



**FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM**

**ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT**  
*FY 2014-2015*

**Program Description**

The Seniors Council Foster Grandparent Program serves Santa Cruz, San Benito, Monterey and Santa Clara Counties. The Seniors Council has operated the Foster Grandparent Program in Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey since 1993 and in 2009 extended its sponsorship to Santa Clara County. These four contiguous counties cover a geographic area from the southern San Francisco Bay to Big Sur along the Central California Coastline and includes the Silicon Valley, the Salinas Valley and the Monterey Bay Area encompassing approximately 6,403 square miles with a population of just over 2.5 million. Within this Four-County area there are close to 400,000 (16%) older adults 60+ years of age and a student population of just over 485,000 (19%) children in grades K-12. There is a great variety of ethnic diversity including large communities of people with Chinese, Hispanic, Pilipino and Vietnamese ancestry. The Program currently serves the following communities:

**Santa Cruz County**

Aptos  
Boulder Creek  
Santa Cruz  
Watsonville

**San Benito County**

Hollister  
San Juan Bautista

**Monterey County**

Castroville  
Greenfield  
King City  
Monterey  
Pajaro  
Salinas  
Seaside  
Soledad

**Santa Clara County**

Milpitas  
San Jose  
Santa Clara  
Sunnyvale

Many school districts in the Four-County area are in a long-term budgetary crisis. Teachers and classroom support personnel are being laid off and class sizes are increasing. Many schools are performing well below the goal set by the Academic Performance Index. Fifty-eight percent of 3rd graders are not proficient in English Language skills while 28% are English Learner Students (those with a primary language other than English who lack the English language skills necessary for listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing). Foster Grandparents are volunteers who serve 15 - 40 hours per week mentoring and tutoring individual children in pre-schools and elementary schools in our Four-County area. As you will see below, teachers report that classrooms in which Foster Grandparents volunteer are more manageable and the children they mentor and tutor improve academically on five skills; academic performance skills, social and emotional development skills, language arts & literacy skills, logic and math skills and small & large motor skills.

While the area is one of the wealthiest in the nation, retirees struggle economically. Based on research for the California Elder Economic Security Index (EESI) by Dr. Steven P. Wallace at UCLA, the estimated monthly income needed for a senior to be Self-Sufficient in the Four-County area is \$2,126 per month. Being "Self-Sufficient" is being able to afford the cost of housing, food,

transportation, health care and other necessities. The average Social Security Retirement payment in the area is just \$971 a month - less than half of what it costs to be Self-Sufficient. We estimate that in the Four-County area there are 160,000 seniors whose income is \$971 a month or less. These senior citizens must sacrifice basic necessities as they struggle to survive economically on their Social Security Retirement payments.



Our Foster Grandparents average income is just \$1,000 a month. They are seniors who volunteer an average of 25 hours a week in pre-schools and elementary schools. In return for their substantial community contribution, Foster Grandparents receive a non-taxable stipend of \$2.65/hour, transportation reimbursement and a daily meal at the work site. The stipend provides an additional \$2,000 of annual income (a 20% increase). According to a national survey of Foster Grandparents these additional dollars are used primarily to help them cover the cost of housing, utilities, food and medical expenses.

The federal government's Corporation for National and Community Service provides major funding for the Foster Grandparent Program through the Senior Corp Program. These funds require a 10% match from the local communities. We are fortunate to have enduring partnerships from many community supporters of which the following provided grants and donations during FY 2014-2015:

Monterey Peninsula Foundation	County and City of Santa Cruz
Community Foundation for Monterey County	United Way of Monterey County
Community Foundation for San Benito County	United Way of San Benito County
The Harden Foundation	United Way of Santa Cruz County
Mission City Fund	

In addition, we receive funding from the federal Department of Transportation Job Access Reverse Commute grant program (JARC). These funds help us cover the costs of transportation for our Foster Grandparents to get to and from their volunteer work sites. These JARC funds cannot be used to meet our federal match requirement.

### **Foster Grandparent Program Community Impact Outcomes**

The over-all goal of the program is to recruit, train and place Foster Grandparent volunteers into preschool and elementary schools in a effort to enhance the leaning environment and to improve the academic achievement of students who otherwise would not keep pace with their peers. During FY 14-15 a total of 774 children were mentored and tutored by 224 Foster Grandparent volunteers. A total of 99 individual school sites received 186,998 Foster Grandparent volunteer hours. These sites included Head Start, Child Development Centers and Elementary School classrooms throughout the Four-County area. The FY 14-15 Impact Report demonstrates that the work of our Foster Grandparent volunteers enhanced teachers' ability to create supportive learning environments and improved the academic achievement of the students they mentored and tutored.

### ***Impact Outcomes - Student Behavior and Classroom Management***

To measure our student behavior and classroom management outcomes the teacher/supervisor completes a questionnaire evaluating the Foster Grandparent's impact on four specific indicators: encouraging student behaviors that contribute to improved classroom management, enhancing students' ability to progress to the next level of education, encouraging student behaviors that facilitate the teachers' goal of creating an effective learning environment for all students in the classroom and improving the self-esteem of individual students assigned to the Foster Grandparent. Survey questionnaires were completed by 93% of Teacher/Supervisors on a total of 224 Foster Grandparents at the end of the 2014-2015 school year with the following results.

- Foster Grandparents improved classroom management by:

Some Improvement	6%
Moderate Improvement	25%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	<u>69%</u>
Total % of Improvement	100%
  
- Foster Grandparents improved the preparation of students for advancement to the next grade level by:

Some Improvement	11%
Moderate Improvement	27%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	<u>60%</u>
Total % of Improvement	98%
  
- Foster Grandparents improved teachers' ability to use their time to create a more effective learning environment for all students in the classroom by:

Some Improvement	9%
Moderate Improvement	19%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	<u>72%</u>
Total % of Improvement	100%
  
- Foster Grandparents improved the self-esteem of the students they mentored and tutored by:

Some Improvement	8%
Moderate Improvement	17%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	<u>75%</u>
Total % of Improvement	100%

### ***Impact Outcomes - Academic Achievement***

To measure our academic achievement outcomes the Teacher/Supervisor completes a Assignment Plan (AP's) for each individual student assigned to a Foster Grandparent volunteer. The AP measures the student's academic achievement on five skills; academic performance skills, social & emotional development skills, language arts & literacy skills, logic and math skills and mall & large motor necessary for academic advancement. The AP is completed at the beginning of the school year or at the time of assignment of the student to a Foster Grandparent. The AP identifies the problem(s) impairing the student's academic achievement that will be addressed with the Foster Grandparent, the specific mentoring and tutoring activities the Foster Grandparent will engage in with the child to address the problem and the anticipated level of improvement on the five academic skills being targeted. At the end of the school year the Teacher/Supervisor completes the AP by assessing the actual improvement the student achieved and recording those findings on the AP. Program staff then gather the completed AP's and tabulate the outcomes. Assignment

Plans were completed by 76% of Teacher/Supervisors on a total of 774 students at the end of the 2014-2015 school year with the following results.

1) Students' Academic Performance Skills showed:

Some Improvement	26%
Moderate Improvement	54%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	20%
Total % of Students Improved	100%

2) Students' Social & Emotional Development Skills showed:

Some Improvement	26%
Moderate Improvement	55%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	19%
Total % of Students Improved	100%

3) Students' Language Arts & Literacy Skills showed:

Some Improvement	25%
Moderate Improvement	45%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	30%
Total % of Students Improved	100%

4) Students' Logic & Math Skills showed:

Some Improvement	26%
Moderate Improvement	48%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	26%
Total % of Students Improved	100%

5) Students' Small & Large Motor Skills showed:

Some Improvement	19%
Moderate Improvement	35%
<u>Significant Improvement</u>	45%
Total % of Students Improved	99%

## **Conclusion**

The Seniors Council Foster Grandparent Program is an effective model of an intergenerational program that provides significant benefit to low-income seniors, preschool and elementary students who are struggling to achieve grade level academic success and teachers' ability to create effective learning environments for their students. Research shows that when the generations come together everyone benefits, children and youth, older adults and the community at large. There are clear positive outcomes for all involved. Children are exposed to their elders' traditions and wisdom. And because of these interactions, older adults are able to expand their social networks and stay physically active, which betters their health outcomes. Communities benefit when all are engaged and feel included. In addition our Foster Grandparent Program helps to dispel age-related myths and stereotypes. Teacher Beth from the Haman Elementary School in Santa Clara says: "I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for all the work you do with the Foster Grandparent Program and to let you know that we had a wonderful first day back. I so appreciate Grandma Nancy and all the support she provides to the kids and to me. What a great program this is, providing winning outcomes for every single stakeholder (kids, parents, teachers, and the grandparents themselves). Again, my sincere appreciation to you!"