

treatment fidelity of an intervention as a self-administered program component? (5) Can a Head Start program achieve the same reduction of problem behaviors and improvement of social skills in a self-administered program as in a research study? (6) What supports are needed for programs to develop local capacity for self-evaluation so they can gather relevant outcome data more systematically as part of their program improvement process?

The results expected from this project include the development of an exportable intervention program with supporting materials, developed in collaboration with Head Start partners and training and technical assistance experts, which has been tested in terms of its effectiveness and ability to be implemented in the Head Start setting. In addition, dissemination of a variety of products to a range of audiences will be an important focus, including empirical articles on effectiveness of intervention, treatment manuals, and practitioner-oriented publications.

University of Oregon

Project Title:

Head Start Adaptation of First Step to Success: Preparing Children for Social/Emotional Success at School

Grantee:

University of Oregon

Project Funding Years:

2001-2006

Project Staff:

Hill Walker, Edward Feil, Annemieke Golly, and Herbert Severson

Head Start Partners:

Head Start Partner: Head Start of Lane County, Springfield, OR
KIDCO Head Start of Linn and Benton counties

Contact Information:

Hill M. Walker

Co-Director

Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior

1265 University of Oregon

Eugene, OR 97403-1265

Phone: (541) 346-3591, Fax: (541) 346-2594

Email: hwalker@oregon.uoregon.edu

Edward G. Feil
Research Scientist
Oregon Research Institute
1715 Franklin Blvd.
Eugene, OR 97403
Phone: (541) 484-2123, Fax: (541) 484-1108
Email: edf@ori.org

Project Abstract:

This proposed work is focused on social-emotional competence, which is an important determinant of school readiness. School readiness, in turn, sets the stage for school success and fosters attachment, bonding and engagement with the schooling process. There is clear longitudinal evidence that school success and engagement, as defined in this manner, serves as a powerful protective factor against a host of later health risk behaviors and negative outcomes including violent delinquent acts, school dropout, teenage pregnancy or fathering a child, heavy drinking and drug use, and multiple sex partners (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999).

This proposal outlines five years of research and development activities that will adapt the First Step to Success early intervention program for effective use with Head Start children. First Step is a collaborative home and school intervention program, delivered by a behavioral coach and lasting approximately two months, that is geared for regular kindergarten classroom settings and designed to help at risk children get off to the best start possible in their school careers. First Step is an early intervention designed to achieve secondary prevention goals and outcomes within the context of schooling. The primary outcome of the program's application is a substantial improvement in the target child's school readiness as expressed through enhancements in both teacher and peer-related forms of adjustment.

The adapted version of the First Step program would provide Head Start consumers, staff and professionals with a proven intervention option that will produce the following benefits: 1) substantially improved school readiness, 2) amelioration and/or elimination of serious behavior problems such as aggression, opposition-defiance, and other indicators of emerging antisocial behavior and externalizing behavior disorders, and 3) improvements in the target child's critically important relationships with the key social agents of parents and caregivers, teachers and peers. This proposed work addresses the rising tide of young children, having very challenging behavior problems, who have increasingly overwhelmed early childhood staff in preschool, Head Start and kindergarten classroom programs during the past decade (See FAN, 2000; Knitzer, 1998).

The First Step adaptation process will be planned during Year 01 of this proposed research and initially trial tested using single subject research methodology. In subsequent project years, a prototype of the adapted program version will be tested during a primary intervention phase, revised and retested in a secondary intervention phase, and finally replicated in another cooperating Head Start site involving the Siletz Native American Tribes of Oregon. A comprehensive dissemination and technical assistance/outreach training program of activities for the final adapted version of the First Step intervention will be planned in project year 04 and implemented during year 05.

Temple University (originally at the University of South Carolina from 2001-2004)

Project Title:

The Companion Curriculum: Connecting Head Start Parents and Teachers to Promote Early Learning and Development

Grantee:

Temple University

Project Funding Years:

2001-2006

Project Staff:

Julia Mendez and Jean Ann Linney

Head Start Partners:

GLEAMNS Human Resources Commission, Inc.
Burlington County Community Action Program

Contact Information:

Julia Mendez
Principal Investigator
Department of Psychology
474 Weiss Hall
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Phone: (215) 204-4924
Email: jmendez@temple.edu

Jean Ann Linney
Professor and Chair
Department of Psychology