



Creciendo Juntos

A Preparing for Life Program



RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Creciendo Juntos: A Preparing For Life Program

BACKGROUND

Recognizing the significant [positive outcomes](#) of the [Preparing for Life](#) program in Ireland on early childhood development, our new, innovative program: *Creciendo Juntos*: A Preparing for Life Program is adopting this prenatal-to-age five model in Chicago to assess its impact on nurturing critical developmental milestones, in a population of Latino families in Chicago's Back of the Yards neighborhood.

THE RESEARCH TEAM

We are a collaborative initiative with the Center for the Economics of Human Development, an interdisciplinary academic research center at the University of Chicago, Preparing for Life (PFL), an evidence-based home visiting model in Ireland, and [Casa Central](#), a local social service organization, who has been serving Latino families in Chicago since 1954..

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this project are covered by two broad categories:

1. to understand *if* a strengths- and relationships-based home visiting program has a positive influence on skill development in children and long-term outcomes; and
2. to understand *how* this program influences positive outcomes in children and families. Included in this objective are **two sub-points**:
 - i. understanding what implementation **inputs** lead to a more effective home visiting program; and
 - ii. understanding how PFL's **Practice Principles** and organizational elements affecting home visiting staff influence implementation factors and program outcomes.

OTHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the program's effects on parent-child interactions, children's cognitive, motor, language, and social-emotional development, and parental well-being?
2. What are the mechanisms enhancing outcomes for children and caregivers, the role of organizational factors in program quality, and practices to foster supportive interactions?
3. Moreover, how does the strength-based and respectful implementation of early childhood and parenting research affect the outcomes mentioned above?

METHODOLOGY

1. STUDY DESIGN

Creciendo Juntos, which means "Growing Together," will be evaluated by a randomized controlled trial that randomly assigns the eligible participants into the low or high treatment groups (traditionally called "treatment" and "control"). Both groups will receive identical supplemental developmental materials, the high treatment group will also receive home visiting services. *Services provided are highlighted in Table 1.* Treatment families are visited 1-2 times per month by a trained early childhood professional. Each home visit lasts around 60 minutes. Sessions include a combination of child-centered activities, parent-child interaction coaching, and home visitor-family relationship building.

2. PARTICIPANTS

The study aims to recruit 200-300 families, targeting pregnant individuals within the service area. The service area includes the zip codes of 60609 and 60632 as *highlighted in Figure 1.* Recruitment for the full study begins in 2025.

3. OUTCOME MEASURES

The primary outcome measures will include standardized assessments of child cognitive, social, and emotional development (validated and standardized tools will be used in this evaluation, e.g., Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Social-Emotional Development Scale). Secondary outcome measures will include parental knowledge, skills, and confidence (assessments used may include: Parenting Stress Index, surveys designed for this intervention).

4. DATA COLLECTION

Data will be collected at regular intervals, specifically at baseline, 12, 18, 24 months, and annually until the child reaches age 5.

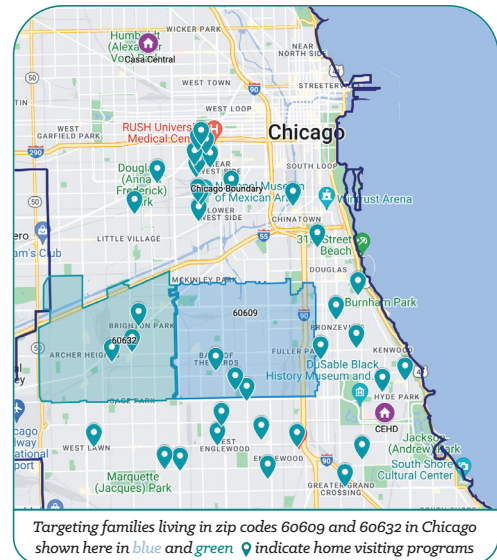
For more information about the study or the intervention itself, visit our website: cehd.uchicago.edu/creciendojuntos. Or email the team at:

CEHDhomevisiting@uchicago.edu

Table 1: Services Provided

- **Support from a Creciendo Juntos home visitor** – Families in the treatment group will receive sessions with a trained home visitor held in either the family home or other location chosen by the family. Sessions will focus on child development, parenting and supporting parent-child interactions.
- **Developmental Toys** – Different toys, games and supplies that follow the development of your child through your enrollment.
- **Framed Photograph** – Each child in the Creciendo Juntos program will receive a quality framed photo.
- **Directory of Services** – A guide to all local child, family and community services will be provided to every family.
- **Newsletter and Special Occasion Cards** – Each family will receive a regular newsletter and cards marking their child's special occasions.
- **Group parenting sessions** – These meetings will take place three times during the life of the program. Each meeting will last 2 hours per week for a total of 4 weeks.

Figure 1: The Catchment Area



CONCLUSION

Creciendo Juntos will provide valuable insights into the impact of the intervention on child development and parental knowledge, skills, and confidence. The results will inform the development of evidence-based early childhood interventions and contribute to the advancement of the field.