

# IMPACT

EVALUATING HOW **GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION** AFFECTS INDICATORS OF CHILD, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

## GaFCP Strengthens Partnerships and Enhances Local Strategies

Georgia Family Connection Partnership (GaFCP) strengthens local action to achieve better outcomes for every child, family, and community in the state across three core strategies:

1. supporting Georgia Family Connection Collaboratives in all 159 counties;
2. promoting informed decision-making through data, evaluation, and research; and
3. developing, maintaining, and expanding partnerships.

The **summer 2025 edition of IMPACT** explored GaFCP's role in helping Collaboratives use data more effectively to boost their opportunities for success. This edition focuses on how GaFCP

strengthens partnerships to address complex issues to achieve lasting impact on key indicators of child and family well-being.

GaFCP—with help from state, community, and investment partners—supports cohorts comprised of Collaboratives that develop and implement local strategies with resources, assistance, and a structure so they can team up with peers in other counties struggling to improve the same indicator. Each cohort is supported by an advisory committee that can inform and address system challenges.

Through specialized technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning opportunities, cohorts build expertise within participating Collaboratives. They, in turn, share that knowledge with other Collaboratives to achieve lasting change across the state.

### GaFCP Helps State Agencies Achieve Better Outcomes for Children and Families

The GaFCP Outcomes Team interviewed 15 state stakeholders and GaFCP Board members in FY24 and 25 to hear their viewpoints on significant ways GaFCP:

- connects partners to our statewide network so they can share information and resources,
- provides an infrastructure for Collaboratives to engage in cross-county work,
- equips local and state-level decision-makers with current and relevant data, and
- supports the use of that data.

Key stakeholders described GaFCP as a supportive partner that facilitates access to communities while strengthening local partnerships and uniting their efforts statewide. Interviews revealed how GaFCP adds significant value, including modeling, facilitating, and brokering partnerships; offering a county-level go-to person for state agencies; identifying local needs; managing the Georgia KIDS COUNT® data; and raising the visibility of the Georgia *Civic Health Index*, grade-level reading, early learning and child care, and other critical issues.

### Improving Local Outcomes

GaFCP has convened five cohorts since 2016 with a focus on early childhood health and education, family support, and community partnerships for supporting youth.

The Outcomes Team interviewed 12 coordinators who have participated in GaFCP cohorts. They said cohorts create opportunities, empower local communities, and shape systems and population outcomes, and acknowledged GaFCP's role in:

- providing partnership opportunities,
- expanding programs and initiatives,
- engaging communities,
- identifying and developing methods to address barriers within systems,
- supporting data-driven decision-making, and
- achieving long-term positive community and population change.

Coordinators agreed that the additional funding has impacted their Collaboratives' functioning and strategy implementation by:

- strengthening their ability to expand resources and services,

- enhancing participation engagement,
- expanding community support and partnerships,
- strengthening program impact and outcomes, and
- reinforcing Collaborative relationships.

They also identified ways the cohort process drives positive community changes, including:

- improved educational outcomes,
- increased intentionality and accountability,
- enhanced service delivery and resource allocation,
- facilitated community partnerships,
- expanded population reach and strategy effectiveness,
- strengthened community collaboration, and
- increased community engagement.

# Lumpkin County Strategically Supports Families Through Cohort Work

## Lumpkin County Family Connection

participated in the Family Support Cohort in 2018, and Executive Director Brigette Barker said their strategy has transformed how partners work with one another.

“Our partners began working together more methodically and intentionally through the cohort, which helped develop a habit of thinking collaboratively on every project,” said Barker. “This shift has genuinely changed the culture of our partnerships. Collaboration is now instinctive.”

The partnerships forged through the cohort and a shared strategic focus led the Collaborative to develop a Student Outreach Center that continues to grow and thrive.

“Through intentional planning and evaluation processes established through the cohort, we tracked positive outcomes and saw a significant drop in child abuse and neglect rates from almost twice the state average in 2015 to well below the state average in 2022” said Barker. “I attribute that to our family support strategies—and our DFCS director being amazing.”



The Collaborative shares resources, co-hosts events, and has a handicapped-accessible bus—decorated with partners’ logos—that shares resources communitywide or brings families to services.

“All these successes are direct results of the relationships and coordinated approach we built through the Family Support Cohort,” said Barker.

## How Georgia Family Connection Collaboratives Can Enhance Community Work

- Reach out to GaFCP Data Manager Jacquan Jordan at [jacquan@gafcp.org](mailto:jacquan@gafcp.org) to bring national and Georgia KIDS COUNT® data to life for your local and state partners, investors, legislators, and others working to improve outcomes for children and families.
- Ask your regional manager to help you engage an array of partners, especially those critical to strategy implementation.
- Work with your Evaluation and Results Accountability (ERA) provider to disaggregate local data and identify geographic pockets of need and potential local partnerships.
- Utilize the GaFCP Communications Toolkit to better communicate your work and reach broader audiences.
- Use data from your Collaborative’s Partner Engagement Matrix to add intentionality to partner outreach efforts.
- Visit [gafcp.org/our-work](http://gafcp.org/our-work) to learn more about how cohorts are addressing key indicators of child and family well-being, and to connect with coordinators for peer-to-peer sharing opportunities.
- Contact GaFCP Director of External Affairs Elizabeth Turner at [elizabeth@gafcp.org](mailto:elizabeth@gafcp.org) to help establish and strengthen relationships with legislators and ensure that they’re familiar with your work.

Visit [gafcp.org/evaluation-snapshots](http://gafcp.org/evaluation-snapshots) to read the full *GaFCP Cohort Interviews Report* and the abstract.

*IMPACT* examines how collaboration among our local- and state-level partners affects indicators of child, family, and community well-being. Each edition presents a snapshot of a finding taken from reports produced by GaFCP’s Outcomes Team of researchers, including Metis Associates and Georgia State University.

GaFCP is a public-private partnership created by the State of Georgia and investors from the private sector to assist communities in addressing the serious challenges facing children and families. GaFCP also serves as a resource to state agencies across Georgia that work to improve the conditions of children and families.

Georgia KIDS COUNT® provides policymakers and citizens with current data they need to make informed decisions regarding priorities, services, and resources that impact Georgia’s children, families, and communities. Reach out to Rebekah Hudgins of the GaFCP Outcomes Team at [rhudgins@anthroeval.org](mailto:rhudgins@anthroeval.org) with any questions or feedback.



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