Staff Development and Training

Explaining Why Early Care and Education Teachers Stay in the Field

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PRESENTER: Sue Vartuli

Early childhood teaching has one of the highest turnover rates (Green, 1999; Whitebook & Sakai, 2004). Low pay and benefits has been mentioned as one of the main reasons for turn over. Although important, pay is only one aspect of work related to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction extends not only to whether things are going well at work but is defined as the difference between our ideal work situation and our real job situation (Bloom, 1986, 1988). Early childhood teachers overall are usually satisfied with their jobs (Stremmel & Powell, 1990; Phillips, Howes & Whitebook, 1991; Stremmel, 1991; Jorde-Bloom, 1996; Cameron, Mooney & Moses, 2002). In this study the teachers' perceptions of work life were explored.

Two samples of early childhood teacher's work attitudes from five hundred and eight early childhood teachers (from predominantly church-based centers) and ninety-nine Head Start teachers were analyzed for this study.

Early Childhood Work Attitudes and Organizational Commitment Questionnaires (Jorde-Bloom, 1986) were analyzed. Correlations were run on scale scores and demographic variables. ANOVA's were computed comparing program type (center-based, Head Start, church-based, and school district) by six early childhood work attitude and commitment scale scores. Variables that were associated with the length of time at current center were determined by regression equations.

Teachers had above midpoint mean scores on all six scale scores, indicating an overall satisfaction toward their work. The lowest mean scores were 3.62 and 3.26 (out of 5), for the pay and promotion scale, and the highest mean score was 4.31 and 3.93 for attitudes about co-workers.

Employees staying longer in their current job were on the average older, more committed to their job, not working at an accredited center, and had slightly more education. There were significant moderate correlations, $r = .58$ and $r = .61$, between more satisfied employees (total job satisfaction scale) and employees with high commitment toward their jobs.

Church-based employees had significantly higher commitment scale scores than center-based or Head Start employees. School district employees had significantly higher pay and promotion scale scores than Head Start or center-based employees. Church-based employees had significantly higher supervisor scale scores than Head Start employees and center-based teachers had significantly lower coworker scale scores than church-based or school district employees. Overall, school district employees had the highest total satisfaction scores and Head Start teachers had the lowest total satisfaction scores. Age of the subject (older), type of program (church-based), and if the center was not accredited were predictors of the length of time at the

current center in the first sample. In the second sample, higher commitment ratings predicted length of time at the current center.

Relationships appear to be important to the job satisfaction of women (McClelland, 1986). Knowing what facets of their work teachers are feeling satisfied or discouraged about can assist administrators in designing strategies that facilitate higher levels of job satisfaction (Bloom, 1988). The strength of the individual's identification with and involvement in particular organizations, such as a church, also appears to be associated with job satisfaction.

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Model for Expediting the Degree Earning Process for Head Start Teachers of Hispanic-Latino-Children

E. Audrey Clark, Alyce Akers

PRESENTER: E. Audrey Clark

Head Start children and families are increasingly of Hispanic-Latino heritage. This requires teachers to be skilled in working with monolingual Spanish speakers and to understand other issues related to multiculturalism. In turn, these factors predispose a need for Hispanic-Latino teachers familiar with multicultural issues. Concurrent with this need for more Hispanic-Latino teachers is a congressional mandate that Head Start teachers obtain post-secondary degrees (Higher Education act, 1998 and proposed amendments for 2005). Such mandates may be particularly daunting for Hispanic-Latino teachers who may be the first generation of college students in their families and speak English as a second language. This research tracked the experiences of 158 Head Start teachers as they earned higher education degrees. The resulting data served as the basis for constructing a model for collaboration among Head Start agencies, community colleges and four-year universities. Accommodations discussed in the model include: creating special program status for the Head Start group, arranging work-friendly course scheduling, involving Head Start classrooms, developing special seminars, awarding financial incentives, creating jobs for participants, and offering enhanced academic counseling. Actions of project personnel to initiate the collaboration, responsibilities of the student participants in the project, and responsibilities of the project personnel toward participants and institutions are discussed.

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A Collaborative Coaching Teacher Development Approach to Facilitate Head Start Children's Language and Communication

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The present research examines a collaborative coaching approach to teacher development for reading to and conversing with three-year-old children in Head Start. Although Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) proposed that the majority of reading problems could be prevented, in part, by increasing children's oral language skills, children who grow up in poverty are at a disadvantage (Hart & Risely, 1995; Zill, Collins, West, & Hausken, 1995). The present research employed a "dialogic reading" approach with Head Start children, one found to foster language development in low-income children (e.g., Lonigan, Anthony, Bloomfield, Dyer, & Samwel, 1999; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Building upon historical and contemporary collaboration and coaching methods, the present research also initiated a professional development approach to foster Head Start teachers' dialogic reading techniques with young children (e.g., Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 2001; Oden, Ricks-Doneen, & The Head Start Research Cooperative Panel, 1998; Rush, Shelden, & Hanft, 2003; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). The professional development approach of the present research is earmarked by a collaborative, coaching process that includes modeling, scaffolding, self-efficacy and reflection, as teachers first collaborate with researchers and then progress to becoming collegial coaches to other teachers. The present report is a qualitative examination of this emergent approach.

Study participants included an assistant director, a staff coordinator and teachers from an urban Head Start agency and a four-person research team from a nearby university. During Phase 1, two Head Start teachers collaborated with two university researchers. Each teacher was videotaped reading to a small group of three-year-olds to provide a "baseline" story reading session; one researcher was videotaped to provide a model of reading to children. After each of five to seven subsequent videotaped sessions, the researchers met with each teacher, separately, to view the videotapes, reflect on the observed practices and brainstorm ideas on reading to children and engaging them in conversations about the stories.

The sequence of Phase 2 was the same as in Phase 1, except for changes in the roles: each of the first two teachers next assumed the coaching role with another teacher and served as a videotaped model. The researchers became coaches of the teacher-coaches and provided feedback on developing coaching and mentoring skills. Each teacher-coach completed the Phase 2 process with a teacher colleague and then replicated the process with another teacher colleague.

Using Atlas.ti, qualitative analyses of transcripts from videotapes and audiotapes, interviews and roundtable discussions were conducted. These analyses reveal the key processes of an emergent, interactive, engaging professional development approach. The processes involved in this approach have led to the teachers changing their shared reading styles in the sessions and internalizing these changes to promote children's language and social development in the

classroom. The major implications of this research, to date, are that Head Start teachers can make changes in their shared reading approaches through a collaborative, coaching process and effectively become collaborative, collegial coaches to other teachers.

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Head Start Teacher Perceptions of the Demands in Their Working Environments

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The purpose of this study was to examine teacher stress in Head Start settings with particular attention to which job related tasks were associated with high teacher stress. The researchers were also interested in comparing various aspects of classroom demands and resources to determine which components of the workplace were perceived by Head Start teachers as most demanding and which resources were seen as most helpful in meeting those demands.

The participants were a sample of 296 Head Start teachers in four southeastern states. The CARD, preschool version, was administered to the sample of Head Start teachers. Each teacher reported the demographic composition and unique or demanding features of his/her classroom, and whether personal and school-provided resources were sufficient to handle classroom demands. Teachers were contacted through the intra-office mail system within the Head Start programs. Teachers returned surveys to an on-site data collection coordinator who worked for the researchers. This method insured anonymity, confidentiality, and separated ratings of the classroom from administrators.

The CARD has two scales, Classroom Demands and Classroom Resources. Factor analysis was used to explore the underlying dimensions of both the resources and demands sections of the CARD. Resources were reported through the following subscales: Specialized Resources, General Program Resources, and Parents. For the General Program Resources' subscale, teacher aides were reported as being moderately helpful to extremely helpful by 86.4% of the participants, while other teachers and instructional materials provided by the center/program were reported as being moderately helpful to extremely helpful by 80.9% of the teachers. The items on the Parents subscale were given the lowest rating by the teachers, indicating they were perceived as the least helpful of all the resources.

The following subscales were used to represent the demands sections: Administrative Demands, Classroom Environmental Demands, Children with Problem Behaviors, and Children with Other Special Needs. The Administrative Demands subscale was reported as being the most demanding by the teachers. Paperwork requirements were reported as being very demanding or extremely demanding by 69.2% of the teachers, while assessments, portfolios, and performance assessments were reported as being very demanding or extremely demanding by 54.3% of the population. All of the items on the remaining demands subscales received mean ratings in the moderate demands range.

These findings indicate that a substantial minority of teachers in Head Start settings may be at risk for stress and suggest that administrative demands, such as assessment and paperwork tasks, are one of the central contributors to teachers' perceptions of occupational stress. This is a particularly important finding given the current administration's focus on child outcomes, assessment, and the National Reporting System.

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Increasing Teachers' Job Satisfaction in Head Start Programs by Using a Strength-Based Approach to Classroom Management

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Teacher turnover plagues early childhood education, with rates among the highest in the nation, estimated at 15-30% annually (Bloom, 1996; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). This is of particular concern in Head Start programs: New York City Head Start has an annual turnover rate of 31% (Granger & Marx, 1990, cited in Granger & Marx, 1992). High turnover presents problems for children by interfering with consistency and effectiveness. Job satisfaction is negatively correlated with job stress and turnover (Todd & Deery-Schmitt, 1996), and centers with less than 10% annual turnover have significantly higher quality ratings than those with more turnover (Helburn et. al, 1995), suggesting that teacher satisfaction is key to providing high quality care. Teachers report one of their greatest sources of frustration as dealing with problem behaviors (Bibou-Nakou, Stogiannidou, & Kiosseoglou, 1999; Boyle, Borg, Falzon, & Baglioni, 1995). This is particularly relevant for Head Start teachers working with children with problem behaviors, often associated with low socio-economic status (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, & Maritato, 1997; Offord & Lipman, 1996). Additionally, teachers indicate feeling apprehensive when talking to parents about their children's behaviors. Strength-based approaches address these sources of burnout by offering concrete strategies to prevent problem behaviors, and opportunities to discuss improvements with parents.

This poster presents one strength-based model used in Head Start programs and its relationship to teacher job satisfaction. We hypothesized that teachers using this model with high fidelity would have greater satisfaction than those using the program with low fidelity. Qualitative findings on satisfactions and frustrations unique to participating Head Start teachers are also presented.

Method

Participants (n=26) were early childhood teachers from across the U.S. All teachers used the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Program, a strength-based program designed to foster children's social-emotional development and family collaboration.

Participants completed a job satisfaction questionnaire adapted with permission from Bloom's (2005) Early Childhood Job Satisfaction Survey, a DECA program implementation measure assessing extent of DECA program usage, and questions regarding demographic information. Each participant was placed into a high-user or low-user group based on level of program implementation.

Results

Participants with the highest level of DECA Program implementation had significantly higher levels of job satisfaction across almost every category, including overall job satisfaction, than low-users. Effect sizes were large, ranging from 0.97 to 1.97. Results showed significant correlations between level of program implementation and almost all job satisfaction scales.

Discussion

Results indicate that the implementation level of a strength-based approach is positively related to job satisfaction. This might be because strength-based approaches are efficacious in reducing problem behaviors, developing social-emotional health, and guiding positive collaboration with parents – all of which contribute to greater job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that using a strength-based program can result in increased teacher satisfaction, potentially leading to better outcomes for children. If teacher turnover is, in part, due to unhappiness in dealing with behavior problems and difficulty communicating with parents, advocating for strength-based programs in Head Start classrooms may be a first step in addressing this national concern in early childhood education.

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How Do Two Years of Professional Development In a Preschool Math Curriculum Affect Teachers' Classroom Practices?

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Design

A pre-kindergarten mathematics curriculum was implemented and evaluated for two years in Head Start and state-funded preschools in California and New York. Each year, 40 classrooms (10 Head Start and 10 state-funded preschool classrooms per state) were randomly assigned to the intervention condition (math curriculum) or control condition (no math curriculum). Eight children were randomly selected from each classroom to participate (N = 320 children per year).

Curriculum and Professional Development

The components of the intervention included *Pre-K Mathematics* (Klein & Starkey, 2002) and the *DLM Express Math Resource Package* (Clements & Sarama, 2003). In Years 1 and 2, intervention teachers attended professional development workshops and received on-site training and technical assistance. Professional development included information on mathematical development, curricular activities, and pedagogical techniques such as providing scaffolding.

Evaluation Methods

Children were assessed using the Child Math Assessment (CMA) in the fall and spring of their pre-kindergarten year (Number, Arithmetic, Space/Geometry, Measurement and Patterns). The Early Mathematics Classroom Observation (EMCO) was conducted in the fall and spring of each year, providing measurements of duration and attributes of mathematic activities in which children were engaged with teachers. These activities were categorized as focal (transmission of mathematics knowledge is the goal of the activity) and embedded (goals of the activity involve non-mathematics knowledge domains), as well as scaffolded or unscaffolded. Implementation fidelity was measured through biweekly visits. Measures included scheduling, preparation, and developmental adjustments and written assessments for each child.

Results

In Year 1 and 2, children's mathematical knowledge increased by 62% and 79%, respectively, in intervention classrooms compared to children in control classrooms (Klein, Starkey, Clements, & Sarama, 2005). Overall fidelity scores for small group activities increased from .87 to .96 from Year 1 to Year 2, respectively (Klein et al.). During Year 1, EMCO analyses illustrated that, regarding non-intervention math activities in the classroom, there were no significant differences between intervention and control teachers in the average number of minutes per activity, focal versus embedded or scaffolded versus unscaffolded practices. However, in Year 2, there were significant differences between intervention and control teachers with regard to their non-intervention math practices in the classroom. Intervention teachers provided longer activities (4.78 versus 3.84 minutes, t=-2.354, p=.019), more focal activities (31.5% versus 21.6%, χ^2=5.739, p=.017) and more scaffolded activities (48.7% versus 31.7%, χ^2=13.764, p<.001).

Discussion

Intervention teachers generalized their use of mathematically-focused activities by creating activities that were not part of the intervention curriculum. Intervention teachers also generalized their use of scaffolding to these activities. In contrast, control teachers continued to embed mathematics in non-mathematical activities. Intervention teachers spent more time with children in teacher-created math activities than control teachers.

Learning to implement the pre-kindergarten mathematics curriculum had a deep influence on teachers' mathematics practices, an influence that extended beyond learning the *Pre-K Mathematics* curriculum. This training enabled intervention teachers to successfully extend their knowledge to mathematics practices beyond the intervention curriculum in the second year.

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Enhancing Physical Environments to Promote Language and Literacy in Early Head Start Classrooms

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The present study evaluated one aspect of a professional development model that informed and motivated participants to improve physical literacy environments for infants and toddlers. This program, StoryQuest: Celebrating Beginning Language and Literacy, was a 2 year Early Childhood Educator Professional Development grant funded by the U.S Department of Education to provide timely, evidence-based information and action strategies to teams to stimulate beginning language and literacy in high poverty neighborhoods with significant risk to young children's development. The present study evaluated the impact of StoryQuest training on Early Head Start classroom physical environments.

StoryQuest selected a purposive sample of three teams from each of the ten Head Start geographic regions in the United States to participate in research pertaining to the efficacy of the StoryQuest professional development model.

Pretest and posttest scores for each classroom in the intervention group were compared using dependent t-tests. Both overall change and change on each environmental literacy concept variable were compared. Due to a limited sample of control group team videotapes, statistical analyses were not conducted for the four classrooms coded from the control group. Intervention group scores were significantly higher on the posttest than on the pretest, $t(15)=-2.57$, $p=.02$, $d=-.64$. In other words, after participation in the StoryQuest professional development model, team members established higher quality classroom physical environments for language and literacy even though little time was spent directly teaching this set of strategies.

Analyses on each concept of the StoryQuest Assessment of Literacy Elements in Infant-Toddler Settings—Abridged, indicated that scores on four of the seven physical literacy environment concepts improved significantly for the intervention group classrooms. Classrooms significantly improved with medium effect sizes on the presence and quality of materials related to vocabulary, $t(15)=-2.64$, $p=.02$, $d=.66$; the provision and placement of meaningful symbols, $t(15)=-2.28$, $p=.04$, $d=.57$; the variety and accessibility of books, $t(15)=-2.71$, $p=.02$, $d=.68$; and the cultural diversity of classroom objects and pictures, $t(15)=-2.21$, $p=.04$, $d=.55$.

The results of this study provide strong support for the effectiveness of a comprehensive, ecologically-based professional development program for enhancing language and literacy environments for infants and toddlers from high poverty neighborhoods. The 14 month duration of the project's diverse learning opportunities, the variety of teaching/learning modes, the peer mentoring required by the project for the direct service provider to spread the effect across the staff, and the multidisciplinary team efforts at local action planning and implementation are potential factors in the intervention's success. The unique combination of these elements should be further explored in future research on professional development for the promotion of emergent literacy.

Community Collaboration in Teacher Training: An Innovative Component of Comprehensive Mental Health Policy Implementation

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The promotion of social competence and emotional well-being has always been fundamental to Head Start goals of healthy development and school readiness (Knitzer, 2000). However, ambivalence and inconsistency in the delivery of mental health intervention, and lack of effective practice and access to appropriate mental health expertise, have been long standing problems, given low priority amidst funding challenges (Knitzer, 2004). Consequently, programs of mental health intervention vary widely among centers, ranging from as little as off-site, minimal consultation to more systematic, proactive and preventive interventions (Piotrkowski et al., 1994; Webster-Stratton, 2001).

Child mental health services for the Regina Coeli Child Development Center have been built over a 30-year history of community collaboration in the development of a comprehensive model by developmental psychologists and early childhood educators. Components include: mental health observation and consultation in the classroom, mental health screening and referral for psychotherapeutic intervention, functional behavioral assessments, individualized behavior plans, and hands-on parent training in behavior management. A key component of this proactive mental health program has been the provision for teacher training in effective classroom behavior management conducted by a developmental psychologist collaborating from within the community.

The application of behavioral principles in classroom settings spans four decades, demonstrating the efficacy of techniques, such as the use of differential reinforcement in reducing problem behaviors and increasing student attention and productivity (Becker, et al., 1967; Madsen et al., 1968; Cossairt, et al., 1973; Walker, Colvin & Ramsey, 1995). However, training delivery systems for teachers vary widely. Joyce and Showers (1980) examined over 200 studies and concluded that a combination of training components (theory, modeling, practice, feedback and coaching for application) was most effective. Later studies have supported those findings (Miller, Harris & Watanabe, 1991; Webster-Stratton, et al., 2001). The present approach combines use of empirically demonstrated behavioral techniques with a data based, hands-on training method utilizing a combined approach of theory presentation, modeling, videotaped feedback, practice, and coaching.

Data were analyzed for 48 teachers trained at 10 Head Start centers. Training consisted of videotaped 10-15 minute segments of teaching time across a range of 2-13 sessions. Teachers were given instruction in use of differential reinforcement techniques and developmentally appropriate intervention. Each teacher viewed her own videotapes and reviewed charted data. Paired T-tests were performed for the primary dependent measure-attention to appropriate behavior (e.g. positive reinforcement or positive behavioral support and guidance). Results indicated a highly significant increase in the use of attention to appropriate behavior or positive

reinforcement. Outcome data were collected, including number of students referred for functional behavior assessments and individual behavior plans, student dismissal rate, and staff turnover rate. Referrals for functional behavior assessments and behavior plans were compared for classrooms of teachers who had received the behavioral training, to classrooms of teachers who had not received the behavioral training. Evidence based teacher training is a critical component of comprehensive mental health policy with regard to Head Start goals of increasing social competence and emotional well-being for students, and providing staff training that is cost effective.

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The Companion Curriculum: A Professional Development Model for Enhancing Parent Involvement in Head Start

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(Summary not available)

Head Start Hispanic Higher Education Partnership to Serve Migrant Families by Better Educated Migrant Head Start Teachers: An Evaluation

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The logic model framework is used to evaluate and analyze a partnership that formed in 2001 to plan and implement Proyecto Empuje (Project Push), a 4 year (2001-2005) Head Start-Higher Education Hispanic Latino Service Partnerships grants project to address the low level of teachers with AA degrees in early childhood education at Michigan Migrant Head Start (MHS) centers.

The rational for partnering is the need to address the problems encountered in the market by degreed teachers in the child care industry. Analysis of the antecedent conditions of the problem of low level of AA degreed teachers suggests the labor market setting plays a key role in the successful recruitment and retention of degreed teachers by MHS grantees. Seasonal employment and relatively low wage compensation are job factors inhibiting the ability to compete effectively in the external child care labor market. The workforce problem is made more challenging by the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate teachers, particularly in Michigan, an "upstream" location in the migration path of agricultural workers where culturally and linguistically appropriate teachers are in the minority.

The benefits from Proyecto Empuje (e.g. encouraging Head Start staff to facilitate their college education and enhance their skills, work pay, and satisfaction) serve as added incentives to stay with MHS. Specific objectives for partnering are the provisions of financial and educational information, educational counseling, tutoring and mentoring to project participants; financial assistance in the form of childcare and mileage stipends, books, etc.; and MSU curriculum development to include culturally relevant classes and development of articulation agreements to allow for their transferability to community colleges.

Many of the factors that stimulated the development, maintenance, and growth of the partnership are similar to those found in other successful partnerships: the benefits of partnering, which include improved educational and professional development opportunities for HS teachers, improved HS center quality and children development; joint project planning between MHS and MSU; strong, established relationship between parties; qualified, knowledgeable, and culturally sensitive and representative staff; joint MMHS and MSU project management and decision making; availability of the resources necessary to operate the project; meeting the needs of the participants, and increasing the economic and personal benefits to teachers participating in the project.

In conclusion, the partnership has played a major role in the professional development of MHS teachers. Benefits from the partnership include improved center quality; progress toward federal compliance as measured by the participation of 139 Head Start staff members in college classes, 43 of which completed an AA degree; enhanced university curriculum; enhanced understanding of the demographic, environmental, and personal factors that constrain the ability of teachers to

continue their education; enhanced teacher work and life satisfaction as measured by increases in work pay and personal growth; increased university capacity to respond to the training needs of Head Start staff; enhanced appreciation for the challenges faced in the formation of articulation agreements; enhanced appreciation for the factors that support the partnership; and impacts on organizational policy and practice to facilitate the college education of MHS teachers.

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Mentoring for Implementing Change in Early Literacy Instruction

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What teachers know and can do is the single most important determiner of what students learn (Darling-Hammond 2002; Darling-Hammond and Berry 1999). Crucial to children's literacy development and successful outcomes is the mentoring of veteran and beginning preschool teachers in literacy instruction. Mentoring practices in preschool education are relatively new and require assessment of existing empirical research on teacher induction and professional development in order to determine the scope and merit of mentoring as a change agent (Feimen-Nemser 1996; Ingersoll and Kralick 2004; NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education 1999).

This paper is based on data gathered in a two-year evaluation of an Early Reading First (ERF) Literacy program funded by the U.S. Department of Education and implemented by a community-based organization in Central Texas. The program provided staff development and mentoring to early childhood teachers and enhanced literacy resources in Head Start classrooms serving disadvantaged and underserved communities. The intervention targeted Mexican-origin children in fifteen ERF classrooms. Mentors worked with teachers in implementing quality literacy instruction and materials in the classrooms. Interview data suggest that mentoring is a balance of respecting teachers' professional competencies and teaching styles while encouraging changes in classroom behaviors. Successful mentoring must be guided by an understanding of teacher learning supported by a professional culture encouraging collaboration. Through modeling and constructive feedback, ERF mentors accelerated new teachers' transition into teaching and helped experienced teachers improve instructional performance.

Data gathering included triangulation of systematic and rigorous quantitative and qualitative approaches. Interviews and focus groups with mentors, mentor assistants, teachers and administrators were tape-recorded, transcribed and thematically coded. Questions covered program perceptions, philosophies of and factors in implementing new literacy activities, obstacles encountered, and outcomes. Researchers observed and photographically documented mentor and teacher interactions, teachers' implementation of literacy activities, and students engaged in literacy activities. Teaching behaviors were evaluated using ELLCO classroom profile assessments and C.I.R.C.L.E. teacher checklists.

Some teachers struggled to adjust to the early literacy curriculum and restructuring of their classrooms. New teachers expressed most positive comments about mentoring support. Positive changes occurred in all teachers as reflected in interviews, focus groups, observations, photographs and ELLCO and C.I.R.C.L.E. scores. Overall, t-tests showed statistically significant positive changes in teachers' literacy practices on ELLCO and C.I.R.C.L.E. scores over time in the program. Statistically significant positive changes in child outcomes on EOW and ROW scores suggest that children also benefited from teachers' early literacy staff development and mentoring. This research suggests that the teacher-mentor relationship, respect for the teacher's professional autonomy, and a clear definition of the role of the mentor are key to successful

mentoring. Mentors expressed a need for training in working with adults, positive communication skills, evaluating classrooms and providing feedback. Roles as classroom evaluators caused conflicts in the mentor-teacher relationships.

For investment in mentoring and teacher training to have long-term consequences for child outcomes, there must be incentives, such as increased salaries or professional rewards, to retain qualified teachers and mentors in early education programs so students can experience the benefits of staff development.

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Can Professional Development in Early Reading First Classrooms Improve Pre-Schoolers Outcomes on Literacy and Vocabulary Assessment? - A Kansas Case-Study of ERF Classrooms

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Wyandotte County Kansas is a community that poses the highest level of risk to children under the age of 5 in the state of Kansas. By third grade, fewer than half the children are proficient in reading and math, and only 70% of them finish high school. In 2004, a collaborative partnership was formed between University of Kansas researchers, Project EAGLE Community Programs, Head Start, and faith-based preschools. This Early Reading First collaborative effort sought to systematically implement a Professional Development (PD) plan and evidenced-base comprehensive literacy program into nine pre-school classrooms using a three-pronged approach that included: PD within a BA, AA, and CDA teacher team, mentor coaching, and data driven instructional decision making. Prior to initiating PD, a collaborative team consisting of ERF personnel, local school district representatives, and classroom teachers used a rubric of evidenced-base criteria to choose a curriculum that aligned with the public school districts curriculum standards.

Each year teachers participated in three days of summer training and half-day monthly trainings throughout the school year. Training topics included information in how to teach phonological skills (Abbott, Greenwood, & Walton, 2002), concepts of print skills, alphabet knowledge skills, and story book reading (Neuman, 1996). Teachers also learned about 3-5 year old literacy development benchmarks, how to create shorter literacy infused transitions, to incorporate teacher and student directed writing activities, how to differentiate instruction using different grouping sizes, use the curriculum, how to improve vocabulary aspects of classroom arrangement and the importance of positive teacher/student interaction (Carta, Atwater, & Schwartz, 1992; Hart, & Risley, 1995). Teacher fidelity of implementation was assessed during two three-hour observations (fall and spring) each year.

Highly trained mentor coaches spent 60% of their work in three classrooms each. On a weekly basis, mentors met with each ERF classroom teachers to support teacher teams in implementing the planned activities and reflecting on instruction. The mentor coaches modeled and demonstrated techniques. Additionally, mentor coaches facilitated parent meetings. Throughout the school year, mentor coaches kept contact notes and met weekly with ERF supervisors to review implementation and other issues related to the project (Parlakian, 2001).

All children in participating classrooms were screened on oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness and alphabet knowledge at the start of their participation in the program. Children were assessed on these same measures during the fall, winter and spring each year of their participation in the program. Additionally, classroom teachers collected data about children's progress on Head Start objectives. From data results, mentors coaches provided feedback to teachers noting successful strategy implementation procedures and ways to improve areas of need (Catts, Fey, Zhang, & Tomblin, 2001).

Data from year-two intervention found increases in student vocabulary, concepts of print, alphabetic knowledge, and phonological awareness. We do believe that the decrease in the percentage of children with receptive language delays is notable (Walker, Greenwood, Hart, & Carta, 1994).

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Enhancing the Quality of Teaching in Head Start: Collaborations to Help Teachers Earn Degrees

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Teacher effectiveness is the single most powerful factor affecting student academic gain, and as teacher effectiveness increases, lower income students benefit most (Darling-Hammond 2004, 2002; Flores-Gonzalez 2002; Haycock 1998;Valenzuela 1999). Professional development available to early childhood teachers is woefully inadequate and often consists of fragmented, intellectually superficial workshops unrelated to learning theory (Borko 2004; Spillane 1999). Research shows that effective professional development deepens teacher knowledge and transforms their teaching (Darling-Hammond and Berry 1999; Ball and Cohen 1999). This paper reports on efforts to address substandard instruction and educational disparities in Head Start programs by supporting high quality professional development for Head Start teachers in degree programs. Collaborative efforts of four Texas Head Start Agencies, a community college and a four-year university shaped college courses to meet teachers' needs, facilitated planning for course offerings, and created better understandings and trust at all levels. Primary motivations for teachers to return to college included a federal mandate to increase Head Start teacher qualifications, opportunities for college not available earlier in their careers, demonstrating the importance of college to their children, and self-improvement. Barriers teachers faced in returning to college included family obligations, lack of child care, competition of work vs. school, low pre-requisite math and writing skills, financial need, inadequate college advising, lack of spousal support, and failure of agencies to recruit classroom substitutes. The project design included a Summer Institute allowing Head Start teachers to earn 12 college credits in two three-week sessions. The Institute provided intensive advising and created a community of learners among the teachers to support college success. Head Start agencies identified participants. Data were gathered through surveys, journals, focus groups, individual interviews, reviews of academic transcripts, participant observations and photo documentation over a four-year period. Factors increasing successful college participation included family and peer support, teachers' motivation, confidence to work through bureaucratic challenges, courses offered in concentrated time frames, compatibility with work schedules, financial aid, work site support and individual attention from university staff in admissions, scheduling, and advising. Most teachers did not know how to "do college." All teachers had completed some university credit hours before participating in the program; some had 90-100 college credits but were nowhere near degree completion because they lacked degree plans or declared majors. Poor articulation between community college early childhood programs and four-year degree programs required teachers to retake professional courses or complete additional hours at the university level. Collaboration among the Head Start agencies, community college and university advisors, staff and faculty facilitated course transfer from community college to 4-year-degrees and degree completion. Bi-weekly group meetings (addressing study skills, stress, juggling family and school responsibilities, academic self-confidence and degree plans) helped teachers overcome fears and lack of knowledge about college curriculum and requirements. Over a four-year period, 184 teachers completed over 2000 credit hours, fifteen participants earned AAS degrees requiring 60 credits and three earned BA degrees requiring 120 credits. Attrition occurred; only

six teachers participated in the Summer Institute all four summers, however all participants acquired degree plans and made significant progress toward degrees.

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Teacher Study Groups and Fidelity of Implementation of a Preschool Literacy Program: Impacts on Student Literacy Outcomes

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There is evidence that the quality of early childhood programs predicts developmental outcomes for children (Vandell & Corasaniti, 1990) and that teachers are less likely to accept a new practice unless it is consistent with their belief systems (Hollingsworth, 1989; Richardson et al., 1991). Since the teacher is (such a critical variable to learning outcomes for young children, desirable teachers attributes such as the ability to plan and reflect, to think for themselves based on deep knowledge of literacy, to make and correct inferences about student performances, and to use effective teaching techniques (Clark, 1988)), need to be developed and supported through effective professional development.

This session will focus on a longitudinal study that examined the efficacy of a preschool literacy program. The design was a randomized trial study with teachers randomly assigned to 2 conditions: one group participated in monthly teacher study groups with 4 days of publisher professional development, and the second group participated in the 4 days of publisher professional development only. Teachers in both groups included some who were new to the literacy curriculum and some who had taught the curriculum for one year.

The research questions were as follows: (1) Do children in preschool classrooms, where teachers have had monthly teacher study group sessions focusing on phonological awareness as well as publisher professional development trainings, perform better on key phonemic awareness tasks in the spring than children in classrooms where teachers have had publisher professional development only?
(2) Do children in classrooms where the literacy curriculum is being implemented with high fidelity show greater achievement gains than students in classrooms rated as having low fidelity of implementation?

All teachers implemented the same literacy curriculum in the fall of the school year (2004). The teacher study group (TSG) met monthly for 2.5 hours. The group meeting focused on phonological awareness as the theme for the year. Research, activities and instruction were all included in the study group meetings. The study group meetings were led by 2 coaches who also conducted classroom observations and worked with teachers in their classrooms at least once every two weeks. The curriculum publisher provided four days of training for all teachers during the academic year. Approximately 8-10 children were randomly selected from each classroom and were pretested in September-October and post tested in May on early literacy and language measures.

Preliminary results indicate that children in classrooms in which the teachers participated in monthly Teacher Study Groups outperformed children in classrooms where teachers received publisher training only on phonological awareness tasks. Data on question (2) are currently in the process of being analyzed, but results from a pilot study two years earlier in the same school

district where preschool teachers implemented the same literacy curriculum, indicated that children in classrooms where teachers implemented the program with high fidelity outperformed children in the control classrooms on measures of phonological processing and the alphabetic principle.

Testing the Effectives of a Teacher Education Program Aimed at the Promotion of Socio-Emotional and Language Development in Early Head Children

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The most advantageous style of teaching for enhancing social-emotional and cognitive competence during early childhood is one that promotes reciprocal interactions between both caregiver and child. Research suggests that caregiver knowledge about language development and socio-emotional growth will motivate interactions with children, thus having positive effects on children's social and cognitive development. A caregiver's request that is sensitive to the child's current focus of attention supports the young child's limited capacity to process information, thus providing the child the opportunity to use his/her cognitive-language skills and awards the child the message that his or her interests are important, thereby promoting positive socio-emotional development. In response, this study examined: 1) The effectiveness of supplementing general Early Head Start teacher training with training focused on social and language milestones, and 2) The relationship between each teacher's individual class language / socio-emotional post-training scores and child outcomes.

Sixty-seven Early Head Start children, ages 3 months to 3 years, and their 14 teachers participated in this study. Workshops focusing on socio-emotional and language development were implemented by the Early Head Start director, social worker, and curriculum manager at the beginning of the academic year. The sample of infants consisted of 33 boys and 34 girls, of which 50.7% were African-American, 31.3% were European-American, 11.9% were Biracial, and 6% were Unspecified.

Developmental components of the teacher workshops were developed using various sources, with the teaching focus following the concepts outlined by Ramey & Ramey, (1999) and O'Brien (1997), which centered on a developmental-ecological approach for meeting individual and special needs for infants and toddlers. Focus of lessons consisted of modules on brain development in infants and toddlers, the importance of responsive care giving and environmental stimulation, linguistic / language development, and how to incorporate these concepts into the Early Head Start curriculum. Outcomes were assessed using the Learning Accomplishment Profile System (LAP), which uses a comprehensive approach to understanding and facilitating the development of young children (Glover, Preminger, & Sanford, 1988). The age-based LAP system provided class averages for each teacher on children's socio-emotional and language development, which was assessed at the beginning of the school year (T1) and at the end of the school year (T2). In addition, specific child outcomes were assessed using the child outcomes portion of the LAP system, which assessed each child's Gross-Motor, Fine Motor, Cognitive Development, and Self-Help, developmentally tailored for each child's age level.

Results indicated that from T1 to T2, there were significant increases in class means for both language development and socio-emotional development. In addition, controlling for age of child, correlations indicated that post-training language scores were significantly related to child

Gross-Motor, Self Help, and Cognitive Development; however, post-training socio-emotional scores were not significantly related to child outcomes. These findings indicate that the child outcomes assessed were more related to cognitive aspects of development than to behavioral aspects. Results highlight the importance of promoting Early Head Start teacher education in order to increase positive outcomes for low-income children.

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What Do Aspiring Early Childhood Leaders Perceive That They Need for Leadership Development?

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While basic early childhood services exist in most areas, the field faces major leadership development issues (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 1994; NECTAS, 1998; Regional Education Laboratories, 1995). New initiatives require significant additional personnel to collaborate with other agencies as well as effectively administer their own programs (Barnett, Robin, Hustedt, & Schulman, 2003). Articulate leaders are everywhere needed to move policy and shape funding (Blank, 1997; Kagan & Bowman, 1997), model effective decision-making within learning communities (Senge, 2000), and lead practitioner responses to difficult issues, such as parent and child mental health, methamphetamine use, and instability in the child care workforce (Shonkoff, Philips, & Keilty, 2000).

This poster summarizes perceived needs for new knowledge, attitudes, and skills from 61 individuals in two states who applied to attend an 18-month-long U.S. Department of Education demonstration leadership development program. It defines salient elements of leadership for emerging early childhood leaders and their employers and suggests priorities for future approaches to address perceived leadership development needs. A multi-pronged national inquiry led to 10 categories for the 11-page electronic self and employer assessment instruments: models of leadership, leadership qualities/skills, cultural/personal inclusion, teaming, systems/contexts, program development, staff leadership, program sustainability, advocacy, and professional leadership.

Aspiring early childhood leaders and their employers from health, human services, and education rated the applicants in each area and sub-area and defined overall and content area priorities for training. The poster shares descriptive statistics on participants' perceived strengths and needs; disaggregates the responses by age, education, discipline, and type of employing agency; and cites key challenges described by the respondents as they anticipated leadership training.

Findings indicated that on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = novice to 5 = expert) aspiring leaders initially rated themselves highest on Leadership Qualities/Skills (M 3.17; SD .59), Professional Leadership (M 3.10; SD .83), Cultural/Personal Inclusion (M = 3.04; SD .91), and Teaming (M = 3.03, SD .73). They perceived their greatest weaknesses to be in Program Sustainability (M 1.87; SD .75), and Advocacy (M 1.86; SD .81). Employers typically rated the aspiring leaders about a point higher than the leaders rated themselves, with Program Sustainability rated lowest for employee competence (M 2.49; SD .93).

Applicants' priorities for training emphasized Program Development; 72% prioritized it in the top three along with Leadership Qualities/Skills, prioritized by 67%; Systems Thinking, 44%; Program Sustainability, 42%; Leadership Models, 41%; and Teaming, 40%. No respondent placed Advocacy in the top 3 priorities. The authors suggest that leadership trainers must address this view directly rather than ignoring an important leadership area that has been given a low

priority (Blank, 1997). Employers emphasized the need for training on Program Development (67% placed it in top three) and Teaming (67%). Seven challenges to leadership development were identified by multiple aspiring leaders, especially "balancing career and family; managing time." Confidence is a critical element in leadership (Klenke, 1996). Aspiring leaders rated themselves near the mid-point on self confidence, but their mean was .7 less on a 1-5 point scale than the level their employers' rated applicants' self-confidence.

The authors recommend needs assessment to contextualize leadership development, perhaps using the forms used in this study.

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Promise of Universal Design for Learning: Innovative Approach to Teacher Education Relationship with Staff Development-Training and Early Childhood Classroom Practice

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This study explores the promise of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in early childhood teacher preparation. UDL is a new approach to teaching, learning, and developing curriculum materials that consider the broadest possible range of learners. In UDL teachers view students along a continuum of skill and style differences, make thoughtful adjustments for learner differences, and provide curriculum materials that are flexible, varied, and diverse (Rose, Meyer, Strangman, & Rappolt, 2002).

UDL is made necessary and possible due to legal mandates, new brain research, increased understanding of learning, and the availability of new technologies (Howard, 2003). Orwkis and McLane (1998) reported in the Developers Group report from the ERIC/OSEP Special Project on universal design that teachers must choose methods that are universally designed in order to support inclusion. Flexibility, accessibility, and engagement are integral to UDL; therefore, universally designed lessons hold promise in helping educators meet a wide range of learning needs.

There is a lack of research about how to train teacher candidates in planning and carrying out universally designed lessons. This research project documents teacher candidates' understanding and use of UDL principles in their practica experiences with young students and the development of universally designed lesson plans. This research examines and documents the effectiveness of approaches used in training teacher candidates in specific lesson planning. It provides documentation of how teacher candidates provide multiple representations of information, multiple methods of expression and multiple means of engagement in the learning environment that can provide equal access and opportunity for all students. This research adds to our understanding of how teacher candidates develop and implement universally designed lessons.

This study examined how 37 teacher candidates in Pre-K through grade 3 classrooms understand and use the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in lesson planning and teaching. The teacher candidates identified a learning need in the classroom, designed a strategy using UDL principles and practices and then implemented the strategy to benefit all students. The early childhood classrooms of the teacher candidates included urban and suburban schools with diverse race, ethnicity, English Language Learners, age, socioeconomic class, and gender. The study provided insight into the effectiveness of training teacher candidates in UDL as they developed action research projects to test their implementation of UDL methods in the classroom. Teacher candidates utilized mixed methods of data collection in action research to determine efficacy of UDL's use in the classroom. Multiple qualitative data collection methods used were checklists, naturalistic observations, tests, student samples and portfolios.

Teaching Universal Design for Learning principles, implementing, and researching those principles allowed teacher candidates to examine and to reflect on how UDL principles transform teaching practice in the early childhood classroom. It provided insight into how to use research to achieve standards and accountability of young children's learning. In summary, teacher candidates developing action research using Universal Design for Learning will have the knowledge-base to continue this research in their own classroom thus becoming teachers who meet the needs of children with diverse ability and learning styles.

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