

New Early Childhood Study Shows Positive Impact Well Into Midlife of Intensive Interventions from Early Learning to 3rd Grade

Children from low-income families in low-income neighborhood participating in an intensive early childhood education program from preschool to third grade is linked to higher educational attainment in mid-life, according to a new study by University of Minnesota researchers.

- This study indicates that an established early program combined with strong family supports and school-based services from pre-K through 3rd grade is associated with higher midlife postsecondary attainment for children from low-income families.
- In a cohort study that followed 1398 children from low-income families in a low-income neighborhood to 35 years of age, 4 to 6 years of intervention was associated with a 48% higher rate of degree completion (associate's degree or higher) compared with lesser participation.

The Program

- The Child-Parent Center Program provides school-based educational enrichment and comprehensive family services from preschool to third grade (ages 3-9 years).
- The CPC program is a school-based preventive intervention for preschool- and school-aged children in high-poverty neighborhoods that are not being otherwise served. The program is designed to promote children's school competence, especially school readiness, achievement, and family involvement in learning.
 - The program provides small classes, intensive learning experiences, menu-based parent involvement, and professional development. The children's parents received job skills training, parenting skills training, educational classes and social services. They also volunteered in their children's classrooms, assisted with field trips, and attended parenting support groups.
 - Funding for the study is from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Findings

- Findings demonstrate that school-based early childhood programs combined with family services through 3rd grade, such as the CPC program, have significant potential to advance life-course health and well-being.

- On average, CPC graduates—whether they participated in preschool only, or through second or third grade—completed more years of education than those who participated in other programs.
- Participants saw a 47 percent increase in an earned associate's degree and a 41 percent increase in an earned bachelor's degree compared to children from low-income families who attended other early childhood intervention programs in the Chicago area.

Links:

<https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/research-finds-early-childhood-program-linked-degree-completion-age-35>

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2668645>