



COLLEGE of EDUCATION

Communities | Schools | Families



Center for Promoting Research to Practice

5-YEAR REPORT



Dr. Gary M. Sasso

Dean, College of Education
Lehigh University
College of Education

From the Dean

For over a decade, our Center for Promoting Research to Practice in the College of Education has provided the support and organization that has been a large part of the success we have had in the development of a substantial knowledge base in the education of children with or at risk for learning and behavior problems. The model of the Center is one in which faculty are encouraged to pursue their research interests within a group of scholars who are all committed to a true research to practice model; that is, rigorous and controlled applied studies that have an impact on the lives of children and that can be replicated and taken to scale.

This supportive yet demanding model for the center was designed to encourage the testing of cutting edge ideas and studies that contributes to the existing data base in education and also challenges the use of programs and interventions that are widely used but lack sufficient empirical validation. Through the leadership provided by Dr. Shapiro, the Center has been steadfast in its insistence that one of the most important roles of a research intensive college of education is the generation of the knowledge that will continue to act as a true applied laboratory for the betterment of education.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary M. Sasso".

Gary M. Sasso, Ph.D., Dean



From the Director

The Center for Promoting Research to Practice began in 2002 with a simple vision – research in education was only as valuable as its implementation in real practice. Focused on individuals considered with or at-risk for disabilities, the Center sought research projects lead by faculty that would result in real change in practice. The Center offers faculty support in terms of space, technology, personnel, and recognition as a collaborative place where other projects with common perspectives share their impact. Likewise, the collective strengths of the faculty provide the opportunity for the Center to compete nationally for external support.

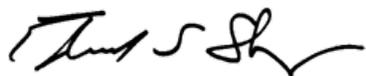
Projects in the Center examine a very broad range of concerns and cut across the age range from toddlers in a home-visiting program through college students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Substantial effort is on the difficulties of schools in educating some of our toughest to teach children and youth. In two major projects, interventions for youth with Emotional/Behavioral Disturbance (E/BD) at the secondary level were the focus of the studies. Those projects have had national impact in advancing practice for students with E/BD. Another project worked with elementary schools to effectively implement a Response to Intervention model, a school change process that uses a multi-tier system of support to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for all students. Still another project targeted middle school students who were at least three years behind expected reading levels examining the efficacy of a known effective intervention to improve their literacy.

A consistent theme across all projects is the Center's mission of partnership. In every project, extensive partnerships with schools, preschool centers, universities, community agencies, and/or parent groups is the centerpiece. This includes collaborations with many institutions of higher education as well as research centers across the country.

I have the privilege of leading the Center since its inception. The Center's growth and success is a direct effect of the strong support of faculty researchers and our college administration who collectively recognize that together we have a strong voice in impacting the field of education.

We hope this report offers an opportunity to showcase many of the Center's projects and successes.

Warmest regards,



Edward S. Shapiro, Director



Edward S. Shapiro, Director

The Center for Promoting
Research to Practice
Lehigh University
College of Education



Center for Adolescent Research in the Schools (CARS)



Development and evaluation of a comprehensive, multi-component intervention for secondary students with social, emotional, and behavioral problems

Project Dates:

July 2008 to June 2014

Funding Source:

Institute for Education Sciences

Principal Investigator:

Lee Kern

Co-Principal Investigators:

Steven Evans (Ohio University),
Tim Lewis (University of Missouri-Columbia)

Other Key Related Personnel:

Talida State (Project Coordinator),
Mark Weist (site investigator),
Howard Wills (site investigator)

Project Targets:

Participants were 647 secondary age students (high school) with social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

The project worked with 7 schools in Kansas, 6 schools in Missouri, 24 schools in Ohio, 16 schools in Pennsylvania, and 15 schools in South Carolina.

PROJECT METHODS

The major goal of the CARS was to develop and evaluate an intervention package for high school age students (grades 9-12) with severe behavior problems (externalizing and internalizing). During the first three years of the project, a comprehensive intervention package was developed and refined. The intervention package was evaluated via a randomized controlled trial during years 4-5. In addition, a number of supplemental studies were conducted throughout the five years of the project to further our understanding of issues pertinent to high school age students with severe emotional and behavioral problems.

PROJECT FINDINGS

We are currently analyzing outcome data from the efficacy trial. In addition, numerous other papers are in preparation based on data collected. These include: (a) a paper describing the intervention

model and rationale, (b) an evaluation of differences between students with emotional and behavioral problems who have and do not have special education labels, (c) an examination of intervention preference and treatment fidelity, (d) an evaluation of the quality of IEPs, (e) a study examining frequency, type, and predictors of accommodations, (f) a study examining variables that predict mental health and behavioral service use, and (g) an examination of perceptions of Check & Connect from the perspective of mentors and mentees.

Research Exploring Alternatives for Children (REACH)



Evaluation of the effectiveness of functional assessment-based intervention for children with severe emotional and behavioral problems

Project Dates:

July 2002 to June 2007

Funding Source:

Office of Special Education Programs

Principal Investigator:

Lee Kern

Co-Principal Investigators:

Frank Gresham,
University of California-Riverside &
Louisiana State University

Project Targets:

Participants were 125 school-age students (K-12) who were identified as having the most severe social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

Pennsylvania: Allentown School District, Bangor School District, Bethlehem Area School District, Central Bucks School District, East Penn School District, Colonial Intermediate Unit, Norristown Area School District,
California: San Bernadino School District

PROJECT METHODS

A delayed treatment design was used to evaluate the effectiveness of functional assessment-based intervention. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to receive intervention while the other half received intervention one year later. Students were followed across 1-4 years.

PROJECT FINDINGS

Both the treatment and the delayed treatment group made significant improvements, according to standardized measures of behavior and academics.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

The project demonstrated the effectiveness of functional assessment-based interventions for students with extremely severe behavior problems.

Implications for future research

Although the participants made significant improvements, there were no group differences. This may have been because intervention was not in place for a

sufficient period of time to ascertain its effectiveness. Additional research needs to be conducted in which functional assessment-based intervention is in place for at least two years and a true comparison group is used.

Implications for future practice

The findings suggest that functional assessment and related interventions continue to be a promising approach for students with intensive behavior problems.

Implications for future policy development

Because functional assessment-based interventions are labor intensive, they need to be implemented in the context of a tiered approach to intervention. Future policy needs to consider the resources and expertise needed for this type of intervention.



Project MP3: Monitoring Progress in Pennsylvania Pupils



Implementation of a school-wide model of progress monitoring for grades K-4 in reading at six Pennsylvania elementary schools. Specifically, the project implemented a Response to Intervention (RTI) model across two different districts

Project Dates:

September 2006 to August 2011

Funding Source:

U.S. Department of Education,
Office of Special Education Programs,
Model Demonstration Project

Co-Principal Investigators:

Edward S. Shapiro (Lehigh University)
Naomi Zigmond, University of Pittsburgh

Other Key Related Personnel:

Alex Hilt-Panahon (Project Director),
Amanda Kloo (Project Director),
Nathan Clemens, Karen Gischlar

Project Targets:

Grades – K to 4 in each building
Teachers – all teachers in all buildings

Specific Schools / School Districts:

Central Dauphin School District
(outside Harrisburg, PA);
Uniontown School District
(western Pennsylvania)

PROJECT METHODS

Project provided training (professional development), consultative support, and direction for all aspects of implementing an RTI model. Project MP3 guided the staff and administration at all schools in the processes of implementation, supported the implementation for three years, and built in sustainability components that would maintain the implemented model after the project ended.

The project developed extensive forms and products to support implementation, and provided extensive and direct technical support to school staff (including Principals) to facilitate implementation.

PROJECT FINDINGS

The project found successful implementation in all schools. Evaluations of the processes of implementation showed high integrity in how the RTI model was implemented,

along with sustainability that was evident two years after all project supports were withdrawn from the schools. Additionally, student performance in reading showed significant decreased risk of reading failure and ongoing increases in all schools on all evaluation measures, including PSSA and universal screening methods.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

Implications for future research

The project provided an opportunity to examine many research questions regarding the use of universal screening measures, decision making processes, professional development, and instructional impact of an RTI model. Future research generated from the project would involve questions of the link between specific intervention processes and student outcomes, the potential long term outcomes of RTI

implementation, and the examination of the impact of universal screening measures as well as progress monitoring processes for ongoing and sustainable implementation.

Implications for future practice

Project MP3 allowed a motivated set of schools to establish and implement a very effective RTI process. The project provided professional development that offered sustainable change and established mechanisms by which future practice would operate. The entire model/demonstration offered clear indications for others in how to build such a model from its start to its sustainable implementation.

Implications for future policy development

Project MP3 offered a vision for how schools interested in implementing an RTI model can put such a model in place. Each step of the model was carefully documented and described, providing a “how to” tool kit that others could use. The model/demonstration project was regarded as a strong demonstration for how such projects can go from model to fully integrated practice.

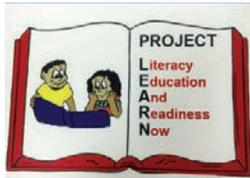


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Project LEARN (Literacy Education and Readiness Now)



Through provision of an Early Reading First grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Community Services for Children (CSC) sought to improve the oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge of young low-income children, including those with limited English proficiency. This was to be achieved through sustained, intensive professional development to staff and the implementation of scientifically based and culturally and linguistically appropriate curriculum and instructional strategies. Lehigh University's role was to complete an evaluation of the program through monitoring student outcomes, as assessed through a variety of measures. Furthermore, the university provided training to teachers in the administration and interpretation of a progress monitoring tool to aid them with instructional decision making.

Project Dates:

January 2006 to May 2008

Funding Source:

Early Reading First Grant (#541-110) from the U.S. Department of Education to Community Services for Children, located in Allentown, PA

Principal Investigator:

Edward S. Shapiro

Other Key Related Personnel:

Karen L. Gischlar, Project Coordinator

Project Targets:

Preschool (ages 3- and 4-years-old) low-income children, including those with limited English proficiency. The secondary target was the staff at CSC who benefitted from review of student outcomes with university staff in determining program effectiveness and in making decisions.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

Community Services for Children (CSC), located in Allentown, PA

PROJECT METHODS

The classroom teachers at CSC received training in administration of the curriculum from the publisher; literacy mentors observed implementation and provided modeling and feedback. To assess effectiveness of the program via student outcomes, multiple measures were administered pre- and post-test each academic year: the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS), the CIRCLE, and the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI) for literacy.

Graduate students from Lehigh University, who had been trained by the project coordinator, administered all assessments, with the exception of the IGDI. The IGDI were administered by the teachers, who had also been trained and met proficiency with the coordinator. Inter-rater data were collected for more than 25% of all administrations via an audio recorder or second scorer. At the end of each academic year, a report was generated by the university and shared with CSC to aid them in instructional decision making.

PROJECT FINDINGS

Although the project did not employ a control group, evaluation did show that the students improved across the school year in the areas assessed.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

Implications for future research

Future research should examine the amount of testing that is necessary to best evaluate preschool student progress. Multiple measures were employed that may have overlapped with one another. Further, studies should be conducted that examine which methods of assessment are most valid, as the measures employed utilized a variety of methods including, auditory, pictorial, timed, and untimed. It is important to identify the combination that best assesses current functioning and predicts conventional reading skills.

Implications for future practice

Implications for practice include the careful selection of tests and the need for student data in determining program effectiveness.

Implications for future policy development

Because much research has demonstrated the connection between the development of emergent literacy skills in early childhood and conventional reading, future policy should focus on the allocation of resources for preschool education and the need for data driven instruction, especially with the at-risk population.



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National Response to Intervention Center



National Center on Response To Intervention
www.rti4success.org

Develop, maintain, and support technical assistance for states implementing Response to Intervention (RTI) in the schools.

Project Dates:

March 2008 through June 2011

Funding Source:

U.S. Department of Education,
Subcontract from the American
Institutes for Research, Washington, DC

Principal Investigator:

Lou Danielson,
American Institutes for Research

Co-Principal Investigator:

Edward S. Shapiro, Lehigh University

Other Key Related Personnel:

Lisa Thomas, Project Coordinator

Project Targets:

All state education agencies (SEA's)
across the United States.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

The project did not work with specific
schools or districts, but instead worked
with all 50 states and territories of the
United States.

PROJECT METHODS

Our specific role in the project was to conduct and support the training process for implementation of RTI, specifically related to the use of RTI by states in the identification of Specific Learning Disabilities. We also worked with faculty and staff from the University of Kansas in the development of technical support materials for implementing RTI at the secondary level.

PROJECT FINDINGS

The National RTI Center developed a key set of web based tools designed to provide technical assistance to users on the nature of measures used for screening, progress monitoring, and on interventions for tier 2 and tier 3 support within RTI models (National RTI Center). Specific to our subcontract, an analysis and report on the state policies for RTI implementation were also developed.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

The website has become a staple in providing technical support information to users nationwide. The specific information on statewide policies in implementation were provided to offer detail on the nature of RTI across the country.



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Project READERS (Response to Effective Assessment-Driven Early Reading Support)



Implement and examine the impact of professional development in Response to Intervention in reading in rural elementary schools. Also, examine existing practices in rural schools to learn about what teachers and interventionists are doing to support students' reading

Project Dates:

July 2009 through June 2014

Funding Source:

IES grant awarded to the National Center for Research on Rural Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Principal Investigator:

Todd Glover

Co-Principal Investigators:

Tanya Ihlo, Edward Shapiro

Other Key Related Personnel:

Stacy Martin
(Project Coordinator-Lehigh),
Michelle Howell Smith
(Project Coordinator-Nebraska)

Project Targets:

K-3 teachers and interventionists in rural elementary schools.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

A total of 61 rural schools in 8 states participated in Project READERS (36 experimental, 35 control). In the Northeast, Lehigh University worked with 28 schools in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

PROJECT METHODS

Project READERS was a large-scale Randomized Control Trial implemented with 61 schools in 8 states. Schools assigned to the experimental group received onsite training supplemented with distance (web-mediated) coaching. Classroom teachers were trained on data-based decision making in reading and interventionists were trained on implementing evidence-based interventions in reading. Comparisons were made to control schools on teacher knowledge, perceptions and practice related to data-based decision making and intervention implementation. The impact of teacher professional development on student reading performance was also assessed (e.g., DIBELS Next and Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement).

PROJECT FINDINGS

Results indicate statistically significant differences in outcomes between control participants and those who participated in

professional development with coaching. Relative to control teachers, teachers participating in professional development had greater increases in data-based decision making knowledge and perceived skills. These teachers also exhibited greater data-based decision making practices with their students (based on coded logs). School-based interventionists participating in professional development had greater increases in reading instructional knowledge and perceived skills pertaining to reading instruction. In addition, initial results also indicated that, relative to control school students, students from professional development schools exhibited a greater increase in reading performance (as measured by DIBELS Next assessments).

The findings from this project have implications for our understanding of effective teacher professional development practices within the Response to Intervention framework within rural school districts.



Trajectories Related to ADHD in College (TRAC) Project



Investigate the developmental trajectory of functional impairments associated with ADHD in the college student population; and identify variables that may predict differential outcomes in this group

Project Dates:

June 2012 - June 2017

Funding Source:

National Institute of Mental Health

Principal Investigator:

Arthur Anastopoulos
(University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

Co-Principal Investigators:

George DuPaul (Lehigh University),
Lisa Weyandt (University of Rhode Island)

Other Key Related Personnel:

Project Coordinators: Erin Kane (UNCG),
Gyda Gudmundsdottir (URI),
Matthew Gormley (Lehigh)

Project Targets:

The target participants for the TRAC Project are two cohorts of incoming college first years aged 18-25 with and without ADHD.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

Participants are being recruited from 11 university sites located in North Carolina, Rhode Island and in the Lehigh Valley (Lehigh University, Lafayette College, and Muhlenberg College).

PROJECT METHODS

Two waves of consecutive first year college student cohorts have been recruited, half of whom have ADHD and half of whom do not. All students participated in a rigorous initial assessment to be certain they met stringent criteria for inclusion in the ADHD and non-ADHD control conditions. Each cohort will be followed for four years. Eligible participants will be assessed each year across multiple domains (e.g., academic, social, vocational) of functioning via self-report ratings, direct testing, archival data, and experience sampling methodology.

PROJECT FINDINGS

The project has just completed the second year of the first cohort. Results, thus far, indicate that (a) participants with ADHD experience significant difficulties with respect to psychological, educational, and social functioning; and (b) more than 50% of students with ADHD

have at least one other psychological disorder (e.g., anxiety disorder).

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

The TRAC Project is the first of its kind to shed much needed light on how ADHD and its associated impairments unfold across the college years. Obtained findings will provide direction for identifying evidence-based assessment methods and procedures that will be critical for addressing the mental health and educational needs of college students with ADHD. Results from this longitudinal investigation will also serve to guide the development of intervention efforts aimed at improving the long-term success of college students with ADHD.

Promoting Engagement for ADHD Pre-Kindergartners (PEAK)



Further develop and refine a parent education program to increase parent engagement with early intervention for young children with ADHD. A secondary purpose is to develop an alternative format (web-based) of parent education to increase parent accessibility to and engagement with the intervention. The end goal is for more consistent implementation of effective behavioral strategies for preschoolers.

Project Dates:

Sept. 1, 2012 through Aug. 31, 2015

Funding Source:

Institute of Education Sciences

Principal Investigator:

George DuPaul

Co-Principal Investigator:

Lee Kern

Project Targets:

Young children (ages 3 to 5) with or at-risk for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and their families

Specific Schools / School Districts:

We are recruiting participants through community preschools, day cares, and pediatrician offices. We have also contacted both local Intermediate Unit early intervention units to solicit referrals.

PROJECT METHODS

During the first year of the project, a community development team (CDT) of relevant stakeholders provided feedback to refine and streamline a previously developed 20-session parent education program for families of young children at-risk for ADHD. Specifically, the research team used feedback from the CDT to develop a 10-session parent education program that was then implemented with an initial cohort of six families. Pre- and post-intervention measures were collected to assess possible child behavior change, parent implementation of prescribed behavioral intervention procedures, family satisfaction with intervention, and family feedback regarding the content and activities associated with the parent education program. During July and August 2013, the research team used feedback and results from the first cohort to further revise the parent education program. A second cohort of seven families then

received parent education September to November 2013 and provided feedback as well as child and family outcome data. In spring 2014, we worked with an instructional technology consultant to develop a web-based platform for parent education delivery that will be pilot tested with a small cohort of families in Fall 2014. Feedback from this family cohort will be used to modify and refine the web-based version of the education program. In the final year of the project, we will collect pre- and post-treatment child outcome and parent satisfaction data for a larger cohort of families who will receive parent education either face-to-face or via the web-based platform.

PROJECT FINDINGS

No specific findings to report at this date, however, families have provided uniformly positive feedback regarding the content and outcomes of this parent education program.



Project CARES



Quasi-experimental evaluation of the Parent Child Home Program (PCHP) of the School District of Philadelphia was conducted. This PCHP program was the largest, single-site PCHP program nationally. Through bi-weekly home visiting during two program years, it provided supports for promoting language and emergent literacy to parents of 2- to 3-year old children. The grand majority of the families served by this program were Latino; all families met federal thresholds for poverty determination.

Project Dates:

Two grants were awarded, each spanning a two-year period (2006-2008; 2008-2010). At present, we are completing data analysis through no cost-extension.

Funding Source:

William Penn Foundation, Philadelphia, PA

Principal Investigator:

Patricia Manz, Ph.D.

Other Key Related Personnel:

Cesar Zuniga, Research Director, National Center for Parent-Child Home Program

Project Targets:

Low-income, toddlers (2 – 3 year old) and their parent(s) were the targets of the PCHP program as well as the evaluation.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

School District of Philadelphia, Early Childhood Office

PROJECT METHODS

Initially this project was planned as an experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to PCHP and the evaluation in the first year. However, the Philadelphia communities served by PCHP as well as the home visitors were very dissatisfied with these procedures, resulting in difficulty obtaining and sustaining a comparison group. In the second year, we operated from a quasi-experimental design. Although we were more successful in recruiting and sustaining intervention and comparison families early in the project, we experienced high rates of attrition due to the mobility of this population.

Several measures of children’s language skills, social and emotional development, and family involvement were repeated through the four years of the project.

PROJECT FINDINGS

Although the longitudinal analysis of this project was affected by high rates of attrition, we found the following:

- PCHP children relative to comparison children showed statistically significant gains in expressive language abilities at the end of the first year of PCHP services.
- At the conclusion of the two-years, PCHP families were more likely than control children to enroll their children in early childhood education programs

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

Child development focused home visiting (as opposed to programs which prioritize adults’ quality of life and parenting competence) has received insufficient attention. When evaluated, even the home visiting program regarded

as the most empirically supported, do not show significant child development outcomes. This study, although limited by sampling issues, is among the few to provide evidence for the promise of home visiting to enhance children’s development and early learning, setting positive trajectories for adjustment in preschool and beyond. At the same time, challenges experienced in this study were equally as valid in identifying targets for developing methodologies that will enable sound development and evaluation of home visiting programs for young children (particularly those who are ethnically and linguistically diverse).

Implications for future research

This project demonstrated a statistically rigorous approach for adapting widely-used measures for use with young, ethnically and linguistically diverse children. For example, we applied Rasch modeling to adapt the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – III and Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test – Revised for use with toddlers who were Latino, as well as English- and Spanish-speaking.

The plan for integrity monitoring of home visits was unsuccessful in this study. However, the barriers we experienced were discussed with the home visiting staff, leading to the development of improved integrity monitoring procedures which are currently being implemented in another home visiting study (Little Talks).

Implications for future practice

The most significant contribution this study made in the development of the PCHP home program was to demonstrate the importance of implementing an evidenced-based curriculum/intervention. Our results did not show sustained improvements across the two PCHP years. Our impression regarding this finding were that the program’s lack of an evidenced-based curriculum that can adapt to children’s emerging competencies did not promote growth in language abilities. This impression is the foundation for the development of the Little Talks curriculum,

which is currently being implemented and evaluated through USDHHS funding.

Implications for future policy development

A priority within the Affordable Care Act is to provide early intervention through home visiting to families living in socioeconomic hardship. The empirical evidence of child as well as parent outcomes is crucial for the home visiting program to receive federal and state funding. This study contributes support to the potential effectiveness of PCHP in promoting children’s early language. Moreover, it has become a platform for identifying directions to improve methodology for advancing home visiting services and seeking external funding.



The most significant contribution this study made in the development of the PCHP home program was to demonstrate the importance of implementing an evidenced-based curriculum/intervention.



Little Talks: Developing the Role of Early Head Start Home Visitors to Provide Evidence-Based Intervention to Families



In response to the national priority to bolster home visiting as a means for providing early intervention services to families and children facing socioeconomic disadvantage, this project is designed to improve the effectiveness of home visiting programming which targets children’s development by equipping home visitors with adequate training and supervision to provide evidence-based interventions. This program will develop and experimentally test a supervision process which utilized integrity monitoring data to provide ongoing performance feedback to home visitors as they implement a book sharing and dialoguing intervention referred to as Little Talks.

Project Dates:

September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2015

Funding Source:

USDHHS Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA)

Principal Investigator:

Patricia Manz, Ph.D.

Co-Principal Investigators:

Lori Roggman, Ph.D. (Utah State University);
Thomas Power, Ph.D.
(Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia)

Other Key Related Personnel:

Community Services for Children, Inc.
(Allentown, PA)

Project Targets:

This first line of participants in this project is the home visiting staff of Early Head Start. However, the project aims to improve the parent-child interactions and language/communication skills for children aged birth to three years.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

The Early Head Start (EHS) Program of Community Services for Children, Inc., Allentown, PA.

PROJECT METHODS

This project will involve two Randomized Control Trials (RCT) to test the effectiveness of home visitor training and supervision as linked to their implementation of Little Talks with parents and children. Several measures to assess outcomes related to young children’s language and communication abilities, parent-child interactions, parents’ routine involvement with their children’s early learning and development, parenting efficacy, and home visitor competence will be repeatedly administered. A comprehensive, three-part model of home visiting integrity (both with and without Little Talks) will be assessed. This includes indicators of quantity, content, and home visitor-parent relationship quality.

PROJECT FINDINGS

A crucial development in the first year was the creation and testing of feasibility of a mobile application to monitor home visiting integrity for the Little Talks intervention as well as the routine Early Head Start home visit. A pilot test of Little Talks with the implementation support of integrity monitoring and performance feedback was completed in the first project year.

With the pilot underway, we have been encouraged by the following experiences and findings:

- 1) We have established a positive and genuine working partnership among the EHS program (administration and home visiting staff) and our Co-PIs. All have been sharing and collaborating to develop supervision procedures that are consistent with EHS principles

yet expand the supervision process to include performance feedback components.

2) We are exploring and developing technological applications for home visitors to use to record integrity information during and immediately following home visit sessions. The integrity monitor program enables an efficient process for reviewing data and preparing performance feedback for supervision.

3) During the pilot, EHS families are reporting excitement and acceptability about the Little Talks intervention. The parents' response to the intervention is similar to parents' response to the project during a prior study. We are encouraged that the intervention procedures will be implemented smoothly in the RCTs.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

Although we are early in the development of our project, we anticipate that it will improve home visiting services that target child development outcomes, specifically in language and literacy development. Large, federally-sponsored, reviews of home visiting effectiveness have not shown favorable impacts on child development outcomes. This finding is surprising given the promising fit of home visiting for the resources and preferences of ethnic minority, low-income families. Routine integration of evidence-based, child development interventions and close intervention integrity monitoring has been largely absent in home visiting; yet these elements are crucial for improving children's early learning. This project will demonstrate the extent to which home visiting service delivery can be enhanced by integrating data-driven procedures into home visitor supervision, providing a model which can be extended and tested across a range of interventions. At the same time, this project can demonstrate the effectiveness of Little Talks in improving the nature and verbal quality of parent-child interactions and subsequent impact on children's acquisition of language and communication abilities (fundamental components of emergent literacy).

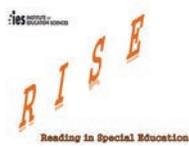


This project will demonstrate the extent to which home visiting service delivery can be enhanced by integrating data-driven procedures into home visitor supervision, providing a model which can be extended and tested a range of interventions.





Read It Again in Special Education (RISE)



Determine the efficacy of *Read It Again!*, an intervention designed to enhance the way preschool teachers read storybooks to children, on the language and literacy abilities of preschool children with disabilities

Project Dates:

July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2017

Funding Source:

Institute of Education Sciences

Principal Investigator:

Laura Justice (The Ohio State University)

Co-Principal Investigators:

Brook Sawyer (Lehigh University);
Shayne Piasta,
Ann O'Connell (The Ohio State University)

Other Key Related Personnel:

Julie Santoro (Lehigh);
Laura Slocum,
Jill Pentimonti (The Ohio State University)

Project Targets:

Preschool children in early childhood special education (ECSE) classrooms and their associated teachers are the focus of the project. Children in ECSE classrooms may represent any number of disability categories, including speech and language impairment, developmental delay, autism, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, and other low incidence disability and may include children who are typically developing in ECSE classrooms.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

A total of 104 ECSE classrooms, with 45 in Pennsylvania and 59 in Ohio.

PROJECT METHODS

The project is a randomized control trial. *Read It Again* teachers will read using the Read It Again strategies, while control teachers will read as they typically would. All teachers regardless of condition will receive the same 15 storybooks and will read a study-provided book two times per week to their class. Using direct assessment as well as questionnaires, we will collect data on children's language, literacy and other school readiness abilities prior to the intervention, immediately following, and at a 8-month follow-up. We will also conduct observations of teachers' practices.



Teach Me To Learn at Home™ Evaluation Project



Evaluate the effectiveness of the Teach Me To Learn at Home™ curriculum in increasing preschool children's early literacy skills.

Project Dates:

Fall 2013 through 2015

Funding Source:

Inspired Learning, LP

Principal Investigator:

Edward Shapiro

Co-Principal Investigator:

Stacy Martin

Project Targets:

Teach Me To Learn at Home™ is an online parent learning portal designed to teach the parents of 3-5 year old children how to promote the development of their child's early literacy skills.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

The evaluation is being conducted with children at multiple preschools within the Pleasant Valley and Bangor Area School Districts. Preschool children attending Lehigh Valley Children's Centers and St. Joseph the Worker School also are participating in the evaluation.

PROJECT METHODS

A delayed-treatment design was utilized to examine the effectiveness of the curriculum. After a baseline assessment of the children's early literacy skills, approximately half of the parents were randomized to receive access to the curriculum. The remaining parents will receive access to the curriculum after the second assessment, which will occur approximately five months after the baseline assessment. A third and final assessment will occur four months later.

PROJECT FINDINGS

The evaluation is still occurring. Only baseline assessments have been conducted at this time.





RAMP Up



This is a randomized controlled trial (Goal 3) project designed to assess the impact of a specific reading curriculum, RAMP-UP, designed by Dr. Beth Calhoon. The reading curriculum targets middle school students with severe reading disabilities. The project is a large scale efficacy trial.

Project Dates:

March 2012 through June 2016

Funding Source:

U.S. Department of Education,
Institute for Education Sciences

Principal Investigator:

Mary Beth Calhoon

Co-Principal Investigator:

Edward S. Shapiro

Other Key Related Personnel:

Karen Mitton, Project Coordinator;
Katie Flately, Assessment Coordinator

Project Targets:

Sixth grade students in middle schools reading at least 3.0 years behind their chronological grade level.

Specific Schools / School Districts:

In the first two years of the project (2012-13, 2013-2014), a total of 230 students from the Allentown School District (Allentown, PA), Bethlehem Area School District (Bethlehem, PA), and Easton Area School District (Easton, PA) were participants. Beginning in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the project will be moving to the University of Miami, and will include a total of approximately 300 students from the Miami-Dade School District.

PROJECT FINDINGS

Results from the first two years of the project are still being analyzed. During the initial year, students in both RAMP UP conditions, those receiving a primarily phonological analysis base and those receiving primarily a comprehension base intervention, had significantly higher scores on measures of Oral Reading Fluency relative to controls.

HOW THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE

The project provided a new approach and opportunity for middle school students with very severe reading disabilities to improve their reading skills. The intensive and explicit instruction in basic reading skills was well received by the majority of students.

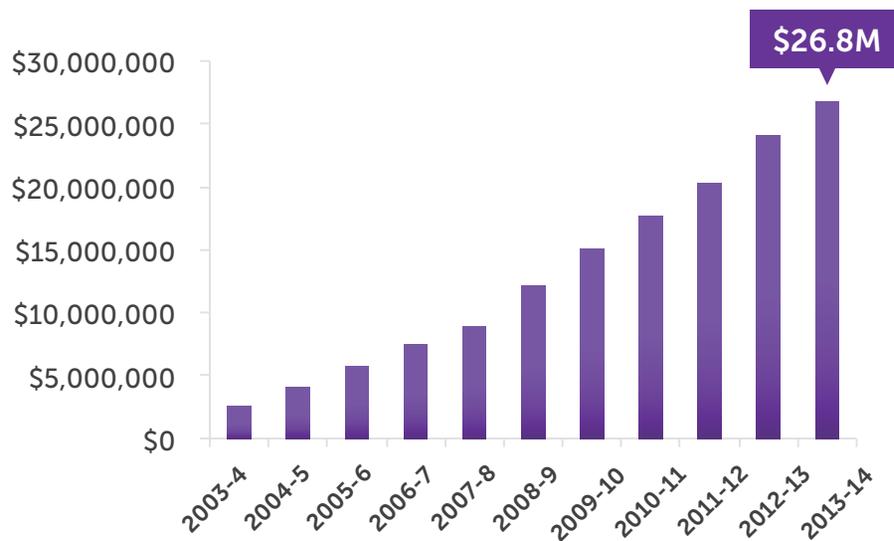


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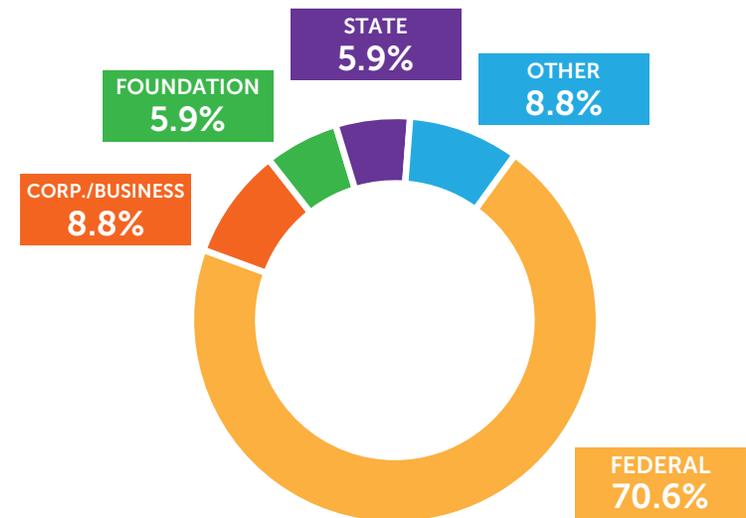
Summary of Center External Support

Across the 12 years since the Center began, faculty affiliated with the Center have been successful in being awarded a cumulative total of \$26.8 million, 70.6% from highly competitive federal research grant competitions. Across years, the average external support dollars per year has been \$2.2 million, ranging from \$1.2 to \$3.8 million, representing between 4 and 14 individual projects in any single year.

Cumulative External Support Per Fiscal Year
2003 to 2014



Percentage of Funding Sources





Center Affiliated Faculty Members



Edward S. Shapiro, Ph.D., Professor, School Psychology and Director, Center for Promoting Research to Practice

Dr. Shapiro focuses on Assessment and intervention for academic skills problems; Outcomes of Response-to-Intervention Models for service delivery; Pediatric School Psychology.



Linda Bambara, Ed.D., Professor, Special Education

Dr. Bambara's specialization is in developmental disabilities and autism. Her research has focused on positive behavior interventions as well as choice and self-determination strategies for helping people with disabilities speak out and do more for them selves. More recently, her research has focused on peer-mediated interventions for improving the social-communication skills for high school students with autism.



George J. DuPaul, Ph.D., Professor, School Psychology

Dr. DuPaul's primary research interest is the treatment of individuals with (ADHD) attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and related behavior disorders. Specifically, he conducts research on school-based academic and behavioral interventions for youth in K-12 settings; early intervention for young children at-risk for ADHD; and the assessment and treatment of college students with significant ADHD symptoms.



Patricia Manz, Ph.D., Professor, School Psychology

Dr. Manz's research is directed toward integrating evidenced-based practices in early intervention for low-income, ethnic and linguistically diverse infants and toddlers. She has developed the Little Talks curriculum for home visiting programs, as a means for enhancing parents' dialogue and

book sharing with young children. Moreover, her work is developing methods for monitoring home visiting integrity and for embedding performance feedback in home visitor supervision.



Ageliki Nicolopoulou, Ph.D., Professor, Psychology

Dr. Nicolopoulou is a sociocultural developmental psychologist with a range of research interests that include the role of narrative in development, socialization, and education as well as the influence of the peer group and peer culture as social contexts for promoting and shaping children's language, social understanding, and gender identity.



Brook Sawyer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Teaching, Learning, and Technology

Dr. Sawyer's research aims are interdisciplinary and center on promoting the development of young children who have disabilities or who are dual language learners (DLLs). Her predominant focus is on language and literacy development.



George White, Ph.D., Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. White is Professor in the Educational Leadership program and the Director of the Center for Developing Urban Educational Leaders (CDUEL) at Lehigh. While at Lehigh, Dr. White has been responsible for establishing a specialized program to train individuals for leadership roles in urban school districts.



Perry A. Zirkel, Ph.D, J.D., LL.M., Professor, Educational Leadership

Dr. Zirkel's research focuses on empirical and practical studies of special education law, with secondary attention to more general education law and current labor arbitration issues.



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