

Trusted by over 50 clients across the U.S., including:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Massachusetts Department of Early Care and Education
- Colorado Department of Human Services
- HOPE Toledo
- First 5 Kings County
- Helen J. Walton Foundation
- Denver Preschool Program
- Summit County, Colorado
- Adams County Head Start
- Early Childhood Council of Larimer County
- Colorado Preschool Development Grant
- Piton Foundation
- El Paso County
- Larimer County Early Childhood Council

Project Examples

Community Needs Assessment

Client: Adams County Head Start

As part of ACHS's federal requirements, BRC evaluated the needs among the county's Head Start-eligible population. The study identified access to high-quality child care, housing, employment, and food security as significant needs.

Colorado Cost of Early Care Modeling

Client: Colorado Department of Human Services

BRC worked with CDHS to help identify the true costs to deliver quality child care compared to market rates and child care subsidy rates. The work helped inform rate setting in the state and helped identify additional funding

Toledo Needs Mapping and Cost Assessment

Client: Toledo Pre-K Team/HOPE

BRC was retained to help estimate the need for high-quality Pre-K in Toledo and the costs to create a universal Pre-K program. BRC also developed a comprehensive evaluation plan for the project. The results were used to inform development of a demonstration project with potential future expansion.



Building stronger early childhood systems

EARLY CHILDHOOD NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Needs assessments provide insight about the resources available in a community, who needs those resources, and how much it may cost to fulfill unmet need. They are used by communities to estimate the costs to create or expand programs for young children, such as Head Start programs or local Pre-K initiatives.

Brodsky Research and Consulting has conducted early childhood needs assessments for organizations across the country, and can help you plan and implement your own custom-designed project. We will help you step through each step of the assessment, from identifying goals to collecting and analyzing data to reporting and communication.

We specialize in working with Head Start grantees, who are required to complete a Community Needs Assessment at least once within each five-year grant period. This assessment must describe community strengths, needs, and resources and details on eligible children such as geographic location, languages spoken, and social service needs.

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COMPONENTS OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Brodsky Research and Consulting (BRC) specializes in collecting, analyzing, and presenting complex data in accessible ways to help stakeholders improve the

lives of children. We partner with government organizations, nonprofits, researchers, and other stakeholders, offering expert consultation in research design; data collection and analysis; interactive tools for decision-making; and technical and public writing to communicate results. Over the past decade we have worked with numerous states, counties, school districts, and other early childhood partners to build better systems for all children.



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Goal-setting and project management

An effective needs assessment begins with a big-picture vision of the change you wish to make in your community. The first step in this process is to clearly identify the goals of the project and the questions it will be able to answer.

Successful projects require close communication with clients and stakeholders, combined with ongoing feedback to assure work proceeds in a timely and efficient manner and that results are accurate and complete. BRC keeps projects aligned with their stated goals as they progress, ensuring they provide accurate insights to help you advocate on behalf of the children and families in your community.

Expert data collection and analysis

BRC is well-versed in the landscape of early childhood data and knows how to efficiently access data from a variety of sources. Commonly used sources include public databases such as the American Community Survey and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as well as state and local databases on workforce participation, economics, population, health outcomes, and other areas.

We employ a range of data analysis techniques appropriate to the research questions at hand, ranging from descriptive statistics to advanced regression modeling. These techniques concisely summarize patterns in data and inform recommendations and further steps for research.

Inclusive interviews and surveys

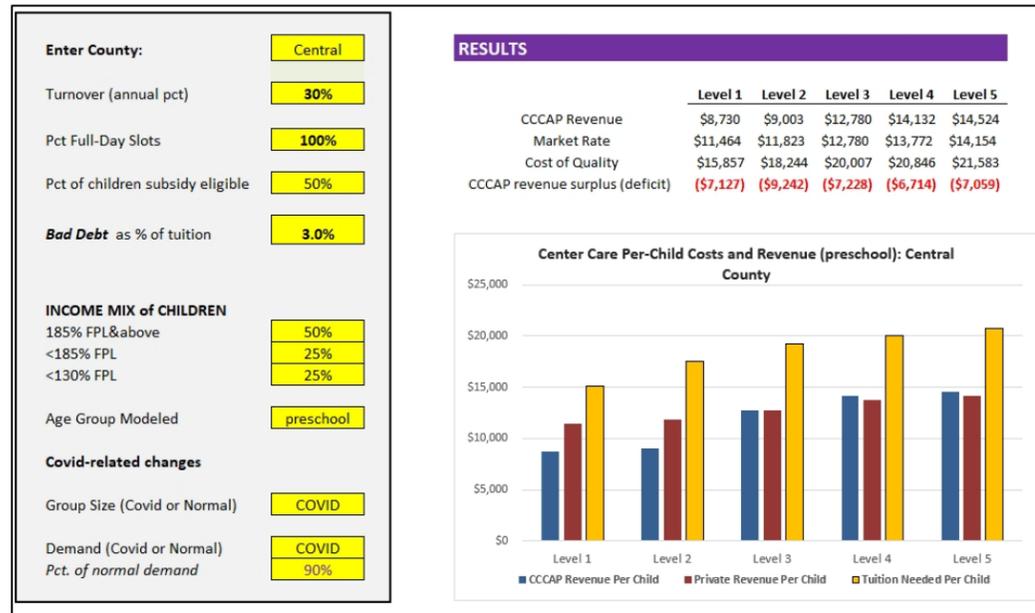
BRC conducts qualitative research that addresses the needs of diverse stakeholders, especially those from underrepresented groups. This process involves identifying participants, conducting interviews and focus groups, and analyzing results in order to extract common themes and sentiments.

Our custom survey creation process takes advantage of our library of survey items commonly used in needs assessments, allowing for quick implementation. Results are analyzed to identify patterns in data to answer the each project's key research questions.

Interactive cost and decision models

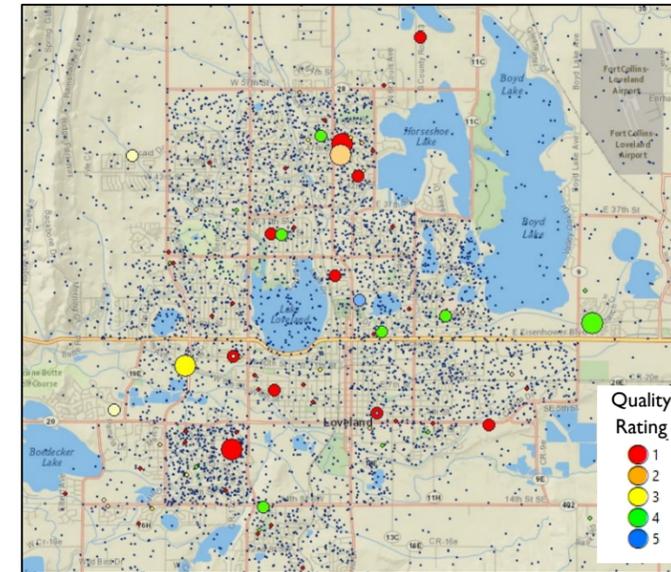
BRC are nationally-recognized experts at modeling the costs of early childhood programs and systems. Customized models can help pinpoint the true costs

to deliver components of a high-quality early childhood system, allowing clients to compare the implications of various assumptions and policy decisions. BRC's decision models are user-friendly and comprehensive, and are accompanied by detailed and accessible user guides and documentation of methodology.



Interactive models allow for easy scenario building with summarized results.

Mapping and data visualization



Child care provider quality ratings, licensed capacity, and eligible population are represented in this custom map.

Mapping presents a story about your community to audiences by graphically demonstrating how resources and needs vary across your area. Maps can incorporate demographic characteristics, locations of providers and services, and indicators of need such as poverty rates and health measures.

Clear and attractive data visualizations are essential in succinctly communicating results to broad audiences. BRC's custom maps leverage GIS technology to create beautiful visualizations custom-designed for each project.

Reporting and communication

Professional, comprehensive, and accurate public documents communicate insights to varied audiences and give your organization credibility. Our communication materials are customized to specific audiences, from highly detailed reports for technical users to accessible briefs for general audiences.

Our project timelines build in time for multiple revisions of reporting deliverables, from initial drafts to polished final products. This allows for a productive feedback cycle that ensures products are accurate, complete, and fully meet clients' expectations.

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Ask the right questions.

Clearly articulating research questions is an important step in making sure the needs assessment accomplishes its goals. These may include:

- What are the demographic characteristics of eligible children in the community?
- What are the education, health, and social service needs of these children?
- What community resources are available to address these needs?
- What is the current public funding available for these services?

Use a range of data sources.

A comprehensive needs assessment incorporates a range of data, such as:

- the quality level, capacity, and location of licensed child care providers.
- costs to deliver high-quality care.
- interview and survey data on community needs and resources from parents, providers, and community organizations.

Ensure representation of diverse groups.

A comprehensive needs assessment should incorporate voices from the diverse range of communities that are impacted by public policy. Strategies include:

- using interviewers who are familiar with local communities.
- oversampling traditionally underrepresented groups, such as undocumented families.
- creating materials in multiple languages.