Child Care & Early Education
RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

Early Childhood Preservice Training on Promoting Social Emotional Development in Young Children: Research-to-Policy Resources

Research indicates that social emotional development and behavioral competence in young children predicts their academic performance and achievement in later years (Raver & Knitzer, 2002). Specifically, children who are unable to follow directions, interact positively with peers, and control negative emotions do more poorly in school (Raver, 2003). Additionally, research finds that preschool children who display behavioral problems are more likely to be expelled from preschool (Gilliam, 2005). Therefore, it is important for early educators to learn how to effectively support the social emotional development of young children and how to address challenging behavior. As a result, some studies have begun to examine how preservice early educators are being prepared to support preschoolers' social emotional development.

This Research-to-Policy Resource List focuses on research examining preservice early childhood teacher training to promote the social emotional development of young children. Research in this area is limited but includes survey research on early childhood teacher preparation programs with a focus on social emotional development content, descriptive studies of the perceptions of preservice teachers on how to support social development of young children, and several small scale evaluations of instructional approaches to promote social emotional development.

Early childhood teacher education programs and their focus on social emotional development:

The following studies include surveys of early childhood teacher preparation programs with a focus on social emotional development content.

- Buettner, C. K., Hur, E., Jeon, L., & Andrews, D. W. (2016). What are we teaching the teachers?: Child development curricula in US higher education. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 45(1), 155-175.
- Hemmeter, M., Santos, R., & Ostrosky, M. (2008). Preparing early childhood educators to address young children's social-emotional development and challenging behavior: A survey of higher education programs in nine states. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 30(4), 321-340.
- Tominey, S., & Rivers, S. E. (n.d.). *Social-emotional skills in preschool education in the state of Connecticut: Current practice and implications for child development*. New Haven, CT: Yale University, Center for Emotional Intelligence.

Perceptions and practices of preservice early educators related to social emotional development:

Several studies have examined preservice teachers perceptions' of how to support social emotional development in young children as well as preservice teachers' own emotional regulation and how this relates to their response to children's emotions in the classroom.

- DellaMattera, J. N. (2011). Perceptions of preservice early educators: How adults support preschoolers' social development. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 32(1), 26-38.
- Kim, H., & Han, H. (2015). Understanding early childhood teachers' beliefs and self-stated practices about social competence instructional strategies in the context of developmentally appropriate practice: A comparison of preservice and in-service teachers in the United States. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 23(4), 476-496.
- Swartz, R., & McElwain, N. L. (2012). Preservice teachers' emotion-related regulation and cognition: Associations with teachers' responses to children's emotions in early childhood classrooms. *Early Education and Development*, 23(2), 202-226.

Instructional approaches:

The following small scale studies and one unpublished dissertation examine instructional approaches to promote social emotional development of young children in preservice early childhood teacher preparation programs.

- Lake, V. E., Al Otaiba, S., & Guidry, S. (2010). Developing social skills training and literacy intruction pedagogy through service learning: An integrated model of teacher preparation. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 31(4), 373-390.
- Pribble, L. M. (2013). *Early childhood preservice teachers' knowledge and application of social emotional assessment and intervention practices*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Oregon, Eugene.
- Waajid, B., Garner, P. W., & Owen, J. E. (2013). Infusing social emotional learning into the teacher education curriculum. *International Journal of Emotional Education*, 5(2), 31-48.

Additional Resource:

Evidence-based Competencies for Promoting Social and Emotional Development and Addressing Challenging Behavior in Early Care and Education Settings highlights skills and concepts related to social emotional development that can be integrated into preservice and in-service training for early care and education providers (Cimino, Forrest, Smith, & Stainback-Tracy, 2007).

References

Cimino, J., Forrest, L. L., Smith, B. J., & Stainback-Tracy, K. (2007). *Evidence-based competencies for promoting social and emotional development and addressing challenging behavior in early care and education settings*. Aurora, CO: Project BLOOM.

Gilliam, W. S. (2005). *Prekindergarteners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten programs*. New York: Foundation for Child Development.

Raver, C. (2003). *Young children's emotional development and school readiness*. (ERIC Digest No. EDO-PS-03-8). Champaign, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Raver, C., & Knitzer, J. (2002). *Ready to enter: What research tells policymakers about strategies to promote social and emotional school readiness among three- and four-year-old children*. (Promoting the Emotional Well-Being of Children and Families Policy Paper No. 3). New York: Columbia University, National Center for Children in Poverty.