

**Introduction**

**The Role of Parents in Early Childhood Experiences**

- Children's early relationships with their parents set the stage for their later development and school success (deRuiter & van Ijzendoorn, 1993; Thompson, 2002).
- Three dimensions of parental engagement are known to relate to child language and socio-emotional outcomes:
  - Warmth, sensitivity and responsiveness (e.g., Clark & Ladd, 2000; Cohn, 1990; Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996)
  - Support for a child's emerging autonomy (e.g., Denham, Renwick, & Holt, 1991; Hill, 2001)
  - Active and meaningful participation in learning and literacy (e.g., Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Hill 2001)

**Latino Parenting Dimensions**

- Latinos are the fastest growing minority in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001), and research suggests that the Latino population will continue to grow in the current century at a much faster rate than the rest of the U.S. population.
- Risk factors such as high rates of teenage pregnancy, large families, low SES and low academic attainment have been documented to cause stress and negatively affect parent-child relationships in Latino families and may place children of recent immigrants at risk for school failure (Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004; Moreno, 1991).
- Research with Latino and Anglo groups points to between-culture variations in parental engagement behaviors.
  - For example, in most Latino groups, maternal warmth has been found to be accompanied by restrictiveness. Latino mothers have also been found to display fewer signs of physical affection and more intrusiveness towards their toddlers than Anglo mothers, though high intrusiveness rates did not seem to negatively affect such relationship for low acculturated Mexican American mothers (Ipa et al., 2004).

**The Getting Ready Intervention**

- In the *Getting Ready* intervention, home visitors provided early education services for parents and children through a prevention lens that:
  - guided parents to engage in warm and responsive interactions, to support their children's autonomy, and to participate in children's learning, and
  - supported parents and home visitors in collaborative interactions/triadic (parent-child-professional) strategies to support children's learning and development.
- Home visitors in the treatment group were first introduced to the *Getting Ready* intervention in an initial, 2-day institute devoted to understanding their use in home visits, socializations, and other interaction opportunities with families and children.
- Demonstrations, role-playing and case examples were used to foster participants' understanding of the key principles and behaviors believed to be critical to the model's effectiveness.
- The home visitors subsequently received support and coaching from a project-provided coach twice monthly for 1 hour.

**Purpose of the Study**

To explore how dimensions of parent engagement interrelate and to examine interim effects of the *Getting Ready* intervention on these parenting dimensions.

**Research Questions**

**Research Question 1:** *What are the relationships among parenting dimensions at baseline?*

**Research Question 2:** *How do changes in one parenting dimension relate to changes in other dimensions over 8 months?*

**Research Question 3:** *How do parenting factors change following 8 months of the parent engagement intervention, and does the change of factors differ for families who are native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking?*

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**Methods**

**Participants**

All families in this analysis were part of home-based Early Head Start (EHS) programs in rural Midwest communities.

	Native English-Speaking (n = 125)	Native Spanish-Speaking (n = 58)
<b>Respondent</b>	92% Mother 7% Father 1% Grandmother	100% Mother
<b>Age</b>	Mean = 24 years (range = 14 to 49)	Mean = 25 years (range = 12 to 36)
<b>Ethnicity/Race</b>	89% White/Non-Hispanic 7% Hispanic/Latino 4% Other	21% White/Non-Hispanic 79% Hispanic/Latino
<b>Born in U.S.</b>	96% Yes 4% No	36% Yes 64% No
<b>Marital Status</b>	56% Married/With Partner 26% Single/Never Married 17% Divorced/Separated 1% Widowed	81% Married/With Partner 15% Single/ Never Married 4% Divorced/Separated
<b>Education</b>	32% Less than High School Diploma 33% High School Diploma/GED 30% Some Training Beyond High School but not College Degree 5% College Degree	65% Less than High School Diploma 21% High School Diploma/GED 11% Some Training Beyond High School but not College Degree 3% College Degree

<b>Age</b>	11 Months (Range = 2 to 32 months)
<b>Ethnicity/Race</b>	58% White/ Non-Hispanic 36% Latino/ Hispanic 6% Other
<b>Gender</b>	51% Male 49% Female
<b>Identified Disability</b>	8%

**Data Collection and Measures**

- The current study uses data collected from families during their first year of participation in EHS.
- Participants were enrolled in the *Getting Ready* study and assigned to treatment or control condition based on home visitor assignment.
- Data were collected from families at baseline and at 4 and 8 months post-baseline (i.e., time 1, time 2, time 3).

**Video-taped Parent/Child Observations**

Coding of Observational Data used the Parent/Caregiver Involvement Scale (P/CIS; Farran, Kasari, Comfort, & Jay, 1986).

Each of 11 categories of parent behavior was rated across three aspects:

**Quality:** The warmth and acceptance the caregiver shows, "how well" or "how sensitively the caregiver carries out behaviors and with what degree of intensity;

**Appropriateness:** The degree of match, "how fitting" the caregiver's behavior is to the child's development, interest level, and motoric capabilities for the task;

**Amount:** Level of involvement in terms of quantity, without regard for quality.

Confirmatory factor analyses were performed on the 33 variables with the *Getting Ready* sample at baseline. The factor analyses supported a model with three factors for quality items (CFI = .954, RMSEA = .066), two factors for appropriateness items (CFI = .953, RMSEA = .060), and one factor for amount items (CFI = .980, RMSEA = .073).

- Warmth & Sensitivity – Quality:** physical involvement, responsiveness of caregiver, play interaction, directives/demands, positive statements, negative statements.
- Support for Learning – Quality:** verbal involvement, teaching behavior, relationship among activities.
- Encouragement of Autonomy - Quality:** goal setting, control of activities.
- Support for Learning – Appropriateness:** verbal involvement, responsiveness of caregiver, negative statements, relationship among activities, teaching behavior, play interaction, physical involvement.
- Guidance/Directives - Appropriateness:** directives/demands, goal setting, control of activities, positive statements.
- Constructive Behaviors – Amount:** teaching behavior, responsiveness of caregiver, verbal involvement, positive statements.

**Results**

**Research Question 1:** *What are the relationships among parenting dimensions, and between parenting dimensions and child outcomes, at baseline?*

Quality		1	2	3	4	5
1. Warmth and Sensitivity						
2. Support for Learning		0.65** <sup>a,b</sup>				
3. Encouragement of Autonomy		0.70** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.63** <sup>a,b</sup>			
Approp. 4. Support for Learning		0.77** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.74** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.74** <sup>a,b</sup>		
5. Guidance/Directives		0.78** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.68** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.76** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.75** <sup>a,b</sup>	
Amount 6. Constructive Behaviors		0.60** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.61** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.53** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.74** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.55** <sup>a,b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Indicates that correlation for Native English-speaking subgroup is statistically significant and in same direction as full sample. <sup>b</sup> Indicates that correlation for Native Spanish-speaking subgroup is statistically significant and in same direction as full sample. <sup>\*\*</sup>p ≤ .01

**Research Question 2:** *How do changes in one parenting dimension relate to changes in other dimensions over 8 months?*

Quality		1	2	3	4	5
1. Warmth and Sensitivity						
2. Support for Learning		0.47** <sup>a,b</sup>				
3. Encouragement of Autonomy		0.53** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.34** <sup>a,b</sup>			
Approp. 4. Support for Learning		0.68** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.54** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.58** <sup>a,b</sup>		
5. Guidance/Directives		0.65** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.46** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.69** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.72** <sup>a,b</sup>	
Amount 6. Constructive Behaviors		0.44** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.45** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.31** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.62** <sup>a,b</sup>	0.48** <sup>a,b</sup>

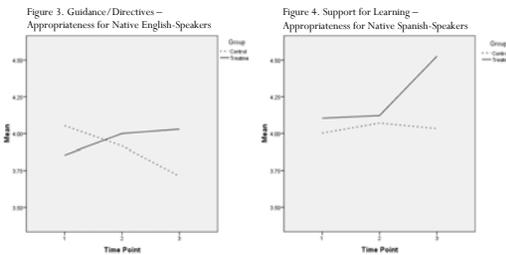
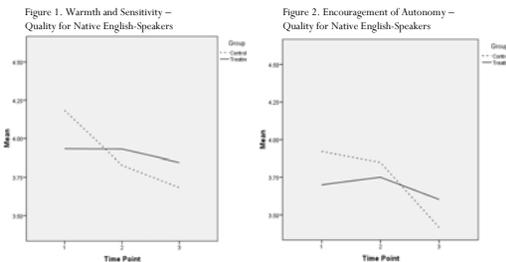
<sup>a</sup> Indicates that correlation for native English-speaking subgroup is statistically significant and in same direction as full sample. <sup>b</sup> Indicates that correlation for native Spanish-speaking subgroup is statistically significant and in same direction as full sample. <sup>\*\*</sup>p ≤ .01

**Research Question 3:** *How do parenting factors change following 8 months of the parent engagement intervention, and does the change of factors differ for families who are native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking?*

Effect	Estimate	SE	DF	t	p-value
Observational Measures					
<b>Native English-Speaking Subgroup<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Warmth &amp; Sensitivity - Quality</b>					
Intercept (T-C)	-0.24	0.12	130	-2.09	0.04
Slope (T-C)	0.05	0.02	72	2.60	<b>0.01**</b>
<b>Encouragement of Autonomy - Quality</b>					
Intercept (T-C)	-0.25	0.14	127	-1.79	0.08
Slope (T-C)	0.05	0.02	79	2.05	<b>0.04*</b>
<b>Support for Learning - Quality</b>					
Intercept (T-C)	-0.13	0.10	145	-1.21	0.23
Slope (T-C)	0.03	0.02	130	1.64	0.10+
<b>Guidance/Directives – Appropriateness</b>					
Intercept (T-C)	-0.20	0.11	126	-1.78	0.08
Slope (T-C)	0.06	0.02	43	3.63	<b>&lt;0.001**</b>
<b>Native Spanish-Speaking Subgroup<sup>c</sup></b>					
<b>Support for Learning - Appropriateness</b>					
Intercept (T-C)	0.05	0.13	60	0.37	0.71
Slope (T-C)	0.03	0.02	69	1.87	0.07+

C = Control group, T = Treatment group  
<sup>a</sup> p < .10, <sup>\*</sup>p < .05, <sup>\*\*</sup>p ≤ .01

<sup>a</sup> Statistically significant results (and results that are approaching significance) presented above; full results provided in handout  
<sup>b</sup> Native English-Speaking Subgroup—Time 1: Treatment group (n = 80), Control group (n = 45); Time 2: Treatment group (n = 58), Control group (n = 23); Time 3: Treatment group (n = 39), Control group (n = 18)  
<sup>c</sup> Native Spanish-Speaking Subgroup—Time 1: Treatment group (n = 28), Control group (n = 30); Time 2: Treatment group (n = 28), Control group (n = 22); Time 3: Treatment group (n = 16), Control group (n = 16)



**Discussion**

**Questions 1 & 2: (1) What are the relationships among parenting dimensions at baseline, and (2) how do changes in one parenting dimension relate to changes in other dimensions over 8 months?**

- Not all parent engagement factors were inter-correlated to the same degree, suggesting that they are capturing unique dimensions of parent engagement behaviors.
- The correlations between parenting dimensions are relatively consistent across native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking subgroups.
- Changes in "quality," "appropriateness," and "amount" behaviors were related.
- The patterns of these relationships were generally consistent for the two language subgroups.

**Question 3: How do parenting factors change following 8 months of the parent engagement intervention, and does the change of factors differ for families who are native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking?**

- Getting Ready* strategies were effective for promoting the quality and appropriateness of some parental engagement behaviors.
- Though exploratory and conducted with limited statistical power, these results suggest different patterns of change for families who are native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking.
- Native English-speaking parents in the treatment group demonstrated greater positive change in the quality and appropriateness of some parental engagement behaviors in comparison to their counterparts in the control group. Additionally, in some cases, they experienced less decline in these behaviors over time.
- While there were favorable effects (significant or approached significance) of the intervention on each of the three quality factors for native English-speaking parents, no such effects were identified in the native Spanish-speaking parents.
- There were no statistically significant effects of the intervention on the parent engagement factors for native Spanish-speaking families, but the effect of the intervention on Support for Learning – Appropriateness approached significance.
- These findings are consistent with past research that has identified differences between parenting behaviors across cultural and language groups.

**Future Research**

- Further investigation of these intervention strategies as a mechanism for supporting parenting behaviors is warranted.
- Native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking families differed on demographic characteristics including marital status and level of education. There is a need to further consider how variation in these and other demographic characteristics may contribute to differential intervention effects for these families.
- There is a need to investigate the long-term effects of intervention on these parental engagement behaviors past 8 months for both language subgroups of parents.
- Future research should consider the effect of these dimensions on child outcomes for native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking families.