



Edition 12 – 2

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Best Practices: Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities

Creating a better tomorrow...

Title: Houston Parent-Child Development Program

Overview:

The *Houston Parent-Child Development Program* is a culturally sensitive program designed to assist low-income families by fostering intellectual and social competence in young children, thus helping them do well in school in their later years.

Target: Mexican-American mothers and their children ages one to three years

Extent/Duration of Program: The entire program requires about 500 hours of participant time over a two-year period.

Program Costs:

- Information regarding costs and associated materials are available from the developer.
- Training provided for mothers as integral part of program.

For further information, or to order:

Dale L. Johnson, Ph.D.
 Professor Emeritus
 831 Witt Road
 Taos, NM 87571

Phone (information): 505-758-7962

E-mail: dljohnson@uh.edu

Web site (information on developer):
<http://www.uh.edu/~psycp2>

Principles/Approaches/Components: The *Houston Parent-Child Development Program* is based on the notion that if mothers can be trained to be effective teachers of their children, and if comprehensive services can be provided in order to counter the effects of poverty, then children in these families can at a very early age become less sensitive, more intellectually curious, and more socially competent, leading to greater success later in life. The program consists of two stages. The first begins when the child is one year old, and includes biweekly home visits to the mother and child, and weekend sessions for the entire family. Instruction in the English language is provided to the mother, the child receives a medical examination, and mothers are provided assistance in accessing other community resources. In the second stage, mother and child participate in specialized activities four mornings a week, including lessons in sewing, buying, health, and home health safety. Mothers and program staff also engage in discussions in which they explore ideas related to childcare. Mothers are additionally provided with the opportunity to interact with their children and practice the techniques discussed in the sessions.

Evidence-based Effectiveness: In various studies conducted since the 1980s, the program has been shown to be effective in helping mothers to provide proper play materials, be more emotionally and verbally responsive, and avoid unnecessary punishment. In 102 randomly assigned Mexican-American children in the 1980s, significant differences were found on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale when compared to the control group at the 24-month mark. A 4-year follow-up study revealed that children (then ages 4-7) who had participated in the program were less destructive, less overactive, and less prone to seek negative attention when

compared to control group children. At ages 8-11, further follow-up findings indicated lower teacher ratings of impulsive, obstinate, disruptive, hostile, and fighting behaviors.

Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) connections:

D - Professional development and training in prevention, education, early identification and intervention, mentoring, or rehabilitation referral, as related to drug and violence prevention.

E.viii - Conflict resolution programs, including peer mediation programs that educate and train peer mediators and a designated faculty supervisor, and youth anti-crime and anti-drug councils and activities.

E.xi - Programs that encourage students to seek advice from, and to confide in, a trusted adult regarding concerns about violence and illegal drug use.

National Standards connections:

Grades 1 through 3 (can also be used in Kindergarten, and is shown to impact children through grade 5)

Health Education Standard 4 – Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Health Education Standard 7 – Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

National Health Education Standards, Second Edition: Achieving Excellence. American Cancer Society, 2007.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard A: Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard B: Students will make decisions, set goals and take necessary action to achieve goals.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills.

ASCA National Standards for Students. American School Counselor Association, 2004.

Recognition and additional reports:

The following organizations/institutions have recognized the *Houston Parent-Child Development Program*. The organizations are in alphabetical order and the recognition status is in parentheses.

Blueprints for Violence Prevention (Promising Program)

National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs system, 2001 (Legacy Program)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Promising Program)

SAMHSA (Promising Program)

2001 Surgeon General's Report (Promising Program)

GENERAL NOTES: The intent of the above synthesis and correlations is to assist teachers and school administrators dedicated to using best practices to reduce violence and substance abuse among students. To our knowledge, the information was current upon publication. However, details pertaining to status of program recognition, research and findings, costs, and contact information are subject to change.

Correlations to the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) federally approved activities and to national education standards have been limited in depth (“standard” level only) and breadth (number of standards and subjects) due to the encompassing nature of many programs that typically qualify as model or exemplary. The correlations listed should not be viewed as exhaustive.

Designed Instruction’s effective SDFS program research series was funded by the United States Department of Education. For information on other effective programs for promoting safe and drug-free schools and communities, visit www.designedinstruction.com/learningleads/effective-sdfs-programs.html

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