



## Investment in *Parents as Teachers*: Results for Children, Families and Communities

**Benefits** Parents as Teachers is an evidence-based home visiting program with demonstrated positive outcomes for children, families and communities.

### **What Experts Say: An Independent Cost-Benefit Analysis**

Very early investment in children produces significant long-term impacts for individuals and communities.<sup>1</sup> A 2004 study conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy titled “Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth<sup>2</sup> found that:

- The benefit of Parents as Teachers is estimated at \$4,300 per child from higher test scores alone.
- Parents as Teachers realized an \$800 per child return on investment (ROI) for communities (\$4,300 in benefits of the program minus cost over 2.5 years).
- For children up to age three, Parents as Teachers had the largest benefit per dollar of cost (\$1.23) of all reviewed pre-kindergarten education programs.

### **Investment in Parents as Teachers has Huge Potential Impact for Children**

*There is a ‘time-value of early education’ with early investment producing the most significant results.*

- Every year 4 million children are born in the United States; if each of these children participated in Parents as Teachers, **more than 17 billion dollars in benefits could be realized.**<sup>3,4</sup>
- With no specified parental age or income eligibility criteria, all parents of young children can be served, thereby increasing the program’s impact exponentially.

### **How Parents as Teachers Makes the Difference:**

#### **Parent knowledge of child development, improve parenting practices**

Most brain development occurs in the first few years of a child’s life and parents are the most important influence for children during this critical period. Children’s early learning and brain development prepare them for school and life success; insufficient supports for development diminish children’s potential.

#### **Early detection of developmental delays and health issues**

Allows for early intervention which is more cost effective and successful for children, reducing the need for costly remedial and special services in schools.

#### **Child abuse and neglect**

Safe, healthy and cared for children are able to put all their energy into learning and growing in order to be ready to succeed in school. Children who have been abused and neglected have higher rates of juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy, school failure, alcohol use, and psychiatric illness.<sup>5</sup>

#### **School readiness and school success**

Children who are prepared for kindergarten continue to do well in the early grades of elementary school and then are more likely to graduate from high school and to go on to be successful in life.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cunha, F., Heckman, J., (2007) Conference Presentation., research funded by Partnership for America’s Success

<sup>2</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2004 Report <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3901> and U.S. Census data

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Dept of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families.

<http://www.ed.gov/initiatives/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/>

<sup>4</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count 2004 data [www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)

<sup>5</sup> Child Welfare Information Gateway, [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long\\_term\\_consequences.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> Snow, C.E., Burns, M., and Griffin, P., (1998) Preventing reading difficulties in young children



### **Home Visiting is Integral to High-quality Preschool Programs**

Research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschools receive immediate benefits from improved kindergarten readiness and long-term benefits from improved achievement, better employment and reduced delinquency and criminal behavior; there is a strong return on investment (ROI).<sup>7</sup>

- Home-visiting was included in all the preschool programs with demonstrated results and the benefits from home visiting cannot be separated from the rest of the program - Perry/High-Scope (1960s), Abecedarian (1970s), Chicago Parent-Child Centers (1980s)
- Parents as Teachers has been chosen by many preschool programs as the home visiting curriculum to support their other early childhood services.

### **Parents as Teachers Addresses Delays Early**

Parents as Teachers detects delays and refers children for early intervention which results in long-term savings:<sup>8,9</sup>

Annual special education costs per student = **\$8,080**<sup>10</sup>  
 Annual cost for non-special education student = **\$4,394**

Parents as Teachers screens all children for delays and provides referrals to appropriate resources so children can receive early intervention. In the 2005-2006 program year:

- Thousands of delays were identified:<sup>11</sup>
  - 3,686 social emotional problems
  - 5,129 vision problems
  - 5,838 physical delays and health problems
  - 6,640 hearing problems
  - 30,134 developmental delays
  - 18,779 children with delays accessed specialized follow-up services
- More than 100,000 families were connected to a community resource.

### **Parents as Teachers: Focused on Parents and Children from All Kinds of Families**

Parents as Teachers has been shown to be effective for high risk families as well as those without multiple risk factors.

- Recent studies have demonstrated a PAT-impact for children of all socio-economic groups.<sup>12</sup>
- Parents as Teachers shows promise in narrowing the achievement gap between poor children and their more affluent peers.
- Participation in Parents as Teachers increases a child's chance of attending preschool.<sup>13</sup>
- Parents who participated in Parents as Teachers were more involved in their child's school, which increases the chances of long-term academic success.<sup>14</sup>

***By promoting good brain development and positive parenting, Parents as Teachers sets children on successful educational paths, which ultimately decreases public spending and promotes stronger communities.***

<sup>7</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2004 report. <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=04-07-3901>

<sup>8</sup> Drazen, S.M. & Haust, M. (1994). *Preventing Special Education Costs via Early Intervention*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Finance Association, Nashville, TN. Savings of over \$97,000 was reported for the 1993-1994 school year in a program which served 43 children in Binghamton, NY.

<sup>9</sup> Pfannenstiel, J.C. & Zigler, E. (2007). *Prekindergarten experiences, school readiness and early elementary achievement*. Unpublished report prepared for Parents as Teachers National Center. PAT participation related to higher kindergarten readiness for children with special needs. Early identification of special services for minority children helped reduce the minority gap in school-aged special education placement. Since special education costs are more than double that of regular education, PAT services provide considerable educational savings.

<sup>10</sup> .S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families*. Washington, DC, 2002. [http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/wnspecialeducation/reports/images/Pres\\_Rep.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/wnspecialeducation/reports/images/Pres_Rep.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Parents as Teachers 05-06 Annual Program Report

<sup>12</sup> Zigler, E., Pfannenstiel, J., Seitz, V., accepted for publication in the *Journal of Primary Prevention*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Pfannenstiel, J. Lambson, T. and Yarnell, V. (1996). *Second Wave Study of the Parents as Teachers Program*