



## THROUGH THE LENS OF FAMILY

Promoting Positive Family Interaction  
Demonstration Project—Year 1 Evaluation

**POISE**  
FOUNDATION

# POISE FOUNDATION

## VISION AND MISSION

*We envision a Pittsburgh Region in which all members of the Black community are empowered and self-sufficient.*

This vision is the core of the Foundation's philosophy and approach to its work.

Our mission is:

*To assist the Pittsburgh Region's Black community in achieving self-sustaining practices through strategic leadership, collective giving, grantmaking, and advocacy.*

## WHO ARE WE

POISE Foundation began in December of 1980 as the first public foundation in the state of Pennsylvania organized and managed by African Americans. The purpose of the Foundation is to develop and enhance the participation of Black philanthropists in the economic and social development of the Black community. For 36 years, the Foundation has been supporting programs that add value to the quality of life of Black Pittsburgh and its surrounding regions; and has expanded its services to impact Black families and their communities across the US. This was the vision of our founder Bernard H. Jones, Sr., of an empowered community, able to take care of itself.

POISE Foundation employs collective giving to enable donors to realize their philanthropic goals, pooling resources to provide funding to worthy organizations and causes. Donors may give to the Foundation's general unrestricted endowment, where funds are pooled to make a greater impact on the Pittsburgh Region. Donors may also start their own individual endowment funds to support their specific charitable interests and organizations throughout the United States. As of December 2015, the Foundation manages more than 160 funds with a balance of over \$6,500,000.

Collective giving enables POISE to provide grants to programs and projects that primarily benefit the Black Community. The Foundation's grants are typically small, yet over its grantmaking history; POISE has impacted the Greater Pittsburgh Region and beyond with more than \$10,000,000 of direct financial support to organizations assisting our most underserved populations. The Foundation currently focuses its unrestricted endowed funds on programs and services that aim to Strengthen Black Families.

## C R E D I T S

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## A Few Words From **POISE FOUNDATION**

**W**e are pleased to share this first-year evaluation report for our Promoting Positive Family Interaction (PPFI) Demonstration Grant. The report provides an overview of lessons learned by POISE Foundation, grantee organizations, and participating families.

This past year has been one of tremendous learning and growth for the Foundation, as we wrestled with traditional paradigms of how foundations intentionally collaborate with organizations using a developmental evaluation approach. This evaluation method highlights our dedication to co-create, with our grantees, meaningful programming that is designed to equip families with innovative tools and resources for self-empowerment.

From the beginning of this journey nearly four years ago, we have been committed to documenting and sharing the evolution of our thinking and practice. We offer this report as the beginning of a promising strategy that we hope will have an indelible impact on Black families.

This report and our experience thus far, validate our belief that families are a core social institution and play a critical role in the community. We hope that, after you read this report, you are encouraged to incorporate a family-centered lens in your own organization or grantmaking portfolio.

As we continue this work, we look forward to maximizing the collective impact in supporting the institution of family.

*Karris Jackson*  
Vice President of Programs  
POISE Foundation

*Aerion Abney*  
Program Officer  
POISE Foundation





THROUGH THE LENS OF FAMILY  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

PPFI Demonstration Project—Year 1 Evaluation

## Background and Overview

In 2012, the POISE Foundation made a deliberate shift in its grantmaking strategy. The Foundation no longer set out to tackle the structural, political and economic challenges faced by Pittsburgh's Black community through broad, short-term, small-scale grants. Instead, it shifted to a strategy that sought to intentionally strengthen and support the Black family as a core and vital institution in community redevelopment. Through this new family-centered grantmaking focus, POISE moved to invest in efforts that lifted up and leveraged the role of the Black family as teacher, responder, supporter, advocate and change agent in the lives of its members and its community.

One of the Foundation's signature grantmaking efforts in this work is the Promoting Positive Family Interaction (PPFI) Demonstration Project. PPFI was developed in response to the expressed desire of families living in Pittsburgh to increase the quantity and quality of the time that members were able to spend together in their homes and communities. Through PPFI, POISE supports programs that aim to, among other things:

- Improve family interactions and communication
- Increase family-time activities (e.g. family dinners, family nights and family outings)
- Encourage family civic engagement
- Strengthen family resilience

In July 2014, after an eight-month Request for Proposal (RFP) process, POISE awarded its first round of PPFI grants to four Pittsburgh-based organizations: Amachi Pittsburgh, Melting Pot Ministries, The Center that C.A.R.E.S., and University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Department of Family Medicine. Each organization received \$20,000 and year-round technical assistance to support the adoption of a family-centered approach in its work. Throughout the year, grantees:

- Implemented their PPFI projects
- Aligned other programs and practices with this family-

centered approach, as appropriate

- Engaged in a continuous learning process that supported innovation and increased organizational capacity in the area of family-centered practice

Likewise, the POISE Foundation engaged in its own process of continuous learning, as it:

- Developed greater capacity to employ a family-centered lens in its grantmaking
- Learned to use an emergent strategy approach in its work
- Engaged PPFI grantees in a participatory (i.e., partnership-based) approach to learning during the first year of the PPFI Demonstration Project

This year of service provision, strategic learning and capacity building proved valuable for the Foundation, grantee organizations and participating families.

What follows is a summary of findings that emerged from the PPFI first-year evaluation. This summary highlights not only family experiences and outcomes, but also (1) the path taken and lessons learned along the way by POISE and its grantees, and (2) the implications of these lessons on the next iteration of the work.

# The PFFI Demonstration Project

## AT A GLANCE

### *PFFI Families*

A total of 50 families and 164 individual family members (65 adults and 99 children) participated in this first year of the PFFI Demonstration Project. Thirty-five of these families consisted of a mother and at least one child; 12 included a mother, a father, and one or more children; one included a father and his children; and two included at least one parent, at least one child, and an extended family member (e.g., a grandparent or aunt).

Sixty-six percent of these families were African American; 22% identified as African born; 8% were bi-racial; and 4% identified as other. All participating families were low income; some had one or more working adults, while some did not.

Ninety-four percent of these families had pre-existing relationships with their grantee organizations (e.g., a child participating in a program, employment with the organization, or a community relationship).

### *PFFI Projects*

During the course of the year, each project explored and adopted new ways to incorporate a family lens into its pre-existing programs (see Table 1). For example, two projects added family counseling and family mentoring activities to their existing menus of services. In addition, all PFFI projects included multi-family group activities (e.g., psychoeducational groups and family outings).

Family members' participation in these multi-family group sessions varied slightly from project to project. For example, one project involved both adults and children in the same psychoeducational sessions on an ongoing basis, while others held independent sessions for parents and for children (often around the same topic), but periodically brought both generations together. These variations were based on individual project design and the ages of the children involved.

There were also slight variations in project goals. However, each PFFI project sought, in some way, to increase:

- Family members' sense of a shared identity (e.g., their togetherness or relationship to one another)
- The quantity and quality of time spent together
- Healthy family behavior (e.g., healthy communication, acts of tenderness, etc.)
- Individual and family coping (e.g. stress management, problem solving and mutual support)

Each PFFI Project also used creative family-centered activities that promoted healthy family interaction. These included role plays and, in one project, psychodrama<sup>1</sup>. It also included interactive relationship-building activities (e.g., a ball-of-yarn activity to illustrate teamwork and the concept of "it takes a village"<sup>2</sup>) and experiential activities (e.g., the family S.W.O.T. Analysis). In two of the projects, families also crafted vision and/or mission statements.

<sup>1</sup> A therapeutic technique that uses spontaneous dramatization, role playing and dramatic self-presentation to investigate and gain insight into people's lives.

<sup>2</sup> In this activity, people stand in a circle. One person holds the end of a ball of yarn, then tosses the ball to someone else across the circle. People toss the ball back and forth to one another, letting the yarn unwind, until a single interconnected web has formed.





Table 1

Number of Families and Individuals Participating in PPFi Projects	
<b>Amachi Pittsburgh: Strengthening Black Families</b>	9 families 11 adult members 13 child members
<b>Center that C.A.R.E.S: Family Time</b>	5 families 8 adult members 6 child members
<b>Melting Pot Ministries: Family Matters</b>	34 families 42 adult members 80 child members
<b>University of Pittsburgh: Teen Mom, Young Dads Program</b>	2 young couples 4 young adult members 3 young child members (children did not participate in project activities)



## Key Project Activities

## Project Focus

Monthly multi-family groups (skill development; role playing; psycho-education)

Multi-family outings (included both parent-only and parent-child outings)  
Family meal time

Family values and priorities (family mission statements)

Family coping and resilience

Family support

Family time

Healthy communication

Healthy parent-child relationships

Weekly multi-family groups (skill development; role playing; psychoeducation)

Multi-family outings

Family meal time

Family savings plan

Family identity ("Let us \_\_\_\_\_ together"; family vision statements)

Family planning (activities, responsibilities, goals)

Family problem solving

Family time

Family support

Healthy relationships

Healthy communication

2 family retreats

3 parent education workshops

1 family vacation (day trip)

3 Teen Center psychodrama sessions

Family meal time

Healthy communication

Healthy parent-child relationships

Family coping and stress management

Parenting tools

Family time

Family affection (acts of tenderness, etc.)

Six-week psycho-educational program for couples

Family meal time

Healthy relationships

Healthy communication

Family planning (contraception)

Career readiness

Self-care (stress management and depression awareness)

Spirituality

## Preliminary Organizational Findings:

# SHIFTING OUR NARRATIVES AND PRACTICES

To support the goals of the project, the Foundation and PPFI grantees used a family-centered lens to examine and transform their thinking and practices. This required shifts in the ways all these organizations considered, engaged and supported families.

For example, during the RFP process, POISE noticed that the traditional ways of understanding, engaging, supporting and leveraging the strengths of families—Black families in particular—were limited, and sometimes restrictive. Some examples:

- Families were more often characterized by structure (e.g., a father, a mother and two teenagers) rather than by relationships (e.g., communication patterns, family roles, family emotional and social support, and family time).
- Most of the proposed projects focused on individual-level interventions—e.g., just the parent or just the child, with limited interaction between the two.
- The proposed projects were overwhelmingly child-centered rather than family-centered. While adult family members were usually included, these projects focused primarily on child development rather than family development.

In response, POISE realized that it needed to reexamine its thinking regarding its investment and role in family-centered grantmaking. In particular, it needed to:

- Be thoughtful and intentional about its approach at every stage of the grantmaking process.
- Recognize that its success was intricately linked with its ability—and the ability of others—to ask and answer the question, So what does it take to do this work?
- Shift its thinking and practice in response to the answer to that question. This created a new appreciation of what it means for the Foundation to shift the paradigm.

- Become clearer about what it means by “strengthening Black families” and “promoting positive family interactions.” The field was and is saturated with differing interpretations.
- Adopt an explicit focus on (1) the relational aspect of family and (2) family as a core social institution.
- Introduce potential grantees to the Foundation’s new thinking and focus.
- Create ways to support potential grantees in developing and implementing projects that align with POISE’s new grantmaking strategy. Activities included a half-day grantwriting session; organizational interviews during the RFP process; and ongoing coaching and technical assistance throughout both the RFP process and the first year of project implementation.
- Become a thought leader in the area of family-centered practice.

Ultimately, grantees were those organizations whose projects showed the most promise—in values, thinking and practice—for using and leveraging a family-centered approach.

Each PPFI grantee was also required to move from something to something else, so that it could better uplift and support Black families. For example, each organization had to shift:

- **The beliefs and perspectives** it held about families. Many had to move from a children-and-their-families paradigm to a family-centered paradigm. Families could no longer be understood through

a problem-saturated lens, in which the grantee organization identified the family as “the problem,” or as unengaged or uninterested in the health and wellbeing of their youngest members. Instead, family relationships and family life had to be recognized as vital aspects of young people’s lives.

- **How it understood core issues.** One organization had previously understood and responded to parental incarceration through a child-centered lens. In working with POISE, it learned to treat incarceration as a family issue that affects every family member, as well as many family relationships and the family’s relationship with the community. This new frame allowed the organization to create and implement practices that better supported the entire family, and better addressed the social and emotional isolation that families of incarcerated members often feel.
- **How it engaged families in community spaces.** One organization had a longstanding practice of inviting parents only to closing events and field trips. As part of its new PPFi initiative, it created a space in its community center that it safeguarded for family time. This space promoted and supported togetherness. In addition, the organization regularly organized family units under the rallying cry of “Let us \_\_\_\_\_” (e.g. plan, serve, play, grow, etc.). In reflecting on this change in practice, a staff member wrote: *We have found that this [created space] allows for individual members to share things that are happening in their lives. You would be surprised at the lack of an opportunity for a platform. At Family Matters, we do not take this for granted.*
- **How it conceptualized and framed family life.** As one project applied a family lens in its work, a more complex and nuanced view of family life emerged. As a result, its proposed interventions had to be modified. As one project staff member noted, *Although you have research that drives it [the intervention], the participants will take you where they want to go.* Another wrote: *An important insight garnered was simply to be open, understanding, and*

*accepting of our young families and their distinct situations. These days, nuclear families are no longer the norm, and family life is complex.*

In each of these cases, shifts in grantee organizations’ concepts and viewpoints led to practice decisions that were more welcoming and inclusive of families. As a result, grantees were able to build more authentic and supportive relationships among the families they served. They were also able to create unique spaces and opportunities to help leverage families’ strengths.

Furthermore, each grantee developed a new way of talking about its work with key stakeholders, using a family lens. These reframed conversations helped two organizations secure additional funding from other sources, which helped them to broaden or deepen their work with families.

These shifts in thinking and practice were possible in part because of (1) the ongoing consultation and coaching the organizations received from POISE and (2) the time the organizations spent together as members of the PPFi learning cohort. Participation in the cohort session provided grantee organizations, and their leaders and staffs, with an opportunity for mutual learning and joint planning, both among themselves and with the Foundation. As one staff member observed, I first thought it was too much work for the little bit of money, but then I started thinking...if you do this thing...the way that they want... because they provide you with a consultant to help you... She paused to reflect on the mentoring she had received in the startup phases of her own organization, how much she missed it, and how much this experience reminded her of it. Then she added, ...then when they brought you in [as a consultant]...I realized that your value was more than the money that they gave us, but the value was...I finally had somebody who gets it, who understands what it is we are dealing with...I think I saw value added to [the organization] for the first time because POISE had enough sense to understand that by giving a consultant to me you were literally...you were actually giving me another ear and another resource.



POISE and PPFi grantees thus become peers in the learning process. This interaction also generated real-time feedback that supported refinements at both the Foundation and grantee levels.

For example, as POISE learned more about an organization's journey, Foundation staff became keenly aware of the time it would take to make lasting shifts within that organization in order to support family-centered work. As a result, POISE shifted its commitment from a one-year grant to a multi-year grant. Similarly, organizations started to think about their own work over the long term, and about the deeper organizational shifts they could make to institutionalize what they were learning and developing.

PPFi grantees also quickly recognized the value of taking on this work together vs. operating as individual organizations. They not only leveraged this opportunity, but saw how they could broaden the discussion by including others in the field. This interest was the impetus for a fall 2015 symposium, jointly planned by grantees and POISE, that brought together about 125 people with diverse expertise to discuss family-centered approaches in community settings.

## Preliminary Findings for PPFi Families:

# MY FAMILY, YOUR FAMILY, OUR FAMILY

This shift in thinking and practice for both POISE and grantee organizations—and the clear value of that shift—were clearly reflected in the experiences of participating families.

Five salient themes emerged over the course of the year:

- **The value of a place where people can be and do family.** Preliminary findings suggest that, for PPFi



families, the family home has become less of a center of gravity, and more of a pass-through location for family members as they manage the competing demands of life (e.g., work, school, after-school activities, friendships, illness, etc.). Across projects, PPFi-sponsored programs became places where family members could reconnect with one another. In these programs, they could both be (e.g., reestablish a shared identity and a sense of togetherness) and do (e.g., act and engage in ordinary family processes) together. Although family members typically saw each other at home every day, they felt more attentive and connected in the time-limited spaces provided by their PPFi-sponsored programs. They were able to:



*need to get, like we used to, especially when I wasn't working. So playing a game was fun, to be able to watch back and look at the fun we were having brought a big smile to my face...*

- **Taking what happened in the program sessions out into the world.** The connections family members made continued into other areas of family life—e.g., family dinners (We had dinner together...around the table!). Some examples:

- » In cases where one parent was incarcerated, knowledge and insights from the sessions rippled outward. One mother explained how her family—including her incarcerated husband—discussed information outside of the sessions: *...he knows when we come to our monthly meeting for the workshop. When we leave he calls...oh, he's like, was the meeting yesterday? Well, what happened at the meeting? Did you have homework? Oh, what kind of homework? Then we go over it, and he's like, next time do this or do that...He gives us his input.*

- » Young participants reported seeing changes in their parents' behavior from participating in PPFi projects. As one daughter in a parent-child group observed, *You know how they feel; you get insight—how they feel about you.* And a son in a parent-child group noted, *Ever since the Family Matters, my mom has been on me...It makes me feel that she cares more...*

- » Both parents and children reported seeing changes in their relationships around house rules and chores. A mother in a multi-family group said of her son, *He changed...now his friends know what to do.* A son in a multi-family group explained, *I have to do my chores first before I play the game.*

- **Creating a community of mutual learning and support.** In pre-test and intake materials, many participants said that their families had limited support networks or needed greater support; some expressed a need for more support in their roles as parents. Later, in focus group conversations,

- » Catch up with each other. As one mother explained in a multi-family group session, *...a lot of things that came out that was going on in your house, you didn't even realize what was going on.*
- » Have meaningful conversations and solve problems together. Another mother observed in a multi-family group session, *It was from both perspectives, like us being adults and the kids were able to address the issues that they had with us..."I'm not going to get mad. Be honest: what do I do that you don't like, that you would like for me to change?"*
- » Have fun and create lasting family memories together. A mother at a family retreat said, *It was fun because my son and I don't get that extra—you know, that extracurricular time, that extracurricular activity like we*





participants noted and discussed the important role the PPFi multi-family groups had played in their family lives. Participants saw the groups not only as places to improve their family relationships, but also as places to connect with other families, and to receive and offer support during difficult times. Families began to see other families as surrogate extended family that could also provide support and resources. This was a big change for many families; in the past, they would not have reached out for support. Participants in all projects also saw the multi-family groups as safe places to open up. They noted that the environment, the people, and the connections they made all contributed to the safety of the space. Many also observed that other group members had had experiences similar to their own. Notably, families also felt that they learned things from each other in their multi-family groups. As one mother explained, *I learned a lot from my peers—you know, they taught me how to calm down, stay calm, don't react to everything...I was the snappy one...I learned from my elders; they let me know, "Calm down; we got this".... It's good to know that people still got your back. A mother participating in a different project put it this way: It helped me realize that I'm not the only one that went through those problems. There were so many other moms that were going through some of the same problems that I was going through....Hearing the feedback of "I did this with my child, I did that with my child" helped me learn how to divide my time between both of my kids...* Families also saw a shared purpose, not only for themselves, but for their communities. As one mother explained, *We are definitely focusing on our children first...We're focusing on our children so that our children can then work on the community...that it could spill over into the community.*

- **The approach is working.** Family members overwhelmingly said that their PPFi project had an overall positive impact on their personal and family lives. The process was new for many of them, and at first they didn't know what to expect. Ultimately, however, they experienced it as an opportunity to:



- » Share and receive support. As a mother in a multi-family group explained, *It was therapeutic...I was able to open up...nice to have people to listen and not judge you. You are not alone.*
- » Learn how to better support each other. Another mother in a multi-family group observed that it helped her understand *...the importance of supporting our children in their growth, physical and mental, and supporting our incarcerated family to help keep them motivated and the family positive.*
- » Have fun with each other. A son in a multi-family group said simply, *We had fun, too.*
- » Strengthen family bonds. A mom in a multi-family group said this about her son: *It brought us a little closer together because we didn't...he really didn't talk to me about things...He wouldn't come to me, but now he's more open.*

- **Families had reached the brink of substantive change.** These PPFi projects were and are meeting a need that wasn't being met in other places—and participants expressed a strong desire to continue in their projects. In fact, one of the projects, which started out with a time-limited design, shifted to an open-ended approach because the families did not want to stop attending at the end of the eight weeks. As one mother explained, *We are really at that brink of communicating...We're at the beginning of our strength....Don't want go back to our routine....* In other projects, families expressed an interest in longer family retreats, opportunities for more parent-child interaction (a request made by both parents and teens), and more individual sessions with their families. Families were also interested in engaging other families and bringing what they had learned into the broader community. They saw themselves as key stakeholders and essential partners in the engagement of other families in PPFi projects. For many of them, this was just the beginning of a longer journey.

## Analyzing the Findings:

### What it Means

POISE set out to accomplish two primary goals through the PPFi project:

1. Shift the paradigm of non-profit organizations and encourage them to strengthen Black families by uplifting, supporting and leveraging them in practice and in community settings.
2. Support programs that lead to improved family relationships (e.g., better family communication, increased family time, etc.) for Black families.

Preliminary findings suggest that both of these aims were met in year one.

Participating organizations demonstrated increased knowledge and skills in family-centered practice, as evidenced by their:

- Successful implementation of projects that engaged families and led to promising outcomes for program participants.
- Critical thinking about how they might engage families in everyday practice, in culturally and contextually appropriate ways.
- Ability to communicate the importance of a family-centered approach to key stakeholders, including board members, funders and peer organizations.
- Successful organizational shifts that now support and sustain family-centered practices, such as family-focused evaluation tools, family engagement at multiple levels of programming, etc.

Participating families also reported improvement in their family relationships and relationships with grantees. They reported:

- Increased knowledge and skills in parenting, communication, problem-solving and planning as a

family.

- Greater connection within the family—as well as with other families.
- Feeling more valued, appreciated and connected to their grantee organization. (This was a new experience for many families.)

Findings also revealed some unintended outcomes and insights. These will help guide the future work of practitioners, funders, researchers and evaluators. These include:

- The power of the multi-family group, and the multiple needs it can meet for families, should be explored further. The response to these groups was profoundly positive, and they appear to offer a great deal of value to families.
- There seems to be great promise in providing spaces outside of the home that intentionally promote healthy interaction for families. We need to explore and better understand family engagement and interaction in these community spaces.
- Full participation by families was the result of multiple factors. On the one hand, some families faced multiple barriers to participation, including competing demands and the transient nature of family life in their communities. On the other, the support or engagement of just one trusted person (a child, a friend or an elder) encouraged many families to participate. Grantee organizations also learned that it was necessary to spend a significant amount of time building relationships with families and orienting them to the new family-centered approach.
- We need to better understand the benefits of smaller group size. It became clear that engaging a relatively small number of families in an intensive group process over an extended period of time contributed to the success of PPFI projects in year one. Thus, any attempt to bring this work to scale (without increasing staffing and funding at the same scale) may thin out relationships and reduce the

overall quality and effectiveness of these programs. The larger the group, the more difficult it will be to have the intensive engagement provided in PPFI projects.

- It is critical to embed a subject matter expert/evaluator throughout the course of the work. The conceptual shifts made by grantees were directly related to the intensive coaching, capacity building and technical assistance they received throughout the first year. This ongoing consultation and technical assistance created continuous opportunities for both POISE and grantees to think critically about their work through a family-centered lens, and to assure that their practices supported the major tenets of family-centered approaches. Furthermore, the strategic focus on evaluation, as well as the ongoing engagement of the evaluator across all stages of the work, provided an opportunity for the Foundation and grantees to engage in a rigorous learning process that refined and strengthened projects over time. These real-time shifts based on critical reflection and lessons learned were instrumental in generating success during year one.
- There appears to be great value in creating a close relationship between grantees and the Foundation throughout the entire process. This closeness gave the Foundation, as well as grantee organizations, access to ongoing real-time feedback, so that necessary adjustments could be made to refine and improve each program. This relationship also allowed both the Foundation and organizations to jointly influence the broader field. However, as in a family, this closeness also created some challenges and issues. These will need to be examined, explored and addressed.

Some key insights also emerged regarding evaluation:

- Year one provided invaluable lessons regarding new evaluation questions, as well as new methods for obtaining and triangulating data. Because PPFI

projects collected family-level data, organizations needed to harvest the perspective of more than one member of each family on each issue.

- Grantees also had to find natural ways to incorporate the evaluation questions in the startup phase of the project. Project staffs had to find a balance between first building the necessary relationships and collecting the data needed to track outcomes.
- The evaluation process highlighted the importance of using multiple data sources and triangulating data in order to understand family experiences. If grantees had only used survey data collection methods, they (and POISE) would have run into two big issues in the data analysis process. First, there would have been the potential issue of missing data, since all family members were not present at the administration of pre- and post-participation surveys. Second, there would have been reliability issues, because (1) the time between the pre- and post-participation surveys varied from project to project, and (2) there were variations in how the project leads administered the survey (e.g., the protocol was dependent on

participants' comfort levels, literacy levels, ages, etc.). Finally, each post-participation survey provided a snapshot in time rather than an ongoing perspective of family change. This last point is important, because many of the post-participation surveys revealed minimal change—yet findings from family focus groups, process notes, and organizational reflections and focus groups tell a much more positive story of the impact on families. In the future, it will continue to be important to collect multiple types of data from multiple sources in multiple ways, based on specific participants, contexts and project designs.

In short, the Promoting Positive Family Interactions (PPFI) Demonstration Project accomplished its primary goals in year one. Preliminary findings suggest positive outcomes and improvements at both the organizational and family levels. In addition, some important lessons have been learned that can shape future directions in the field.

As the POISE Foundation and its PPFI grantees begin year two, lessons learned in year one will serve as the impetus for strengthening and refining projects going forward.





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Susan Batten, *President & CEO, ABFE: A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities*

Dr. Leon Caldwell, *Consultant, Caldwell & Associates, LLC*

Dwayne Barker, *Family Advocate*







**POISE**  
FOUNDATION

Two Gateway Center, Suite 1700  
603 Stanwix, Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
Phone - 412-281-4967 | Fax: 412-562-0292  
<http://www.poisefoundation.org>

