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Jason Curry
Southern Illinois University

Author:

Jason Curry
Doctoral Student
Department of Workforce Education and Development
212 Pulliam Hall
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Carbondale, IL 62901-4605
618-453-4563
jcurry@siu.edu

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the Working to Success (WTS) model as a structured format to help parents and Head Start personnel not only meet the performance indicators of the Head Start Regulations, but also look to other disciplines for creative ideas. The model is based on basic DACUM principles and asserts that these principles can potentially be incorporated into Head Start curricula via the WTS model and could potentially promote family and educational development. Literacy, following directions, organization, teamwork, symbolic thinking, and cognitive, social, and linguistic development are just a few of the potential, not yet proven, benefits for Head Start-aged children. Finally, current DACUM and workforce education practitioners are challenged to consider the broad applications of workforce education principles.

INTRODUCTION

Developing A Curriculum (DACUM) workforce and training principles can be applied to many unique situations. One area of application is within Head Start programs. By using a modified version of the DACUM model and original material, the model Working to Success (WTS) has been developed. The WTS model is designed to introduce a modified DACUM curriculum into Head Start programs to potentially benefit student's educational and family development. The WTS model is presented as one alternative to meet the existing goals Head Start programs. Following the presentation of the model and its application to the classroom, home, and community, a brief discussion relating to its potential impact on family and educational development will be reported. Finally, current DACUM and workforce education practitioners will be challenged to consider the broad applications of workforce education principles.

THE DACUM MODEL

Developing A Curriculum (DACUM) is a model developed more than 30 years ago by a Canadian university team as a fast and reliable way to identify job tasks for training curricula (Halazs, 97). In the WTS model, the DACUM technique of job analysis will be applied, in a very simplistic way, as it relates to the children enrolled in Head Start programs. Teachers and parents will be asked to think of identified work activities in terms of jobs and tasks. A job refers to the general description and name of what is to be accomplished by the child. The tasks refer to the necessary steps needed to complete the job.

HEAD START

Head Start is an early childhood program for low-income children. Head Start began in 1965 in the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity as an extension of the Economic

Opportunity Act of 1964 (Zigler & Muenchow, 1992). Head Start is a national program that focuses its curriculum on education, physical and mental health, social services, nutrition, and parent involvement. Family is a crucial requirement of Head Start's intervention strategies. Parents are asked to play a key role in program planning and delivery; however, paternal absence, low literacy skills, and chronic unemployment often limit active involvement amongst Head Start families (Leik & Chalkey, 1990).

THE WORKING TO SUCCESS MODEL

The Working to Success (WTS) model is a process-oriented model that offers Head Start providers and parents an alternative to meet existing goals. As its name indicates, the WTS model is designed to introduce the notion of "working" as a means to potentially promote family and educational "success". The WTS model is guided by DACUM concepts. It expands the application of the DACUM model by encouraging Head Start teachers and parents to view their classrooms and homes as workstations in which their students and children learn. Teachers and parents are encouraged to identify the jobs and the tasks associated with maintaining an organized environment in which to learn and play. However, because our students are very young, the jobs and tasks considered should be age appropriate.

HOW THE MODEL WORKS

Planning Phase

Before any teacher or parent begins to consider using the WTS model, basic research, practice, and awareness of the DACUM process is needed. Jobs and tasks are the main focus of this learning. It is important to know that you are not applying DACUM process as it is intended, but rather modifying the jobs and tasks approach to organize your thoughts about the environment in which your children will be working. There are many jobs in the environment in which your children are working. Labeling many of the jobs that need to be completed by the children and teaching them the proper way to complete the job is necessary for other benefits to develop. In the classroom, the WTS model is intended to be utilized as an organizational model to compliment the scientifically-based research relating to not only literacy, organization, and cognitive development, but also, social and family involvement as well.

During your initial planning, please keep in mind that a job should have no more than a couple of tasks, but jobs should be meaningful to the children none-the-less. For example: A job could be watering a plant. The tasks associated with watering the plant are as follows: (a) obtain a water container, (b) fill with appropriate amount of water, (c) pour water in correct manner, and (d) return water container to appropriate storage. There are numerous opportunities to discuss why you water plants, how to follow directions, and endless other important educational opportunities. In the classroom, utilizing scientifically based literacy activities relating to the jobs is strongly encouraged. The main point of the Planning Phase is to stimulate thinking about how the children can contribute to their environment in a meaningful way by "working".

Educational Development Phase

The WTS model has practical implications for teaching. The first step is called *work planning.* In this step, students will learn the names of the jobs and tasks you have identified in your home or classroom. They will also learn the skills needed to accomplish each. The teacher should present the jobs in a verbal, written, and modeling format. The modeling should occur in conjunction with written vocabulary. The work planning phase should be presented and structured with the following goals in mind: literacy, following directions, organization, teamwork, symbolic thinking, cognitive, social, linguistic, and any other you deem appropriate for your classroom.

The second step is called *work stations.* Classrooms should be divided into approximately four to five workstations. Each station should have its' own set of jobs and tasks. Teamwork is crucial here during the initial planning stage. Students should be allowed to choose which station to work in during *work planning.* The number of students per station should be controlled by the teacher to ensure adequate working space and number of jobs. Students should have some form of identification assigned to their appropriate workstation. Hats or colored badges, with appropriate print rich language, are two suggestions. The important concept is for all children to not only identify their individual job and workstation, but also know and understand others' jobs and workstations.

The third step is call *work time.* Adequate time should be given to complete the jobs and tasks. The teacher should use verbal and written cues during this phase. For instance, the teacher may pose the question, "Is everyone ready to go to work?" followed by "Do we all have our work badges? Okay then, let's go to work!" This can be introduced during free play, clean-up, or any other time deemed appropriate.

The fourth step is the *teacher's role.* The teacher's role should be mostly observational. If the children are having difficulty with the skills, language, or coordination needed to accomplish the job, then teachers should join the workstation. After joining, the teacher should model the correct task or duty as well as language. This should be brief. The only other time a teacher should enter the workstation is to settle disputes.

Family Development Phase

The WTS model also has practical implications for home and family. The first step is encouraging parents to observe classroom Educational Development phase. This not only allows parents opportunity to see the model in action, but also promotes family involvement in their children's education. Head Start social workers can work collaboratively with parents and teachers to design a "work" curriculum to meet the needs of the whole family. Social workers are encouraged to use the The Partnership Process Model presented in Head Start Regulations, Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1301 through 1311 (see figure 1). Families will have final say as to whether the WTS model is appropriate to their family routine. The WTS model is simply one collaborative way to meet the performance indicators in Subpart C—Family and

Community Partnerships of the Head Start Regulations, 45 CFR 1301 through 45 CFR 1311 (Head Start Regulations, 2001).

The second step is to follow steps one through four in the Educational Development phase above. However, it is an important goal to incorporate the whole family in to the process. Jobs that require the family to participate as a family unit should be identified. Everyone should know all jobs and tasks associated with each job and should have a choice and input in to developing the jobs and tasks. Language and family involvement are crucial during this phase. When not working a team job, parents should have specific jobs and duties near the workstations of their children and only enter the children's workstations should problems arise.

Community Phase

This phase of the model is extremely important. People who live and work in the community should be invited to come to classrooms and discuss their occupations with the children. Head Start programs already have a community partnership format in place that promotes this phase. Parents are encouraged to take their children to local job sites and discuss roles of the workers. If the parent is not working, but searching for employment, they should discuss their job search process with their children. This discussion should be age appropriate and contain meaningful analogies that Head Start-aged children can relate to.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO EDUCATIONAL AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Head Start can offer families a method to identify their own strenths, needs, and solutions. The objective of 45 CFR 1304.40 is to support parents as they identify and meet their own goals, nurture the development of their children in the context of their family and culture, and advocate for communities that are supportive of children and families of all cultures (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

The WTS model can be used as a structured collaborative tool to help most of the performance indicators in Subpart C—Family and Community Partnerships. This section discusses family goal setting through the family partnership agreement process, access to community services and resources, and parent involvement across all areas of Head Start.

Goals of Subpart C—Family and Community Relationships for WTS Application (Head Start Regulations, 2001):

Family Partnerships
      (a) Family Goal Setting
      (b) Accessing Community Services and Resources
      (d) Parent Involvement - General
      (e) Parent Involvement in Child Development and Education

(g) Parent Involvement in Community Advocacy

(h) Parent Involvement in Transition Activities

(i) Parent Involvement in Home Visits

SUMMARY

By blending DACUM principles into the Head Start curriculum, the Working to Success (WTS) model can serve to structure and balance the many Head Start regulations. This is just one strategy of many to help parents and teachers meet and exceed any appropriate identified need. The WTS model and it's benefits to Head Start curricla is not proven at this time. Further development, a pilot study, and intense evaluation is needed to determine the effectiveness of the model. The WTS model is one way to organize our thinking about how we can meet the needs of children in Head Start programs. The potential benefits, growth, and application of the WTS model are limitless.

Other than Head Start personel and families, workforce education practitioners are encouraged to consider the broad applications of their discipline as in the WTS example presented in this article. As a workforce education practioner, have you ever listened to a friend with a personal problem and offered a solution based on your knowledge of workforce education principles? Have you ever used a proven workforce evaluation model to objectively consider the benefits of a persoanl situation? It is my belief that we need to push the boundaries and consider the potential benefits of proven workforce education and development methodologies in all areas of work, education, personal, family, and society.

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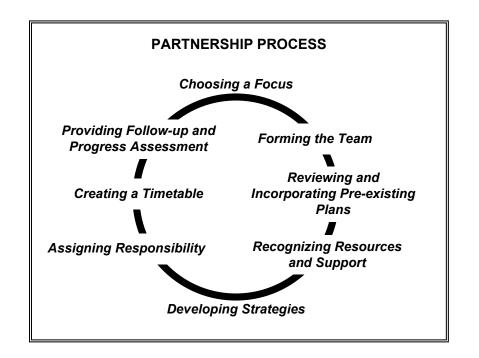
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APPENDICES

FIGURE 1

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS - PARTNERSHIP PROCESS
DIAGRAM

PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

Choosing a Focus

Providing Follow-up and Progress Assessment

Forming the Team

Reviewing and Incorporating Pre-existing Plans

Creating a Timetable

Assigning Responsibility

Recognizing Resources and Support

Developing Strategies

This diagram is very simply an outline of a circle with 8 points of information listed around the circle. Starting from the uppermost point (12 o'clock on a clock) and following around clockwise the points are:

- "Choosing a Focus
- Forming the Team
- Reviewing and Incorporating Pre-existing Plans
- Recognizing Resources and Support
- Developing Strategies
- Assigning Responsibility
- Creating a Timetable
- Providing Follow-up and Progress Assessment"