Project Title:
Children's Aggressive Behavior in a Head Start Sample: Its Relation to Caregiver Factors and Children's Attachment Representations

Grantee:
Ann M. Stacks

Project Funding Years:
2001-2002

University Affiliation:
Bowling Green State University

Project Abstract:
The purpose of this study was to investigate caregiver psychological and environmental factors that contribute to parenting attitudes, attachment representations in their children, and subsequent child behavior. Sixty-three caregiver-child dyads participated in the study. Caregiver factors included the perceived availability of social support and satisfaction with social support, life stress, parenting attitudes, and caregiver psychological well being. The Six-Year Attachment Doll Play Attachment Classification System (George & Solomon, 1990, 1996, 2000) was used to assess children's attachment representations. Teachers and caregivers reported children's aggressive behavior.

Children's sex did not account for differences in child behavior. The caregiver's cultural background did not account for differences in parenting. Due to the small number of children classified as secure (N=4), this category was dropped from the analysis. Caregiver psychological well-being was associated with children's attachment representations. Social support network size, satisfaction with social support, and life stress, and parenting attitudes were not associated with children's attachment representations. Caregiver environmental factors were significant predictors of empathy and role reversal, but were not significant predictors of values related to corporal punishment, inappropriate expectations, or power-independence issues. Children's aggression at home and at school did not vary as a function of attachment representations.

Sample:
N=30 families of children attending full day-full-year Head Start
N=33 families of children attending half-day Head Start.

Measures:
Child
Six-Year Attachment Doll Play Classification System
Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)

Behavior Assessment System for Children, Teacher Rating Scales (BASC-TRS)

Parent
Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ)
Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI)
Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory-2 (AAPI-2)
Schedule of Recent Events
Parent Demographics Questionnaire

Stacy A. Storch **

Project Title:
Assessment of Curriculum Practices in Head Start

Grantee:
Stacey A. Storch

Project Funding Years:
2001-2003

University Affiliation:
State University of New York (SUNY), Stony Brook
Department of Psychology

Project Abstract:
This study proposes to develop a Preschool Curriculum Q-sort to be used in assessing the degree to which engagement in particular classroom activities by teachers promotes language and literacy development in Head Start children. Specific objectives of the study include: (a) developing a Q-sort measure to assess preschool curriculum practices that is practical to use and comprehensive in measuring literacy and language activities; (b) instructing teachers in the use of the Q-sort and having them complete it at specific points during the school year; (c) validating the measure using independent observers; and (d) assessing the degree to which teachers' responses to Q-sort items relate to student growth in school readiness skills, particularly emergent literacy. The first year of the project will consist of two phases. In the fall, a pilot group of Head Start and private preschool teachers will form a focus group to collaborate with the researchers in developing, testing, and revising the curriculum measure. In the winter and spring of the first year, a sample of approximately 40 Head Start teachers and classroom aides from 20 classrooms will complete the Q-sort. Children from these classrooms will be tested on the measures listed below upon their entrance to and exit from Head Start. These classrooms will also be observed using the ECERS-R and the Observational Code for Literacy Interactions. The second year of the