South Carolina First Steps

Evaluation of Parents as Teachers

Presentation of Findings
December 2017

Compass Evaluation and Research
Durham North Carolina

South Carolina First Steps
Evaluation of Parents as Teachers
Compass Evaluation and Research

Agenda

- Welcome
  - Dan Wuori, South Carolina First Steps
- Overview of the project and the evaluation
  - Compass Evaluation and Research
- Presentation of findings
  - Compass Evaluation and Research
- Moving Forward
  - Dan Wuori and Compass Evaluation and Research

Overview of Parents as Teachers

- Nationally-recognized, evidence-supported intensive home visitation program
- Four core elements:
  - Personal visits
  - Group meetings
  - Screenings
  - Referrals

Parents as Teachers®

Overview of Parents as Teachers

- Program goals:
  - Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve parenting practices
  - Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues
  - Prevent child abuse and neglect
  - Increase children's school readiness and school success
- Comprehensive implementation structure
  - 17 Essential Requirements identified by National PAT

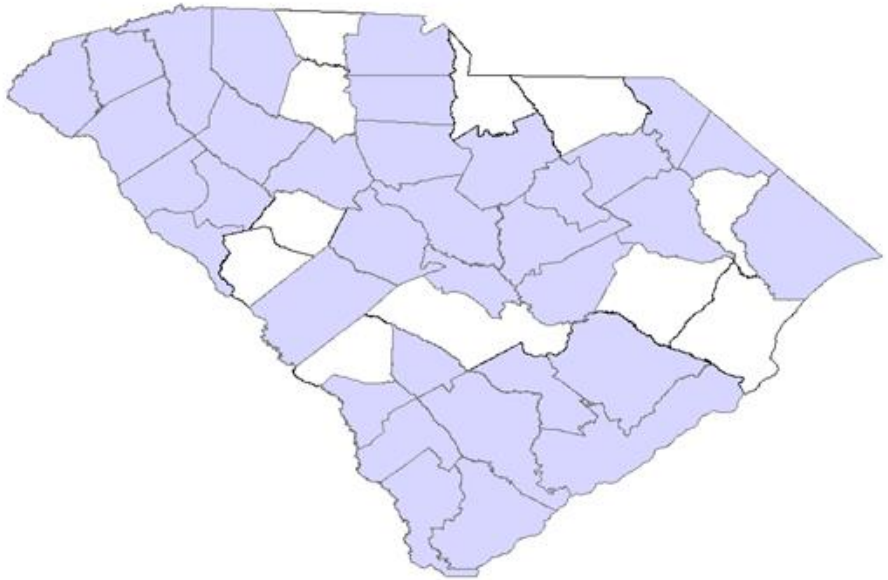
Parents as Teachers®

Overview of the Evaluation

- Conducted in response to *Section 59-152-50(7)* of the S.C. Code of Laws:
  - There will be an evaluation of programs that comprise 10% or more of total programming spending

Overview of the Evaluation

- Examined PAT as a collection of programs across the state
  - Used data available from state data systems
- Examined eight years of data 2008-09 to 2015-16
- Assessed the program in three stages



Counties with Parents as Teachers programs in the evaluation period

Evaluation Stages

- Stage 1: Was the program faithfully implemented?
  - National Parent as Teachers criteria
    - There have been changes over time, primarily to make implementation more rigorous
  - South Carolina First Steps criteria
    - Consistent with National PAT criteria
    - Ensure programs are focused on the most vulnerable populations
    - Program staff are highly qualified

Evaluation Stages

- Stage 2: To what extent did the program achieve its short-term (or, direct) outcomes?
  - Parenting behaviors
    - Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale
    - Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory
  - Screenings for child-level developmental delays

Evaluation Stages

- Stage 3: To what extent did the program achieve child-level outcomes?
  - Formal identification of development delays or needs and entry into appropriate IDEA-sponsored services
  - School readiness on (or close to on) par with peers
    - Prekindergarten and kindergarten CIRCLE results
  - Kindergarten retention rates

Implementation Findings

- Parents as Teachers programs are meeting if not exceeding South Carolina standards for implementation
  - Meeting National PAT requirements
  - Providing services in dosages and formats correlated with program success
  - Finding and serving the most vulnerable children and families

Implementation Findings

Highlights:

- As of 2015-2016, ~81% of enrolled families had three or more risk factors.
- Prevalent risks include:
  - 89% of cases had at least one **poverty** risk factor;
  - 53% of cases had at least one risk factor related to **low maternal education**;
  - 24% of cases had at least one risk related to **family stability, illness, or disability**;
  - 17% of cases had at least one risk related to **child developmental delays or health concerns**;
  - 10% of cases had at least one risk related to **abuse, neglect, or violence**; and
  - 3% of cases had at least one risk related to **English as a Second Language**.

Implementation Findings

Highlights:

- As of 2015-2016, families are enrolled for an average of 21 months.
- Families have averaged 2 or more home visits per month.
- The percent of families attending at least one group meeting each year has grown from ~50% (2009-2010) to ~63% (2015-2016).
- The average number of referrals per family has risen to 4.1 in 2015-2016; the connection rate for referrals was greater than 93%.

Parenting Skills and Behaviors

Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale

- 12 parenting behaviors are tracked

KIPS
Nurturing Insights · Proving Outcomes
Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale

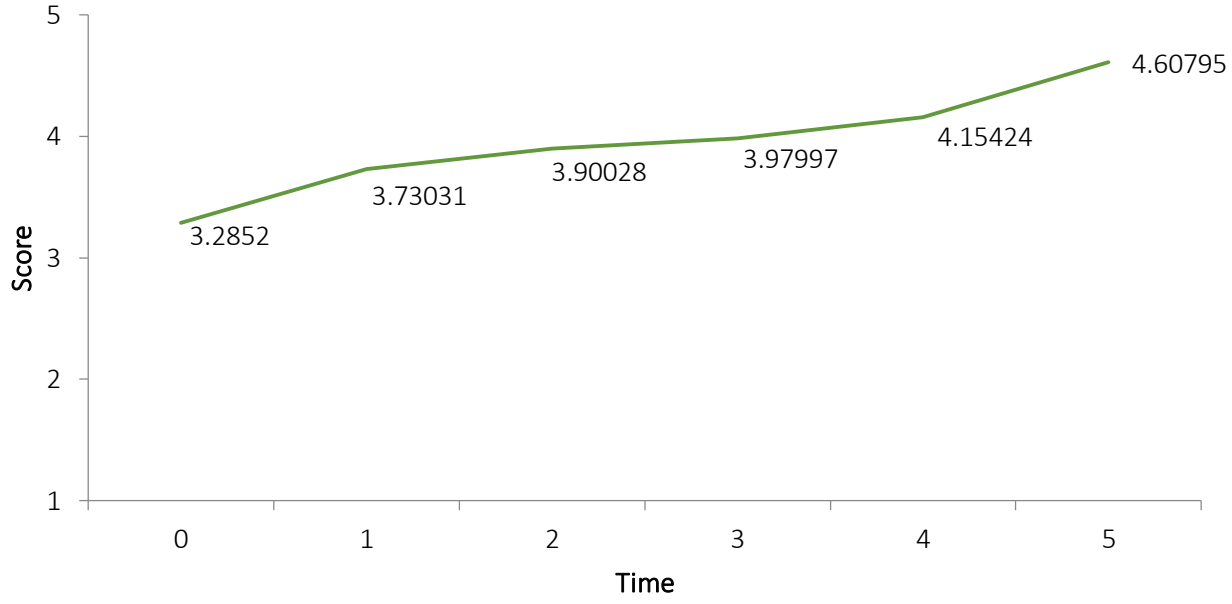
1. **Sensitivity of Responses**
2. **Supports Emotions**
3. **Physical Interaction**
4. **Involvement in Child's Activities**
5. **Open to Child's Agenda**
6. **Engagement in Language Experiences**
7. **Reasonable Expectations**
8. **Adapts Strategies to Child**
9. **Limits & Consequences**
10. **Supportive Directions**
11. **Encouragement**
12. **Promotes Exploration & Curiosity**

South Carolina First Steps
Evaluation of Parents as Teachers
Compass Evaluation and Research

Parenting Skills and Behaviors

Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale

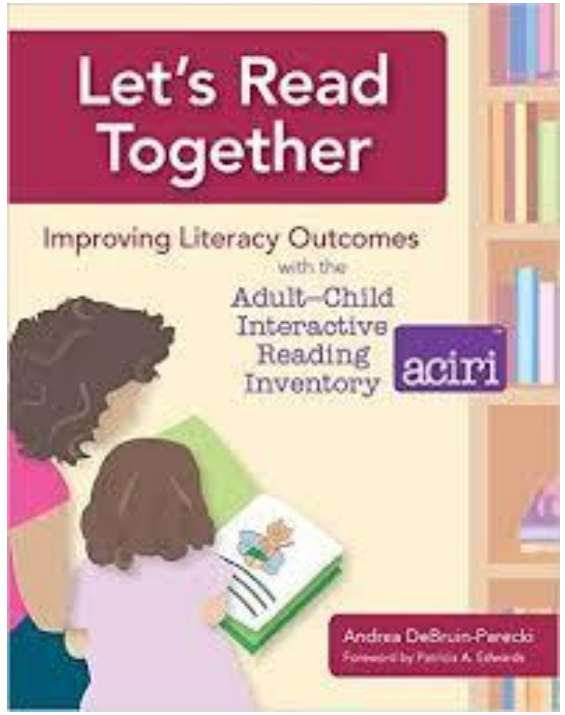
- Significant and positive change over time



Parenting Skills and Behaviors

Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory

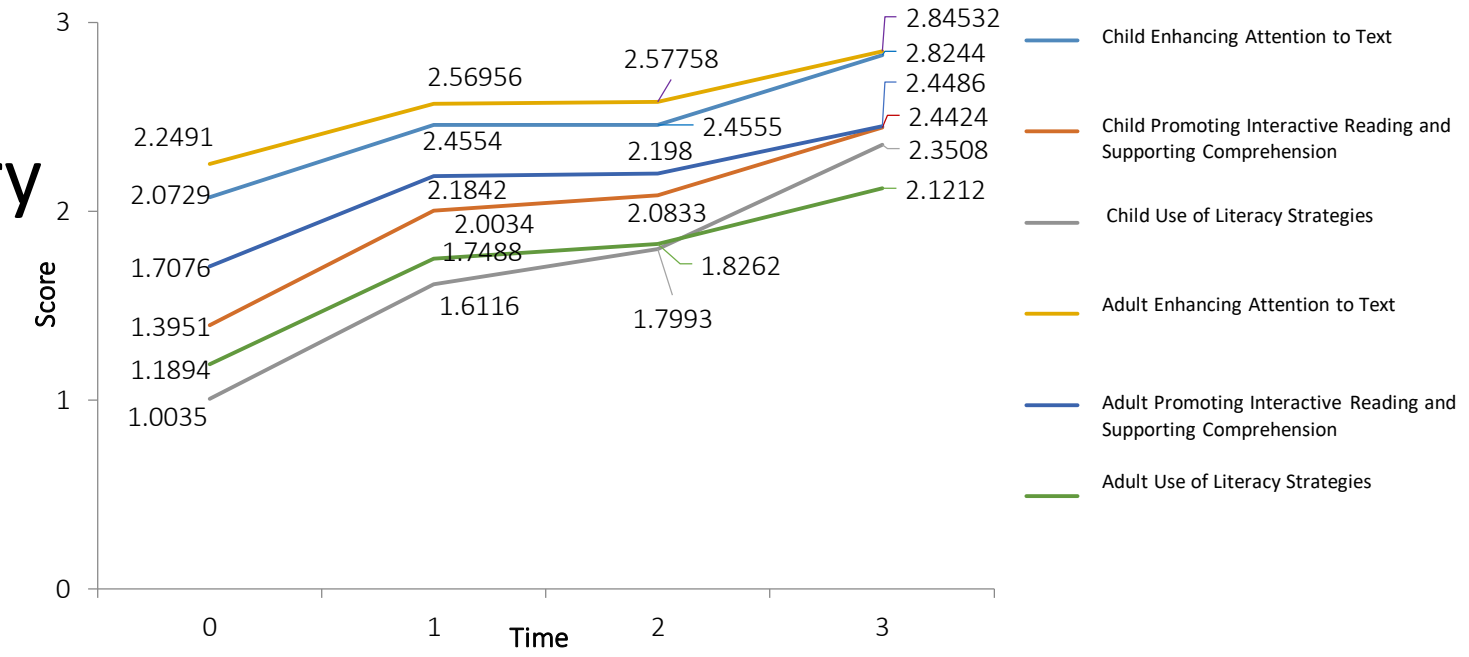
- Adult and child literacy behaviors are tracked by trained observers
  - (1) Enhancing attention to text
  - (2) Promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension
  - (3) Use of literacy strategies



Parenting Skills and Behaviors

Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory

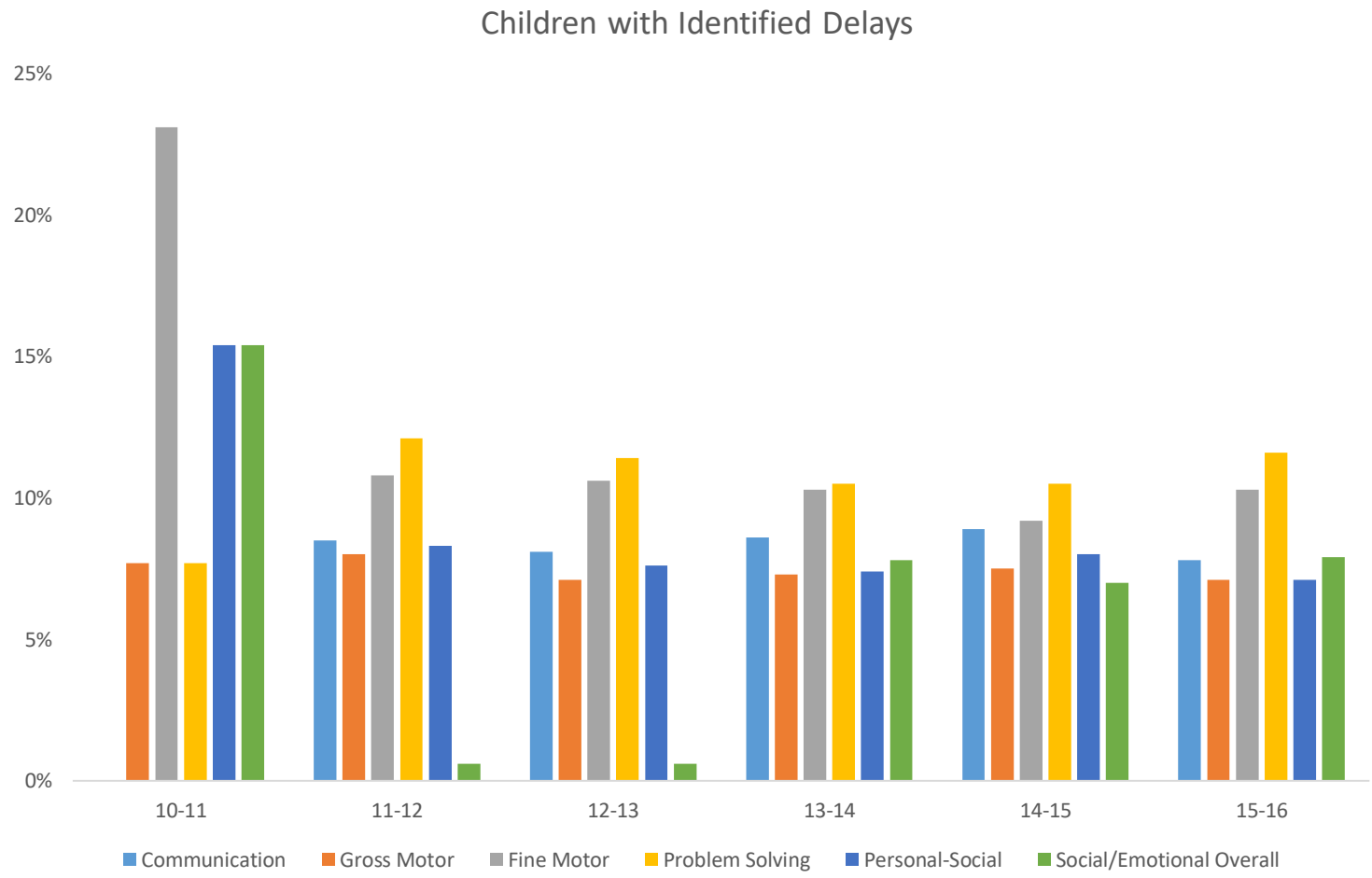
- Significant and positive change over time



South Carolina First Steps
Evaluation of Parents as Teachers
Compass Evaluation and Research

Child Screenings and Referrals

- Children are screened for delays or potential delays
- Screenings lead to referrals and formal assessments



Child Outcomes

- Placement and receipt of special education services
  - When appropriate—child must meet formal eligibility standards
  - In 2014-2015:
    - Almost 16 percent of Prek PAT students received special education placement (compared to almost 11 percent of PreK students who were not involved in PAT).
  - Also of interest:
    - More than twice as many males received special education status, compared to females.
    - SNAP-participants were more likely to receive special education status.

Child Outcomes

- Placement and receipt of special education services
  - In 2015-2016:
    - PreK PAT students did not have higher rates of identification than PreK non-PAT students
    - 13% of kindergarten PAT students were identified (compared to 11% of non-PAT kindergarten students)
    - As in the 2014-2015 PreK cohort, there appear to be gender and income effects
      - Male students and students who qualify for SNAP have greater odds of being identified

Child Outcomes

- 2014-2015 CIRCLE data made available from state databanks
- Standardized, criterion-referenced measures for:

- **Letter Recognition**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Phonological Awareness**
- **Math**
- **Science**
- **Social Studies**
- **Social and Emotional Development**
- **Book and Print Awareness**
- **Early Writing**
- **Approaches to Learning**
- **Creative Arts Expression**
- **Physical Development and Health**

Child Outcomes

- Prekindergarten cohort:
  - PAT and non-PAT groups had comparable outcomes and the mean differences did not reach statistical significance for most outcomes
- Kindergarten cohort:
  - Most of the mean differences between PAT and non-PAT students reached statistical significance but these results should be taken with caution
    - Large sample sizes in the “comparison” group, compared to PAT, affect tests for statistical significance
    - Absence of large differences in mean scores, between PAT and non-PAT students

Child Outcomes

- PAT and non-PAT children coming “along side” each other in mean scores
  - PAT children performing on (or, close to on) par with more advantaged peers
  - Female students tended to have higher scores than male students
  - Hispanic students tended to have lower scores, compared to other racial or ethnic groups

Child Outcomes

- Grade retention
  - No statistically significant difference between PAT and non-PAT students
  - Males tended to have higher retention than females
  - SNAP participants tended to have higher retention than students who did not participate in SNAP

In Summary

- Evidence that South Carolina PAT is operated with strong fidelity to the evidence-based model.
- Short-term measures of interactive parenting (KIPS) and interactive literacy (ACIRI) show significant, positive change over time.
- Evidence PAT is serving the state's most high-risk children (81% possess 3 or more significant risk factors.)
- In measures of retention and early school success (mClass CIRCLE), the high-risk children being served are generally performing on par with their less high-risk peers – an indication that the program is helping to close or prevent early achievement gaps.

Moving Forward

- Continue focus on implementation
  - Evidence-supported programs have established protocols that are correlated with desired outcomes
- Continue to track direct outcomes
  - Do we see direct outcomes in parenting and identification of special needs?
  - Earliest signs that the program is have the desired effect
- Provide support to programs, as needed
  - Professional development and training
  - Encouragement and motivation
  - “Lessons learned” and best practices for serving highly vulnerable populations