

activities (circle time, math activities, science activities, and storybook reading). Higher-level instructional interaction will be assessed with a multi-method approach, using both global ratings of instructional support (Classroom Assessment Scoring System; Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008) and an utterance-level analysis of teachers' use of higher-level questions (Massey, Pence, Justice, & Bowles, 2008). Associations will be tested between higher-level instructional interaction and important school readiness outcomes, including language and literacy, math, science, and initiative.

Sample:

24 Head Start classrooms

208 Head Start preschoolers

Child Outcome Measures:

The Learning Express (McDermott, Fantuzzo, Waterman, Angelo, Warley, Gadsden, et al., 2009)

The Preschool Science Assessment (Greenfield, Dominguez, Greenberg, Fuccillo, Maier, & Penfield, in preparation)

The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA; LeBuffe & Naglieri, 2002)

Classroom Quality Measures:

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008)

Coding for "cognitively-challenging questions" described in Massey, Pence, Justice, & Bowles (2008)

Katie Hart

Project Title:

Promoting Successful Transitions to Kindergarten

Mentor:

William Pelham, Ph.D.

Project Funding Years:

2009-2011

University Affiliation:

SUNY-Buffalo

Project Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to develop, implement, and evaluate the efficacy of kindergarten transitional services for behaviorally at-risk preschoolers from Head Start organizations in the Miami, Florida area. Sixty children identified as being at high-risk for problematic transitions to kindergarten

due to behavior problems will be randomly assigned to one of two groups. Group 1 (Kindergarten Summer Readiness Class (KSRC)) will receive four weeks of intensive kindergarten readiness services in a summer program in which children's behavioral, social-emotional, and academic functioning will be targeted using evidence-based approaches. Caregivers of children assigned to the KSRC will be invited to attend 8 weekly parent transitional workshops in which they will learn skills to support their child's transition to kindergarten. Group 2 (comparison treatment group) families will be invited to attend a similar 8-week series of parent transitional workshops prior to the start of kindergarten, but the children will not receive daily KSRC programming. Parent transition services will continue to be offered throughout the kindergarten year for both groups. The children's transition to kindergarten will be evaluated and compared in the fall and spring of the kindergarten year via parent and teacher report, child assessment, and objective measures of behavioral, social-emotional, and academic functioning. Caregiver involvement in the transition to kindergarten will also be evaluated and compared. It is hypothesized that 1) children in the KSRC will demonstrate fewer problems in their behavioral and academic functioning in kindergarten than children who do not receive the KSRC, and 2) caregivers of children in the KSRC will be more involved in their child's transition to kindergarten and their child's learning activities than caregivers in the comparison treatment group.

Sample:

60 behaviorally at-risk children entering kindergarten, and their caregivers, who are enrolled in Head Start organizations in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Child Outcome Measures:

Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory (Parent Report) (ECBI; Eyberg & Ross, 1978)

Sutter-Eyberg Student Behavior Inventory-Revised (Teacher Report)(SESBI-R; Funderburk & Eyberg, 1989)

Disruptive Behavior Disorders Rating Scale (Parent & Teacher Report)(DBD; Pelham, Gnagy, Greenslade, & Milich, 1992)

Impairment Rating Scale (Parent & Teacher Versions) (IRS; Fabiano, et al., 2006)

Social Competence Scale (Parent & Teacher Version) (CPPRG, 1995).

Observations of Classroom Behavior

Frequency of Disciplinary Actions

Retention in Grade

Referral for Special Education

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Third Edition (PPVT-III; Dunn & Dunn, 1997)

Alphabet Knowledge

Number Knowledge

Measures of Parents', Teachers', and Children's Relationships:
Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Teacher Report) (STRS; Pianta, 2001)
Parent-Teacher Involvement Questionnaire (Parent & Teacher Versions)
(CPPRG, 1991)
Parent Daily Report of Parental Involvement in Child's Learning Activities

Whitney LeBoeuf

Project Title:

A Population Study of the Protective Benefit of Head Start in the Context of Early Risks and School Transitions

Mentor:

John Fantuzzo, Ph.D.

Project Funding Years:

2009-2011

University Affiliation:

University of Pennsylvania

Project Abstract:

This study intends to take a population-based look at the protective benefit of Head Start in an entire cohort of children who are transitioning into kindergarten in a large, urban school district and who live in a context of multiple early risks to development. There are three primary purposes of the proposed research study. The first is to understand the unique influences of child maltreatment, homelessness, high lead exposure, and low maternal education on academic and behavioral adjustment for an entire cohort of children entering kindergarten. The second purpose is to examine the protective benefits of having a Head Start experience for academic and behavior adjustment among these kindergarten children living in a context of multiple risks. Finally, this study proposes to investigate whether the protective benefit of Head Start is maintained through the end of first grade. The proposed study will analyze a subset of data from a longitudinal study using the Kids Integrated Data System (KIDS). KIDS is designed to integrate data across city agencies for research to inform public policy and practice. This unique capacity allows for population-based epidemiological research that considers the complex contexts in which children and families live.

Sample:

All children who were enrolled in public kindergarten and continued through first grade in a large urban school district (N = 8,300). The average age of children at kindergarten entry is 5.5 years (SD = 0.47). Half the children in the sample are male (50%) and the race/ethnicity demographics of the