

Impact evaluation of the “Crecer Jugando” parenting program

Submission date 15/05/2026	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 27/05/2026	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 27/05/2026	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Early childhood is a critical period for cognitive, emotional and social development. Parenting programmes that promote positive caregiver–child interactions through play and responsive caregiving have shown potential to support children's development and family wellbeing. Crecer Jugando is a parenting programme designed to strengthen caregivers' abilities to interact with young children through play, communication and emotional support. The aim of this study was to evaluate the impact of the Crecer Jugando programme on caregiver–child interaction, parenting practices and early childhood development outcomes.

Who can participate?

Caregiver–child dyads living in the communities where the programme was implemented could participate in the study. The caregiver had to be of legal age and the child had to be between 0 and 48 months. Participation in the study was voluntary.

What does the study involve?

Families who agreed to participate were randomly assigned to one of two groups. One group participated in the Crecer Jugando programme, which consisted of weekly group sessions designed to strengthen parenting skills and promote positive interactions between caregivers and children through play and guided reflection. The other group did not participate in the programme during the study period. All participating families completed surveys and assessments before the programme began and again after it ended. These assessments measured parenting practices, caregiver–child interaction and children's development.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Participants in the intervention group could benefit from learning strategies to support their children's development and strengthen their relationship with their child. The study also contributed to generating evidence about programmes that support families and young children. The risks associated with participation were minimal and mainly related to the time required to attend sessions or complete assessments.

Where is the study run from?

The study was conducted in Chile. The Crecer Jugando programme was implemented by Infancia

Primero, and the evaluation was designed and carried out by Estudios y Consultorías Focus. The study took place in the municipalities of El Bosque, Melipilla, Quinta Normal, Limache, Concepción, Maule, Monte Patria, and Río Negro.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

The study started in 2024 and ran until 2025, including programme implementation and follow-up assessments.

Who is funding the study?

1. The evaluation was conducted under the EDU-LAC Impact Fund, an initiative led by SUMMA in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation and the BHP Foundation to generate evidence on innovative educational interventions in Latin America.

2. Fundación Angelini

3. Fundación Colunga

4. Fundación Huella

5. Fundación Viento Sur

6. Fundación Ilumina

7. Fundación Olivo.

Who is the main contact?

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Protocol serial number
CJ-IPFOCUS-2025

Study information

Scientific Title
Impact evaluation of the Crecer Jugando early childhood parenting program on caregiver–child interaction and child development: a randomized controlled trial in Chile

Acronym
CJ-RCT

Study objectives

1. To estimate the causal impact of the Crecer Jugando parenting programme on caregiver–child interaction.
2. To evaluate effects on early childhood development outcomes.
3. To assess changes in parenting practices, parental stress and social support.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
approved 26/02/2024, Alberto Hurtado University Ethics Committee (Avda. Bernardo O'Higgins 1825, Santiago de Chile, 8340576, Chile; -; comiteetica@uahurtado.cl), ref: -

Primary study design
Interventional

Allocation
Randomized controlled trial

Masking

Blinded (masking used)

Control

Active

Assignment

Parallel

Purpose

Supportive care

Study type(s)

Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Early childhood development and caregiver–child interaction quality

Interventions

This is a multicentre interventional randomised controlled trial with parallel-group design, 1:1 allocation ratio, active waitlist control, and partial masking (blinded outcome assessment for PICCOLO instrument only).

Caregiver–child dyads are randomly assigned using a computer-generated sequence stratified by municipality and intervention cycle, with a 1:1 allocation ratio, to either a treatment group or an active waitlist control group. The treatment group receives the Crecer Jugando parenting programme, consisting of 10 weekly group sessions of approximately 90 minutes each, delivered in face-to-face or remote (Zoom) format, focused on strengthening parenting skills and promoting positive caregiver–child interaction through play-based activities and guided reflection. Participants also receive educational resources via a WhatsApp community forum throughout the 10-week cycle. The control group is placed on an active waitlist and receives no programme materials or sessions during the intervention period. Data are collected at baseline and post-intervention follow-up using standardised instruments measuring parenting practices (E2P), caregiver–child interaction (PICCOLO), child development (ASQ-3), and parental stress (PSI-4-SF).

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

1. Caregiver–child interaction quality measured using the Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) at baseline and post-intervention follow-up
2. Child development measured using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3) at baseline and post-intervention follow-up

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Parenting skills measured using the Escala de Parentalidad Positiva (E2P v.2) at baseline and post-intervention follow-up

2. Parental stress measured using the Parenting Stress Index, Fourth Edition Short Form (PSI-4-SF) at baseline and post-intervention follow-up

Completion date

15/02/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Caregiver–child dyads with children aged 0–48 months
2. The primary caregiver is of legal age (18 years or older)
3. The caregiver is the primary caregiver of the child
4. Caregivers residing in one of the eight implementing municipalities
5. Caregivers linked to services implementing the Crecer Jugando programme
6. Caregivers willing to participate in the evaluation and complete study instruments

Participant type(s)

Carer, Healthy volunteer

Healthy volunteers allowed

Yes

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

0 months

Upper age limit

48 months

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

600

Key exclusion criteria

1. Caregivers who are not the primary caregiver of the child
2. Children older than 48 months at enrolment
3. Participants who do not provide informed consent
4. Families who had previously participated in a Crecer Jugando programme cycle
5. Families receiving a similar parenting intervention concurrently
6. Infants with a diagnosis of severe disability preventing the use of psychomotor development scales (ASQ-3)

Date of first enrolment

01/03/2024

Date of final enrolment

15/11/2024

Locations

Countries of recruitment

Chile

Study participating centre

Municipalidad de Concepción

Av. O'Higgins 525, Concepción

Concepción

Chile

4030615.

Study participating centre

Municipalidad de El Bosque

Av. Alejandro Guzmán 735, El Bosque

Santiago de Chile

Chile

8010620

Study participating centre

Municipalidad de Limache

Av. Palmira Romano Sur 340, Limache

Limache

Chile

6520000

Study participating centre

Municipalidad de Maule

Av. Balmaceda 450, Maule

Talca

Chile

3530000

Study participating centre

Municipalidad de Melipilla

Silva Chávez 480, Melipilla

Melipilla

Chile

9580196

Study participating centre
Municipalidad de Monte Patria
Diaguitas 31, Monte Patria
Ovalle
Chile
1840000

Study participating centre
Municipalidad de Quinta Normal
Av. Carrascal 4447, Quinta Normal
Santiago de Chile
Chile
8500643

Study participating centre
Municipalidad de Río Negro
Vicuña Mackenna 170, Río Negro
Osorno
Chile
5300000

Sponsor information

Organisation
Focus Consulting

Organisation
Childhood First Foundation (Fundación Infancia Primero)

Funder(s)

Funder type
Not defined

Funder Name

SUMMA

Funder Name

Fundación Angelini

Funder Name

Fundación Colunga

Funder Name

Fundación Huella

Funder Name

Fundación Viento Sur

Funder Name

Fundación Ilumina

Funder Name

Fundación Olivo

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

Data shared upon reasonable request will include anonymised participant-level data used in the analyses. Data will be available following publication of the results. Access will be granted to researchers for academic and research purposes only. All data were anonymised prior to analysis in accordance with the ethics approval granted by the Ethics Committee of Alberto Hurtado University. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request, Published as a supplement to the results publication