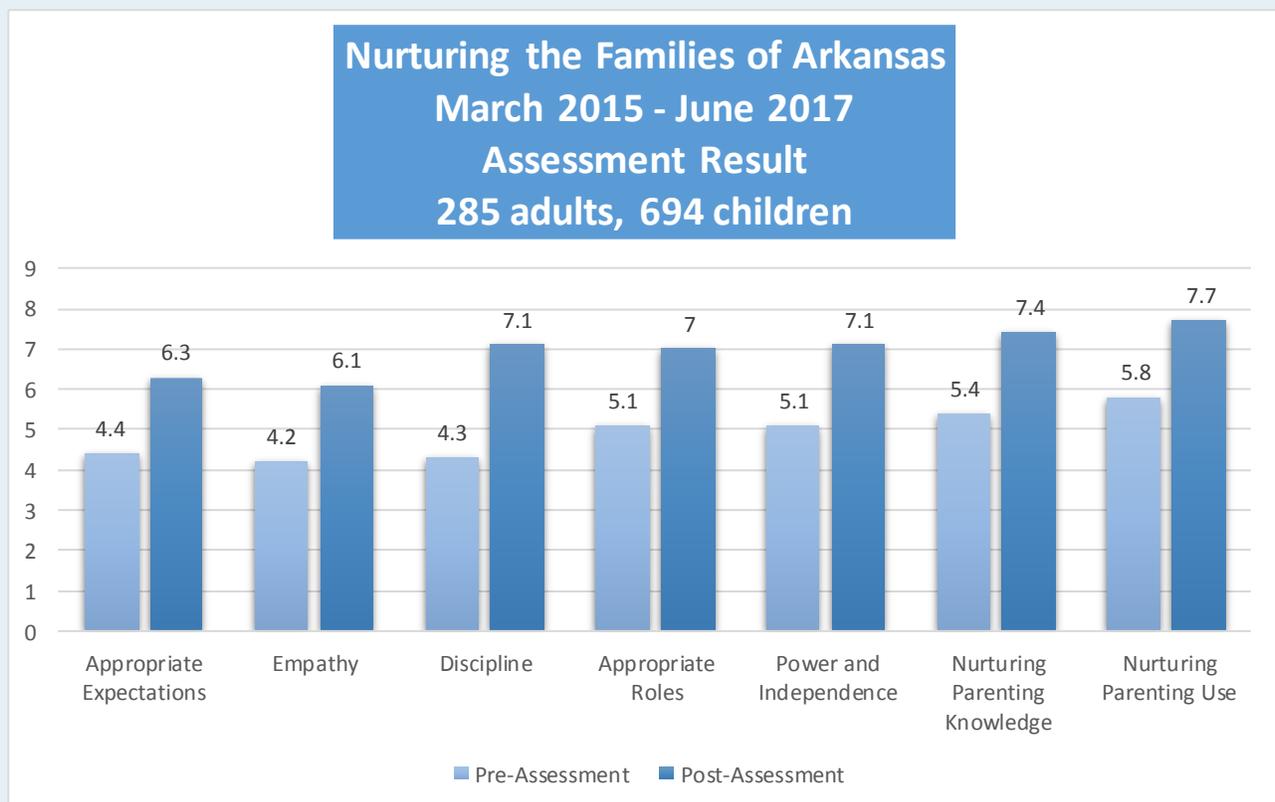


Nurturing the Families of Arkansas

- ◆ Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services sponsored initiative;
- ◆ Demonstration project for families in which there is an active in-home protective service case, at least one child in the home is between the ages of 5 and 11, and substance misuse (if applicable) does not prevent the family from participating in sessions;
- ◆ Developed from the evidence-based *Nurturing Parenting Program*, written by Dr. Stephen Bavolek, international authority in field of child abuse and neglect;
- ◆ An intensive, 16-session (2.5 hours each) family intervention with assessments conducted at identified phases (prior, during, and after) throughout the education process;
- ◆ Lessons are competency-based, allowing both parents and parent educators to track their progress in learning new parenting skills;
- ◆ All sessions include concurrent parent and children’s sessions, as well as allocated time practicing the skills as a family;
- ◆ Sessions are delivered in the manner that best fits each family’s needs—group-based setting, home-based setting, or a combination of settings. Individualized tutorials are provided, as needed.



“The ladies [educators] who taught had such love [for] children and [were] very respectful to parents.” NFA Parent

Nurturing the Families of Arkansas

The five *Nurturing the Families of Arkansas* parenting constructs known to be protective factors with families where child abuse and/or neglect are present or at risk of occurring

- 1.) Understanding age-appropriate developmental expectations for each child;
- 2.) Developing a sense of caring and compassion for self, others, and the environment;
- 3.) Providing children with positive discipline;
- 4.) Increasing self-awareness and appropriate family roles; and
- 5.) Developing a healthy sense of empowerment in both parents and children.

The long-term anticipated outcomes of this program are to significantly reduce the rates of recidivism as well as the number of children entering foster care.

A survey conducted by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. reported that *“overwhelmingly, families reported good communication with their instructor, with families also indicating the instructor focused on their positive qualities as a parent. Instructors were found to have treated families with respect and modeled good parenting behaviors.*

The positive exchange with the instructors resulting in all families agreeing the relationship with their child had improved with what they learned in the parenting classes, they were more confident in the parenting, and they were able to keep their children in their care or have them returned to their care, for those whose children were placed into substitute care.”

Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. also reported that several parents noted they have learned more effective tools than spanking a child and more ways to handle real life situations.



Interviews by Hornby Zeller Associates, Inc. with agency stakeholders noted that placing an emphasis on the families' strengths and engaging in individualized service planning were useful tools in engaging families. They also noted that continuing to support families, even when a session was missed and make-up sessions were needed, helped families stay engaged and complete the program.

