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Abstract

This action research was conducted in a primary classroom at a Montessori school. Using caregiver education that focused on the importance of limiting screen time, it aimed to increase student concentration during the work cycles. The research collected data through pre and post caregiver attitude scales and questionnaires as well as concentration and observation logs during the morning work cycles. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the data revealed a successful intervention with an increase in student concentration. This study can serve as a framework for future research projects that look at how caregiver education, focusing on different topics, can positively impact a child's development. This study provided evidence that intentional caregiver education, that both informs and helps build a strong school-family relationship, can support the students' concentration levels and therefore their development and success in the classroom.

Keywords: Concentration, Montessori, Caregiver Education

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, children and families spent an increased amount of time at home. As a result, many families turned to screen time as a form of entertainment, distraction, and education. According to a 2018 study, caregivers and early childhood educators have mixed perspectives on the benefits and negative effects of children's technology usage (Zabatiero et al., 2018). While some may feel positively about the increased access to information and new education apps and tools, others are concerned with the lasting effects on children's health and development (Zabatiero et al., 2018).

The American Academy of Pediatrics currently advises caregivers of children ages 2 to 5 to limit screen time to one hour of high-quality programming a day (Hill, 2016). However, based on Dr. Maria Montessori's theories, many Montessori educators recommend that children have very limited screen time, if any at all. For one, during the first plane of development, or the first six years of life, children are sensory motor learners. They learn best through manipulating concrete materials. So, while there are a multitude of educational applications directed toward children under the age of five, they simply do not satisfy a child's educational and developmental needs. For example, when a child is only tapping an iPad screen, they are deprived of the opportunity to develop their pincer grip which is essential for them to develop handwriting skills.

Dr. Maria Montessori also observed that children under the age of six are still developing their reasoning mind and therefore caregivers and educators should not bestow fantasy and pretend play on children. Instead, research suggests that young children prefer engaging in real activities and reading about things rooted in reality, rather than make believe (Lillard, & Taggart, J., 2019). A lot of television programing aimed at children are fantastical and feature talking animals, magic, and mythical creatures. When children spend time at home watching shows and movies that are fantastical, it affects their perceptions of reality and their ability to concentrate on

the Montessori materials in the classroom (consider adding citation). Concentration is essential

because it encourages repetition, a deeper understanding, development, and intelligence. While

observing in the first few months of the school year, I noticed that many children were in their

own reality and would constantly talk about pretend characters from television programming

rather than choosing work. To better support students' development, I decided to offer additional

education for students' caregivers on the importance of limiting screen time and choosing

educational programs rooted in reality. In this study, I will investigate the impact that caregiver

education, with an emphasis on the importance of limiting and regulating screen time, has on

student concentration levels.

This action research was conducted in a private AMI Montessori school that serves

children six weeks to six years in a surrounding suburb of Sacramento, California. It looked at

the importance of parent/caregiver education on screen time and the effects on concentration in

the classroom. This study took place in a primary classroom with 18 three- to six-year-old

children, one first-year guide, and one first-year assistant. This research provided important

information through caregiver education events, weekly newsletters, and parent-teacher

conferences. The caregiver education used different approaches to caregiver philosophies and

techniques in order to be the most impactful and best serve children's concentration and

development.

Theoretical Framework

This study aimed to increase children's levels of concentration in a primary Montessori

children's house. The intervention focused on parent and caregiver education. Knowles' (1968)

integrative theory of adult learning, known as Andragogy, combines years of thought and

insights from the fields of developmental psychology, sociology, and philosophy. It aims to

differentiate itself from the concept of youth learning, known as pedagogy and is based on six assumptions about the adult learner.

This action research project looked at the effect parent education had on overall levels of concentration and independence in the children's house. Knowles' adult learning theory of Andragogy is used to inform this action research. It helped guide the decisions on how to approach the adult learners. Knowles' six assumptions of adult learning informed the language used in email correspondence, newsletters, and conferences, as well as how the parent education night was structured. Caregiver education of the Montessori method has many positive effects. When children are supported at home, they have higher levels of concentration and independence in the classroom. Also, caregiver education creates more wide-spread knowledge and appreciation of the method, as well as higher enrollment for the kindergarten year. Parent education has been known to be an effective method for contributing to a child's success in school (Galindo, C., & Sheldon, S. B., 2012), and this study used Knowles' Andragogy theory for adult learning as a guiding principle of how to structure the adult education program.

The first assumption is that adult learners must understand why they need to learn something new and recognize the value of learning something new before they begin learning. The second assumption, since adults have developed a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, is that when they feel as if their will is being imposed on by others, they will begin to resent those situations (Knowles et al., 2005). When adult learners enter an educational setting, they may resort back to their previous ways of learning, such as being dependent on the teacher, which conflicts with their developed self-concept. The third assumption about adult learners is that they bring a wide array of experiences. This can be seen as both a positive and a negative. For one, Knowles claims that the adult learner is already equipped with the best

resources for their own learning (Knowles et al., 2005). However, these experiences also result in limiting mental habits and presuppositions that prevent adult learners from changing perspectives and ways of thinking (Knowles et al., 2005). The fourth assumption is the readiness to learn. When the material is applicable to the adult learner's real-life situations and stage of development, they will be more inclined to learn. For example, an adult learner who has a toddler-aged child will be more ready to learn about toddler toilet learning techniques than a young professional without children. The fifth assumption of adult learners is their orientation to learning. Adult learners take a problem-centered approach to learning (Knowles et al., 2005). And the sixth and final assumption of adult learners is that they are motivated by internal pressures such as self-improvement and quality of life.

Review of Literature

Research shows that caregiver involvement and a caregiver-school relationship lead to academic success. This involvement can include caregiver education nights, community nights, and consistent communication between administrators, educators, and caregivers. While caregiver education programs may look different, the most successful models aim to build a trusting relationship between caregivers and school as well as help empower caregivers to make positive educational choices for their children. They also aim to develop consistency between the home environment and the school environment. This literature review looks at the effects of caregiver education on a child's academic success, specifically in a Montessori program.

Caregiver Education Methods

As the Montessori method of education grows in popularity, there remains a lack of awareness and understanding for many caregivers. Montessori education is not trademarked, any early childhood learning center can use "Montessori" to describe their philosophy of education.

This can create a false narrative surrounding what an authentic Montessori program looks like as well as the educational benefits. There have been many research studies that aim to solve this problem. One solution includes promoting a strong school and family partnership through outreach activities such as caregiver-teacher conferences, home visits, sending home progress reports, and family social nights (Galindo, 2012). It's important to offer a 'Back-to-School Night' that focuses on the caregiver-school partnership and offers, "caregivers ways they can reinforce Montessori principles, such as critical thinking and independence, at home" (Haakmat, 2015). The 'Back-to-School' night is simply the beginning of a successful caregiver education program, as well as the beginning of a strong caregiver-school partnership. Some schools even require caregivers to participate in an education program that has both theory and practice before their child is even allowed to enroll in the school. Lau (2015) researched the importance of educating the caregivers on their children's development needs while reframing preconceived notions and prejudices adults may have about children. This is only the beginning of a caregiver education program. Other studies point to having multiple community events throughout the school year in order to foster a strong caregiver-school relationship. Further studies suggest teachers send colorful newsletters that highlight ways caregivers can support their children at home (Abel, 2014). Teacher communication that provides caregivers with theory about the Montessori method and ways they can implement it at home is consistent throughout the school year. Finally, another solution was including caregivers in the production of Montessori materials. When caregivers are a part of the material making process, they have more ownership over their child's education (Bercnik, 2017). Material making also helps to demystify the Montessori theory for caregivers who have little knowledge or background in the method.

Research Results

Current research on the effect of caregiver education on a child's academic success solutions indicate that when teachers and schools make an active effort to involve caregivers, they are more inclined to become engaged in their child's education. As a result of caregiver education and involvement, the child experienced more academic success (Galindo, 2012). When caregiver education, particularly that pertaining to early childhood education, focuses on a child's natural path of development, caregivers tend to provide a more natural way of nurturing their child, rather than the typical method of force-fed learning (Lau, 2015). The Montessori method follows the natural path of development of each child, therefore it's beneficial for children enrolled in a Montessori program to have consistency between education and caregiving styles. The Montessori method is not the mainstream form of education, and as a result, it doesn't reflect the mainstream style of parenting. Montessori caregiver education encourages parents to tell their friends and family about the Montessori method, and therefore it, creates excitement and conversation regarding Montessori education (Haakmat, 2015). Montessori caregiver education programs are also beneficial because they expand the reach of the Montessori philosophy. As more caregivers become aware of the Montessori method, it becomes easier for them to participate in Montessori practices at home and, consequently more caregivers will be inclined to enroll their child in a Montessori program.

The current research reveals that having a caregiver education program is not enough. Different practices increase the effectiveness of the intervention. Pretis (2012) claims that the success of a school's caregiver education program depends on the ability to form a strong and empathetic relationship between the school and caregiver.

No matter the type of education program and form of communication being used, the most important factor of caregiver education programs is the caregiver-teacher relationship. Gross (2020) conducted a study on caregiver engagement that noted that there are many different avenues of communication that teachers can use to connect with caregivers including newsletters, phone calls, email, flyers, texting, home visits, and social media. While there are numerous ways of communicating, in order to achieve the highest rate of caregivers attending to the communication, it is essential that schools aim to create strong teacher-caregiver relationships. When caregivers trust and respect teachers and administrators, they are more inclined to engage with different forms of communication. Caregivers also find more value in attending caregiver education evenings.

A successful type of caregiver education program is an action research-based program for caregivers. The findings of Loizou (2013) suggest that the participation in an action researchbased program allowed the caregivers to reflect on their caregiving style through a more critical lens while building a supportive community of caregivers. Through self-reflection, caregivers felt more empowered to change their caregiving technique. An action research-based program provides opportunities for caregivers to experience the support of a community of other caregivers, as well as educators and administrators. Self-reflection is an important component of an action research-based program and can be used in any caregiver education program. Selfreflection allows for caregivers to acknowledge their progress and growth throughout the program resulting in feeling more empowered. Finally, Pickard (2019) notes the importance of integrating a caregiver education program into the school's philosophy and values. When schools foster a strong caregiver-teacher relationship, it is possible for a caregiver education program to be consistent throughout the school year. So rather than a few caregiver education evenings,

caregivers are receiving educational content all year long that helps empower them to make the important decisions about their child's education.

Summary

Caregiver education is an effective tool for engaging caregivers in their child's education, which leads to academic success. When caregivers are supported and empowered to implement the Montessori method at home, the child benefits from the psychological consistency between their home environment and their school environment. Caregiver education is an effective tool for spreading information about Montessori and helping caregivers realize the value of the Montessori method. While there are plenty of studies that support the use of caregiver education in a Montessori primary program, and reveal the educational benefits, more research is needed on how caregiver education can encourage limiting screen time and empowering caregivers to make informed decisions about their child's education.

Based on my findings, I implemented my own caregiver education program and planned different family nights that focus on the Montessori materials and their aims. In order to encourage caregivers to limit their child's screen time, my caregiver education program focused heavily on the importance of limiting screen time and different alternatives to screen time that support their child's development. Also, my caregiver education program consisted of aesthetically pleasing newsletters that contain photographs and graphics to make the content more accessible.

Methodology

This research was performed over six weeks during January and February of 2022, and explored the impact of caregiver education on student concentration, specifically educating caregivers on the importance of limiting screen time. This study was conducted at a private

Montessori school that follows the Association of Montessori Internationale (AMI) philosophy

and serves children ages six weeks to six years. The school is in an affluent suburb of

Sacramento, California, established in June of 2020. The study took place in a classroom with

eighteen children (4 three-year-olds, 11 four-year-olds, 2 five-year-olds, and 1 six-year-old). Six

of the children were new to the school for the 2021-2022 school year, and the remaining twelve

were returning students. The six new children attended previous early learning centers but were

new to a Montessori environment. This was my first year in a Montessori classroom setting and

my first year as a lead guide. I recently earned my AMI diploma and have my Bachelor of Arts

in Early Childhood Education.

Overview

The intervention began with an optional caregiver education presentation. I hosted this

event along with the head of school and the classroom assistant. The event focused on the

Montessori method and the importance of limiting screen time. We discussed many Montessori

materials from all four areas of the classroom, the four sensitive periods for language,

movement, refinement of the senses, and order, and highlighted topics such as concentration,

repetition, and the importance of developing hand strength for the pincer grip from a young age.

At the beginning of the presentation, the caregivers filled out a pre-questionnaire (see Appendix

A) and a pre-attitude scale (see Appendix B). One questionnaire and one attitude scale were

collected from each household. Student concentration was observed every Tuesday over the

course of six weeks. Using the concentration log (see Appendix C), the number of students

exhibiting concentration every fifteen minutes was recorded and numbered. On Thursdays,

using the observation log, students' concentration and independent choice during the morning

work cycle was observed. During the third week of the study, the caregiver participants were

invited to optional virtual parent-teacher conferences. These were the second conferences of the school year. Their primary focus was on the individual child's screen time usage and ways to support their child's concentration in the children's house. At the end of the study, caregivers were asked to complete the post-questionnaire (see Appendix D) and post-attitude scale (see Appendix E). While the post-attitude scale was identical to the pre-attitude scale, the postquestionnaire asked questions regarding change of behavior and attitude from the prequestionnaire.

Table 1

Timeline of Methods

Pre-intervention	INTERVENTION	POSTINTERVENTION
Pre-questionnaire and preattitude scale completed by caregivers	**Week 1-6:** Concentration Log and Observation Log during morning work cycle Tuesday and Thursday, Newsletter sent to caregivers	Post-questionnaire and post-attitude scale completed by caregivers
	Week 3: Optional Parent-Teacher Conference	

Data Collection

This action research project used both qualitative and quantitative collection tools. The quantitative data tools included pre and post questionnaires and attitude scales completed by the caregivers, while qualitative data was collected utilizing observational field notes with a focus on student concentration. The observation process was rooted in the Montessori philosophy with attention to independent choice, full cycle of activity, repetition, and concentration. For this study, concentration was defined as, the child working with a material for a prolonged amount of time, remaining focused on the work, and repeating the work. Some of these questions focused on caregiver education and asked for their attitudes toward Montessori education, their feelings towards caregiver education provided by the school, and their willingness to implement the Montessori method at home. Other questions focused on their child's screen time usage. The questions on the pre-questionnaire were open-ended while the questions on the pre-attitude were a likert scale. I completed a reflection questionnaire after the caregiver education evening (see Appendix F) that provided guiding questions to reflect on the questions and comments made throughout the presentation.

Concentration logs were used every Tuesday during the morning work cycle and observation logs were used every Thursday during the morning work cycle. Over the course of the 5-week intervention, I would scan the room and count the number of children working concentrated every fifteen minutes on the Tuesday of every week. A child would be considered to be working concentrated if their focus was on their work, they were in a calm state, and they repeated their work. While this data collection tool was helpful in providing a general overview of the ebbs and flows of concentration levels throughout the mornings over the course of six weeks, it didn't account for deep concentration, interruptions, or repetition. On Thursday

mornings, I observed and collected qualitative data regarding the children's concentration and

independent choice of work for 30 minutes during the morning work cycle. This observation

typically took place between 10:00AM-10:30AM when the majority of the children were

working concentrated. I observed for independent choice, repetition, concentration, and

completing the full cycle of activity.

Throughout the six-week research project, caregiver participants were asked to

participate in one caregiver education presentation, optional virtual parent-teacher conferences,

and weekly newsletters that focused on the importance of limiting screen time. These

newsletters included information such as alternatives to screen time and the type of programming

suitable for young children (see Appendix G). Caregivers were asked to fill out a

postquestionnaire and a post-attitude scale. The post-questionnaire and post-attitude scales were

sent home with caregivers at the beginning of the week allowing the participants five days to

complete. The post-questionnaire asked questions regarding how/if the caregivers' opinions had

changed since the beginning of the action research project. The post-attitude scale was identical

to the pre-attitude scale.

Analysis of Data

The purpose of this intervention was to determine how caregiver education on the

importance of limiting screen time impacted children's concentration during the morning work

cycle in a primary classroom. Throughout the intervention, the researcher collected both

quantitative and qualitative data that looked at the children's concentration levels. The researcher

received permission for 11 of the 18 students to participate in the intervention. The caregivers of

the 11 students were the only attendees of the education evening. Of the caregivers of the 11

students that completed pre-questionnaires and pre-attitude scales, 5 completed the

postquestionnaire and post-attitude scale. Two caregivers attended the optional parent-teacher conference during the third week of the intervention.

Pre-Questionnaire

The research began with a caregiver pre-questionnaire and pre-attitude scale to collect both a quantitative and qualitative baseline of caregivers' thoughts about the Montessori method, their feelings towards receiving more information about the Montessori method, and their children's current screen time usage. When asked to list the reasons they decided to send their child to a Montessori program, caregivers valued the development of their child's independence (45%), the program being student-led (36%), and the opportunities for peer teaching (27%). Two of the eleven caregivers valued the prepared environment and the inclusion of practical life exercises.

When asked, "What are your expectations for your child's education this school year," nearly half of the caregivers' (45%) expected their child to gain more confidence during this school year, while approximately one third (36%) expected them to develop their social skills. Two of the eleven caregivers expect their children to learn to read and write, as well as develop skills that prepare them for elementary school. Even though many caregivers hope that their child gains more confidence and social skills, it's important for them to realize that this is achieved through normalization which occurs when the child can repeat and concentrate on their work. As mentioned previously, caregiver involvement results in a child's academic success. The research and data reveals that educators and caregivers must recognize the importance of caregiver education and caregiver involvement in order to support the child during their time in the classroom.

When asked, "How are you currently implementing the Montessori method at home," most caregivers claimed to provide their children with opportunities to be independent in care of self (73%), as well as participate in household responsibilities (64%) and have access to dishes or food preparation supplies (64%). This reveals that caregivers are open and willing to implement the Montessori method at home in hopes to support their child's development. Every caregiver noted that their child has access to a Television, while 82% have access to a tablet and 18% have access to a smart phone. 67% of the children have 6+ hours/week of screen time, 16.5% have 4-5 hours/week of screen time, and 16.5% have 2-3 hours/week of screen time.

Post-Questionnaire

Five of the eleven initial participants completed the questionnaire. Of those five, 60% noted that they had a better understanding of the materials in the children's house as well as children development. Forty percent did not have a change in understanding or appreciation of Montessori education since the pre-questionnaire. The implementation of the Montessori method at home remained nearly identical with opportunities to be independent in care of self (80%), participating in household responsibilities (60%), and access to dishes or food preparation supplies (60%) being the most common responses. When asked, "has your child's use of screen time changed since the pre-questionnaire survey," only one caregiver responded with, "no." The remaining caregivers noted that their children have substantially less screen time usage. One caregiver noted that most of the television programing that their child watches now is rooted in reality, rather than imaginative, make-believe, or fantastical. This reveals that caregivers not only value caregiver education, but implement the information being presented to them once they have developed a trusting teacher-caregiver relationship.

Pre and Post Attitude Scale Results

The caregivers' attitudes toward the benefit of attending education events, reading

newsletters, and recognizing the importance of a partnership between caregivers and the school

as a community remained nearly identical between the pre and post attitude scale surveys.

However, while 27% of caregivers only sometimes read the newsletters pre-intervention, all of

caregivers selected that they "always" read the newsletters on the post-attitude scale. This is

beneficial as this weekly newsletter will continue to serve as a pathway for continued sharing of

current research with caregivers. During the pre-attitude scale, more caregivers (64%) selected

that they strongly agree that it is important to limit their child's screen time. While 40% of

caregivers selected that they strongly agree with the same statement on the post-attitude scale.

However, the remaining 60% of caregivers selected that they "somewhat agree" with the

statement. During the pre-intervention survey, the majority of caregivers shared that their

children had 6+ hours of screen time each week (Figure 1) but on the post-intervention survey,

only 20% of caregivers shared that their children had 6+ hours of screen time each week (Figure

2). While the children continued to have a substantial amount of screen time each week, the

caregiver education had an impact on decreasing the amount of screen time.
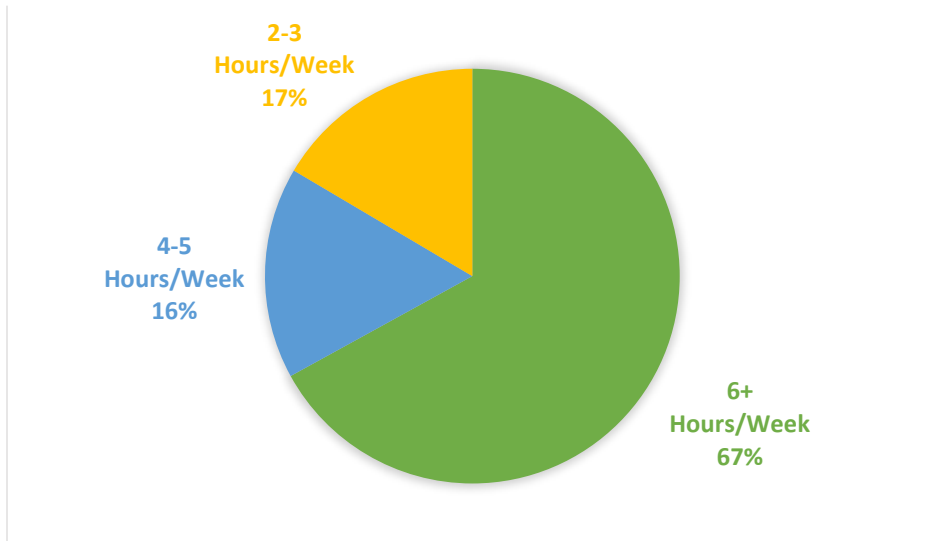
Figure 1

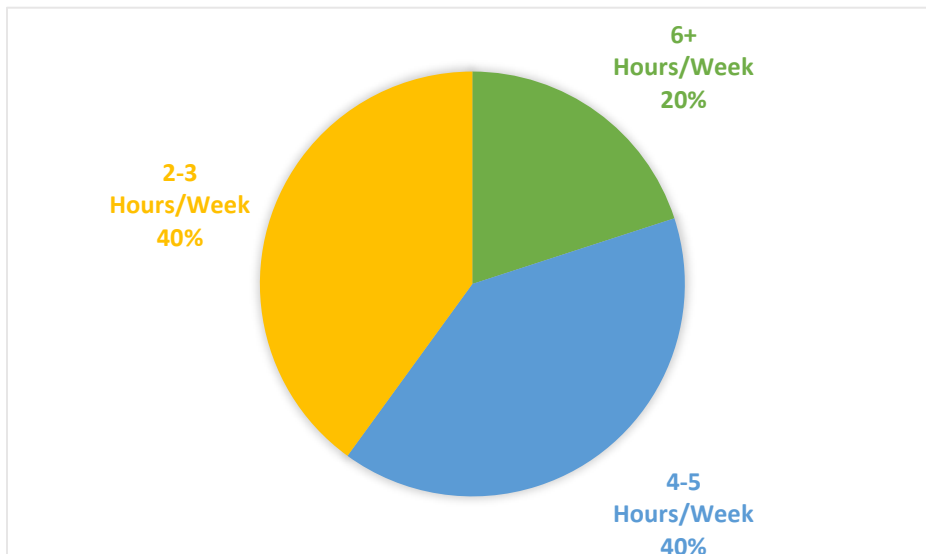*Children's Screen Time Pre-Intervention*

Figure 2

*Children's Screen Time Post-Intervention*

Concentration Results

The levels of class wide concentration followed the same trend each week, with week 4

and 5 having the highest levels of class wide concentration (Figure 3). During each Tuesday

work cycle, the levels of concentration would slowly increase throughout the morning, reaching

their highest levels around 10:00AM-10:15AM. After reaching the highest level of

concentration, it would typically decline during the last 30 minutes of the morning work cycle,

which was around the second hour of work. Maria Montessori observed and noted that children

typically experience a false fatigue around this time, before choosing work again. During the

fifth and final week, the children sustained a high level of concentration until the end of the work

cycle.

Figure 3

Percentage of Children Working During Tuesday Morning Work Cycle
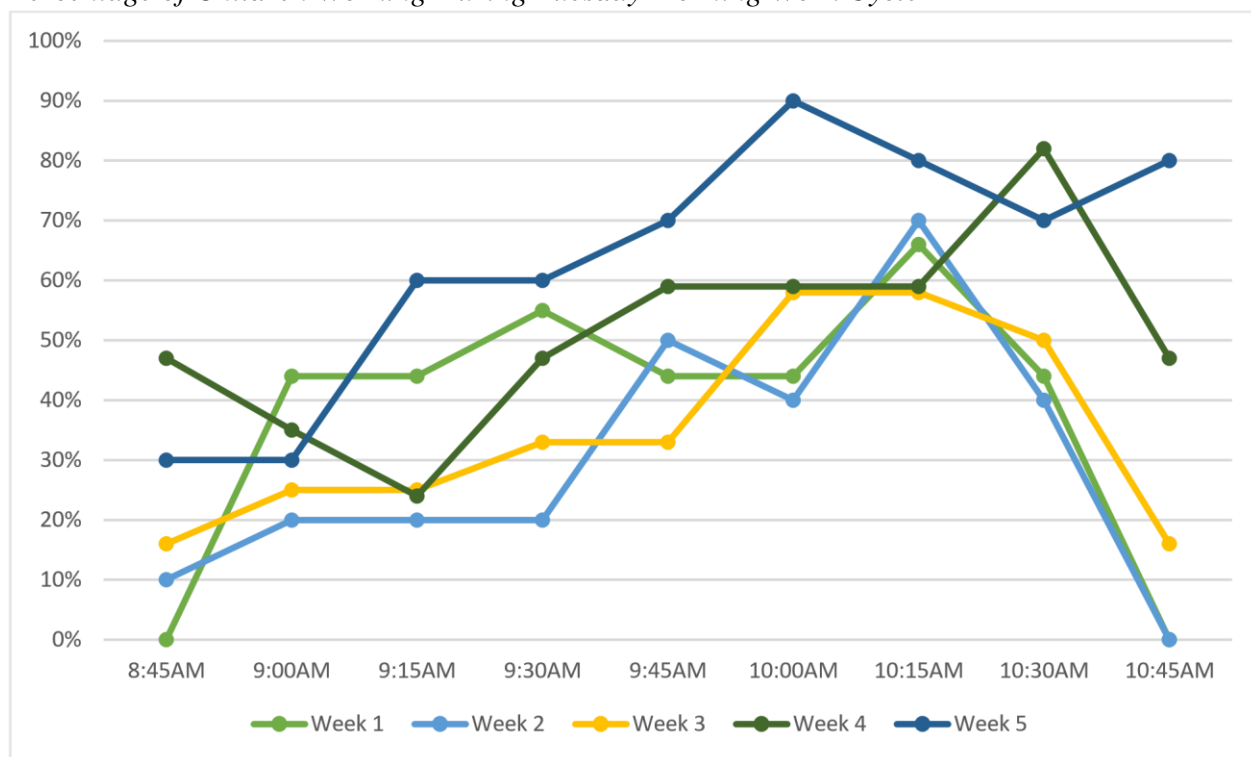
Over the course of the five week intervention, there was an increase in children working

concentrated with an independent choice, and a decrease in children not working concentrated,

or wandering around the room and interrupting children (Figure 4). During the first week, 46%

of the work being done was an independent choice, while 54% was a teacher directed choice.

However, during the final week of the intervention 57% of the work being done was an

independent choice, while 43% was a teacher directed choice. This indicates that both

independent choice and concentration increased throughout the course of the five week

intervention.

Figure 4

Children's Concentration and Independent Choice during Thursday Morning Work Cycle
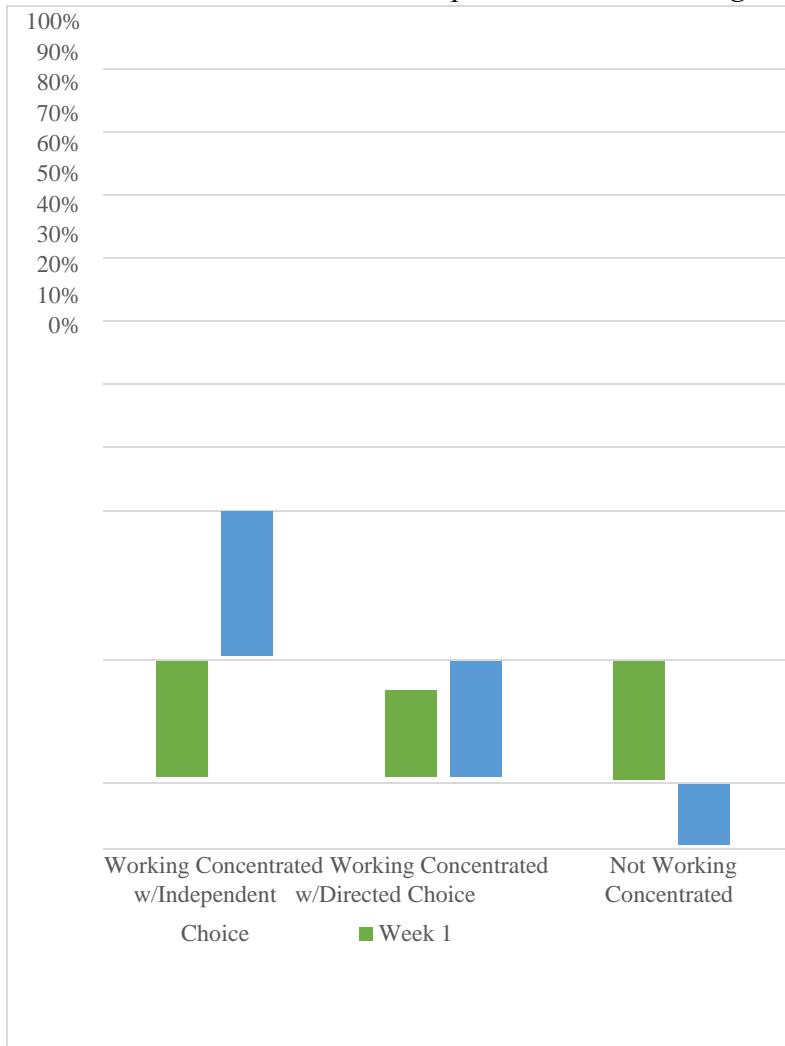
Action Plan

This action research study set out to determine how caregiver education, particularly that pertaining to the importance of limiting screen time, could positively impact children's concentration and independent choice in a primary Montessori classroom. There is substantial research exploring caregiver education in Montessori environments, as well as the importance of limiting screen time during early childhood. This action research project also addressed the paucity of research on how caregiver education regarding screen time impacts children in a Montessori setting.

While traditional preschool settings incorporate a more fantastical and imaginative approach to early childhood education, the primary Montessori method is rooted in reality. When young children, under the age of 6, are exposed to fantastical television programing and tablet games, they have a much more difficult time staying grounded in reality and following their natural path of development. Also, since screen time provides children with instant gratification, it contradicts the Montessori approach that invites the children to participate and enjoy a slower pace life; repeating their work until their developmental needs are satisfied and allowing time to try and try again to zip up their jacket for example.

According to the literature review, caregiver involvement directly correlated to academic success (Galindo, 2012). Because Montessori is not the mainstream approach to education and a lot of misinformation exists surrounding the method, it's critical that Montessori schools aim to build trusting relationships with caregivers in addition to providing them with education. This includes providing caregivers with plenty of opportunities to participate in education events to develop community as well as multiple forms of communication with the educators including newsletters, emails, phone calls, and conferences. As a new educator at a Montessori school, I

sought to begin to develop these new trusting relationships while simultaneously providing caregivers with information about the importance of limiting their child's screen time use. According to the pre and post surveys, caregivers reported that their children had access to less screen time by the end of the intervention. These results show that the caregivers were open to listening to suggestions and that the children benefited from those suggestions. The caregiver education evening was informative and social, both to form community and model Montessori being a way of life, rather than simply a form of education. As caregivers become more trusting of the educators, they will become more inclined to listen to suggestions and implement them at home. When children experience continuity between home and school environments, they feel more supported and secure, which in turn helps them follow their natural path of development.

The data revealed that intentional caregiver education is important. Meaningful ideas include a family summer social before each school year to begin to build trusting relationships with caregivers, a welcome packet highlighting different topics of Montessori theory and how to implement the Montessori method at home, and research on the importance of limiting screen time. Hosting monthly caregiver education evenings that will have both a social and educational function will help foster strong school-family relationships as well as empower caregivers to implement the Montessori theory at home. This study has helped me realize just how important the teacher-caregiver relationship is and the influence it can have on the child's development. This action research study took place at a new school, with a new Montessori guide and children that were new to a Montessori environment and therefore provided a replicable framework for follow up research to take place in the same or similar environments. Based on the findings, continued repetition of this action research, where the topic of caregiver education changes,

could continue to result in positive changes for the children. The literature suggests that caregiver

education should be continuous throughout the child's time in the program (Pretis,

2012) and therefore it's important for this research to be replicated and expanded on. In

conclusion, it is of value for the children when educators invest in building teacher-caregiver

relationships while simultaneously presenting caregivers with information that supports their

child's development and academic success through intentional caregiver educational techniques.

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Appendix A

Caregiver Pre-Questionnaire

Please answer each question, and provide as much information as you can on the open-ended questions:

1. Why did you decide to send your child to a Montessori school?

2. What are your expectations for your child's education this school year?

3. How has your understanding/appreciation of Montessori education changed since you first enrolled your child?

4. How would you describe the materials in your child's classroom?

5. How are you currently implementing the Montessori method at home?

6. What would you like to learn more about (circle all that apply):
   a. Implementing the Montessori method at home
   b. The Kindergarten year of the Montessori primary program
   c. Theory of the Montessori method
   d. I don't have any interest in learning more about the Montessori method

7. What are your plans for your child's kindergarten year?
   a. Continue at Rocklin Ranch Montessori
   b. Public/Charter School: _____
   c. Private School: _____
   d. Other: _____

*Please use the back of this paper to ask any questions you may have.

Appendix B

Caregiver Pre-Attitude Scale

I see a benefit in attending parent/caregiver education events at Rocklin Ranch Montessori:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I read newsletters and monthly check-ins:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I believe that educating my child should be a partnership between parents/caregivers and school as a community:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I know what my child is talking about when they mention the different materials they are working with at school:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I value peer to peer learning for my child:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I worry when my child works slower/isn't at the same level as other children of the same age:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I bring the Montessori philosophy into our home as much as possible:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I provide opportunities for my child to participate in household tasks such as feeding a pet, folding laundry, etc.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I give my child rewards such as stickers, candy, money, or screen time for behaving or doing well at school:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always
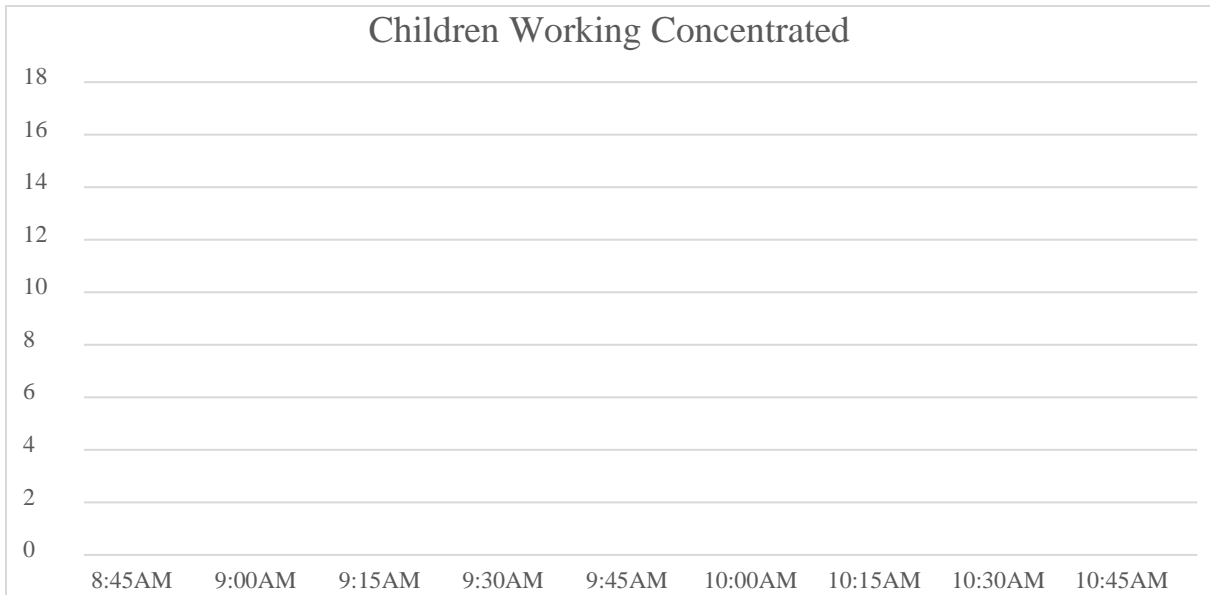

Rocklin Ranch Montessori offers parents/caregivers enough information about the Montessori program:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

Appendix C

Date:

Attendance:

Children Working Concentrated

18

16

14

12

10

8

6

4

2

0

8:45AM   9:00AM   9:15AM   9:30AM   9:45AM   10:00AM   10:15AM   10:30AM   10:45AM

Notes:

Appendix D

Caregiver Post-Questionnaire

Please answer each question, and provide as much information as you can on the open-ended questions:

1. Have your expectations for your child's education this school year changed since the pre-questionnaire survey? If yes, how so?

2. How has your understanding/appreciation of Montessori education changed since the pre-questionnaire survey?

3. How would you describe the materials in your child's classroom?

4. How are you currently implementing the Montessori method at home?

5. What would you like to learn more about (circle all that apply):
   a. Implementing the Montessori method at home
   b. The Kindergarten year of the Montessori primary program
   c. Theory of the Montessori method
   d. I don't have any interest in learning more about the Montessori method

6. What are your plans for your child's kindergarten year?
   a. Continue at Rocklin Ranch Montessori
   b. Public/Charter School: _____
   c. Private School: _____
   d. Other: _____

*Please use the back of this paper to ask any questions you may have.

Appendix E

Caregiver Post-Attitude Scale

I see a benefit in attending parent/caregiver education events at Rocklin Ranch Montessori:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I read newsletters and monthly check-ins:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I believe that educating my child should be a partnership between parents/caregivers and school as a community:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I know what my child is talking about when they mention the different materials they are working with at school:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I value peer to peer learning for my child:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I worry when my child works slower/isn't at the same level as other children of the same age:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I bring the Montessori philosophy into our home as much as possible:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

I provide opportunities for my child to participate in household tasks such as feeding a pet, folding laundry, etc.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

I give my child rewards such as stickers, candy, money, or screen time for behaving or doing well at school:

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Frequently   Always

Rocklin Ranch Montessori offers parents/caregivers enough information about the Montessori program:

Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Neutral   Somewhat Agree
Strongly Agree

Appendix F

Caregiver Education Night Self-Reflection and Observations

1. How many parent/caregivers attended?

2. What were some feedback comments/remarks?

3. What were some of the questions asked by parents/caregivers?

4. What were some strengths of the evening?

5. What were some areas that could have been improved?

The Importance of Limiting Screen Time....

In the Montessori classroom, we have the philosophy of "Freedom within Limits." I encourage you to treat screen time with your children in a similar manner. I recognize that Covid has brought on many new challenges, and sometimes a screen time "break" is needed for your family. However, it's

Hello Juniper Families!

Imagination and creativity are important skills for children to develop and it's a common misconception that a Montessori education doesn't support this. At Rocklin Ranch, we support a

Appendix G

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3 Ways To Limit Your Child's Screen Time:

1. Cook with your children. It's common for children to watch TV or go on their iPad while their caregivers prepare meals. Rather than having your children occupied with a screen, I encourage you to include your children while cooking. They can wash the fruits and vegetables, pour, stir, etc. It will help tremendously with their independence, fine motor movements, and confidence!

2. Give your children simple household tasks. This will also help with their confidence, but more than anything, children want to feel included and they want to contribute to caring for their environment. A few examples include sweeping, setting the table, and sorting/folding laundry.

3. Encourage independent play. If your child isn't used to playing independently, I suggest that you introduce it gradually and be prepared for some protests. Begin by encouraging them to play independently for 10 minutes while you're in the same room. Eventually you can work up to more time. Preparing the environment for your child to be able to easily access their toys will also support independent play.