

Defining Equity in Early Language Learning from a Community Prevention Perspective



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Introduction

The Problem

- Children first learn language through the number and quality of daily interactions they have with their adult caregivers beginning at birth.
- We know that inequities exist in children's language learning opportunities, particularly among those experiencing the stresses of poverty (Hart & Risley, 1995).
- We define equity in early language learning opportunity in terms the number of rich language environments for all children.

Solution

- Creating equity in children's language learning environments and thereby promoting learning and school readiness at the population level is our goal.
- Our ecological solution is a multisectoral community partnership with a mission to promote early language and improve school readiness (KC Brain Builders).

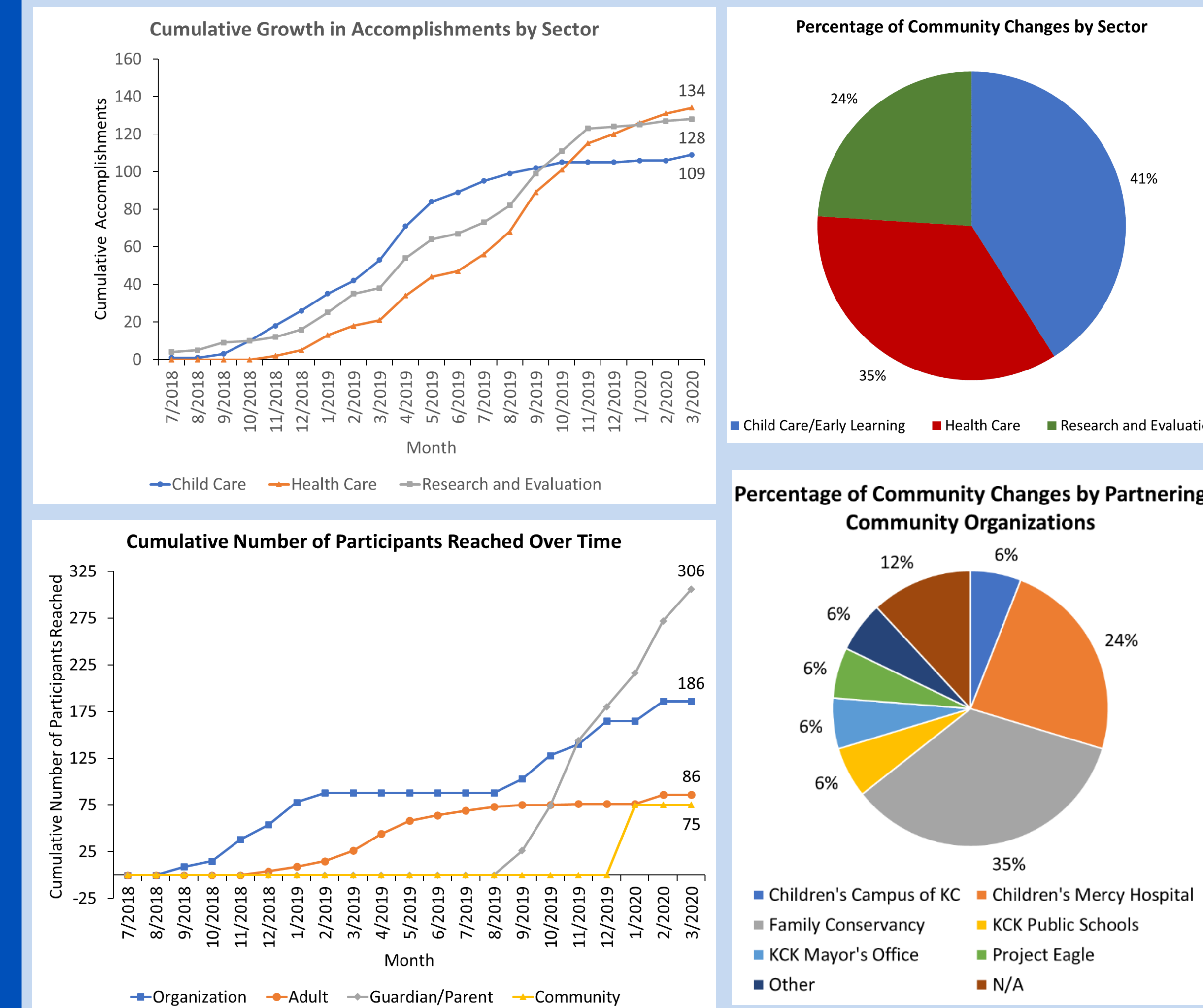
Purpose. To develop the needed capacity and evaluate in a pilot intervention study

Research Questions

1. What capacity building activities, products, and tools were the outcomes in support of the BWG community initiative?
2. To what extent were the BWG initiative's actions implemented?
3. What changes occurred in BWG practices, programs, and policies?

A community-wide multisector intervention holds promise in building equity in young children's language learning opportunities and school readiness.

Results (Continu.)



Discussion

- **Recap.** The multisector intervention was measurably effective in producing desired actions and changes in 3 sectors of 1 community.
- While promising, future research is needed including more sectors in the intervention and measures of child-family reach, language environment improvements, and children's language outcomes. (KC Brain Builders)
- **Significance** The intervention has potential for replication by other communities improving equity in children's learning opportunities, language outcomes
- Policymakers, program directors, and community leaders should consider the approach and support further research and development.
- **Reference**

Greenwood, C. R., Carta, J. J., Schnitz, A. G., Walker, D., Gabriel, D., Thompson, V., & Watson-Thompson, J. (2021). Progress toward a multisectoral community intervention approach to prevention of the Word Gap. *Behavior and Social Issues*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42822-021-00074-y>

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Method

Participants One community & three sectors:

1. Pediatric Health (12 nurses in one hospital and 62 newborns)
2. Childcare (3 Centers, 14 teachers, and 34 children)
3. R&E Team (5 PhD researchers, 1 assistant, 2 RAs)

Measurement The online BWG Community Check Box Evaluation system.

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Procedures

Combination evidence-based interventions were simultaneously implemented within and across community sectors over 21 months creating multiple intervention effects as compared to only one single intervention in one sector. Thus, anywhere a child is in a community, their language acquisition was supported.

Interventions

1. Community Level-Multisectoral Partnership Intervention, KC Brain Builders Community Action Planning Guide
2. Child-Family Level:
 - Talk With Me Baby! In Pediatric Practice (<https://www.talkwithmemybaby.org/>)
 - LENA Grow in Child Care (<https://www.lena.org/lena-grow/>)

Results

1. Established the capacity, mobilization, and activities needed in a community effort (i.e., Guide, Check Box, Media)
2. Documented 371 total community BWB actions: Pediatric Health Care [134], R & E [128], and Child Care [109])
3. Community changes were made in practices, programs, and policies