

Washington State

Project Title:

Spokane Head Start Outcomes Initiative

Principal Investigator:

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Project Funding Years:

2002-2006

Head Start Partners:

Spokane County Head Start, Spokane, WA

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Project Abstract:

Washington State University has developed strategies to assure that children's outcomes guide the organizational development of local Spokane Head Start programs, and develop a model for organizational change that can be adapted by other Head Start programs. Work has been organized around three goals. In Goal 1, the capacity of the Head Start organization to systematically use outcome information in program development is being enhanced. Program objectives include the development of expanded management information systems, staff training in the use of information systems, and pilot research programs that improve the quality of child assessment in Head Start. Data on approximately 500 to 700 Head Start children are being collected using the Child Observation Record (COR), Creative Curriculum Assessment System (CreaCurr), Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), and a battery of individual child assessment tools used by the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) during the

initial program year at three assessment points. In addition, data obtained from the FACES battery are being compared to findings from the COR and CreaCurr on a random sample of 200 children. In Goal 2, the training and administrative structures that are needed to improve ways in which outcomes information guides program planning are being created. Program objectives in Head Start address the use of information in program planning, supervision, and classroom activity planning for children. In Goal 3, a "learning community" is being developed that establishes an ongoing relationship between early childhood practitioners and Washington State University programs in early childhood education. Researchers are establishing "Head Start Scholars," who will be Head Start staff working with university faculty to develop professional training and translate what is learned from Goals 1 and 2 into practical and accessible training papers and materials for practitioners.

Sample:

N=500 to 700 Spokane County Head Start children

Measures:

Child Outcome Assessment

Child Observation Record (COR)

Creative Curriculum Assessment System (CreaCurr)

Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA)

FACES Child and Family Instruments

Woodcock-Johnson Letter-Word Identification Scale

Woodcock-Johnson Dictation Scale

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)

McCarthy Draw-A-Design Test

Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist

Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) Parent Interview

Classroom Assessment

High/Scope Program Quality Assessment (under consideration)

Head Start Staff

Focus Groups/Key Informant Interviews

Outcome Framework Survey