In 2011, the Centre for Early Childhood Development began an innovative family outreach project in the community of Gugulethu, in the Western Cape, South Africa. This home-visiting and caregiver education programme targeted the most vulnerable of families, working with caregivers with children 6 years and younger, who could not access ECD centre programming.

This project was led by two family outreach workers, working in these homes, sharing knowledge with the caregivers on how children develop and how families could enhance this. The information in this summary reflects the impact of this programme of 3 years. Two hundred and forty-three caregivers (with 267 children) participated in this programme, and took part in baseline assessments in 2011, 2012, and 2013. Seventy-three caregivers (with 131 children) were part of the 2014 follow-up survey.

**Baseline Assessments**
Conducted 2011, 2012, and 2013

- 243 families (267 children)

**Follow-up Assessments**
Conducted 2014

- 73 families (131 children)

**Average age:**
- **Baseline Assessments:**
  - Average age: 2 years
  - Range: 1 month old to 6 years old
  - 47.9% female
  - 52.1% male

- **Follow-up Assessments:**
  - Average age: 3 years 11 months
  - Range: 1 year 7 months old to 8 years old
  - 45.9% female
  - 54.1% male

None of the children attended an ECD programme

67% of the children attend a centre-based ECD programme
Who caregivers think are mainly responsible for teaching their children at home

More importance is now placed on ‘both parents’ and other family members.

How often caregivers read to their children*
(3 years and older)

Approximately 30% more caregivers now read to their children ‘twice or more’ times a week.

How often caregivers tell their children stories
(younger than 3 years old)

How often caregivers teach their children to count (3 years and older)

Approximately 30% more caregivers now tell their children stories more often (two or more times a week).

*From books, newspapers and magazines with pictures.
**Nutrition**

How often caregivers feed their children per day

- **More than 4 times a day**
  - Baseline: 35.4%
  - Follow-up: 43.8%
- **4 times a day**
  - Baseline: 20.8%
  - Follow-up: 77%
- **3 times a day**
  - Baseline: 21.8%
  - Follow-up: 1.1%

See here: Over 40% more caregivers now feed their children more often ('more than 4 times a day').

**Positive discipline**

How caregivers discipline their children (younger than 3 years old)

How caregivers discipline their children (3 years and older)

Caregivers now talk to and reason with children, whilst all other forms of discipline have drastically declined.
Our Family Outreach Project, in Gugulethu in the Western Cape, reached the most vulnerable of families; and in so doing made a significant difference in the lives of the caregivers and children in the community. This is seen in the significant changes in the way the caregivers view their role in the development and early education of their children; from the increase in reading, story-telling and counting activities, the change in discipline methods, to the increase in the number of caregivers that feed their children more meals per day, and importantly, to the increase in the number of children attending a centre-based ECD programme. This impact assessment demonstrates that, with quality family outreach programme, we are able to significantly shift caregivers’ attitudes and behaviours, thus providing their children with real opportunities to develop and thrive.

What next?

The Centre for Early Childhood Development now provides this project in various communities surrounding Gugulethu, with new caregivers and new children. For more information on this project, you can contact CECD on +2721 683 2420, email CECD at cecd@iafrica.com, or visit the CECD website at www.cecd.org.za.