MEASURING PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

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NREC

PRESENTATION GOALS

- **Present** an overview of research
  - What is parent engagement?
  - Why is it important?
  - Why is this an aim of early childhood intervention programs?

- **Identify** general measurement challenges
  - How do you measure parent engagement?
  - What measures are available? How do you choose measures?

- **Describe** the efforts of the National Research and Evaluation Center (NREC) to measure parent outcomes for one national ECI program (HIPPY USA) that aims to increase parent involvement.

WHAT IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

- Location?
  - In early childhood intervention programs
  - In schools
  - At home
  - In the community
- Connecting home-school environments?
- Activities directly with children?
  - What types of parent-child interactions
  - Providing early learning opportunities
- Attitudes and expectations?
- Providing enriched language and literacy environments?

WHAT IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

PE has been conceptualized, operationally defined, and measured in many ways

- Current theoretical frameworks of parent engagement are situated within a broader ecological perspective

- **Parent Engagement vs. Parent Involvement**
  - Terms have been used interchangeably by some, and distinct by others

    - *Parent Involvement* defined in terms of educational and academic pursuits
    - *Parent Engagement* defined in more holistic terms encompassing various dimensions of parenting practices

WHAT IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

Parent Engagement in Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs

- Korfmacher, J., Green, B., Staerkel, F., Peterson, C., Cook, G., Roggman, L., Faldowski, R. A., Schiffman, R. (2008) *Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Home Visiting*, Child Youth Care Forum

"Involvement is defined as the process of the parent connecting with and using the services of a program to the best of the client's and the program's ability"

- PAT evaluation http://policyweb.sri.com/cehs/publications/pat_engage1.pdf
  - Attrition
  - Intensity of service delivery
  - Ratings by home visitors / parent educators

DEFINING PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Why do you need a definition?

- **Importance of a clear definition for ECI programs**
    Identifying Objectives
    Logic Model for how to influence change

- **Importance of a clear definition for research purposes**
    - Know what key parent behaviors and attitudes to document
    - Guide how to assess outcomes
    - Allow comparable outcomes for similar studies
    - Meet study objectives
    - Implications for future research studies

DEFINING PARENT ENGAGEMENT

"Behaviors that connect with and support children or others in their environment in ways that are interactive, purposeful, and directed toward meaningful learning and affective outcomes." (Sheridan et al., 2011)

- **Multi-dimensional Construct**
  - Sheridan et al., proposed 3 dimensions:
    1) warmth, sensitivity, and responsiveness
    2) support for a child's emerging autonomy and self-control
    3) participation in learning and literacy
  - Joyce Epstein's 6 dimensional model (1995) for school age children
    1) parenting, 2) communicating, 3) volunteering and supporting school programs, 4) learning in the home, 5) decision making, and 6) community collaborations.

WHY IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT IN EDUCATION?

- *Parent engagement in education is linked to school outcomes*

  - Benefits are well-established
  - Promotes positive adaptation to formal schooling
  - Facilitates parenting knowledge and skill building
  - Parent expectations associated with educational performance
  - PE provides continuity between home and educational settings
  - Increase teacher awareness of cultural values and background information

WHY IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

- ***Particularly important during infancy and early childhood:***

  - Stable and responsive relationships with caregivers with consistent, nurturing, and protective interactions with adults that enhance children's ability to learn and develop adaptive capacities

  - Safe and supportive physical environments, free from toxins (including chemicals, dirty water, and poor sanitation) and fear

  - Appropriate nutrition and disease prevention, including immunization and health-promoting levels of food intake

- Parenting practices are linked to child outcomes
- Parents provide early learning opportunities and experiences

WHY IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

- *Achievement discrepancies start early and persist*

  - Poverty remains a persistent, significant and *modifiable* risk factor associated with low school success

  - PE and early childhood education are two of the most important protective strategies for at-risk children

  - Children's outcomes can be improved by altering parenting practices and increasing parent engagement

WHY IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

- *AIM of ECI: Promote Development, Prevent Secondary conditions, Increase Academic Achievement, Reduce Risk*

Research has identified several facilitators that promote child health, development, & positive functioning.

Three major dimensions of parenting that impact children's literacy skills:

      1) learning environment

      2) Warmth / responsivity

      3) Management /discipline (Morrison, 2009)

WHY MEASURE PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

- Increasing need for accountability of program effectiveness by funders
  - Limited resources and the need for Evidence Based Practice (EBP)

- Evaluate success at achieving program goals
  - What works, for whom, under what circumstances?

- Understand not just whether a program "works" but how to improve service delivery to maximize possibility of achieving benefits

HOW DO YOU MEASURE PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

- What is the purpose of the evaluation?

- What are the program objectives regarding parent outcomes?

- Begin with a clear definition to know what you are trying to measure

- Decide on data collection methods

- Align with program goals

- Select appropriate instruments and measurement tools

HOW DO YOU MEASURE PARENT ENGAGEMENT?

- **Data sources**
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - Independent Observers

- **Types of data collecting methods**
  - Surveys
  - Interviews
  - Video taping
  - Observation
  - Program and school records

SPECIFIC PARENT ENGAGEMENT MEASUREMENT TOOLS WITHIN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Instrument	Brief Description	Additional Information
Adult Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) (DeBruin-Parecki, 2008)	Measures adult and child behaviors to assess joint storybook reading; administered to teachers for young children and their parent/guardian; 12 literacy behaviors based on frequency scores ranging from 0–3 with qualitative support through notes; English and Spanish	Made in conjunction with the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy College of Education at the Pennsylvania State University, www.ed.psu.edu/ goodlinginstitute ; or purchase Let's Read Together: Improving Literacy Outcomes With the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (Aciri) By Andrea DeBruin-Parecki Ph.D.
Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ) (Fantuzzo, Tighe, & Childs, 2000)	Multi-dimensional scale to measure levels of parent involvement in home, classroom, and school contexts; administered to parents of preschool-age children; 42-items on a 4-point Likert scale; English and Spanish	To obtain a copy of the FIQ complete the Instrument Request Form at http://www.gse.upenn.edu/child/request; afterwards you will be contacted by a member of the Penn Child Research Team.
Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) (Totsika & Sylva, 2004)	Measure used to assess the caring environment in which the child is reared; administered by a trained observer; designed for children 3-6 years old; 55 items clustered into 8 subscales: 1) learning materials 2) language stimulation 3) physical environment 4) parental responsively 5) learning stimulation 6) modeling of social maturity 7) variety in experience 8) acceptance of child; English.	HOME was first developed in the 1960s; available for purchase at: http://fhdri.clas.asu.edu/home/index.html
Parent as a Teacher Inventory (PAAT) (Strom and Strom, 1995)	PAAT is a composite attitude scale measuring parents attitudes; administered to parents of children ages 3-9; 50-item survey; five aspects of the parent-child interactive system: 1) creativity 2) frustration 3) control 4) play 5) teaching/learning; English, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hopi, Japanese, Kannada, Mandarin, Malay, Navajo, Portuguese, Serbo-Croatian, Sinhalese, and Turkish.	First developed in 1974 by Robert Strom; available from the author Robert D. Strom bob.strom@asu.edu
Parent Education Profile (PEP) (Prins & Toso, 2008)	Measures parenting practices; administered to parents of children ages 1-8; ratings based on rubric from 1-5; four scales related to children's literacy development: 1) parent's support for children's learning in the home 2) parent's role in interactive literacy activities 3) parent's role in supporting child's learning in formal educational settings 4) taking on the parent role; English and Spanish.	Developed by RMC Research Corporation in the mid 2010s, for ordering go to http://www.rmcportsmouth.com/Products, or call 1-800-258-0802; instrument used by EvenStart Family Literacy Program.
Parent–Teacher Involvement Questionnaire: Teacher (PTIQ-T) (Fast Track Project, n.d.)	Measures parent involvement in the schools; administered to teachers of children (age not specified); 21 items on a 5-point Likert scale; three subscales that measure: 1) parents' comfort in their relationship with the teacher and with the school 2) parent involvement and volunteering in school 3) parent–teacher contact; English	Created in the early 1990s; available online from the Fast Track Project website: http://www.fasttrackproject.org/techrept/p/ptt/, contact the instrument's developer for specific terms of use at: fasttrack@duke.edu
The Familia (Buhs, Welch, Burt, & Knoche, 2011)	Measures family contributions to young children's literacy development across home and school environments; administered to parents of 3-4 year olds; 51 questions based on a 6-point Likert scale; organized in three categories: 1) exposure to printed materials 2) family engagement in learning 3) family involvement in school activities; English and Spanish	Originally created in 1995 in Iceland →revised in 2008 for the US; used in the Getting Ready Project; for more information contact Eric Buhs (author) at ebuhs2@unl.edu .

CHALLENGES MEASURING PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- No universal definition of Parent Involvement

- Limited understanding on the effects of different parenting practices on child outcomes

- Lack of available instruments, especially for measuring PE outside of center-based programs
  - No known standardized measure exists to assess parent engagement for home-based parent education programs

- Cultural differences in parenting practices
  - What is valued, what is measured, what actually works

- Lack of research for examining specific benefits of PE for low-income families during preschool.

- Inadequate ways of measuring parent engagement
  - For example, few or solitary items from surveys, or using only one item to measure parent engagement

IMPLICATIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS AND PRACTITIONERS

- Ultimate goal: How EC programs can best facilitate PE to promote child health, development and school success

- Understand significant facilitators and barriers to parent engagement—what types and patterns of involvement enhance educational outcomes

- How to appropriately define and measure key aspects of PE

- How key aspects of PE differentially relate to child outcomes.

HIPPY PROGRAM MISSION

- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a parent involvement, school readiness program that helps parents prepare their three, four, and five year old children for success in school.

- Parents are provided with curriculum, books and materials designed to strengthen their children's cognitive skills, early literacy skills, social/emotional and physical development.

  - Home visitors role play 5 integrated daily curricular activities with parents (approximately 15 minutes each), in turn, parents do daily activities one on one with their children.

  - Parent topical group meetings 2 x Month
    - http://www.hippyusa.org/

HIPPY INTERNATIONAL

HIPPY USA PROGRAMS
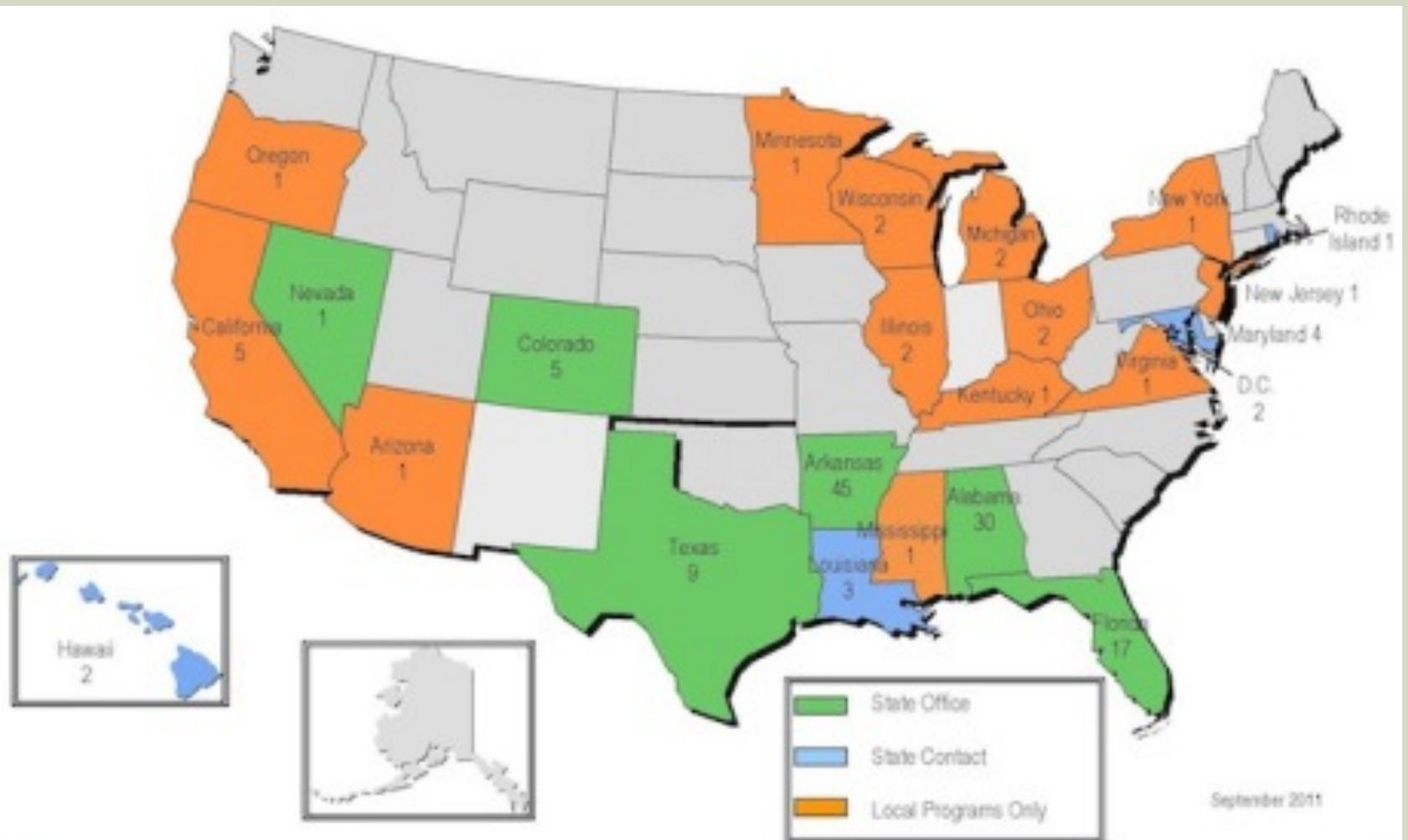
PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY) PROGRAM

HIPPY is an early childhood, home-based parent education program that focuses on at-risk children ages 3-5

- HIPPY background Information
  - Created in Israel in 1969
  - Implemented in 13 countries
  - In US—21 states, 15,000 families

- Four core components
  - 1) standard curriculum
  - 2) role play
  - 3) staff characteristics
  - 4) service delivery method

- Primary Objective of HIPPY
  - Promote parent engagement
  - Prepare children for long term school success

HIPPY LOGIC MODEL

Activities

Home Visitor
- Assists parent in setting goals for self and child.
- Models behavior for parent.
- Provides social-emotional support and encouragement to parent.
- Builds rapport with parent.

30 weekly visits are conducted during a program year, in which the Home Visitor:
- Reviews previous week's curriculum packet
- Provides parent with new weekly curriculum packet
- Role-plays weekly curriculum packets with parent
- Provides parent with other educational materials, resources, and extension activities
- Establishes performance expectations for parent
- Provides parent with information about child learning and development.

HOME VISITS

PARENT TEACHING

Parent completes HIPPY curriculum activities with child according to instructions.

GROUP MEETING

Program holds group meetings, during which:
- Parents are presented with additional parenting information
- Parents receive additional educational materials, information, and resources.
- Parents learn about school culture and organization.

Stage 1 Outcomes

- Parent understands education and school terminology.
- Parent increases communication skills for discussing child's educational activities.
- Parent understands child development and age appropriate expectations for child.
- Parent increases frequency of engaging in educational activities with child in home and community.
- Parent demonstrates how to use and care for educational materials.
- Parent uses HIPPY teaching skills during other activities.
- Parent initiates, monitors, and directs child's pre-academic educational activities.
- Parent increases time working with child on educational activities.
- Parent increases time spent reading with child.
- Child's pre-academic skills improve.
- Parent spends more time in quality interaction with child.
- Parent-child relationship improves.

Parent demonstrates increased knowledge of:
- Teaching skills
- Parenting skills
- Child development
- Community resources
- School involvement.

- Parent increases connection with community and local school.
- Parent displays increased comfort and interest in participating in school-related activities.

Parent has increased opportunities for sharing in a group setting.

Stage 2 Outcomes

Parent and child complete at least two years of the HIPPY curriculum, during which:
- Parent becomes active in guiding child's educational experiences in the home
- Parent expands child's pre-academic environment
- The home literacy environment improves
- Parent involvement increases and family relationships improve

- Child acquires skills and values that display a predisposition to learning
- Child acquires learning skills and knowledge in key domains
- Child starts school ready to learn

Parent assumes an active role as child enters the formal academic environment by:
- Advocating for child's education
- Communicating with child's school
- Attending school events
- Volunteering in the school

Stage 3 Outcomes

Children achieve long-term academic success.

Parent involvement in schools is increased.

Family involvement in local community activities is increased.

Families have strong parent-child relationships.

HIPPYUSA®

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HIPPY Logic Model

HIPPY USA NATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CENTER (NREC) AT USF

- NREC background information
  - Joint initiative between University of South Forida (USF) and HIPPY USA (HUSA)
  - Established in February 2012

- Primary goals/objectives
  - Set up a national research agenda: enhance evidence-based practices and provide support for program evaluations
  - Identify, develop, recommend standardized measures for parent and child outcomes
  - Measuring parent engagement and effects on child outcomes

- Parent outcomes that the HIPPY NREC will investigate
  - Effects of program participation on parent engagement
  - Types and patterns of engagement associated with stronger program effects
  - How specific parenting outcomes relate to child outcomes
  - Factors that contribute to different levels of parent engagement

NREC PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

- HIPPY USA parent engagement survey for local program evaluations
    - Aligns with new curriculum
    - Looks at program participation
    - Frequency of direct educational and literacy behaviors
- Multi-state, national parent survey advisory board
    - To aid in creating a reliable, valid, and well-researched survey
- Piloting study of survey
    - Across five states
- Multi-state, national RCT study design
    - Rigorous research design that can indicate cause and effect
    - Using mixed methods and standardized measures of parent engagement
- Standardized instrument for parent engagement
    - Applicable for *all* home visiting models and programs

FUTURE DIRECTION FOR MEASURING PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- Increased federal attention, mandates & legislative support

- Address Challenges in future research

  There has been little attempt to present a comprehensive overview of parent involvement in home visiting, even though policy-makers and service providers increasingly view it as a central piece of effective intervention to young children and their families (Korfmacher et al., 2008)

- Develop new instruments that reflect key aspects

NREC

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

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