

Uninvolved Parents Despite a High Quality Intervention: Who Are They?

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Historical and Current Context

The **Child-Parent Center (CPC)** program is an early childhood intervention from preschool through 3rd grade, targeting low-income children and their families.

- Over 30 years of research has demonstrated returns of \$8 per dollar spent.
- The CPC produces cognitive, socio-emotional, mental health, and economic gains throughout the life course (Reynolds et al., 2011).

The **Midwest Child-Parent Center Expansion Project** is a targeted school reform effort across the Midwest. The CPC provides intensive and continuous educational and family-support services through the entire school transition process. This validation project assesses generalizability for a broader array of social contexts.

Core Program Elements include:

- Effective Learning Experiences, PreK-3rd
- Aligned curriculum
- Parent involvement and engagement
- Collaborative Leadership Team
- Continuity and Stability
- Professional development system



Methodology

- **Sample definition:** Any student who entered a CPC site by January 2013 AND received at least 4 months of instruction at the site is considered part of the intervention group.
- **Average Attendance:** The average monthly attendance for a CPC student for all of the months the student was in the program.
- **Chronic Absence:** Dummy coded variable indicating whether or not a student missed 10% or more of all class days for the time the student was in a CPC Center.
- **High Parent Involvement** is defined by the Parent Resource Teacher rating of school level parent involvement. If 30% or more of the school met the 2.5 hour per week requirement, this was coded as high parent involvement.

Results

- Findings indicate the effectiveness of the following three key components for increasing daily attendance rates and decreasing chronic absence rates in Chicago preschool students:
 - Full-day PreK,
 - a Full-time School-Community Representative
- The presence of all three elements indicates a positive, synergistic impact on attendance.
- For students with *none of the three elements* in place (369 students), **75% were chronically absent**, or missed 10 or more days during the year and had an average attendance rate of 80%.
- In comparison, for children who were able to benefit from *all three elements*, **only 39% were chronically absent** during the same year and had an average attendance rate of 90%

Research Question

The Goal of the present study is to assess the impact of the Midwest CPC Expansion project by child, family, and program characteristics. Specifically,

1. What impact do full-day PreK, parent involvement, and outreach staff have on chronic absence as individual factors?
2. To what extent is there a benefit from having more than one of these factors present in a child's school?

Policy Implications

School districts should:

1. Increase access to full-day PreK to increase attendance and reduce the rate of chronic absenteeism
2. Increase emphasis on school-home connections, including hiring parent involvement staff, to increase parent involvement in school and at home.; one parent involvement staff member should work out in the community to connect with hard to reach families.

The maximum reduction in chronic absenteeism can be achieved when all of the above elements are instituted at the school-level.

Future Directions

- Continue investigation into attendance, absenteeism and interventions across other project districts to see if results are similar.
- Analyze data controlling for individual student level characteristics.
- Examine the relationship between PreK chronic absenteeism and attendance and Kindergarten readiness as well as PreK attendance to attendance in later grades.

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- For more information, visit <http://humancapitalrc.org/midwestcpc/sponsors.cfm>

Unadjusted Means

	Average Attendance		Chronic Absence	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Full-Day	86%***	83%***	53%***	65%***
SCR	86%***	82%***	57%***	68%***
High PI	82%***	85%***	64%***	61%***
At least two	83%	84%	58% ^t	63% ^t
All 3	90%***	84%***	39%***	63%***

Sample

Element	Yes	No	Total
Full-day prek	409	1315	1724
Full-time SCR	897	827	1724
High PI	523	1201	1724
At least two	404	1320	1724
All three	70	1654	1724



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