Teacher Well-being, Classroom Composition, & Coaching in a Public Preschool Program
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BACKGROUND

- Teacher well-being is important for supportive teacher-student relationships and positive child outcomes (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).
- Children’s behavior in a classroom has been linked to teacher stress (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2014), and other aspects of classroom composition probably affect teacher wellbeing.
- Coaching may help early childhood educators develop needed skills to mitigate job-related stress (Early et al., 2007).

RESEARCH AIMS

- Extend research on the associations between classroom compositional characteristics and early childhood teachers’ well-being.
- Examine other compositional characteristics (e.g., children’s literacy and self-regulation skills, family income) as they relate to both stress and efficacy, using more complete data.
- Examine whether supportive coach relationships predict teacher well-being.

PARTICIPANTS

- 102 center-based preschool teachers in Virginia Preschool Initiative - Plus (VPi+) during the 2017–18 school year.
- Preschool teaching experience: Median = 4 years (range = 1–36).
- All teachers had bachelor’s degrees; 50% master’s degree or higher.

MEASURES

Construct | Measure
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Teacher well-being | Teacher self-efficacy score (spring)  
Teacher job stress score (spring)  
Teacher supports  
Teacher characteristics  
Classroom composition characteristics | Classroom average literacy score  
Classroom average self-regulation score  
Classroom average positive behaviors

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

- Teachers reported higher teaching efficacy in the spring, on average, when classrooms were composed of children who entered preschool with higher levels of positive literacy skills and/or higher levels of behavior control (p < .05).
- Teachers reported lower job stress in the spring, on average, when classrooms were composed of children who entered preschool with higher levels of behavior control (p < .05).
- Teachers who reported a positive, collaborative relationship with their coach reported lower job stress and higher teaching efficacy (p < .05).

DISCUSSION

- Teachers’ sense of teaching efficacy may be a reflection of the literacy and behavioral skills that children bring with them to school rather than a measure of their actual effectiveness as a teacher.
- Supporting children with challenging behaviors appears to have negative implications for teacher well-being.
- Having a strong positive and collaborative relationship with a coach may help support teacher well-being.
- Taking into account children’s academic and behavioral skills (via a screener) and family background before preK entry when making decisions about classroom composition could help support teacher well-being.

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