

Sample: Approximately 200 Head Start parents

Measures:

- Program collected data on child and family characteristics
- Family Expectations for School Readiness Involvement (FESRI in English and Spanish)
- Family Involvement Questionnaire (FIQ in English and Spanish)
- Program records on family involvement and kindergarten transition activities made available to families and activities completed by families

Caroline Shanti

Project Title: Understanding Parental Engagement: Investigating the Home Visitor Experience and Context

Mentor: Marji Erickson Warfield

Project Funding Years: 2012-2013

University Affiliation: Brandeis University

Project Abstract: This exploratory study will examine the individual, program, and agency factors that impact home visitor ability to engage parents. The study has three primary goals: 1) to understand the push-pull between standardization and individualization as it takes place in EHS home visiting programs; 2) to understand how home visitors develop the ability to achieve engagement; and 3) to integrate the findings from goal one and goal two to understand how implementation choices made by individual programs impact home visitor ability and experience in engaging parents. This is a comparative case study, with the primary form of data collection being 30-minute phone interviews with EHS program managers or directors. Findings will inform replicable models of approaches to team building, mentoring, supervision, and training that could be implemented across the spectrum of possible program design in EHS.

Sample: 28 home visitors and 8 supervisors from four Early Head Start Home Visiting Programs in Region 1.

Measures:

- In-depth interviews with home visitors and supervisors

Diana Westerberg

Project Title: Student-Teacher Relationship, Cortisol Reactivity, and Behavioral Outcomes of Children Attending Head Start

Mentor: Julia Mendez Smith

Project Funding Years: 2012-2014

University Affiliation: University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Project Abstract: The project examines the buffering role of student-teacher relationship in Head Start populations. The three major objectives of the research are: 1) to describe the chronic stress experienced by children attending Head Start and investigate how chronic stress impacts their cortisol reactivity to a stress paradigm; 2) to examine the relation between children's cortisol reactivity and child behavior problems and social competence; and 3) to investigate the moderating role of teacher relationships on the relation between children's cortisol reactivity, behavior problems, and social competence. The study findings will help identify chronic stressors that may be particularly harmful to children's cortisol reactivity. Understanding the role student-teacher relationships may play in moderating this risk will show how physiological risk may be reduced by supportive environmental factors that can be provided through Head Start.

Sample: 10-12 Head Start Teachers (per year of the study)

75 children from 10 Head Start Classrooms (per year of the study)

Measures:

Child Measures:

- Saliva samples
- Behavior during stress tasks
- Caregiver-Teacher Report Form (C-TRF)
- Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale (PIPPS)
- Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (S-TRS)

Teacher Measures:

- Demographics

Parent Measures:

- Chronic Stress Inventory
- Parenting Stress Index - Short Form (PSI-SF)