method. The behavioral and skills-based curriculum was delivered by a Bachelor's-level Case Manager and degreed Service Coordinator in detention, within the school (after school program), in our partner's office or within the participant's home.

Treatment. Research shows that effective approaches to changing behavior are based on social learning theory and cognitive-behavioral interventions (Andrews and Bonta, 2003). Specifically structured social learning programs are those where new skills are taught, modeled, and prosocial behaviors and attitudes are reinforced. Within this framework, the program model blended social

and emotional competence through group and individual case work necessary to form strong parent-child bonds with knowledge and skills to become a “supportive parent.”

Group Sessions. The specific behavioral training curriculum included *Nurturing Parenting*, *Aggression Replacement Training* as well as case management services.

Nurturing Parenting programs are a family-centered trauma-informed initiative designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices. Developed in 1983 by Dr. Stephen J. Bavolek Founder of Family Development Resources Inc., this evidence-based nurturing philosophy helps break inter-generational cycle of child maltreatment and dysfunction. The program helps build family strength and resilience and promotes positive parent-child relationships to improve parental functioning and child cognitive and socio-emotional skills, as well as prevent child abuse, trauma, and future substance abuse.

Aggression Replacement Training is a comprehensive intervention curriculum for youth who experience aggressive behaviors. The training provides both theory and application of aggression skills. ART helps the youth break negative cycles and learn the effects of aggression and violent behavior. ART consists of 30 sessions which focus on three main components: Social Skills Thinking, Anger Control Training and Moral Reasoning. ART teaches youth what to do, helping them replace antisocial behaviors with positive alternatives. Sessions consist of a combination of modeling, role-playing, performance feedback, probation solution, moral maturity, identifying triggers, identifying uses, using anger reduces, thinking ahead and uses self-evaluation. Developed by Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein and Dr. Barry Glick. ART is reflected over 30 years of use in schools, community agencies, juvenile institutions, and other settings.

Fidelity. To ensure service fidelity and that programs were implemented successful, the County evaluated their effectiveness. In this project, identifying and learning new behaviors and skills was not enough – we observed participants rehearse the skills learned to ensure the proper use of the skill. This progress was assessed by ROPATCS Case Manager as she observed behaviors through rehearsal in groups and through interactions with the parent/child, as appropriate. Verbal feedback was constantly provided to the parent.

Additional Strategies. Interventions also included strategies such as case management, family crisis and service brokerage. During the service-planning phase, our partner’s Case Manager used the results of initial assessments and surveys to create goals for each parent that reflected his/her specific needs. Case Management also included documentation and observation of gains and achieving service goals. In some instances, Case Management services were provided in the home environment, but most often within the school (as applicable) or our partner’s central offices.

In addition, the Case Manager was available to provide family crisis interventions 24 hours a day or referred the parent to the County’s Sure Help Line Center. Finally, discharge planning involved the determination of completion status, summarizing the parent’s progress, and identifying any ongoing needs, as appropriate, which may include educational services, mentoring, enhanced family services such as substance abuse, health care, job training, etc.

IV. Project Evaluation Methodology

Evaluation Design

In order to ensure that the program operated with fidelity, the Department and ROPATCS developed a data infrastructure which recorded and tracked multiple aspects of the Proud Parenting program in collaboration with the program evaluator. Individual data was recorded a client's individual case file and included records of attendance, exit surveys, demographic information, etc. Aggregate information was reported through mechanisms such as the monthly Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs are a blending of process and outcome indicators that are used to identify program issues, measure program performance in specific areas, and measure services provided.

To evaluate the program, the evaluator used the KPI data, pre- and post-program surveys as well as the quarterly progress data to answer the following key questions:

1. Is there an adequate flow of referrals?
2. Is the program offering the services it promised?
3. Are participants successful in completing the program?
4. Is the program reaching the target demographic?
5. Are parents benefitting from the program?

With these questions in mind, information was gathered on program operations, case management data, counseling, and supportive services data as well as service brokerage information.

Process and Outcome Variables

The Proud Parenting program records measurable variables in order to monitor the quality and performance of the services offered to its clients, as well as how effectively the agency functions. The process variables measured inform us on the efficacy of our service provision: what our agency and staff do and how well they are able to perform these functions. Our outcomes variables, on the other hand, measure the results of the services received by clients—in other words, on the benefits participants received as a result of their participation in the program, and/or how participants were empowered to make positive changes in their parenting skills and social skills as a result of our program. Specific variables of each type are outlined in the table, below:

Process Variables	Outcome Variables
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age of participant• Gender of participant• Marital status of participant• Ethnicity of participant• Primary language spoken by participant• Educational status of participant• Current hardships & potential obstacles faced by participant• Number of children that the participant has• Number of Proud Parenting sessions held• Number of telephone contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of referrals• Number of program completions• Number of program discharges• Youth involvement in new system• Change in employment status• Change in the Knowledge of Parenting and Child Education• Change in the Knowledge of positive aggression responses• Reduce in parenting stress

- Number of home visits
- Number of life skills sessions held
- Number of outside agency contacts
- Number of probation contacts
- Number of arrests/probation interventions
- Number of interventions by Child Welfare
- Recidivism data on program completions

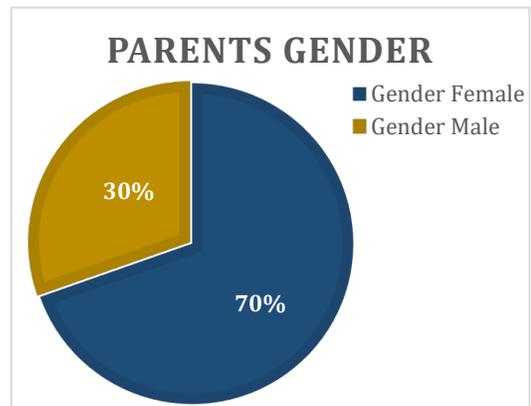
The data gathered is summarized in the following sections.

V. Project Evaluation Results

The evaluation results are compiled from the source documents discussed previously, including quarterly Progress Reports provided to BSCC, as well as from the Key Performance Indicators collected by partner agencies. The evaluation findings focus on demographic information, program results as well as community level impacts such as employment and system involvement. Together, the evaluation results provide evidence that the target population was appropriately served with the right mix of supports and services to make a positive impact on their own lives as well as the lives of their children.

Proud Parenting Participants

During the 2018-2021 three-year reporting period, the Proud Parenting focused on providing services to over 150 young parents and successfully admitted 102. 64 young parents successfully completed the program whereas 38 were exited due to the participant no longer being interested in services. Given that the majority of the participants were parents currently caring for between one to three children, the total impact of this program includes the 102 admitted parents, plus an estimated 102 children, for a total of nearly 202 family members benefitting from the Proud Parenting program.

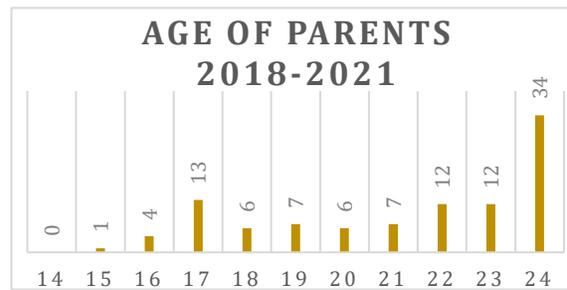


The participants were referred from Imperial County Probation and community-based partners including schools and educational agencies, and job training programs as well as Rite Track. Referrals came from the largest population centers in Imperial County, including El Centro, Brawley and Calexico.

Upon referral to the program, clients were assessed to determine if they qualified for the program. All who met the admissions criteria were accepted. Only a few were declined, which was based on not meeting the age criteria established in the grant. All referrals were voluntary participants; no one was ordered to participate in the program.

Demographic Information

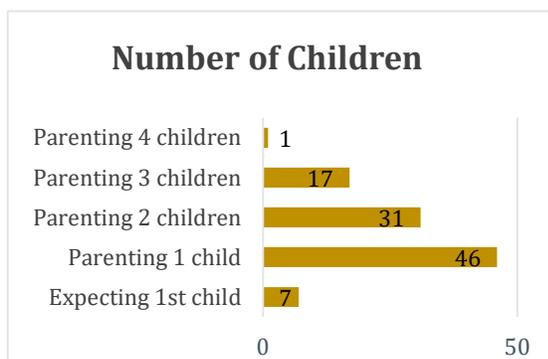
The Proud Parenting program collected demographic information, including the age, gender, ethnicity, and number of children for the young parents referred to the program. This information allowed our organization better to understand the characteristics and specific needs of the clientele.



The program served young parents between the ages of 14 and 24. 17% of the parents served by this program were between 14-17 and 82% were between 18-24 years of age.

Approximately 85% of the 179,702 county residents are Hispanic. And, according to Healthy People 2020 defines a *health disparity* as “a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. Health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health based on their racial or ethnic group. The Proud Parenting program likewise reported the highest percent of young parents as Hispanic or Latino. Over 93% of the total population were Hispanic or Latino, 1% were Native American, 5% were White (not Hispanic or Latino) and 1% claimed other.

While the Proud Parenting program represented a large majority of Hispanic and Latino parents, there was a majority of female participants; the program population was 30% male, and 70% female. This data was consistent with data from previous years. For years 2018-2021, 42% of participants reported to be married at the time of enrollment, however only one couple participated in sessions together. 27% of participants claimed to be in a relationship at time of enrollment and



57% of those participants attended parenting sessions with their significant other. 30% of participants were not in a relationship at time of enrollment. This data tells us that participants who are in a romantic relationship were more willing to participating in parenting sessions with their current partner, when compared to married couples.

When considering the number of children, the participants were responsible for, over half the parents were first time parents (51%). Of those currently parenting, 48% were parents to more than one child, and 7 young women enrolled in the program while being pregnant.

Community Factors

The target population included at-risk and vulnerable young parents, including parents at-risk of criminogenic behavior and system involvement within Social Services or Probation. There were very few (6) reported outgoing community referrals within the reporting period. Additionally, 8% of the parents reported to have been currently employed at time of enrollment whereas 92% were unemployed at time of enrollment.

These factors put the employment status into better context, as the current unemployment rate in Imperial County continues to be one of the highest in the nation with 15.5 percent compared to 5.4 percent for the state of California, per the Employment Development Department as of November 2021.

Further methods that Proud Parenting impacted the community through partnerships with other community and County agencies. Proud Parenting partnered with the Imperial County Sheriff's Department, where Proud Parenting staff were able to provide services to eligible participants in confinement.

Over the past three years we have participated in numerous events, fairs, and community summits. We have participated in the Teen Conference in collaboration with the Imperial County Office of Education and Mental Health Fairs with Imperial Valley College. We have provided our own events such as Baby Showers, Father's Day tool kit, bi-weekly in-home activities and offered sessions via Zoom.

Service & Support Outcomes

Targeted services were provided that met the individualized needs of the parent. As discussed previously, services included parent training as well as collateral, supportive services such as in-home direct services and Aggression Replacement training. The Department's primary service partners included ROPATCS who served the young parents for three and two years (respectively) within the grant funding cycle.

During this time, the following outcomes were produced:

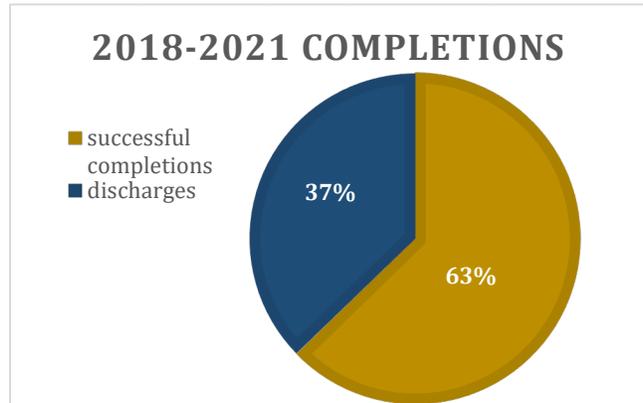
- In the first year, July 2018-June 2019 there were 135 *Nurturing Parenting* sessions held, 62 *Aggression Replacement Training* sessions held. 44 new parent enrollees and 3 parents who rolled over from the previous year, received individualized case management services. Over 168 home visits were conducted, and 739 phone calls were made. Parents also received 8 direct supportive services (diapers, formula, cribs, car seats etc).
- In the second year, July 2019-June 2020 there were 134 *Nurturing Parenting* sessions held, 137 *Aggression Replacement Training* sessions held. 45 new parent enrollees and 13 parents who rolled over from the previous year, received individualized case management services. Over 242 home visits were conducted, and 778 phone calls were made. Parents also received 64 direct supportive services (diapers, formula, cribs, car seats etc).
- In the final year, July 2020-December 2021 there were 139 *Nurturing Parenting* sessions held, 83 *Aggression Replacement Training* sessions held. 13 new parent enrollees and 12 parents who rolled over from the previous year, received individualized case management services. Over 93 home visits were conducted, and 2,123 phone calls were made. Parents also received 22 direct supportive services (diapers, formula, cribs, car seats etc).

Through the exit survey that the Proud Parenting staff conducted, participants were asked to rank the services in order of their increased knowledge. The results indicate the most impactful service was early childhood education and anger management. Additional services that were impactful include (in the order of most impactful to least): stress management education, parent-child group activities and identifying anger and triggering cues.

Program Exits and Successful Completion

Participant success was determined by the participants ability to complete their individual goals aligned with their individual service plans, overall program participation/compliance and successful completion of the *Nurturing Parenting* 12-session curriculum. During the 2018-2021fy there were 102 exits recorded. Of these exits, 63% successfully completed the program and received a certificate of completion and \$50.00 gift card.

Participants who failed to complete their individual plans or decided to not continue with the program services, were unsuccessfully discharged from the program. Some of the reasons for not completing the program included, lost of interest in service, could no longer participate in services due to personal barriers and/or moved out of county.



Martha's Story



Martha was a 21-year-old single mother of one, who was previously involved and referred to the program by Social Services. Martha's daughter was previously removed from her care due to intoxication of a fetus. She struggled with substance abuse before and during her pregnancy which led her to Social Services. Martha's newborn daughter was removed from her care and Martha was court ordered to attend parenting classes to prove she was fit parent to reunify with her daughter.

Martha resided in a small one-bedroom apartment with her father, who's single parent income helped sustain the household. Martha was unemployed and relying on governmental assistance to help her father out, but soon after lost her benefits, due to the removal of her daughter. Coming from a single parent household herself, Martha felt abandoned and lonely. She searched for refuge and the sense of belonging within her friendships that soon turned into unsupportive and led her to spiraling road of addiction.

When Martha enrolled to Proud Parenting she struggled with her confidence and in confiding in others. She had experienced trauma and felt the system abandoned her. She had lost her trust in organizations and programs. She had lost hope of regaining custody of her daughter.

After months of support from Proud Parenting and participating in the lessons, Martha slowly started to regain her self-confidence and fought against her addiction. Martha enrolled into adult-ed to pursue her High School diploma and began job searching. She relied in the support from Proud Parenting and as her reunification court date approached, Martha had another obstacle to conquer, she needed to show she had an adequate designated sleeping area for her daughter.



With the help of Proud Parenting, Martha received a crib and necessary items to help prepare her home for the arrival of her daughter.

In 2019 Martha successfully completed the Proud Parenting program, proved to the courts she was a fit mother and regained custody of her daughter.

VI. Discussion of Results

The results obtained by the Proud Parenting program clearly demonstrate that the program is achieving positive outcomes for its target clientele while meeting the following goals:

- Increase parenting knowledge
- Improve anger management skills
- Promote healthier families

These goals are being met due to appropriate and relevant process variables (the training and qualifications of program staff, program efficacy and fidelity) as well as identified outcome variables (a participant's change in knowledge or attitudes toward parenting) that enable our organization to monitor the progress of program participants.

There are, however, additional details which support the outcome data of this program, and which suggest certain trends that will enable this program to experience future success. These include shifts in client demographics, changes in recruitment strategies, the frequency of outreach activities and the efficacy of the curriculum presented to participants. Additionally, the following conditions impacted our program outcomes:

- The global COVID-19 pandemic caused the shutdown of schools and community organizations, therefore reducing the incoming of referrals and networking opportunities.
- Due to COVID-19, in-person sessions were cancelled and held via zoom and led to the decrease in student participation, as they were not able to participate from home while caring for their children.
- Due to COVID-19, local high school teen-pregnancy program (one of our leading partners) closed its doors permanently.
- Although majority of parents were married or in a relationship, only a low percentage counted with the support from their spouse.
- There was a shift in the age of program participants. In previous years the majority of youth served were 16-18 years old, there was a marked increase in participants who were 23-24 years old.
- 100% of our graduates mentioned they felt they improved attitudes about responsible parenting, enhance parent-child relationships after completing the Make Parenting a Pleasure curriculum.
- Despite the success of the Proud Parenting program over the past three years, barriers that impede the success of participants and the program include participant attendance and retention.
- Our office locations are satisfactory to serve clients; our location in El Centro, CA is convenient for most program participants. For those clients who cannot easily access

services at the El Centro location, Proud Parenting provides transportation and bus passes to ease this barrier. For those who cannot travel, we offer home visits.

Program Funds

During the 2018-2022fy, a total of \$423,345.00 funds (\$313,12.00 grant funds and \$110,220.00 in-kind) were used to provide services to 102 young parents and 102 children. 99.91% of the awarded funds were exhausted and 100% of in-kind was matched. Average cost per family of three during the 2018-2021fy was approximately \$2,095 with a 8-month length of stay.

VII. Conclusion

The stated goal of the State Board of Community Corrections in the development of the grant was to break the intergenerational cycle of violence and delinquency by strengthening parenting knowledge and skills through parent education classes supported by proven strategies.

With this objective, Imperial County Probation Department partnered with community-based organizations (ROPATCS) that utilized researched and evidence-based proven strategies to design a program for young parents between 14 and 24 years of age, particularly those who were involved in the justice system and/or welfare system. Targeted strategies (including parent education, job training, anger management, case management and linkages to community resources) yielded positive results for the nearly 204 parents and children who benefited from the program.

At the end of three years, the Imperial County Proud Parenting program demonstrated an increased knowledge of parenting practices, an improvement in early childhood education and anger management training. While parenting education was the primary focus, reducing economic and social barriers and stressors were also at the heart of the program implemented in Imperial County. Through this comprehensive and collaborative approach, Imperial County has made a positive impact on the parents and children in this County and has helped create a new generation of successful parents in the County and in the State.