Any Involvement is Better Than None: The Role of Parent Involvement on Chronic Absence and Achievement

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Background

- The Midwest Child-Parent Center Preschool-3rd (CPC P-3) program is a comprehensive school-based intervention for at-risk families (Reynolds, 2000).
- Parent school involvement is a critical element of the CPC program.
- CPC requires 2.5 hours of weekly home and school involvement
- The Parent Resource Teacher and a School-Community Representative develop and support a menu-based system of parent involvement which offers:
  - Home visiting
  - Child development workshops
  - Healthy, nutrition, safety workshops
  - Language, literacy, math, and science events

CPC Parent Program Process

1. Parents sign a School-Home Agreement
2. Schools conduct a Needs Assessment
3. Schools conduct an Asset Mapping
4. School develop a Parent Involvement Plan
5. Schools and families develop a monthly Parent Involvement Calendar
6. Participation is tracked with Parent Involvement Logs
7. Parents complete a Parent Survey

Research Questions

1. Does school parent involvement increase children’s achievement, socio-emotional development and attendance?
2. Does any parent involvement impact student achievement or do they need to be highly involved?

Sample & Methodology

Sample

- 1,724 Midwest CPC P-3 participants living in Chicago, IL
  - 48% male
  - 85% free and reduced price lunch
  - 10% special education
  - 64% African American
  - 34% Latino
  - 48% male
  - 85% free and reduced price lunch
  - 10% special education
  - 64% African American
  - 34% Latino

Measures

- Preschool parent involvement in school
  - Parent participation was collected through a monthly Parent Involvement Log, completed by the Parent Resource Teachers
  - No school involvement: 0 participation (17%)
  - Low school involvement: participated 1-17 times (55%)
  - High school involvement: 18 times or more (29%)

- Achievement, behavioral development, and attendance
  - Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment (fall and spring teacher ratings)
  - Literacy, language, math, cognitive, socio-emotional development
  - Chronic absence collected by the school district (10%+ missed days and 20%+ missed days)

Sample & Methodology

Results

Parent involvement Predicting Achievement, Socio-Emotional Development, and Chronic Absence

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>Chronic absence 20%+ missed</th>
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<td>SE</td>
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<td>72***</td>
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<td>95***</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>8.5***</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>42***</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>64***</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>20**</td>
<td>.07</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; Covariates controlled for: fall score, month assessed, black, Hispanic, male, sped, months old, free lunch status. (n=1724)

Findings

- CPC preschool parent involvement increases student achievement across multiple domains, socio-emotional development, and may prevent chronic absence.
- Any parent involvement – even just attending a few times:
  - can impact a child’s socio-emotional development
  - is associated with decreased rates of extreme chronic absence

Policy Implications

- Parent involvement in a context of a concerted school-wide effort to increase parent participation increases students’ gains in achievement from fall to spring among all at-risk families.
- Parent involvement has a clear impact on children’s educational development in a school culture where parent involvement is encouraged.
- Our findings indicate the importance of having a dedicated parent liaison that develops a menu-based parent program of events tailored to the needs of the families.
- School improvement plans should prioritize parent involvement systems, as required by ESSA.

The CPC parent program:

- provides concrete steps and strategies for schools to build capacity for school staff and families.
- is a response to the USDoE Dual-Capacity Building Framework
- provides evidence-based strategies that have been proven to increase parent involvement and impact children’s development
- is a response to ESSA legislation to incorporate opportunities for family engagement

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