



GEM OF THE MONTH



Highlighting an exemplary intervention study



A randomized trial examining the effects of parent engagement on early language and literacy: the Getting Ready Intervention

This study used a randomized trial to examine the effects of the Getting Ready intervention on child language and literacy skills with 217 children, 211 parents, 29 Head Start teachers in 21 schools enrolled in the study. The Getting Ready Intervention provides a structure for Head Start teachers during agency-required home visits. The intervention aims to foster home-school collaborations, strengthen parent engagement, enhance the daily learning opportunities between parents and children, and encourage parental warmth to support child learning and school readiness. Results indicated that all children improved in language and literacy outcomes; however, children in the Getting Ready intervention significantly improved on teacher-reported language and literacy outcomes compared to children receiving typical Head Start services. Additionally, children in the Getting Ready intervention continued to make gains during the summer months when Head Start was not in session; whereas, children receiving typical Head Start services showed fewer gains during this time.

Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L. L., Kupzyk, K. A., Edwards, C. P., & Marvin, C. A. (2011). A randomized trial examining the effects of parent engagement on early language and literacy: The Getting Ready intervention. *Journal of school psychology, 49*(3), 361-383. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2011.03.001

Advancing Knowledge to Bridge the Word Gap

The Getting Ready intervention provides a structure for home visits to foster home-school collaboration and build parent engagement. With the intervention embedded into the home visits required by Head Start, the Getting Ready intervention requires few additional resources and teacher time. Therefore, this study provides a feasible way to embed an intervention into practice to facilitate child language and literacy development to Bridge the Word Gap.

Meet the First Author

Susan Sheridan, University of Nebraska

Why did you do this study?

Susan: Partnering with parents to support their meaningful engagement can enhance the development of formative skills, including language. We wanted to test the “added value” of a parent partnership intervention (“Getting Ready”; GR) on children’s language and early literacy, considering certain child and family characteristics.

How is this study informing your next research steps?

Susan: GR was most effective for children for whom there was a developmental concern. We also recognized the need to intensify efforts with parents who present challenges such as limited education and personal health concerns. We now provide greater levels of support to teachers interacting with parents, especially when child and family risk is pronounced.



Commentary by the Nominator

Judy Carta, University of Kansas

This study elucidates the processes used to facilitate parent engagement and family-school collaboration. What was especially noteworthy to the BWG Risk Workgroup were the moderational analyses reported in this study examining the effects of both child risks and family risks on intervention outcomes. Interestingly, children with risk factors (i.e., those who began the intervention with developmental concerns as well as children not speaking English upon entry into preschool) had higher rates of language growth than children who did not experience those risk factors. On the other hand, children from families with risk factors (i.e., parents who had not completed high school, or parents with health concerns) had fewer improvements in language compared to families without those risks. These results may help practitioners be alert to family differences and tailor their home-school consulting model to enhance parent engagement and maximize intervention outcomes.