



**Outcomes Evaluation and  
Program Effectiveness.  
Parents As Teachers:  
2006-2007**

**BACKGROUND:**

**What is the Parents as Teachers Program?** The Parents as Teachers Program is a proven effective school readiness parent education and family support program for families who have children younger than kindergarten age. Specially trained and certified parent educators provide the program services that include offering parents practical ways to encourage learning, manage challenging behaviors and promote strong parent-child relationships. The program consists of

- Regularly scheduled personal in home visits with parents and child
- Monthly parent and/or parent and child group meetings
- Developmental screenings using a standardized tool such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, along with health, vision, and hearing checks
- Referral to appropriate community resources when needed

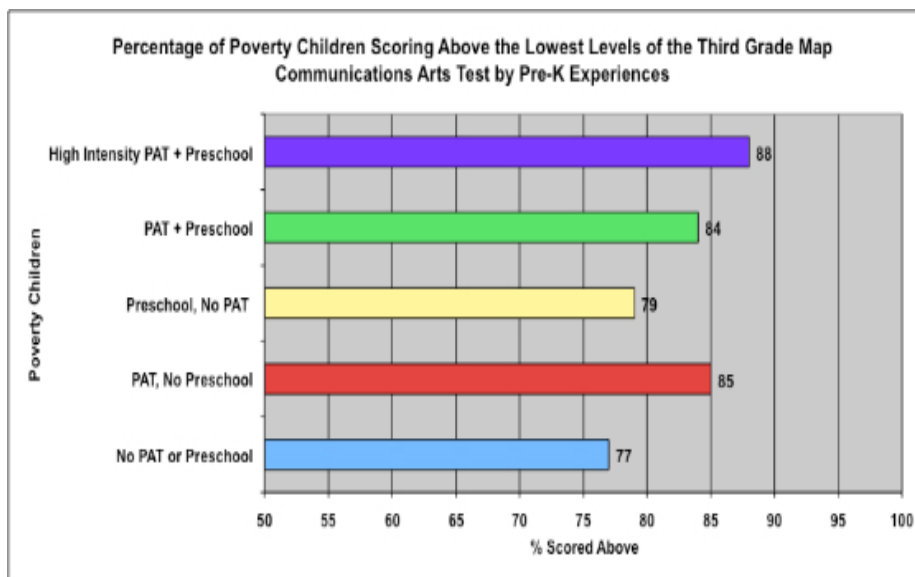
**Why have a Parents as Teachers Program?** In 2004 Washington kindergarten teachers reported that more than half of children starting school were not ready to learn. Studies show that children who start school behind other children often have difficulty catching up and tend to stay behind as they move through the grades. This situation can lead to school failure, the need for special and remedial education, school drop-out and increased chances for several types of negative life outcomes.

Research clearly tells us that children begin learning in their earliest days, weeks, and months. The first months and years largely determine the attitude and approaches a child will bring to life and learning depending on the everyday experiences and relationship the child has with his first teachers, the parents (or primary caregivers). Parents as Teachers addresses this important time with families and is one of only three proven effective school readiness programs cited in the WA State Institute of Public Policy Report (9/04).

**Who does the Parents as Teachers Program serve?** The program is designed to be used with all families and children. Parents as Teachers Programs are implemented internationally in more than 3,000 sites. In Washington, Parents as Teachers currently serves more than 1,700 families with 1,977 children younger than kindergarten age in 25 programs located around the state. These same families and children received 14,346 visits in 2006-2007.

## RESULTS

**“The Parents as Teachers program: its impact on school readiness and later school achievement A Research Summary” based on a report by Pfannenstiel, J. and Zigler, E. (April, 2007)\***



Results of a 2006 study of 7,710 Missouri children who participated in Parents as Teachers and other early childhood experiences clearly shows that Parents as Teachers not only predicts children’s school readiness, but that it also predicts third grade achievement regardless of income level.

Adapted from “The Parents as Teachers program: its impact on school readiness and later school achievement”.

### Results:

- 88% of children in high poverty schools who participated in at least two years of Parents as Teachers and one year of preschool scored above the lowest levels of the third grade MAP communications arts test.
- 84% of children in high poverty schools who participated in some Parents as Teachers and preschool scored above the lowest levels of the third grade MAP communications arts test.
- 79% of children in high poverty schools who attended preschool only and 77% of children in high poverty schools who had neither PAT nor preschool scored above the lowest levels of the third grade MAP communications arts test.
- 85% of children in high poverty schools who participated in Parents as Teachers only (no preschool) scored above the lowest levels of the third grade MAP communications arts test.

### \*The full research article can be found at:

Zigler, E., Pfannenstiel, J.C., & Seitz, V. (2008). The Parents as Teachers program and school success: A replication and extension. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 29, 103-120.