
GEORGIA
— CENTER FOR —
OPPORTUNITY

RAISING HIGHLY
CAPABLE KIDS

ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2025

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January 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information regarding Georgia Center for Opportunity’s Raising Highly Capable Kids (RHCK) programs from January to December 2025. During this window of time, there were fifteen RHCK programs offered at twelve different locations.

At the first class, participants completed a pre-program survey where they provided some demographic information as well as answering questions related to the 40 Developmental Assets for their oldest child in school, their own support-seeking behavior, and religious involvement at baseline. At the last class, participants were asked about their satisfaction with the program and were asked the same questions about the 40 Assets, support-seeking behavior, and religious involvement to allow the evaluation to examine pre-to-post changes in these outcomes of interest.

Participants who completed the pre- and post-program surveys ($n = 85$) were mostly female (87%), had completed at least a high school diploma (68%), worked full or part time (56%), and were married (62%), but were diverse in age, race/ethnicity, and income.

Overall, RHCK participants were highly satisfied with the program and the majority reported that they learned new parenting skills, had come up with ideas to promote the development of the assets with their children, implemented what they learned, and increased their knowledge and skills in each of the Asset Categories either to a “small” or “medium” extent. Further, nearly all participants reported that the facilitators made sure they understood the assets to be discussed for each session and that they would recommend the program to their friends.

Further, participants in the RHCK programs saw improvements pre- to post-program on many of the 40 Assets, support-seeking behaviors, and religious involvement, many of which were statistically significant.

Details regarding the programs are shared in the report below. First, details regarding the method of data collection and analyses are shared. Finally, findings from all the RHCK programs conducted January – December 2025 are reported.

METHOD

Procedure

The Raising Highly Capable Kids (RHCK) program teaches parents of school-aged children how to raise responsible, caring, and healthy children by focusing on 40 Developmental Assets developed by the Search Institute. These 40 Assets fall under eight asset categories: Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competence, and Positive Identity. This 10-week program is designed to give parents the knowledge and skills to help their children develop these 40 Assets in order to improve their short- and long-term well-being.

This report focuses on three main outcomes of interest for parents participating in RHCK programs ($n = 15$) held January – December 2025. These outcomes of interest include development of the 40 Assets, parents' support-seeking behavior, and religious involvement.

Participants were recruited through community partnerships. After participants were recruited into the program, they completed a pre-program survey where they provided demographic information such as sex, race/ethnicity, education status, employment status, relationship status, and annual household income. After providing demographic information, participants reported on their oldest school-aged child's development of the 40 Assets, their own support-seeking behaviors, and religious involvement at baseline.

After the program, at the end of the last class, participants completed a post-program survey where they reported on the same questions regarding the outcomes of interest to allow for the evaluation of change over time. They also answered questions about their engagement with the program, their satisfaction with the facilitator, and how they have applied the knowledge gained during the program.

Program Participants & Report Sample

There were 125 participants across the fifteen classes held at 12 locations January – December 2025. Of these, 77 (62%) participated in Parents First Initiative RHCK programs (see Table 1).

Of those who participated in the RHCK program January – December 2025 ($n = 125$), 85 (68%) completed both the pre- and post-program surveys and thus were included in the analytic sample (see Table 2).

For the purpose of this report, we report the demographic information, mean scores on variables of interest, and if there are significant pre-to-post changes for those who completed the pre-program and post-program surveys ($n = 85$).

Table 1. Locations of all RHCK program participants.

Location	Spring 2025 (n)	Fall 2025 (n)	Total (n)
PFI			
Central Gwinnett High School	7	--	7
Jenkins Elementary School	--	11	11
Jordan Middle School	--	7	7
Lawrenceville Elementary School	9	--	9
Lawrenceville First United Methodist Church	9	13	22
Moore Middle School	--	7	7
Winn Holt Elementary School	14	--	14
PFI Total	39	38	77
Non-PFI			
Choices Crisis Pregnancy Center	--	7	7
Gwinnett County Public Library: Grayson	--	6	6
Houston County – Infinity Training Center	--	4	4
Lamar County Family Connection	3	10	13
Next Generation Focus	4	14	18
Non PFI Total	7	41	48
Total	46	79	125

Table 2. Location of participants in the analytic sample.

Location	<i>Analytic Sample</i> <i>n</i>
PFI	
Central Gwinnett High School	3
Jenkins Elementary School	3
Jordan Middle School	2
Lawrenceville Elementary School	5
Lawrenceville First United Methodist Church	19
Moore Middle School	4
Winn Holt Elementary School	14
PFI Total	50
Non-PFI	
Choices Crisis Pregnancy Center	4
Gwinnett County Public Library: Grayson	5
Houston County – Infinity Training Center	2
Lamar County Family Connection	7
Next Generation Focus	17
Non-PFI Total	35
Total	85

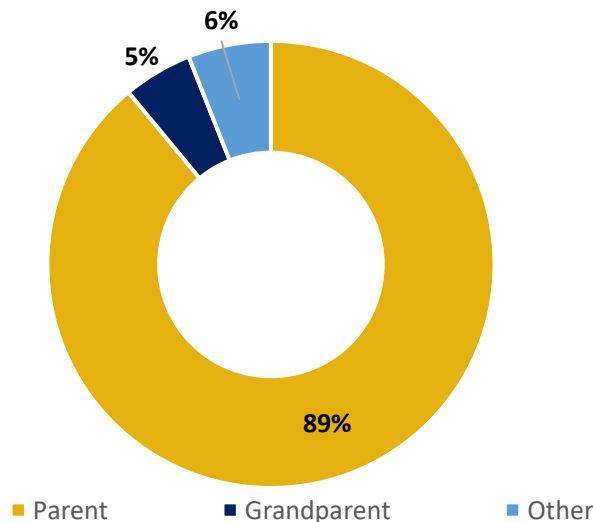
Analyses

The following report includes descriptive data on various outcomes related to the outcomes of interest. Frequencies, descriptive analyses (e.g., means, standard deviations), and paired-samples *t*-tests were examined to understand change from pre-to-post program. Pre-to-post changes were considered statistically significant if the paired-sample *t*-test had a *p*-value of .05 or lower.

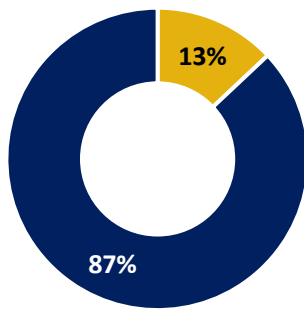
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Demographic data are shared for those who completed both the pre- and post-program surveys (*n* = 85). Of those, almost all program participants for all RHCK programs were parents (89%). Further, most participants were female (87%) and varied in age. Many participants (56%) were highly educated with some post-secondary education and 40% had an annual household income of at least \$40,000.

Why did you register for the RHCK program? I am a...

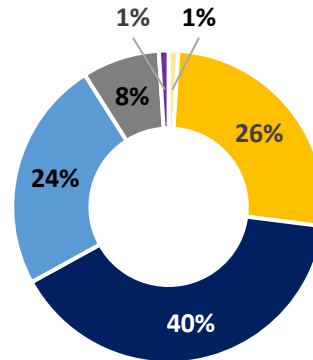


Gender



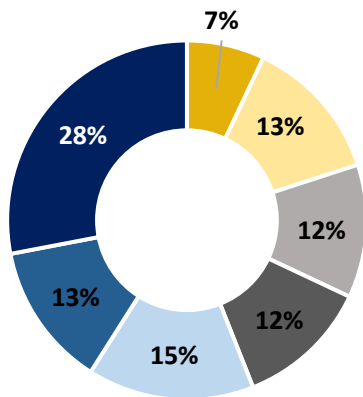
■ Male ■ Female

Age



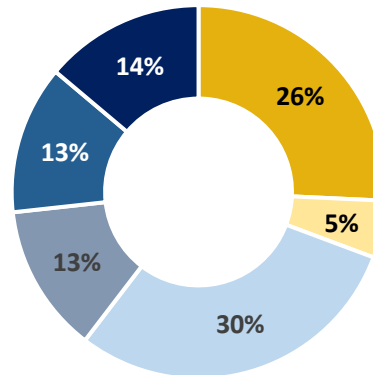
■ Under 21 ■ 21-30
■ 31-40 ■ 41-50
■ 51-60 ■ 61 or older

Highest Level of Education



■ Elementary School
■ Middle School/Junior High School
■ Some High School Experience
■ High School Diploma
■ Some College
■ Associate Degree
■ Undergraduate or Graduate Degree

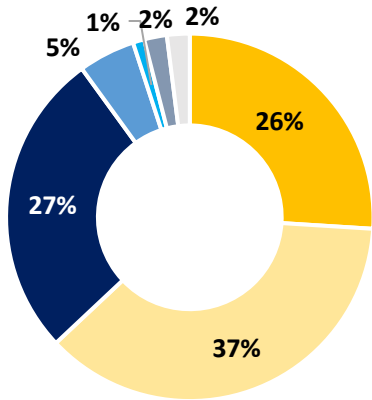
Annual Household Income



■ Less than \$7,000
■ \$14,000 - \$24,999
■ \$25,000 - \$39,999
■ \$40,000 - \$74,999
■ \$75,000 - \$99,999
■ \$100,000+

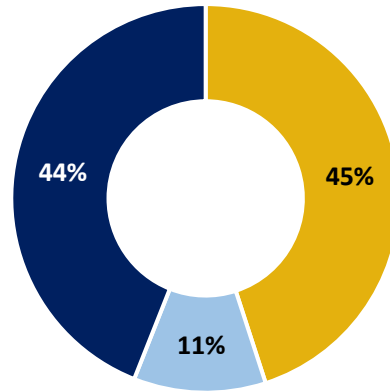
Participants varied in race with 26% identifying as Black, 37% as White, and 27% as Hispanic/Latino. A little over half of participants reported being employed with 45% reporting being employed full time. Most participants were also married (62%).

Race



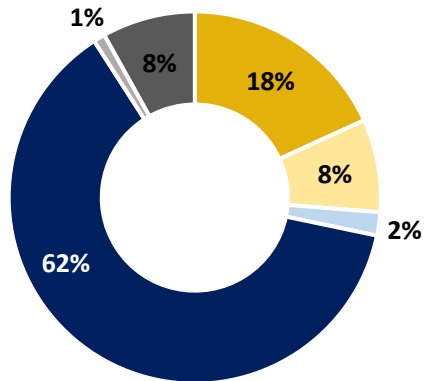
- Black
- White
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Asian
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Multiracial
- Other

Employment Status



- Full Time
- Part Time
- Not Currently Employed

Relationship Status

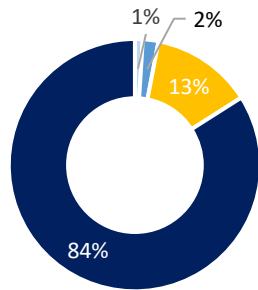


- Single
- Dating
- Engaged
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced

PROGRAM SATISFACTION

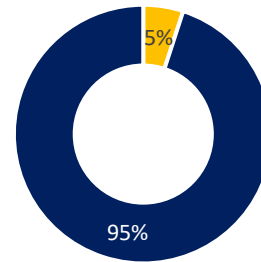
Overall, Raising Highly Capable Kids (RHCK) participants who completed the pre- and post-program surveys ($n = 85$) reported a high level of interest and engagement in the program. Almost all participants (99%) reported that they learned a new parenting skill and 100% reported that the facilitator made sure they understood the assets. Almost all participants (99%) stated that they have come up with ideas to promote the development of the assets that their children did not already have. The majority (93%) also reported that they have implemented what they learned with their children to at least a “medium” extent. Finally, at least 98% of participants reported that they increased their knowledge and skills in each of the asset categories.

I have learned new parenting skills from participating in this program.



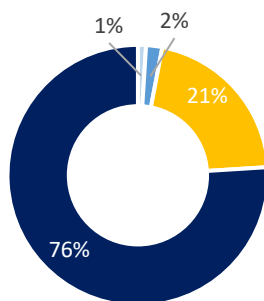
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

The facilitator made sure we understood the assets to be discussed for each session.



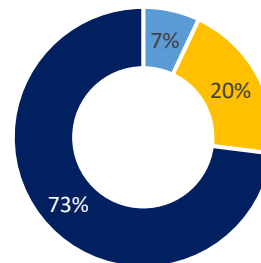
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have come up with the ideas to promote the development of the assets that my children do not already have.



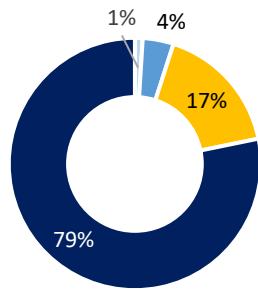
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have implemented what I learned in the sessions with my child(ren).



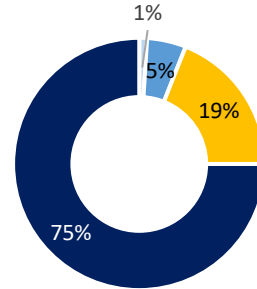
■ To a small extent ■ To a medium extent
■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Support.



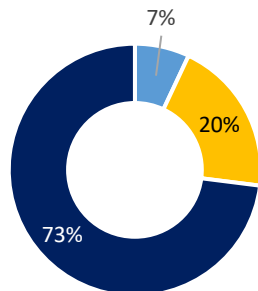
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Empowerment.



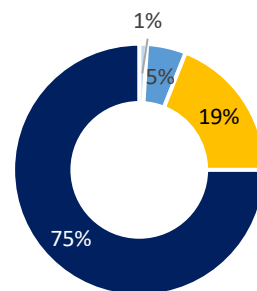
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Boundaries and Expectations.



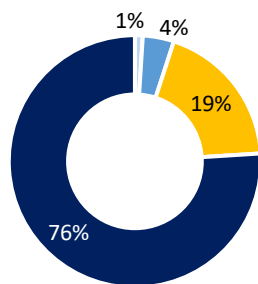
■ To a small extent ■ To a medium extent
■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Constructive Use of Time.



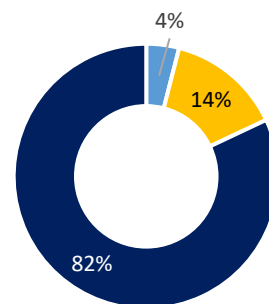
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Commitment to Learning.



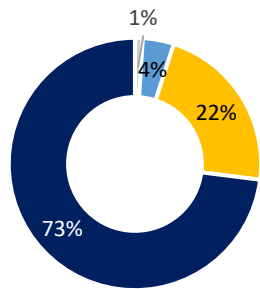
■ Not really ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Positive Values.



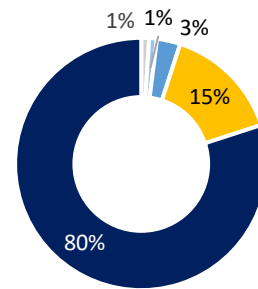
■ To a small extent ■ To a medium extent
■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Social Competence.



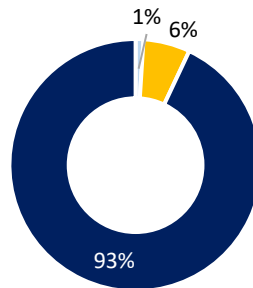
■ Not sure ■ To a small extent
■ To a medium extent ■ To a large extent

I have increased my knowledge and skills in the asset category of Positive Identity.



■ Not sure ■ Not really
■ To a small extent ■ To a medium extent
■ To a large extent

I would recommend this program to my friends



■ Not really ■ To a medium extent
■ To a large extent

Participants were also given the opportunity to provide suggestions for improvements via open-ended comments. The program team monitored these suggestions closely and made adjustments to program protocols to address many of the constructive feedback throughout the programs.

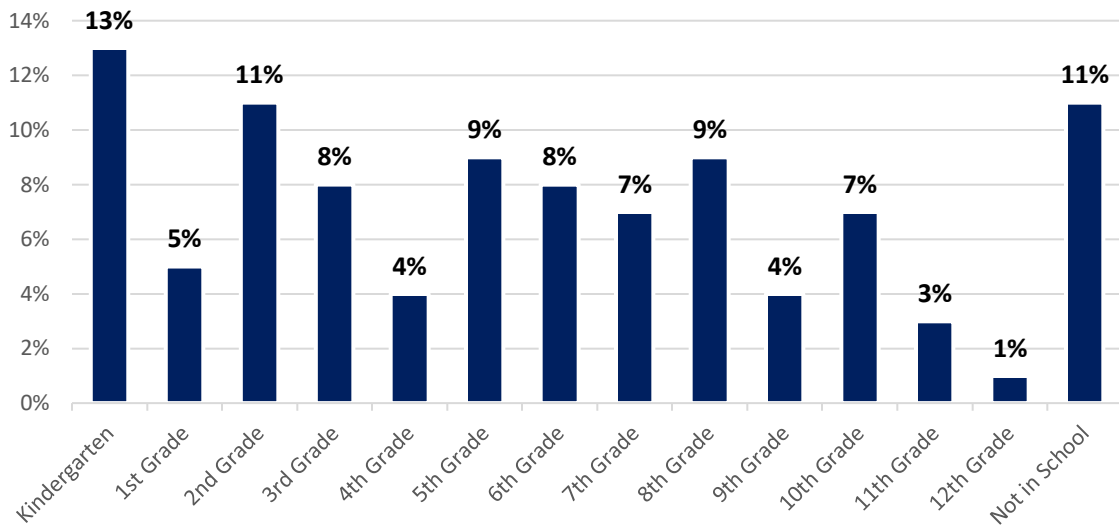
- I am completely grateful for the program. Thank you all. God bless you.
- A way to include the children into some exercises during the workshop at least once.
- Support with the babies.
- Coinciding class for kids exploring developmental assets.
- Everything so far is good!
- Everything was so powerful and knowledgeable. However, I would advise more videos.
- Have a meet and greet orientation before the program starts. Advertise the incentives ahead of time to potential candidates.
- I enjoyed the cohort model and appreciated the discussion and the time spent by the leader. But overall, this felt very surface level. I wish it went deeper.

-
- I feel as if a class was held in Thomaston, GA there would be a lot more participants that could benefit from this class as I did.
 - I think the course may be better suited for parents with kids in middle school, not small children.
 - I would only suggest continued resources at the ending of the program. We all enjoyed our time together so much, we would like to know if we had any further questions where to turn.
 - More dialogue between parents to see different points of view.
 - Maybe an afternoon session as well as a summer session where parents and kids can attend.
 - Maybe having meetings on weekends and expanding to other counties as well. Having follow up meetings to catch up or expanding it for the graduates like a 2nd part. We tried this and in six months we regroup to talk about what has helped us or not. Maybe make that into a smaller session, like three sessions. Just continue that for every six months.
 - More hands-on activities.
 - Maybe more sessions.
 - I have no recommendations as the program turned out better than I expected. Thank you very much.
 - Offer this program at more libraries! I loved this program, but it was a 30-minute drive for me after work and another 20 going home. But I loved learning with Becca, and I believe I have made some wonderful bonds with my peers here.
 - Program was great and I leave with an even stronger sense of community!
 - I wish it could have lasted longer! I love this program; each class brought more learning and development as a mother. I'm so happy to have participated. Thank you to everyone who made this possible and to all the staff!
 - The program was so perfect that I have nothing to say only that I wish it was longer.
 - This entire class, teachers, skills, and support have been such a blessing for my son and I! I think it is perfect! We have learned a lot! Thank you for this class!
 - This is a great program and worth every session!
 - This program is a huge asset to families and the community. It needs to be more widely advertised so that more people are aware and can take part. The class was engaging and informative. Well done, team!
 - This was a great program that benefits everyone who participated in it. Keep helping the community.
 - This was such a great class, and I think more people will join if there was an incentive for parents to join.
 - Everything was great; they helped us and will continue to help us even more.
 - Everything was super educational. Thanks to Cristina for her great support and professionalism in her work.
 - Everything is excellent and very helpful for many mothers, since we are the ones who spend most time with our children.
 - Try to find ways to incorporate both adults with adding in some sort of childcare.

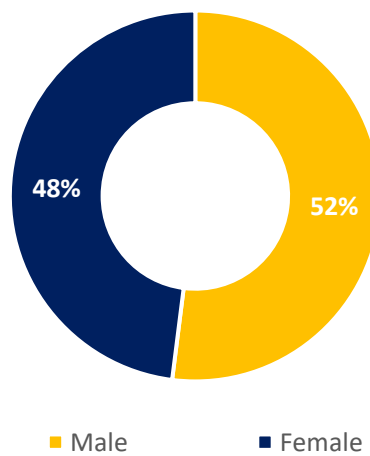
CHILDREN

Participants reported having 1 – 12 children with an average of 3 children ($SD = 2.02$). Participants were asked to report some simple demographics of their oldest child that is in school. However, some parents (11%) who reported on their oldest child stated that their oldest child is not in school.

Oldest Child's Grade



Oldest Child's Gender



CHANGE IN ASSETS

Participants were asked to answer 40 questions related to the 40 Developmental Assets while thinking about their oldest child who was still in school. In thinking about this child, they were asked to rate each of the items from 0 (*not at all*) to 3 (*very*).

Overall, participants ($n = 85$) reported an increase in most of the items pre-to-post, on average and 17 of these assets saw statistically significant increases ($p < .05$; see yellow highlights). Another seven assets saw mean improvements of 0.15 or higher (see blue highlights). Participants reported statistically significant increases on each of the following items:

- Does your child spend at least 3 hours per week participating in youth programs? (examples: soccer team, basketball league, chess club, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club)
- Does your child spend at least 1 hour per week in religious settings?
- Does your child spend 2 or fewer nights per week out with friends (unsupervised) with “nothing special” to do?
- Is your child actively engaged in learning?
- Does your child read for fun most days of the week?
- Does your child have a heart for helping other people?
- Does your child place high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty?
- Does your child stand up for their beliefs, even when it is difficult or unpopular?
- Does your child tell the truth, even when it is difficult?
- Does your child accept and take personal responsibility?
- Does your child believe it is important to avoid risky behavior?
- Does your child know how to plan ahead and make wise choices?
- Does your child have good friendship/relational skills? (examples: knows how to make friends and keep them, communicates well with different types of people, listens with empathy)
- Is your child able to interact positively and comfortably with people from other cultures, races, and ethnic backgrounds?
- Does your child resist negative peer pressure and make good choices?
- Does your child believe their life has purpose? (examples: “I am not here by accident”, “my life can be used for good”)
- Is your child optimistic about their future? (hopes or believes they will have a good life)

Table 3. Mean scores for the 40 Assets pre- and post-program.

Asset	Question	Pre	Post
1	Does your child know that you love and support them no matter what?	2.81	2.90
2	Does your child know they can talk to you about anything? (examples: asking you for advice, telling you what is going on in their life, etc.)	2.71	2.82
3	Does your child know at least 3 non-parent adults they can turn to for help, encouragement, or good advice? (examples: grandparent, neighbor, teacher, coach, priest/pastor)	2.58	2.54
4	Do the people in your neighborhood know and care about each other?	1.62	1.79
5	Does your child experience a caring, encouraging environment at school? (examples: from teachers, principals, staff, and fellow students)	2.29	2.46
6	Do you help your child succeed in school? (examples: help them with homework, attend parent/teacher conferences)	2.60	2.74
7	Does your child feel that adults in the community value youth? (instead of viewing young people as unimportant or a nuisance)	1.93	2.15
8	Does your child see your community giving useful roles to young people? (examples: letting young people work or volunteer, allowing them to speak up, entrusting them with responsibility)	1.86	1.84
9	Does your child serve in the community for at least one hour per week? (examples: volunteering at school or church, mowing an elderly neighbor's yard for free, collecting canned goods for a food pantry)	0.90	1.13
10	Does your child feel safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood?	2.84	2.75
11	Does your child know the rules and expectations at home (family rules), as well as the consequences for breaking those rules?	2.69	2.67
12	Does your child know the rules and expectations at school, as well as the consequences for breaking those rules?	2.72	2.77
13	Does your child know the rules and expectations in your neighborhood? (examples: being polite, respecting other people's property, following safety guidelines, not being too loud)	2.42	2.51
14	Do you and other adults model positive, responsible behavior around your child? (examples: following the laws/rules, being polite, being a good employee, being a good neighbor)	2.81	2.82
15	Does your child's close friends model positive, responsible behavior? (examples: following family/school rules, being polite, cleaning up a mess they've made)	2.21	2.22
16	Do parent(s) and teachers encourage your child to do well?	2.83	2.77
17	Does your child spend at least 3 hours per week doing creative activities (examples: music, theater, drawing/coloring, dance, crafts, woodworking, writing poetry or stories)	2.22	2.31

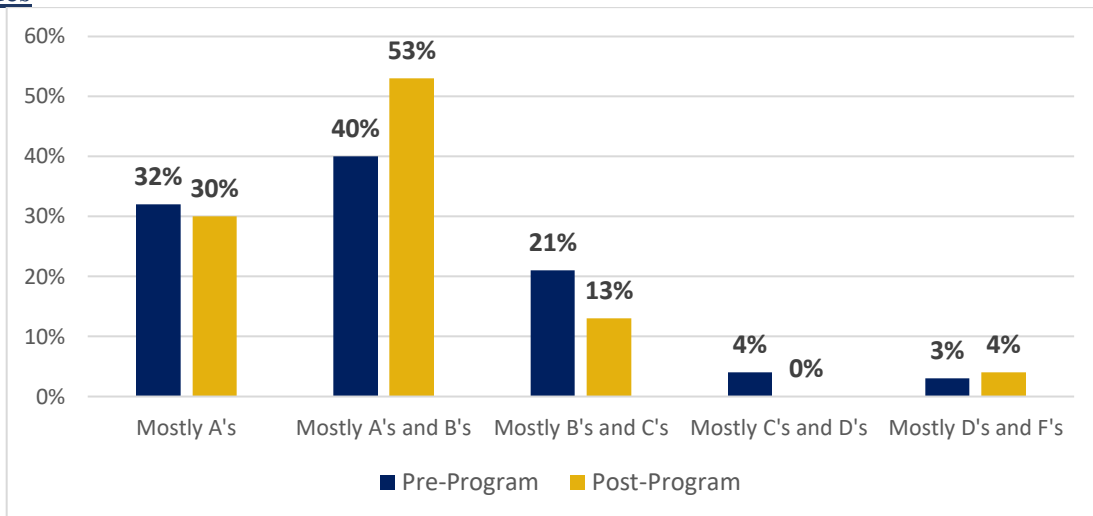
18	Does your child spend at least 3 hours per week participating in youth programs? (examples: soccer team, basketball league, chess club, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club)	1.05	1.35
19	Does your child spend at least 1 hour per week in religious settings?	1.89	2.06
20	Does your child spend 2 or fewer nights per week out with friends (unsupervised) with “nothing special” to do?	0.49	0.74
21	Is your child motivated to do well in school? (child wants to get good grades and is willing to put in the effort)	2.61	2.63
22	Is your child actively engaged in learning?	2.43	2.62
23	Does your child complete their homework and turn it in on time?	2.47	2.53
24	Does your child care about their school? (examples: school spirit, enjoys being at school)	2.48	2.63
25	Does your child read for fun most days of the week?	1.74	2.04
26	Does your child have a heart for helping other people?	2.49	2.70
27	Does your child place high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty?	1.91	2.29
28	Does your child stand up for their beliefs, even when it is difficult or unpopular?	2.04	2.40
29	Does your child tell the truth, even when it is difficult?	2.04	2.25
30	Does your child accept and take personal responsibility?	2.07	2.27
31	Does your child believe it is important to avoid risky behavior?	2.21	2.44
32	Does your child know how to plan ahead and make wise choices?	1.74	2.00
33	Does your child have good friendship/relational skills (examples: knows how to make friends and keep them, communicates well with different types of people, listens with empathy)	2.18	2.39
34	Is your child able to interact positively and comfortably with people from other cultures, races, and ethnic backgrounds?	2.44	2.64
35	Does your child resist negative peer pressure and make good choices?	2.06	2.25
36	Does your child resolve conflict without violence? (using words, not fists, to solve problems)	2.25	2.30
37	Does your child feel they have control over the things that happen to them? (examples: “studying now will help me achieve success later”, “being friendly will help me kame friends”)	2.07	2.19
38	Does your child have high self-esteem? (child knows they are valuable – not because of what they have accomplished, but because of who they are)	2.31	2.49
39	Does your child believe their life has a purpose? (examples: “I am not here by accident”, “my life can be used for good”)	2.30	2.51
40	Is your child optimistic about their future? (hopes or believes they will have a good life)	2.35	2.60

Note. Mean scores highlighted in yellow represent statistically significant increases ($p < .05$); mean scores highlighted in blue represent increases 0.15 or greater that were not statistically significant.

ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

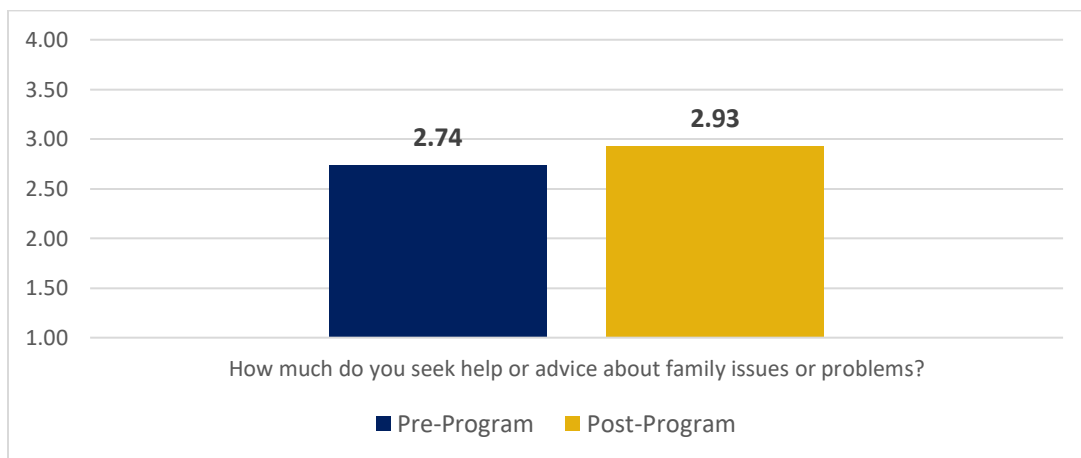
Participants reported that their children did not display an increase in grades, on average, between the pre- and post-tests. On average, parents reporting that their child made mostly A's and B's. Further, it is important to note that from pre- to post-test, the number of participants who reported that their child made B's and C's decreased while the number of participants who reported their child made mostly A's and B's increased, indicating a possible improvement in grades for some participants. It is expected that we would see a greater increase in grades long-term since there is such a short amount of time between the pre and post-test.

Grades



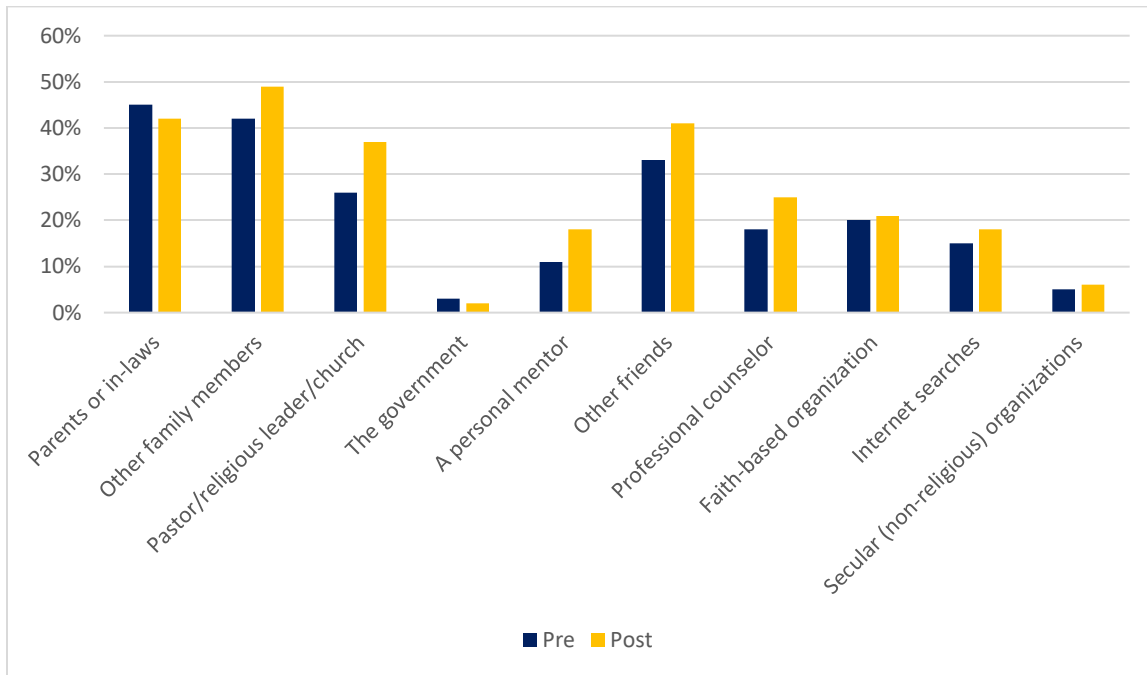
SUPPORT SEEKING

Participants were also asked about their support-seeking behaviors before and after the RHCK Program. On average, participants reported an increase in how often they seek support about a family issue or problem, although this difference was not statistically significant.



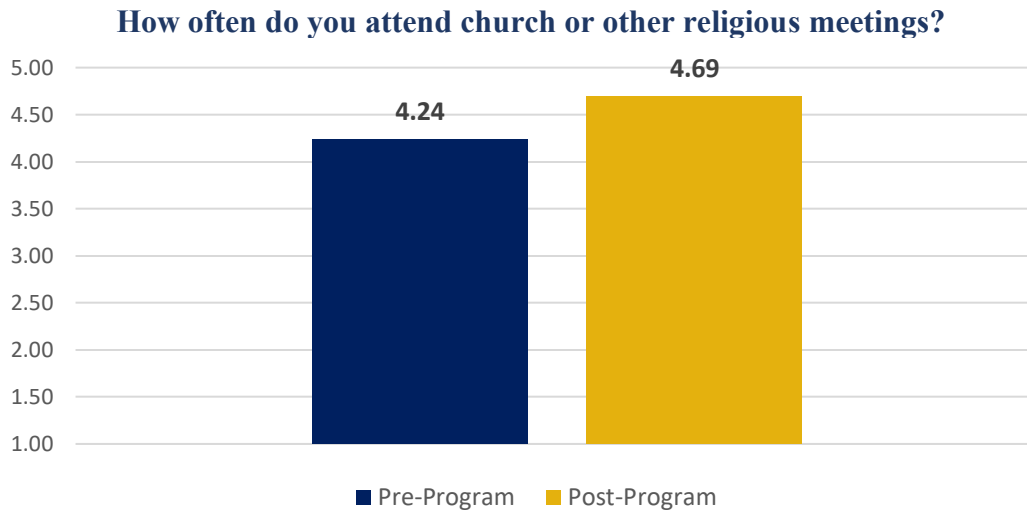
Note. 1 = Never; 4 = Frequently

Next, participants were asked who they turn to when they feel they need help or advice about a family dilemma. Prior to the program, participants reported turning to family members, religious leaders, and friends most frequently. After the program, participants reported turning to the same sources. However, there was a decrease in how many reported turning to family and an increase in how many turned to religious leaders, a personal mentor, other friends, and Internet searches for support from pre-to-post.

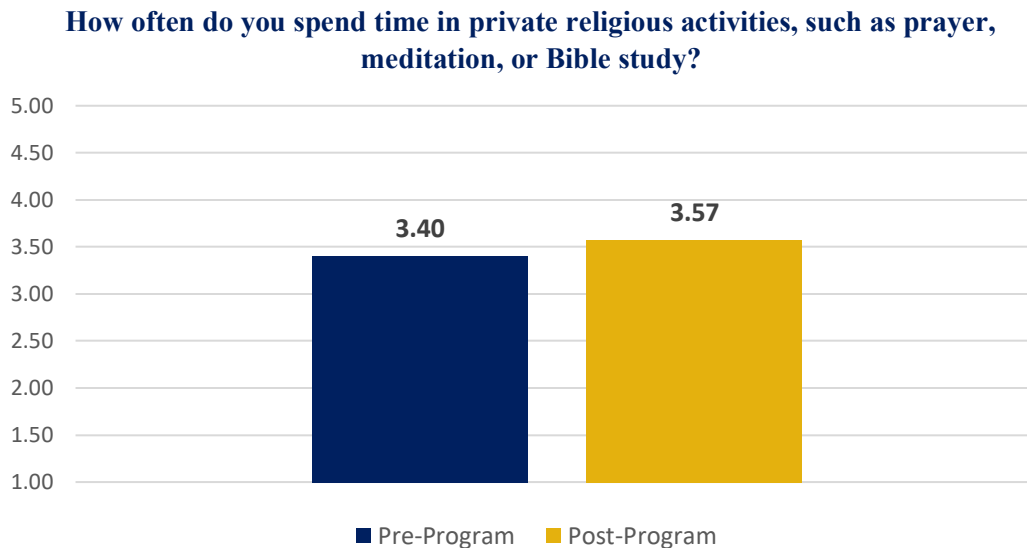


RELIGIOUS INVOLVEMENT

Finally, participants were asked to report their religious involvement including how often they attend religious meetings, how often they spend time on private religious activities (e.g., prayer), how often they talk about religious matters with their children, to what extent their religious beliefs guide their approach to life, and how confident they feel sharing religious beliefs with their children. Overall, participants reported engaging in religious activities often both prior to participating in RHCK and after program participation. Overall, participants reported increases in religious involvement, on average. Participants reported statistically significant increases in how often they attend church or other religious meetings and how often they talk about religious matters with their children.

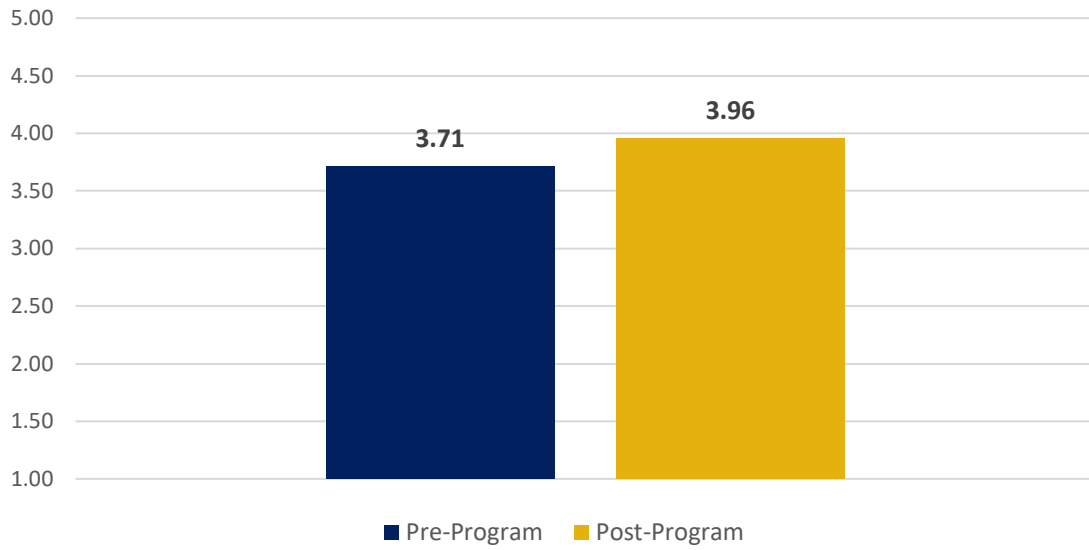


Note. 1 = Never; 2 = Once a year or less; 3 = A few times a year; 4 = A few times a month; 5 = Once a week; 6 = More than once a week.



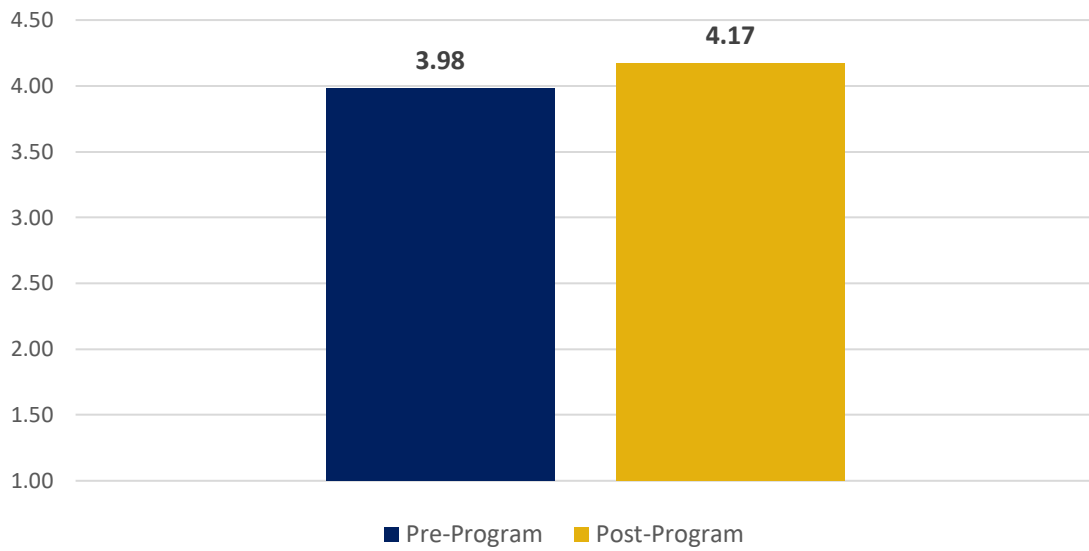
Note. 1 = Rarely or never; 2 = A few times a month; 3 = Once a week; 4 = Two or more times a week; 5 = Daily; 6 = More than once a day.

How often do you talk about religious matters with your children?

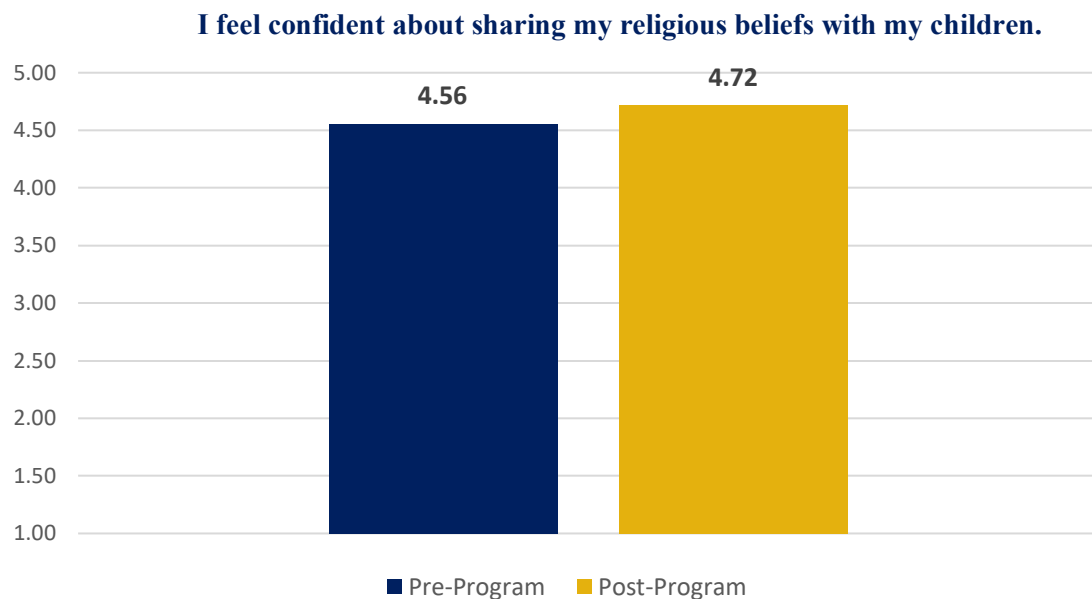


Note. 1 = Rarely or never; 2 = A few times a month; 3 = Once a week; 4 = Two or more times a week; 5 = Daily; 6 = More than once a day.

My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.



Note. 1 = Definitely not true; 2 = Tends not to be true; 3 = Unsure; 4 = Tends to be true; 5 = Definitely true of me.



Note. 1 = Definitely not true; 2 = Tends not to be true; 3 = Unsure; 4 = Tends to be true; 5 = Definitely true of me.

PROGRAM COMPARISON

Of the fifteen programs provided in January – December 2025, eight programs were provided through the Parents First Initiative (PFI) funded by the Lilly Foundation. While the curriculum was the same, participants who attended programs through the PFI were provided additional incentives including gift cards for attendance and survey participation. To determine if there were any differences in outcomes between those who participated in PFI RHCK programs and non-PFI programs, we compared the post-program responses for those who participated in the PFI RHCK program ($n = 50$) and those who participated in RHCK that was not funded by PFI ($n = 25$). Overall, responses were not significantly different with a few exceptions. Participants in PFI-funded RHCK programs reported significantly higher scores on one question:

- How much do you seek help or advice about family issues or problems? ($p = .027$)

Further, non-PFI funded RHCK programs reported significantly higher scores on several other questions:

- Does your child feel that adults in the community value youth? ($p = .031$)
- Does your child see your community giving useful roles to young people? ($p = .027$)
- Does your child complete their homework and turn it in on time? ($p = .018$)
- Does your child care about their school? ($p = .027$)
- Does your child have a heart for helping people? ($p = .007$)

Due to the large difference in sample sizes, it is possible that other differences exist, but statistically significant differences were not detectible.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

In Fall 2025, participants were asked two open-ended questions about their experiences in the RHCK program. Select responses for each question are provided below.

What did you, your children, and your family gain from your participation in the Raising Highly Capable Kids program?

- “Tools to face challenges.”
- “A lot of cognitive structure. That's what I highly lack with my daughter is structure at home because I work during the day and her grandma watches her and spoils her. But she is cooped up at home watching TV all day. I think that I didn't have these assets growing up and it would have made me much more well-rounded and adjusted.”
- “I care about how to educate my children and how to have harmony in the home.”
- “A mother that is capable of understanding and giving their all to make sure my kids are heard, are confident, and are comfortable in coming to me with any concern. Knowing that mom will always be there for them.”
- “A sense of structure and strength. To know we're not in this alone. Built a sense of community.”
- “Learning to understand each other.”
- “Better appreciation for how parenting affects overall outcome not just of individual children but the family and community as a whole. Better relational skills, better awareness of childhood development.”
- “Better our relationship for our child and be active in community.”
- “Confidence and interaction with community.”
- “I have learned to be more patient with my children and to understand them better.”
- “Helped me have confidence in raising my boys and knowing I'm on the right track.”
- “How to be calmer, sitting back and identifying how we feel more.”
- “I gained an understanding that in order for my children to be highly capable children I have to be a highly capable adult that is able to provide them with the tools to be successful in their everyday life.”
- “I have learned how to be a better Aunt to my niece and nephews.”
- “I learned how each asset is important for my children's development and was given knowledge and examples of how I can implement the assets for and with my children. While also gaining a support community from the program.”
- “Knowing that it's a continuous learning process and I have the tools and community to support and guide my children.”
- “More clarity on strategies for raising my children. Many of them I previously valued, but now I have an organized path forward.”
- “Motivation and self-worth. To know that you are doing a good job, you're not alone and its people to help you.”
- “Plenty of tools and tips to use while going through our parenting journey.”
- “To have more confidence in the authority that God has given us as parents over our children.”
- “Understanding of valuable assets we want to instill in our child and further develop within our own lives.”
- “Ways to stay communicated with our children and make sure they feel heard and loved.”
- “We all learned a better view and perspective of family values and roles.”

What is your favorite asset? Why is it your favorite asset?

- “All of them, but if I had to choose one, I would choose social media.”
- “Caring – It my favorite asset because I like to help people in any way possible to me communication / community.”
- “Community, because it is important to know that there is support.”
- “Equality and social justice. Everything in life revolves around morality and this is so important in feeling that you matter and have purpose.”
- “Family boundaries – It’s helping me learn to set boundaries for myself and my daughter.”
- “Family support. Trying to find ways to better our family support in our household.”
- “Having supportive people that are like minded. I’ve learned so much having different perspectives.”
- “Honesty, and because it’s hard to have any of the other assets if you’re not honest.”
- “I don’t really have a favorite. I enjoy them all.”
- “Interpersonal Competence- I think fostering empathy and friendship skills are super important for a child to thrive in the world today.”
- “Motivation through his achievements, because it motivates me to encourage my son to be a great student.”
- “My support system, because I could not parent well without it!”
- “Personal power and sense of purpose. They embody the purpose of the rest of the assets. It’s the end goal for the children.”
- “Personal power. This asset seems fundamental to being able to effectively integrate other valuable skills and assets into a person's life.”
- “Planning and Decision making... organization is very essential for me as a single mom.”
- “Positive family communication - communication is so impactful on how we react and engage. I have learned different ways to communicate with my child. I have been communicating more and more with my child since taking this workshop.”
- “Positive Family Communication. I just feel like it all starts there. We have to be able to come together to get through stuff. That includes the good and the bad. Kids need to be comfortable to talk and they need positive reassurance.”
- “Positive Identity: Sense of purpose. To let my kids know Life has purpose to it.”
- “Positive Values - it encompasses so much.”
- “Self-esteem because my child really needs it because of mean family.”
- “Social Competence - my children are young and this asset is probably the most influential at this time.”
- “Support – It’s very important to have support and to show your kids you support them.”
- “Support - discussed and found different ways one can find support through this class even when it feels difficult to do.”
- “Support because it’s so needed. It takes a village.”

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

As part of the evaluation of RHCK in Spring 2025 and Fall 2025, seven participants were interviewed by an independent evaluator, Dr. Richardson, about their experiences in the RHCK program, why they signed up for the program, what they learned, how they have applied their learning, and what they would say to another parent who was considering participating in the program. These participants were identified by the Georgia Center for Opportunity based on their engagement in the program and their ability to speak to their experiences.

Overall, all seven participants spoke very highly of the RHCK program, shared their challenges as parents raising children, and how the RHCK program helped them change their parenting strategies or reinforce the positive strategies they were already using with their children.

SPRING 2025

Participant 1

The first participant interviewed was a divorced single mother raising her four daughters ages 13, 11, 9, and 8 years old.

When asked why she wanted to participate in the RHCK program, she stated that it was because she wanted to learn new parenting skills to improve her relationship with her children:

I wanted to participate in the program because I wanted to improve my parenting skills and be able to interact with my children and have a healthier relationship. I definitely was going through a rock and a hard place during that time so I wanted to learn, as we were going through, how to thrive and how we can thrive together despite our circumstances. How do we shift our mindset and our perspectives? It was very important to me to have a positive influence in our lives. You're not born with "this is how you be a parent" so we all learned together on this.

When asked what she learned as part of the RHCK program, she stated,

I would say I've learned more patience. Being able to learn how to communicate effectively. Interacting with the other parents and then seeing my children grow as they're interacting with the other children. They're not staring at the phone and they implement the same things. Like, when they would come out they would be like, "I want to do more things, like be more involved!" And they had something to look forward to like, "Oh, are we going to the parent workshop today?" Seeing outside of our circumstances and then having so many people in our community try and help us, all of it. I see them as better children and so much more of an asset to our community as well.

Additionally, she spoke about how the Parents First Initiative helped her and her children:

They helped us when we didn't have transportation. They helped us get transportation to get to and from [the program].

We also asked this participant what she would say to another parent who was considering participating in the RHCK program but was on the fence. She talked about the importance of being a lifelong learner and what she gained from participating in the Parents First Initiative workshop classes:

I consider myself a lifelong learner. Never stop learning. When it comes to a commitment to learning, you'll always learn how to be a better person, a better mother, a better father, a better family member, a better coworker. Just all around a commitment to learning. That would be the greatest asset. And I'd say you'd miss out if you don't get involved in the Parents First Initiative workshop.

I'm going to do more. Like, I know I have to work and I know I have to pay bills. But, you realize there is more to life and there's more that you can be able to do and be able to have internal and external assets to be able to grow. Tools that you wouldn't have been familiarized with had you not been in this parent workshop. I just really recommend anyone join the next class.

Participant 2

The second participant was a divorced single mother of three children ages 14, 12, and 11. She disclosed that she had experienced domestic violence in her marriage and had moved to a new area after the divorce. Her children were struggling in school and with friendships since their move and that she needed an outlet. She stated that she heard about the program on social media and was drawn to it because of the free food and childcare:

I had no idea what it was, so I didn't have any expectation, I took this class for my oldest daughter because she is struggling. She's going through that awkward stage, she's going through puberty, so all these different changes and emotions. And I was like, I don't know how to raise a 14-year-old because she didn't act like I was when I was 14, so I needed the help.

This participant really spoke about the bond that she had formed with the other mothers in the workshop:

In this group I've poured out my heart. I've said my good, my bad, my ugly, and they have too. So, we've connected on that level, and they understand. They've gone through what I've gone through. These women that I have met in this program, we are like sisters. Like, we text every day. We check in on each other. We're planning on different things in the summer to get along.

When asked what she would say to a parent who was on the fence about attending the RHCK program, she replied:

Take that first step. It's hard. It's not easy because no parent wants to feel like they failed or no parent wants other people, other adults to tell them like, this is how you should parent. But, just take the first step.

Participant 3

The next RHCK participant interviewed was a 39-year-old beauty consultant who is a single mom of a 12-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son. She is planning to go back to school for business in the near future.

When asked about what motivated her to join the RHCK program, Participant 3 stated:

I've had challenges with my preteen, almost teenage daughter. I was taught growing up to be a little more aggressive as far as discipline goes and I don't agree that that's helpful to children. So, I wanted to see if this would help me find another patient, more understanding approach to discipline and understanding her.

When asked what are two or three things that she learned in the RHCK program that she can apply to her parenting, she stated:

Two or three things that I would like to apply to my parenting, joining community with my daughter as far as spiritual. She's the reason I go to this church, LV First. Also, being creative as far as how we spend time together, being more engaged in her school life. She's really active in school so I want to support her as best I can. I have a young lady going into young adulthood soon, so I don't want to make her grow up the way I did, so restricted. I want her to be free to navigate through life in a way that feels best for her. I don't want her to feel like she's forced to do it a certain way, because that's how I had to do it.

When asked what she learned that she wants to use moving forward in her parenting journey, she replied:

I have already incorporated not yelling. I incorporated hearing her before I respond. I've incorporated processing what I hear and repeating it back to her so that she understands that she's heard. And, last Sunday was my first Sunday attending church service with her and she just laid on my shoulder the whole Sunday. It's more important for us to lean more into our children. I feel like a lot of us are more disconnected with our kids because of electronics and everything going on in our lives, we forget about them. I feel like this program will help bring parents back into being more present in their kids' lives.

When asked what she would say to other parents who are considering participating in the program, she replied:

I just want to be the best mom I can be and I want to always be open to learning more. I would tell other parents to absolutely try this program. Give it a few weeks. You'll be addicted to it. You're growing and it helps you become closer to your kids.

Participant 4

The final Spring 2025 RHCK participant interviewed was a mother of three boys ages 13, 9, and 3. When asked why she decided to participate in the RHCK program, she said:

I think with parenting, for me, there's always room for improvement. Something that I may be doing good, I believe I can do better with it. So, participating in the Parents First Initiative, let me go and see what it's about first. I'm about to be a teenage mom, so let's see because this is like a different level of parenting.

When asked what she was hoping to improve, she stated:

I was hoping that I could improve mainly being a teenage mom. Upon the first day, I saw how interesting it was. I knew I had some lacking as a parent, but I didn't actually know exactly those things. How to deal with it? So, this workshop really helped me be able to come up with solutions to those issues. It has improved my parenting skills.

When asked what she would say to other parents who are considering participating in the program, she replied:

We are parents, we are not perfect. We are in this journey with our kids, so coming to this workshop will help you get a good balance. I would say to other parents considering to absolutely do it.

FALL 2025

Participant 1

The first Fall 2025 RHCK participant interviewed was a mother of one son who was in kindergarten. This participant spoke about several themes around what she learned in the class and how it has helped her as a parent. First, she spoke about how she learned the importance of communication, teaching her child healthy communication behaviors, and being emotionally supportive of her son:

- *“The biggest takeaway for me was communication — being present and knowing how to guide my child through big emotions.”*
- *“When he has big emotions, being grounded and being present really helps the situation.”*

-
- *“Even though my bond with my son was already strong, learning these skills made our communication calmer and even better.”*

She also spoke about how the RHCK classes gave her confidence and empowered her as a mother:

- *“The class gave me confidence as a parent — confidence that I’m doing right by my child and myself.”*
- *“It was empowering to realize that my child has a voice and that I can help him learn how to use it.”*
- *“I learned that we don’t have all the answers, and that’s okay — having support makes a huge difference.”*

This participant discussed how she is teaching her son responsibility through skill-building:

- *“He’s very capable, and I learned to step back and let him do things for himself — and he loves that empowerment.”*
- *“I now ask him how we can prepare for tomorrow, and I let him take responsibility, like packing his own snack or helping with laundry.”*
- *“Teaching responsibility at this age feels like an investment in who he’ll become later.”*

The mother also talked about the community she gained from participating in the RHCK class and how the other parents and facilitators of the workshop created a supportive environment for all the participants:

- *“You gain community, support, and so much more from the class.”*
- *“The environment was warm, welcoming, and completely judgment-free.”*
- *“Hearing other parents’ experiences helped me realize we’re all going through similar things.”*
- *“When the facilitators shared their own experiences, it made the space feel real and safe to open up.”*
- *“At first I just listened, but over time I felt comfortable sharing my own experiences and asking questions.”*

Finally, this participant shared how the class has changed the vision for her future, the future of her child, and the future of their relationship:

- *“The class changed how I think about the future — what we do now really shapes how our children handle things later.”*
- *“Learning these skills helped me see how being supportive now affects accountability and growth down the road.”*
- *“It was eye-opening to realize how today’s parenting choices guide future outcomes.”*

Participant 2

The second RHCK participant interviewed was a mother of a three-year-old son. She shared that they had recently moved to the state and that they do not have any family who live nearby. Since they do not have family living nearby, they chose to join the RHCK program to learn different parenting styles to help raise their son:

- *“Because our family is so limited, we were looking for different ways to learn different parenting styles and what we’re doing right, wrong, what seems wrong but could be right.”*
- *“There’s nothing really for when [our children are] here and in the world with us, so it was nice to have a parenting class that we can attend.”*
- *“Having childcare for the class was a big plus because then you can come more comfortable.”*

She also shared more about what she was hoping to learn during the RHCK program and a bit about what she did learn, including the values discussed during the program:

- *“I wanted to learn more about what I can do better as a person to start, and having more patience and understanding.”*
- *“Trying to tailor expectations to be age appropriate and also giving them grace was difficult to maneuver at first.”*
- *“I did learn a lot of tools, and relating with other parents was also helpful.”*
- *“Integrity is something you choose to utilize both when people are watching and when they’re not.”*
- *“Helping [our children] realize what’s right and wrong instead of just telling them is really important.”*

This mother discussed more about what she learned, including learning to resist yourself and your own poor habits as a parent in order to model positive behavior change. With this modeling, she has seen her son change his own behavior patterns:

- *“Now [my son] does it himself. He’ll say, ‘Okay, calm down,’ and start breathing. I’ve seen him go up to other children and ask them, ‘What’s wrong? Breathe with me. It’s okay.’”*
- *“It might not show up right away, but as long as you keep doing it, it becomes more natural.”*

Given that they did not have community nearby, learning to build community was especially important to this participant. She discussed learning how to build community outside of her family and how she was able to build community with other parents in the classes:

- *“We learned how important community is and that you can find community outside of your home.”*
- *“A lot of us leaned on each other. We made new friends and other parents with the same goal.”*
- *“Not tailoring community to just inside of your house was a big hurdle that we jumped over.”*

Through the RHCK program, this mother discussed how she’s learning to reduce her parenting stress and self-judgment, including learning from other parents in the classes:

- *“I don’t beat myself up as much when he’s doing toddler things, especially in public.”*
- *“It was nice to hear other parents go through the same thing and have the same running thoughts.”*
- *“Having grace on each other and not judging as much, that was really nice.”*

She also discussed how much she enjoyed the program environment and the support of the facilitators:

- *“It felt more like an open discussion than someone just speaking and you’re listening.”*
- *“Our instructors really made it an open conversational format.”*
- *“We were looking forward to it every week. It was really fun.”*

Finally, this mother talked about the long-term impact of participating in the RHCK program:

- *“My vision for my child has changed by knowing what tools to use when I get lost.”*
- *“Now I know where to look and that it’s possible to build your own family.”*
- *“It gave us a more positive outlook into the future.”*

Participant 3

The final RHCK participant interviewed in Fall 2025 was a grandmother helping her daughter raise her three children, one of whom lives with her full-time, her 13-year-old grandson. This grandmother discussed how she really focused on one of the assets, positive family communication:

- *“I really only focused on one of the assets, and that was positive family communication. When you think about it, communication falls into all of the other thirty-nine assets. That one resonated strongly with me because we were dealing with a thirteen-year-old boy that doesn’t talk.”*

In focusing on positive family communication, she discussed how she has changed her communication patterns with her grandson and how that has also impacted his behaviors:

- *“I realized that I needed to pay attention and be mindful of how I communicated with him.”*
- *“In order to get him to trust me and talk to me, even about uncomfortable things, I had to be better with my communication.”*
- *“Instead of yelling and being real negative about it, I changed how I talked to him.”*
- *“He noticed it right away, the difference in how I communicated with him. He started coming to me and talking to me about things that a typical thirteen-year-old is not going to share with an adult. Now he asks every week, ‘What was the asset this week?’”*

Next, she discussed how participating in RHCK has changed her perspective toward raising children:

- *“I thought I had it figured out.”*
- *“Things are different from when I was raising [my daughter] as a child.”*
- *“This class makes you realize that you don’t have it all and you don’t know it all.”*

Finally, this participant shared how she’s been sharing the program with other parents:

- *“It’s an amazing class. I’ve already shared it with several people and encouraged them to consider taking it. You can always learn something new and take away something more positive.”*

CONCLUSION

Overall, the 85 participants who completed the pre- and post-program surveys reported slight improvements in children’s attitudes or behaviors related to the 40 Assets discussed in the Raising Highly Capable Kids Program, with many improvements being statistically significant. Further, participants also reported a slight improvement in their own support-seeking behaviors and religious involvement. While results shared in this report are promising regarding improvement in outcomes of interest, it is important to note that since a control group is not available, caution should be used when interpreting these findings, meaning that there is no way to know if the improvements are a direct impact of the program or other reason.

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