

# Family Engagement in Public Libraries: Protective Factors and Play

## 1 Introduction

The idea seems simple:

1. Tie children's traditional library services to protective factors for the prevention of child maltreatment.



2. Intentionally do more of what works.

3. Build in new ideas, and make it all based on PLAY-the work of childhood!

## 2 Methods

### Protective Factors and Competencies Crosswalk

#### Protective Factors for the Prevention of Child Maltreatment

Parental Resilience

Social Connections

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Concrete Support in Times of Need

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

#### ALSC Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Libraries

Built through implementation of the FEPL program.

Commitment to Client Group  
2. Recognizes systems of oppression  
3. Recognizes the effects of societal factors

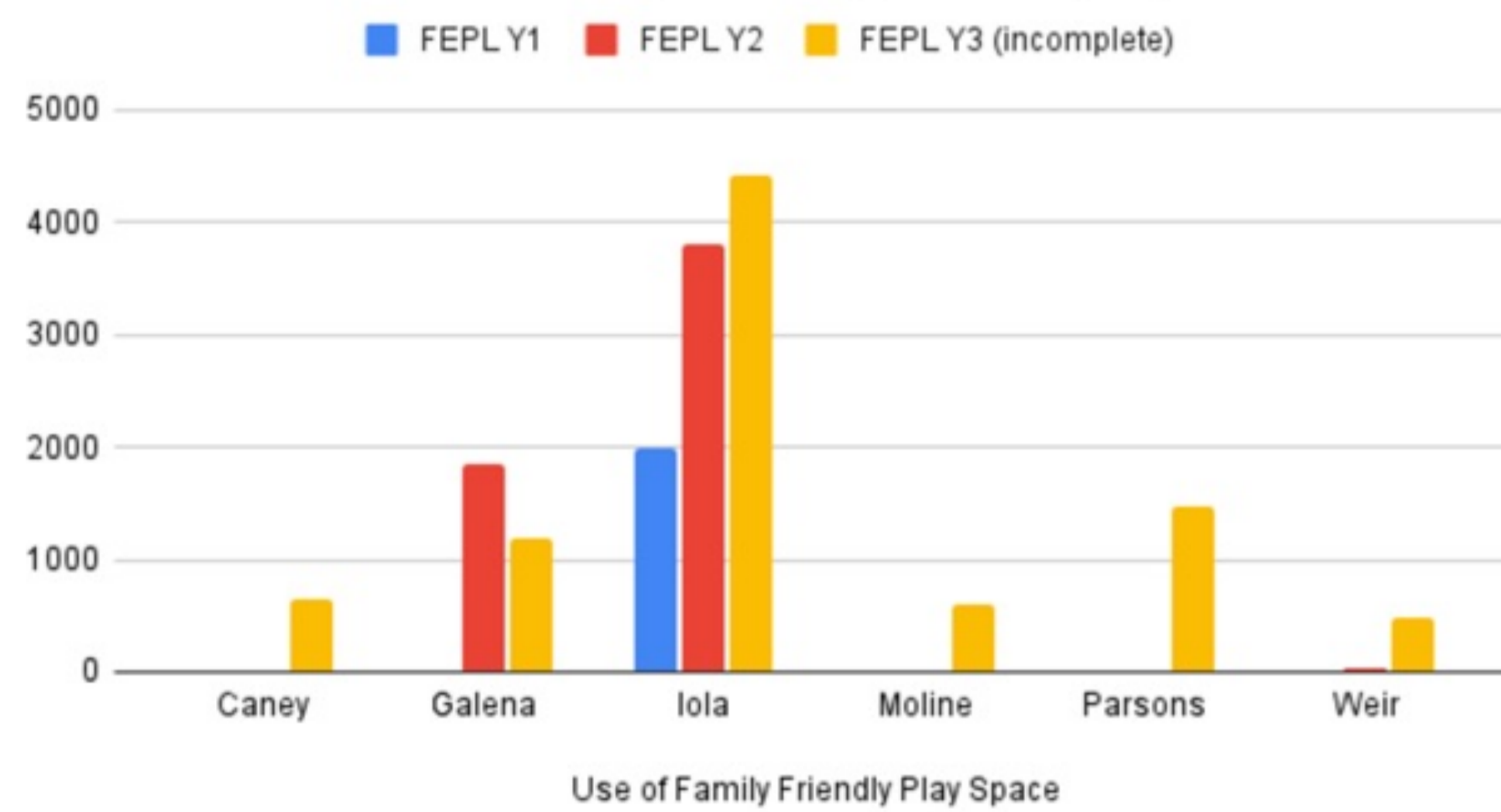
Reference & User Services  
1. Creates and maintains a library environment that provides access to materials and resources for children and caregivers.

Outreach and Advocacy  
6. Communicates and collaborates with other agencies, serving children

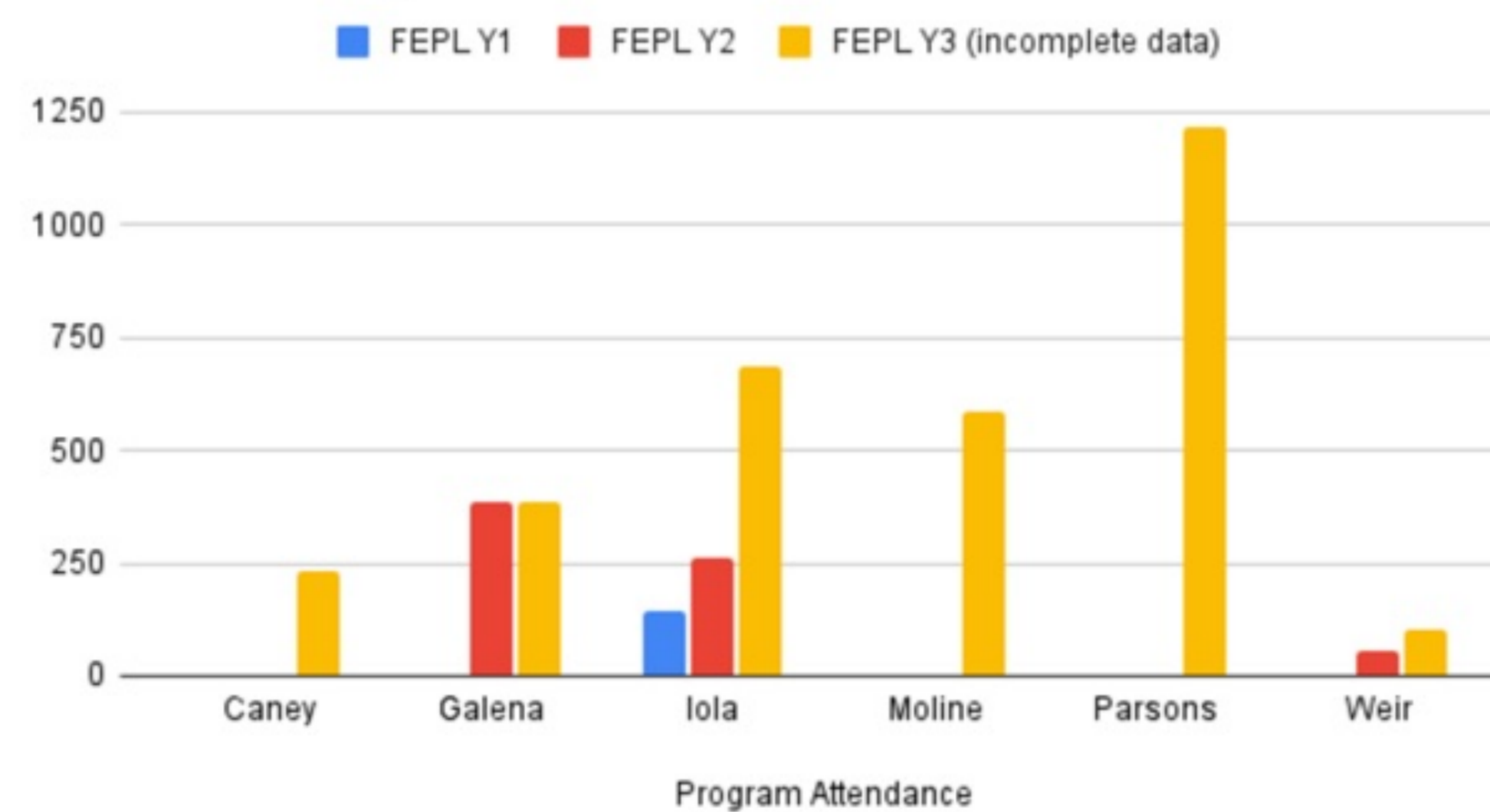
Commitment to Client Group  
1. Provides inclusive and equitable service to diverse populations.  
2. Interrupts systems of exclusion by providing culturally aware services.  
3. Recognizes the effects of societal factors on the needs of children and their caregivers.  
4. Understands theories of learning, literacy and brain development, and their implications for library service.  
5. Understands current educational practices.  
6. Responds to the needs and preferences of children, their caregivers, educators, and other adults who use the children's department.  
7. Cultivates an environment for enjoyable and convenient use of library resources.

## 3 Results: What does this look like?

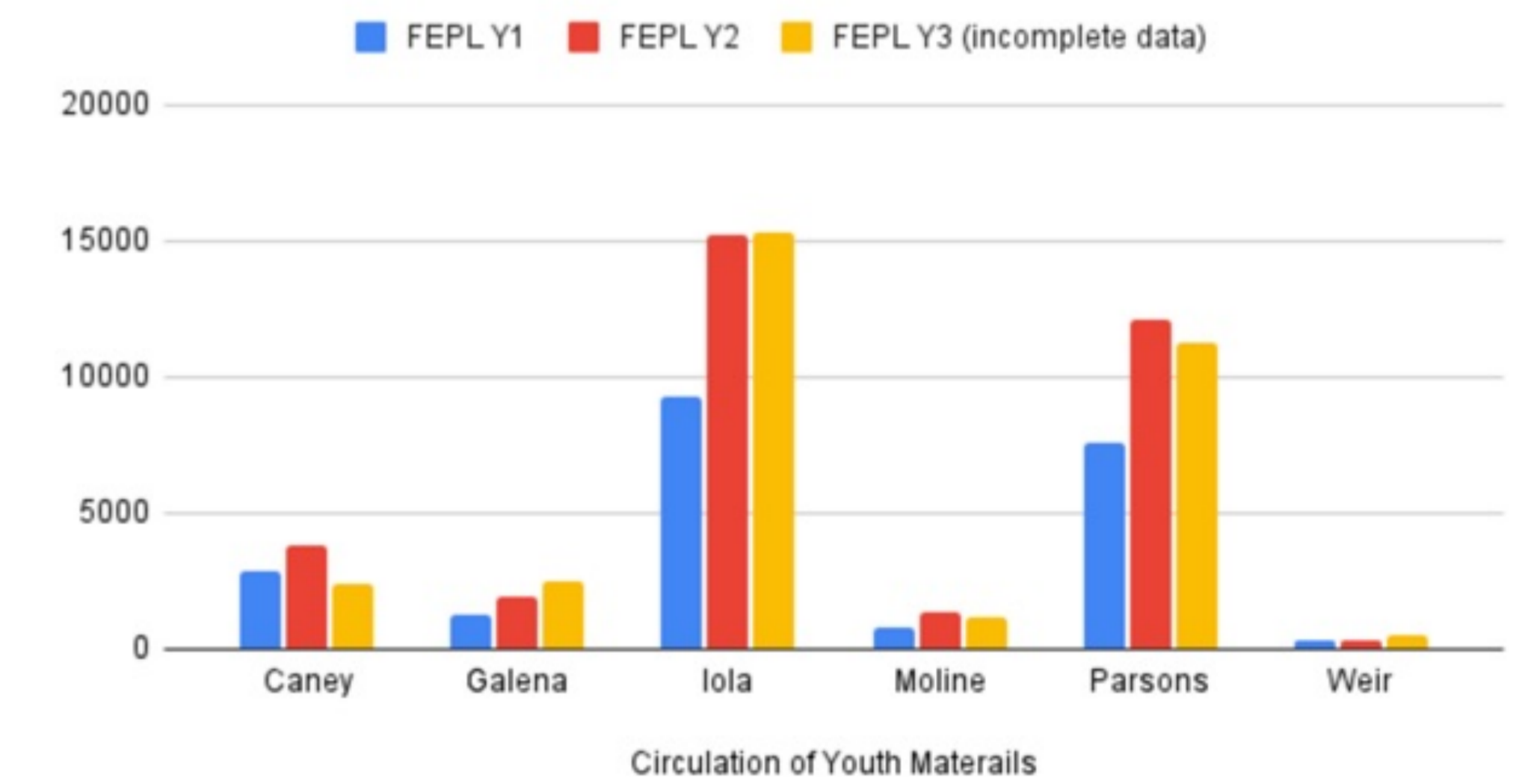
Number of People Using the Play Space



Program Attendance at FEPL Libraries



Circulation of Youth Materials at FEPL Libraries



## 4 Conclusions



Ripple Effects Mapping (REM) by researchers at the Kansas University Center for Public Partnerships and Research (KU-CPPR) shows the widespread impact library services such as FEPL have when they are intentional.

In communities where the Family Engagement in Public Libraries program has been implemented outcomes have been encouraging and continued expansion is warranted.

Libraries continue to fill the need of the "third" place of belonging and when knowledge of child development and prevention of child maltreatment are aligned with library services, the library becomes a more powerful place of acceptance and stability for young children and families.

## 5 References

- Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC Competencies for Librarians Serving Children in Libraries). <https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/alsc/content/edcareers/alsccorecomps/ALSC%20Competencies%20for%20Librarians%20Serving%20Children%20in%20Libraries.pdf>
- Family Place Libraries. <https://www.familyplacelibraries.org/>
- Protective Factors for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. <https://cssp.org/our-work/projects/protective-factors-framework/>
- This project is funded through a Community-Based Child Development (CBCAP) grant to Southeast Kansas Library System from the Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund. Tammie Benham, Project Director can be reached at [tbenham@sekls.org](mailto:tbenham@sekls.org)

