An Evidence-Based Home Visiting Model

A range of research studies conducted by and supported by state governments, independent school districts, private foundations, universities and research organizations, demonstrate that Parents as Teachers makes a real difference in the lives of parents and their children.

Length of participation in Parents as Teachers was a significant predictor of children’s third grade achievement.

“…the PAT program improved parenting practices in ways that promote both school readiness and subsequent academic achievement.” (p.116).


Parents as Teachers parents were more involved in children’s school activities and engaged their children more in home learning activities, especially literacy-related activities.

“…children of parents involved in a PAT program should enter school with ‘stronger’ readiness skills than their non-PAT peers.”


Parents as Teachers parents read to their children more often and were more likely to enroll them in preschool, both of which increased school readiness.

“…the PAT program was highly effective in helping impoverished parents prepare their children to enter school.”(p.81)


Parents as Teachers helps all children enter school ready to learn.

> 7,710 public school children from a stratified random sample of Missouri districts and schools were examined at kindergarten entry and at the end of third grade. Results showed that participation in Parents as Teachers, together with preschool, not only positively impacts children’s school readiness and school achievement scores, but also narrows the achievement gap between children in poverty and those from non-poverty households. With at least two years of Parents as Teachers combined with a year of preschool, 82% of poor children were ready for school at kindergarten entry—a level identical to non-poverty children with no Parents as Teachers or preschool.¹ A reanalysis using a subset of the above data strongly confirmed these findings.²

> Parents as Teachers children showed better school readiness at the start of kindergarten, higher reading and math readiness at the end of kindergarten, higher kindergarten grades, and fewer remedial education placements in first grade.³

> Kindergarten readiness of children in high poverty schools who participated in Parents as Teachers was equivalent to that of children at low poverty schools with no preschool enrichment (Parents as Teachers or preschool). In addition, when children attending high poverty schools participated in both Parents as Teachers and preschool,

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their scores were significantly higher than those of children in low poverty schools with no preschool enrichment (Parents as Teachers or preschool).iv

> 87% of Native American children served by Parents as Teachers through its BabyFACE program were ready for preschool by age 3.v

> Parents as Teachers children scored significantly higher on mastery motivation at 36 months. At 24 months, greater effects were found for low-income Parents as Teachers families whose children scored significantly higher on cognitive development and mastery motivation than comparison group families.vi

Parents as Teachers supports later school achievement.

> The 2007 study of 7,710 Missouri public school children also showed that length of Parents as Teachers participation was a significant predictor of children’s third grade achievement on the Missouri Assessment Program Communication Arts test.vii

> Parents as Teachers children continued to perform better than their peers on standardized tests of reading and math achievement in second grade. Compared to their peers, Parents as Teachers children required half the rate of remedial and special education placements in third grade.viii

Parents as Teachers prevents child abuse.

> The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect states, “home visiting and center-based programs with a parental focus can help prevent child abuse and neglect.” x The Task Force on Community Preventive Services recommends early childhood home visitation as an effective method for preventing child abuse and neglect.xi

> In a randomized trial, adolescent mothers who received case management and Parents as Teachers were significantly less likely to be subjected to child abuse investigations than control group mothers who received neither case management nor Parents as Teachers.xii

Parents as Teachers increases parental involvement.

> Results of a multi-site randomized trial showed that for families with very low income, those who participated in Parents as Teachers were more likely to read aloud to their children and to tell stories, say nursery rhymes, and sing with their children.xv

> In another randomized trial, adolescent mothers in an urban community who participated in Parents as Teachers scored lower on a child maltreatment precursor scale than mothers in the control group. These mothers showed greater improvement in knowledge of discipline, showed more positive involvement with children, and organized their home environments in ways more conducive to child development.xiii

> Parents as Teachers families had fewer documented cases of abuse and neglect in comparison to the Missouri state average.xiv

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Parents as Teachers improves children’s health and development outcomes.

> Annual health and developmental screenings is a core component of Parents as Teachers. Of the more than 227,000 children screened in the most recent program year, 15% were identified with possible health/developmental delays and were referred for additional follow up services and 64% of those referred received follow-up services.

> Children participating in Parents as Teachers were much more likely to be fully immunized for their given age, and were less likely to be treated for an injury in the previous year.

> At age 3, Parents as Teachers children performed significantly above national norms on a measure of school-related achievement, despite the fact that the sample was over-represented on all traditional characteristics of risk. More than one-half of the children with observed developmental delays overcame these delays by age 3.

Research Highlights

- 4 Independent Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)
- 7 peer-reviewed published outcomes studies

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