

THE PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM



Summary

The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) strives to prepare at-risk students for their first school experience through a series of home visits. Through these home visits, the goals are to increase a student's language and literacy skills, enhance social and emotional development, and strengthen the parent-child relationship.

In 1994, South Carolina's first Parent-Child Home program opened in Florence School District 3. Since then, the program has spread to many different school districts across the state. The Parent-Child Home Program provides intensive home visiting to parents of children aged 16 months to four years old who are identified as at-risk and who receive free and reduced meals. Home visitors visit assigned homes a minimum of 46 times in a year (twice a week over 23 weeks). The first visit of each week the home visitor brings a book or educational toy as a gift to the family. Consequently, over the course of two years, the families will acquire a library of children's books and a large collection of stimulating toys. The home visitors model the behaviors for parents that enhance children's development instead of directly teaching the parents the behaviors. Home visitors also help parents realize their role as their children's first and most important teacher. Parents are never given homework or assignments to complete but are encouraged to continue quality play and reading between visits with the books and toys they receive each week.

Demographics

- *Target Settings:* Urban, rural, inner city
- *Target Groups Served:* Parents of free and reduced lunch eligible students between the ages of 16 months and four years old. Emphasis is on years two and three.
- *Districts Served:* 22 Parent-Child Home Program replications are currently operating in South Carolina (Charleston County School District; Clarendon County School District 3; Dillon School Districts 1-3; Dorchester School Districts 2 and 4; Florence School Districts 1, 2, 4, and 5; Fort Mill School District; Georgetown County School District; Horry County Schools; Kershaw County Schools; Lancaster County Schools; Lexington School District 1 and 2; Marion School District 2; Richland School District 1 and 2; Williamsburg County Schools)

Research and Evaluation

What national or other research was considered during the development of this program/initiative?

Describe the evidence that shows the program/initiative works.

The SC PCHP is a replication of the national model developed in 1965. Building on the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky, the emphasis on play for the targeted age group, Bruner's theory of language symbolization, and attachment theory, the PCHP focuses on increasing parent-child verbal and non-verbal interactions that promote the child's social-emotional and conceptual skills development (development of pre-literacy skills e.g. receptive and expressive language) while promoting positive parenting skills acquisition of the parent/primary caretaker. The approach is non-didactic and utilizes a non-threatening behavioral modeling methodology that is process-focused and driven to reinforce learning via this intensive services model. The PCHP is specifically designed for parents with multiple risk factors that include: low-income, low levels of education, teen parents, isolation (rural or urban), single-parent households, recently-arrived immigrants, or language barriers that may inhibit their ability to prepare a child for school or be involved in their child's education.

In 2002, a four-year study was done on children who participated in the PCHP. These students were given the Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery (CSAB), a test given to all first graders. 84.8% of PCHP children passed the assessment versus 74.4% of free and reduced meal eligible students statewide. 84% of at-risk identified African American children in the PCHP passed versus 75.6% of their respective peers. It was later noted that seven of the 84 children in the study were diagnosed with severe developmental delays. These children are now receiving special education services and are atypical of PCHP participants. All of these children failed the test. Without their scores, the pass rates for the program are 93.1% of PCHP receiving free or reduced meals and 92.7% of PCHP African American children. These scores exceed the state passage rates for each group by 18% each.

Several detailed research reports may be found at <http://www.parent-child.org/proven-outcomes-research.html>.

Resources

- *Annual Cost:* Varies by site due to the number of homes and coordinators – must have one coordinator for every 60 families
- *Funding Sources:* Individual replication sites receive funding from a wide variety of sources. These sources include federal Title I funds for disadvantaged students, federal Even Start, Early Head Start, state education funding, state public welfare funding, funding from local school districts, corporations, private social service organizations, community foundations, and individual donors
- *Staffing Needs:* Each site has a site coordinator who recruits and trains home visitors.
- *Infrastructure/Equipment Needs:* Books and toys to be provided to the families that the home visitors visit
- *Partner Organizations:* First Steps of Florence County, First Steps of South Carolina, The Children's Trust of South Carolina, Florence School District One and many other SC school districts, Safe Kids and Prevent Child Abuse

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