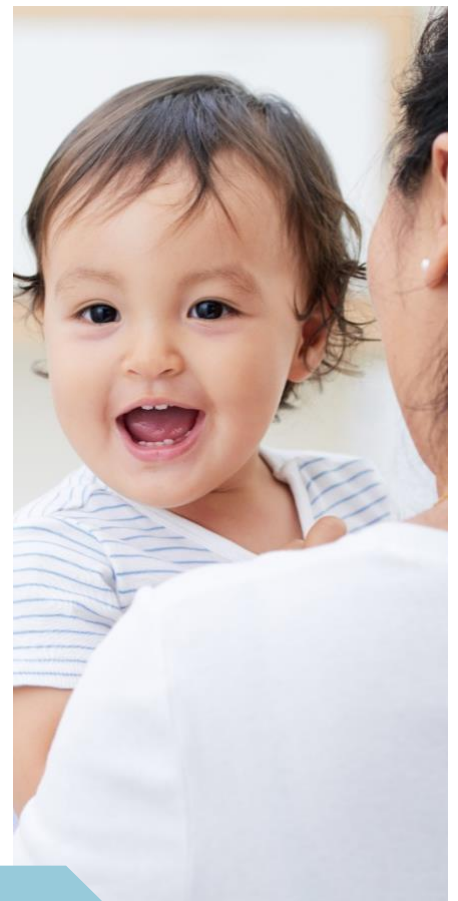


ReadyRosie Program Evaluation

2020 COVID Report | September 2020



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ReadyRosie Program Evaluation ■ ■ ■

2020 COVID Report

During March of 2020, Nebraska began to experience the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Schools across the state shutdown in mid-March, and by April 1st the Governor of Nebraska directed Nebraska schools to operate without students through the end of May. Childcare in Nebraska was also affected, with many closing and state health directives limiting the number of people allowed to share one space at a given time. The ripple effect of school and childcare closings and restrictions on providers and families was felt across the state. This mini report provides information on the ways in which providers utilized ReadyRosie, a comprehensive family engagement resource, during the pandemic to encourage family engagement and maintain connections with children and their families during uncertain times.



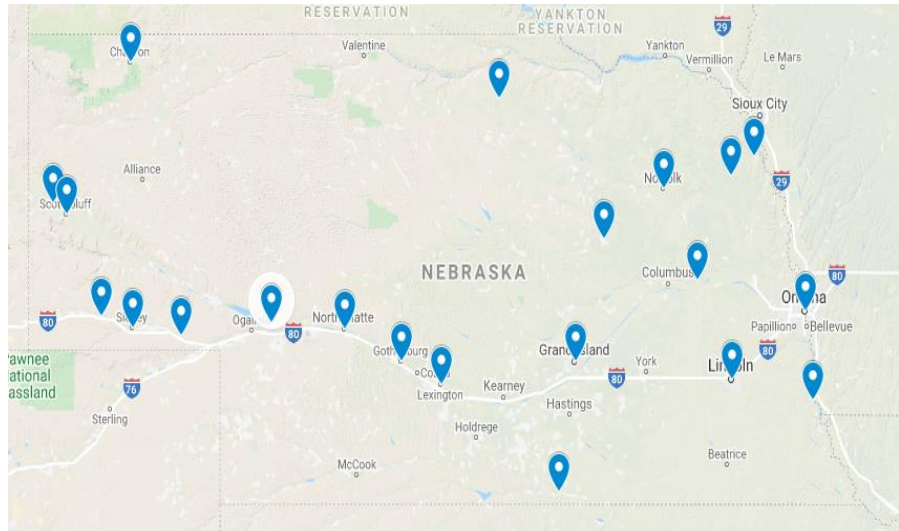
What is ReadyRosie?

ReadyRosie, a comprehensive family engagement resource, uses video modeling to build school family partnerships to promote school readiness. The ReadyRosie Active Family Engagement System is built on the premise that *“every child can be ready to learn when schools and families work together.”* ReadyRosie’s Modeled Moment videos are the core of the ReadyRosie program and provides resources to support schools, childcare providers, home visitors, children and families. A weekly video playlist is sent to families via text or e-mail. Families and educators can also access the 1000+ videos through the ReadyRosie video library, which contains videos for topics on health and well-being, language and literacy, math and reasoning, and social-emotional learning for children from birth to age 8. Videos are available in English and Spanish. Customized playlists can be created based on classroom needs or aligned to classroom objectives.

ReadyRosie in Nebraska

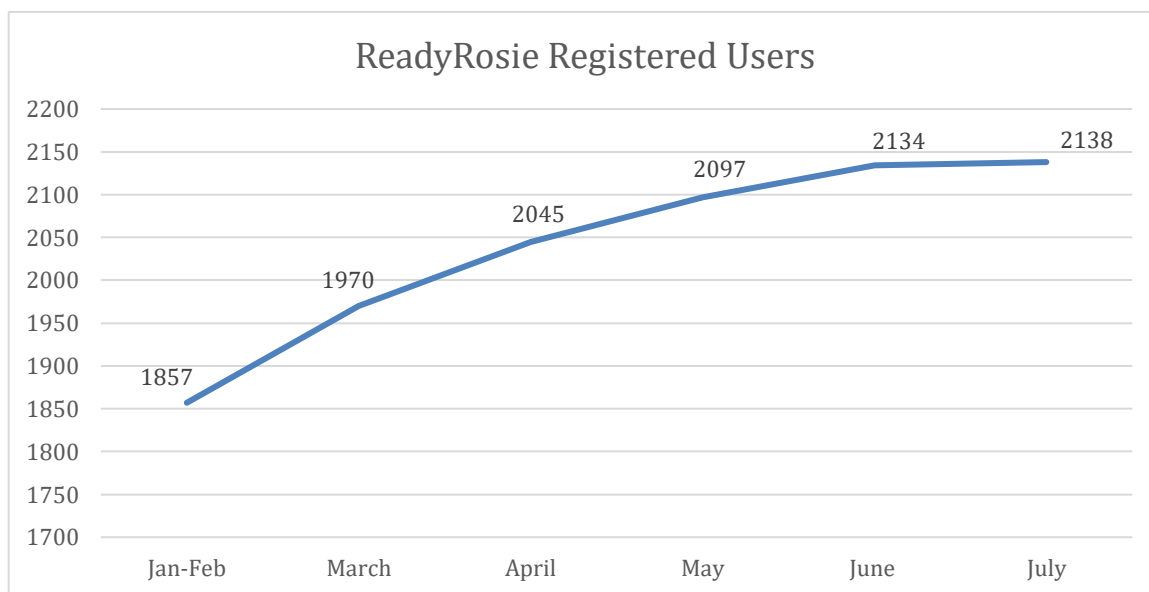
ReadyRosie has been implemented in three Cohorts in twenty-one communities across Nebraska. The first Cohort included the Nebraska Panhandle, and the second Cohort included: Gothenburg, Lincoln, Norfolk, Omaha, Pender, Red Cloud, and York. The third Cohort included:

Boone County, Grand Island, Keith County, Lexington-Dawson, Nebraska City, North Platte, Schuyler, Stuart, and Winnebago. In addition, Lincoln, Norfolk, Omaha, and York expanded the programs served in their communities. A variety of large and small programs, including Educare and Sixpence programs, have implemented the ReadyRosie program across a variety of contexts: infant/toddler classrooms, pre-school classrooms, home visitation programs, and family home care. A total of 23 coordinators oversee 60 respective programs across Nebraska.



ReadyRosie COVID-19 Enrollment Growth

ReadyRosie parent enrollment experienced steady growth throughout out the spring from the onset of the pandemic in Nebraska.



****Note:** Data for one Omaha childcare center was not available and thus not included in the enrollment totals.



Focus Groups

COORDINATOR AND PROVIDER FOCUS GROUPS

Three focus groups were conducted during an online ReadyRosie informational meeting in June of 2020. ReadyRosie sites from across the state provided input regarding their use of ReadyRosie during the pandemic and included coordinators, providers, home visitors, and community collaborative representatives.

The Nebraska ReadyRosie sites were operating and serving their families in a variety of ways during the pandemic:

- Stayed open, but with reduced numbers to the directed health measures (DHMs) from the state.
- Closed site, but held virtual services
- Closed at beginning of pandemic in Nebraska and set to reopen to students July 1st.
- Closed for 2 weeks during April, but reopened according to the DHMs with reduced numbers
- Stayed open, no change
- Closed for 2 months and reopened according to DHMs
- Virtual home visitation and/or phone calls

ReadyRosie use varied by site and community.

For some sites that continued to stay open RR was used to stay connected with children and families who were at home, and to encourage parent/child engagement. Intentional playlists were sent by teachers, home visitors, special education coordinators, and public-school preschools to provide information and resources to families each week or every other week.

Some centers stated that the use of RR has “fell off”— “Teachers are highly stressed, families are highly stressed, kids are highly stressed, so ReadyRosie has not been as much of a priority as safety and stability for the kids are the primary focus.” A few providers who stayed open and had families that continued to work they reported more parents declining participation in ReadyRosie and for families who were already enrolled in ReadyRosie they reported a reduction in interaction.

In the in-home prevention services, where they have moved to virtual, RR has taken on new meaning for those activities. “We’ve actually seen an increase in usage. Partners who work with families send videos to families prior and then talk through activities. It looks different for different programs, but it is bolstering prevention services. Face-to-face contact has been lost, but still able to utilize the curriculum to provide enhanced learning. One downside is that there are not many videos geared toward infant and toddlers and the home visiting programs are infant-toddler specific”.

Increased staff buy-in and understanding.

Many sites reported an increase in teacher/staff buy-in and parent enrollment when the pandemic hit. “I think RR was the first thing that came to the teachers minds when they were figuring how to connect with the parents during that time.”

While many sites experienced an increase in parent enrollment, they did not experience an increase in parent interaction. Consistent use among a few families was reported, but site wide increases in family interaction was not common.

Teachers looked to ReadyRosie as a way to connect with parents during quarantine and for teachers who had limited familiarity to the program due to time constraints were able to gain greater understanding of the program.

Prior to the pandemic, some sites had the expectation that teachers/staff would send a weekly playlist, but they reported the intentionality in doing so has increased. In addition, they have communicated with parents how to carry out activities at home and sent pictures to families indicating how it was done in class. This has allowed for additional opportunities for families to stay connected with sites.

For some home visitation programs, before the pandemic the home visitors were doing videos together with the families during the home visit, as opposed to sending it to the parents prior to the meeting.

“Before the pandemic there were teachers who wanted to do it but didn’t take the time to understand it because you only have so many hours in a day. This time has really set us up to properly use ReadyRosie going forward.”

ReadyRosie Coordinator

Resources surrounding routines and social emotional skills were most frequently requested.

The majority of sites indicated families were requesting resources regarding routines social emotional and maintaining basic skills. Bedtime, potty training, mealtime struggles were common themes that families requested. “The common routines that are usually a struggle across the board for most families are what our families are wanting resources and supports for.” Some families were looking for quick activities to keep up basic preschool skills as well as to keep their younger children entertained while home schooling older children.

Many sites indicated that families have not reached out for anything outside of the resources already provided by the sites and communities. “With COVID, obviously our families that were struggling are just struggling even more. I feel like probably RR has taken a back seat. Even our Parents as Teachers curriculum has taken a back seat just because we are in crisis management for a lot of these families. It has had to take on a different focus right now. Yes, that’s typically a part of our program, the overall social-emotional wellbeing of the family, but that’s hard to be a priority when you have families who are needing supports with diapers, wipes, food, access to new jobs (because they’ve lost their jobs and they’re not getting them back), housing assistance, clothing. There is a lot of need right now.”



ReadyRosie use varies.

The use of ReadyRosie has varied widely depending on site and family situation. A few sites indicated that families are feeling overwhelmed with the number of e-mails and text messages they were getting, especially if they had children in public school. Not only were families receiving multiple e-mails from the public-school system, but also from ReadyRosie and it became too much. Some sites scaled back their use of ReadyRosie and sending playlists to focus on crisis management surrounding COVID. Sites do not want to add to family's stress levels by adding another layer.

"I feel like it's such opposite ends of the spectrum. We have some families that use it non-stop. They watch the videos sent to them on the play list, they search for videos for children of different ages, and use it consistently. I can see the most recent activity – I can already tell you which families are going to be on that list. And there are some families who don't even watch the videos on the playlist where they don't even have to search for anything. Those who use it consistently love it and obviously see the benefit because they use their time to access the videos. The families who don't use it, it's not probably that they don't see value in it, it's just not a priority right now."

Some sites reported that their families appreciated the extra ideas and activities provided by ReadyRosie "Our families really appreciated the extra ideas. They used it to keep them away from the screen time. Parents would watch it and then be like hey, we're going to do this the rest of the day."

Expectations and engagement remain a struggle.

Continuing to have difficulty getting families to engage—especially parents who are more well off. Teachers send videos, but families are not engaging. Teachers were hopeful they would see more usage. The nice thing about ReadyRosie is that there is a playlist sent each week, so even if teachers forget to send a custom playlist families still have an opportunity to access a resource or do an activity with their children because they were sent out by ReadyRosie automatically.

Some teachers have had success with completing ReadyRosie activities with children in their weekly zoom meetings. Parent involvement is beginning to rise as parents are checking in and looking at the videos themselves after they learn that the activities and videos are from ReadyRosie. Once the teachers demonstrate that they are totally "bought in", parents are more apt to get on board and see that their children are enjoying the activities and it is a good resource.

For sites with coordinators who are not directly on site, they struggle with setting expectations for teacher/parent engagement "It's hard for me to then reach out to a program to say, 'Hey, why aren't you sending videos?' Because I'm not their supervisor, so it puts me in a very awkward role. I can have expectations for teachers in my direct program, but if the other programs in the community aren't using it, I don't really feel I have the position to call them out on it."



Conclusions

ReadyRosie in Nebraska provides a valuable resource for families and programs with videos on health and well-being, language and literacy, math and reasoning, and social-emotional learning for children from birth to age 8. Parent enrollment experienced a steady increase over the first six-months of the year as sites looked to ReadyRosie to build engagement and increase interaction with families during the pandemic. While some sites reported that parents were overwhelmed with the number of texts and e-mails they were receiving from multiple sources, others reported families utilizing ReadyRosie to keep children's routines and skills. Overall, parent enrollment increased during the COVID-19 restrictions across Nebraska and many sites reported an increase in staff buy-in and understanding of the ReadyRosie program.



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Evaluation Report prepared by
Amy Encinger, M.S., Barbara Jackson, Ph.D.

Interdisciplinary Center of Program Evaluation
The University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-
Meyer Institute: A University Center of Excellence for
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