

Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) Overview Being Implemented in Colorado by Advocates for Younger Generations (AYG)

The Problem

- U.S. students' academic performance compared with students from other advanced economies has fallen to the middle of the pack, and is even lower in math and science.
- One third of all American students fail to finish high school and 50% of low-income students fail to finish high school.
- Students who do not finish high school are far more likely during their lives to require high expenditures for special education, to fail to find gainful employment, to be involved with the criminal justice system, to pay very little in the way of taxes, and to have children at an early age. Often these students do not fully or effectively participate in our democratic society.
- Students who fail to finish high school are a tremendous net drain on society and are unable to maximize their potential. Research shows that students who start out far behind are likely to stay behind.
- The West High School (DPS) graduating Class of 2009 took its first high school state standardized tests in the spring of 2006. Six percent were proficient in math and 22% could read at grade level; 47% graduated in 2009. Among graduates going on to Colorado colleges, 91% needed remedial work.
- In *Meaningful Differences*, researchers Hart and Risley have documented that by the time children get to kindergarten, low-income children have heard just 15 million words while middle-income children have heard 55 million words, 40 million more words, which is almost 4 times more than the low-income children. (Hart, B. & Risley, T. R. (1995) *Meaningful Differences: in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks.) Children's brains do not respond to words they hear on TV the way they do to words they hear directly from people

The Program

The Parent-Child Home Program sends paid paraprofessional home visitors to low-income families of two- and three-year-old children. Research indicates that the most effective way to level the playing field and break the cycle that ends in high school failure is to work with low-income toddlers when they are two and three years old, by

helping the children's first and most important teachers, their parents, prepare them for school.

Key features of the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP):

- PCHP reaches children and their parents at the developmental stage when increased positive verbal interaction is critical to the children's pre-literacy and social-emotional skills. Social-emotional skills, such as listening, sitting quietly, paying attention, and cooperating with others, are essential tools for school readiness.
- PCHP was specifically designed for families with challenging lives, not adapted from a program that fits for a wide range of families. It is deliberately non-threatening and non-invasive of families' privacy.
- PCHP can serve families of numerous ethnicities and languages by recruiting home visitors from the communities and cultures to be served. PCHP can also serve families at any literacy level.
- The design of providing two 30-minute visits a week is appropriate for the developmental stage of the toddler being served and for the time a parent can comfortably devote to each visit and meet other duties. The frequency of the home visits and high dosage (92 visits over 2 years) provide strong reinforcement of sufficient duration to create lasting change. In Colorado, we intend to add 8 visits a year for a Living Well component.
- PCHP is premised on the parents' ability to develop skills and behaviors demonstrated by the home visitor.
- The books and educational toys brought as gifts by the home visitors are a key part of the curriculum and serve as tools for verbal and social-emotional interactions between the parent and child on an ongoing basis. The visitor leaves these toys and books with the parents.
- PCHP evaluations show that the home visits change the parent as much or more than the child. The parents develop new attitudes, beliefs and skills that carry through the child's educational years. Parents truly become their child's first teacher.
- PCHP nationally has a retention rate of about 80-85% after two years.

Results

Children who have completed two years of the program show documented progress:

- In randomized controlled trials, The Parent-Child Home Program has demonstrated significant ongoing positive effects on participating parents' interaction with their children, in contrast to control group families examined before, immediately after,

and two years after completion of the Program. Program parents' verbal interaction with their children showed a lasting superiority over that of the control group, and this parent-child interaction correlated with children's first grade cognitive and social emotional skills. Children who have completed PCHP start school at the same level as middle class children.

- PCHP students test at or above national and state scores on standardized tests in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades.
- A randomized controlled study of the Parent-Child Home Program found that low-income children who completed two years of the Program went on to graduate from high school at the rate of middle class children nationally, a 20% higher rate than their socio-economic peers, 30% higher than the control group in the community.
- Nationally, 53.9% of students graduate from high school. For PCHP students, the graduation rate is 84.1%.
- Parent-Child Home Program children gained 17 points on IQ assessments, going from 84.9 to 101.9, whereas the combined control groups' IQ remained stable (89.9 to 90.4). A statistically significant increase in receptive vocabulary was also found in Program children and not in the control groups.
- Children who completed the program were 50% less likely to be referred to special education.

Dr. Todd Risley, co-author of the landmark book *Meaningful Differences*, summarizes the research findings on PCHP as follows: "This program arguably has the best cost-benefit ratio of any literacy program. Its years of data demonstrate that it actually changes parental behaviors...and prompts parents to foster language development in their children."

Costs

The program costs \$4000 per family per year on average, though costs can run over \$5000 a year (Palm Beach County runs a year-round program) or as low as \$2800 a year in a low-income area in which families are geographically close and salaries are low. Colorado costs may be higher because:

-AYG plans to do extensive and careful evaluations.

-AYG will link children in the PCHP program to other programs that work.

-AYG will add a Living Well component since we know that early detection of health problems and healthy behaviors result in healthier children, reducing health costs.

Videos

The following videos convey PCHP's ability to prepare low-income children to succeed in school. [To view these videos click on hyperlink, or if necessary, copy the address, paste it in your browser and click Enter.]

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uli-U95W2dk&feature=mfu_in_order&list=UL

This video shows John Stanton, CEO of Clearwire, and Drs. Patricia Kuhl and Andy Meltzoff, leading brain researchers at the University of Washington. The event is a celebration of the end of Seattle's 5-year 4 million dollar pilot program of PCHP (through the Business Partnership for Early Learning) and a kick-off of United Way's 25 million dollar expansion of the program.

<http://www.youtube.com/parentchildhomeprog#p/a/f/0/NDIMiq34sfM>

This video shows an Eritrean home visitor in Seattle and interviews her about her work. We met her in Seattle and found her very charismatic, as did the Seattle business leaders.

<http://www.youtube.com/parentchildhomeprog#p/a/f/2/tCsPJoj5BtA>

Prepared by the national office of PCHP, this video is an excellent program overview.

Articles and Reports

Informational articles from *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Philadelphia Enquirer*, *Education Week* and others are available on request.

The outstanding report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Workforce Readiness led AYG to the PCHP (see p. 21). You can read this report by copying and pasting the address below in your browser, scrolling down to the **Ready Set Go** report at the bottom and clicking on the icon to download the PDF-formatted report.

<http://icw.uschamber.com/publication/ready-set-go-why-business-should-support-early-childhood-education>.

The Chamber's report highlights the Seattle implementation of PCHP by the Business Partnership for Early Learning (BPEL). United Way in Seattle has now made PCHP their number one priority and is in the midst of a 25 million dollar campaign to make PCHP available to every low-income child in Seattle.

PCHP Endorsements

PCHP has repeatedly been recognized for more than 30 years as a highly effective program that produces results. A partial list of some of those endorsements and commendations follows:

- 1972 Endorsed by the U.S. Office of Education as one of fifteen compensatory education programs considered to be national models
- 1978 Endorsed as one of five best childhood programs by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health
- 1978 Endorsed as “a program that works” by the Joint Dissemination Review Panel of the U.S. Department of Education
- 1998 Pittsfield High School graduation study demonstrates that the program prevents dropping out (Levenstein et al).
- 2001 Endorsed as a “wise investment” by the Comptroller of the City of New York because he estimated the program saved \$210,000 per student.
- 2002 Publication of South Carolina first grade school readiness study showing 92 percent of Program graduates pass first grade skills assessment (Levenstein et al).
- 2003 Endorsed by the California Children and Families Commission as one of six programs most closely aligned with its goals
- 2005 Endorsed by the New York State Education Department as “a science-based Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act program”
- 2005 Endorsed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices as one of six recommended programs
- 2006 Endorsed by the Council of Chief State School Officers as one of three recommended programs
- 2006 Endorsed by the Children’s Trust Fund of Washington/Washington Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect as one of three evidence-based home visiting programs
- 2007 Publication of New York University study showing that the Program bridges the “preparation gap” (Allen et al).
- 2011 Found to be one of 19 highly effective programs for low-income children from birth to age 18 by a study prepared for the new government of British Prime Minister David Cameron. The expert review panel included a handful of well-known experts including the University of Colorado’s Del Elliott (head of the Blueprints Project). This study also selected the Nurse Family Partnership, which was conceived and researched by the University of Colorado’s Dr. David Olds, the leading researcher in

the world on early childhood interventions. (Page 130 of the study lists NFP, followed by PCHP, as highly effective programs).

2011 Selected by the Growth Philanthropy network as one of 6 programs that should be replicated nationally (others included Teach for America, and KIPP Schools).

2011 PCHP selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a Bright Spots program.

PowerPoint

The purpose of this handout is to give interested parties an overview of the PCHP, while linking them to additional resources. If you'd like to see or use a terrific PowerPoint about PCHP, it is available upon request.

AYG

Advocates for Younger Generations (AYG) has affiliated with the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center (CNDC), through which it has obtained its 501c3 status and back-office operations. AYG is a bipartisan group of business, civic, governmental, and university leaders who will bring PCHP to the state of Colorado by assisting in the creation of local independent AYG affiliates who will bring PCHP to their communities.

The national PCHP requires sites to sign a replication agreement, have the national center train coordinators, use the research and MIS system developed by PCHP, and report results to the public.

AYG requires participating Colorado sites to create bipartisan, cooperative groups of leading business, civic, governmental, and community organizations. AYG assists in the creation of these groups. The AYG statewide program will conduct evaluations to assure fidelity to the model and assist local communities in reporting results to the public. The AYG research team is led by Drs. Carl Larson and Darrin Hicks, who conducted the research on Invest in Kids' implementation of the Nurse Family Partnership in Colorado.

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Each of our three initial sites (Jefferson County, Mesa County, and the San Luis Valley) has Republican and Democratic Co-Chairs leading the bipartisan group of local community leaders.

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AYG Colorado board members are: Dr. Paul Alexander, Norma Anderson, Anne and Steve Burkholder, Kwali Farbes, Kathy Hall, Shawn Hays, Dr. Darrin Hicks, Moe Keller, Dr. Carl Larson, Dr. Renee Lopez, Representative Tom Massey, Marsha Miller, Bill Rosser, Karen Tomb, Representative Ed Vigil, Dr. Gerrit Westervelt, and Marty Zimmerman.