Family Child Care: A Practice-based Approach to Professional Development

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Research on family child care
Importance of early literacy development
Practice-based approach to professional development
Method
Results
• Quantitative
• Qualitative
Discussion and policy Implications
Definition

Potential of family child care
  • Children
  • Community

Existing research on family child care
  • Comparatively lower in quality
  • Professional development
  • Global quality, not language and literacy
- National priority
- Existing research
- Low-income children
Research and policy imperative

A practice-based model of professional development

How study fills gap
1. Does a practice-based professional development program improve early literacy content and pedagogical knowledge in family child care?

2. Does this professional development program improve early literacy instructional practice in family child care?

3. In what ways does a practice-based professional development program improve early literacy instructional practice in family child care?
128 providers
Recruitment
Eligibility
3 groups:
• Course only
• Coaching + course
• Control
Language and literacy course
Literacy coaching
Coaching cycle
PRACTICE

Set Goal

Identify Desired Outcomes

Identify Strategies

Create Action Plan

Reflection
Language and literacy knowledge assessment

CHELLO

Qualitative observation field-notes

Provider/coach interview

Provider survey

Coaches focus group data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-intervention</th>
<th>During intervention</th>
<th>Post-intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge assessment</td>
<td>Course Coaching Observations Provider/coach interview</td>
<td>Knowledge assessment post-CHELLO Provider survey Coaches focus group</td>
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<tr>
<td>pre-CHELLO</td>
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Teacher knowledge

• No significant differences between groups on post-test

Teacher practice

• Statistically significant differences between:
  • Coaching + course vs. course-only ($d=0.71$)
  • Coaching+ course vs. Control ($d=0.74$)

• Replicated for structural and process quality
The graph shows the change in language and literacy practice scores (observation section) from pre-test to post-test for different groups:

- **Course only** represented by diamonds.
- **Course + coaching** represented by squares.
- **Control** represented by asterisks.

From the graph, it is evident that the score improved from pre-test to post-test for all groups, with the control group showing the least improvement compared to the course and course plus coaching groups.
How did coaching improve practice in family child care?
“The best part is having a deadline... having someone make you think about things.”

“I learned so much from my coach. It was the simple things like a schedule.”

“...not to have all the answers.”

“I try to naturally get the provider to set her own goals.”
“I never thought of using them as a good way to actually teach...”
“She allowed me to grow as a real teacher.”
“...they were seeing themselves as babysitters or nannies.”
“...she was standing up straighter and she was proud.”

professionalism
“...think outside the box”

“She was a fresh set of eyes on my childcare practice.”

“...I made one suggestion and she just expanded on it.”

“That’s exciting to see somebody catch fire... that it ignites something in her.”

new strategies
“The greatest gift was learning how to use objects from the dollar store.”

“She showed me that books can go anywhere, not just the library.”

“...amazing amount of isolation.

“Home providers are waiting at the door for us to come, they keep wanting to extend our time there.”

overcome challenges
Coaching works!

Create opportunities for professional development for family child care providers

Re-think coursework-only models of professional development for family child care providers

Implications for low-income children

discussion
- Generalizability to other groups
- Provocative findings about knowledge gains
- Caution about independent coaching component
- Child outcomes
- Dosage/time issue

limitations

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Popularity of family child care with low-income families.

Family child care ≠ poorer quality care

Bold imperatives needed

colclusion
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the end.