

treatment conditions will receive 30 hours of group-based teacher training. Teachers in the Workshops Plus condition will additionally receive on-site technical assistance consisting of individual consultation and mentoring. Teacher outcomes are assessed in baseline, intervention, and maintenance years. Child assessments are conducted in the fall and spring of the intervention year and after the children have made the transition to kindergarten. The outcomes of the proposed research will inform teachers, program directors, and policymakers as they make important decisions about the directions and expansion of early childhood efforts in the U.S.

University of Pennsylvania

Project Title:

Evidence-based Program for the Integration of Curricula (EPIC): A Comprehensive Initiative for Low-Income Preschool Children

Principal Investigator:

John Fantuzzo

Project Funding Years:

2003-2008

Project Abstract:

The literacy and early developmental problems facing low-income preschool children seriously threaten their academic achievement and social adjustment. Such problems are among the most longstanding and important issues in educational and developmental research and practice. Increased attention to the preschool years has spotlighted this period of life as a critical time for developing skills needed to be successful in school. Low-income preschool children are disproportionately at risk for developmental lags and poor school performance-problems exacerbated in urban settings with widespread poverty and limited institutional resources. Over the past 10 years, researchers have sought to ameliorate these problems by considering how to link early literacy and learning to broad dimensions of children's psychosocial well-being and socio-cultural context. However, despite the dire need, there have been too few attempts to integrate these different areas of inquiry in early childhood development or to examine the interactions between and among them through rigorous multivariate, longitudinal study of evidence-based integrative curricula. In this application, we draw upon a developmental ecological conceptual framework to address these limitations in the existing literature. The primary aim of this application is to conduct a series of studies that will additively connect previously isolated areas of research and theory into a fully-integrated early literacy, numeracy, and

social/emotional adjustment curriculum for low-income preschool children living in diverse, high-risk urban settings. The integrated curriculum will be developed, tested, and refined in partnership with researchers and practitioners. It will be built upon empirical research in three focal areas: (1) early literacy and language, (2) early numeracy and (3) social/emotional adjustment, with special attention to foundational approaches to learning and emotional development, and to the differential family, classroom, and neighborhood contexts within which development occurs. The integrated curricula will be formed and tested in four consecutive phases: parallel curricula integration phase (year 1), parallel randomized field trials phase (year 2), full curricular integration phase (year 3), and randomized longitudinal experiment phase (years 4-5). The strength of this application is its integration of these areas of research in such a way that applications are configured practically to the real preschool classroom environment, and the families and cultures of urban Head Start children. Overall, the project's goals are (a) to develop an evidence-based integrated early literacy, numeracy, and social/emotional adjustment curriculum, and (b) to conduct a randomized, longitudinal experiment that will investigate the efficacy of the integrated curriculum in alternative forms and across multiple preschool settings, using state-of-the-art research methods.

University of Virginia

Project Title:

Web-training: PreK Teachers, Literacy, and Relationships

Principal Investigator:

Robert C. Pianta

Project Funding Years:

2003-2008

Project Abstract:

Large-scale observational studies of pre-kindergarten classrooms indicate overall mediocrity and a high degree of variability in classroom quality and practices, even when experienced, credentialed teachers use the same curriculum. Most educators recognize that ongoing training and support for high quality implementation is critical to ensuring the value of early education experiences, particularly for children at-risk of early school failure. Thus the proposed project evaluates two conditions of Web-based training designed to support teachers' implementation of an integrative curriculum in early literacy, oral language, and social relationship/self-regulation skills in state-funded week classrooms. Two models of training will be implemented