THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Equitable Family-Teacher Relationships for All Children
4Es of Exploration, Expectation, Education, and Equipment

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Speaker for Early Childhood Investigators Webinar June 16, 2022

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I LIVE, WORK, AND BUILD MY FAMILIES’ ECONOMIC WEALTH ON THE LUMBEE TRIBE TAKEN THROUGH CONQUERATION AND ATTEMPTED ERADICATION BY SETTLERS. LUMBEE TRIBE PROVIDES PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS WITHIN THE AREAS OF CUMBERLAND, HOKE, ROBESON, AND SCOTLAND COUNTIES IN NC.

Honoring Native Lands

Honoring Black Bodies

- Many parts of the US was built by enslaved Africans and their enslaved descendants, and only within the past generation were Black people afforded full rights.
- Today, Black individuals and People of Color disproportionately work as service staff across the country. This community is largely responsible for the maintenance of our daily lives, the food and food service available, child care, health care, and many other basic necessities that make our lives easy. The wealth of our nation is due to the forced free labor of these Africans.
About the Equity Research Action Coalition

- University collaborative at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill
- focuses on co-constructing actionable research and evaluation with practitioners and policymakers to support the optimal development of Black children prenatally through childhood.
- works at the intersection of research, practice, and policy through anti-racist and cultural wealth frameworks

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of the parent-teacher relationship for children’s learning and wellbeing.
2. Examine opportunities to strengthen the home-school connection through parent-teacher relationship.
3. Identify how to create spaces and process to strengthen family engagement and leadership.

Take home message

Science is clear that families matter for children’s development and learning. Home-school connection reduce inequitable learning opportunities and experiences. Authentic partnership with families should be viewed as a social justice strategy. Partnering with families is the one strategy to ensure children are healthy and thrive. The 4Es—Exploration, Expectation, Education, and Equipment—are foundational for partnership with families.
Family engagement and support is bidirectional.

Family engagement is about building authentic relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for parents, children, educators, and systems.

Families are managing a lot!
Black Parent Voices - Data

768 Black families/caregiver
- Surveyed between April – November
- Average household income of $69,286
  - Higher than the 2019 median income for Black households of $45,438
- 8% immigrant caregivers
- Majority English-speaking households
- Representing 43 states and DC

214 Black families/caregiver
- Experiences with racism and discrimination
  (August – November)

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

• Parents’ experience prior to/since pandemic:
  - Have you been unfairly stopped, searched, questioned, physically threatened, or abused by the police because of your race or ethnicity?
  - For unfair reasons, have you not been hired for a job because of your race or ethnicity?

• Frequency of concern for children prior to/since pandemic:
  - Getting stopped in a white neighborhood.
  - Being punished more harshly than others.

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

[Graph showing data]

All Parents (N=2,481) (across their lives)
Black families are experiencing high levels of economic instability regardless of household income level, with half of all Black families reporting a decrease in income during the pandemic.

Over 40% of Black families below/near poverty are feeling a financial strain even after receipt of stimulus checks.
MATERIAL HARDSHIP

Table 1: Percent of Black Families Having a Hard Time Paying for Basic Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Needs</th>
<th>Below/Mean Income</th>
<th>Middle Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult Paying for Basic Needs (Hard)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Care and Education</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Childcare</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data reflect the number of Black families with very high monthly expenses for food and shelter.

PARENTS’ HEALTH CARE AND WELL-BEING

Table 2: Reasons for Delaying Health Care Across All Black Families and by Income Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Delay</th>
<th>All Black Families</th>
<th>Below/Mean Income</th>
<th>Middle Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic for COVID</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of Child</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Away From Work</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data reflect the number of Black families with very high monthly expenses for food and shelter.

“Stress and worry has been very debilitating and constant trauma from violence against Black people.”

“The paranoia of us getting sick and ultimately dying from COVID or racism is [ex] exact that we have days where we disconnect from all news platforms and social media just to breathe.”

- BLACK PARENT
Almost a third of black parents reported their child missed a checkup during the pandemic. Concern over being exposed to the virus was the primary reason.

2016 NASEM Parenting Matters report shows critical importance of supporting families to ensure children are healthy and thrive in excellence.

Parental knowledge & attitudes matter for optimal child outcomes, but...
- Knowledge of child development and evidence-based parenting practices
- Attitudes about roles of parents in raising children and specific practices
Parenting practices had consistent impacts on children’s development and learning.

- contingent responsiveness (“serve and return”);
- showing warmth and sensitivity;
- routines and reduced household chaos;
- shared book reading and talking to children;
- practices that promote children’s health and safety (e.g., prenatal care, breastfeeding, vaccination, nutrition and physical activity); and
- use of appropriate (less harsh) discipline.

Research gaps still exist in...

- Interventions for parents with special needs (e.g., parents of children with developmental disabilities, parents with mental illness or substance abuse)
- Interventions that engage fathers
- Differences in parenting and engagement in interventions across diverse populations and family forms

Examining malleable factors that explain racial/ethnic gaps

- Based on an IES-funded preK-3rd grade project based at UNL
- Uncover malleable factors that reduce or eliminate end of kindergarten racial/ethnic gaps
- Affirmative and enriching home and classroom environments and their connections have the potential to reduce achievement gaps
**Kindergarten Outcomes:** White children score significantly higher on academic outcomes than other children. Black children rated by teachers with more problem behaviors than other children.

![Graph showing Kindergarten Outcomes](image_url)

**Family Involvement Questionnaire:** Black parents report more home-based involvement and home-school conferencing than other parents.

![Graph showing Family Involvement Questionnaire](image_url)

**Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale:** Black parents and teachers of Black students report less joining with teachers than other parents.

![Graph showing Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale](image_url)
Summary of Findings

- The end of Kindergarten gaps exist but not for every outcomes examined
- Racial differences found in parent- or teacher-reported malleable factors, but not classroom quality
- Black-White & Latino-White gaps in expressive language remain largely unchanged after covariates included
- Home-school connections reduce gaps between Black and White children in math and problem behavior
- No malleable factors significantly reduce Latino-White gaps in reading, language, & math

What does this mean for us/you?

4Es of Family Engagement

EXPLORE the funds of knowledge of families

Understand the lived experiences, resources, and assets families bring, including their fears and history.

EXPECT the most of and best from families through non-White lens

Must have high expectations of families and their ability to be and do the best.

EDUCATE families about systems and opportunities.

Elevate families' knowledge about policies and systems that may hamper their own and child development.
Reaching the 4Es

• Viewing parents as equal partners in determining the types of services that would be most beneficial
• Tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of families
• Integrating services and collaborating to support families with multiple service needs
• Creating opportunities for parents to receive support from peers to increase engagement, reduce stigma, and increase sense of connection to other parents with similar circumstances

Reaching the 4Es CONT’D

• Addressing trauma which can interfere with parenting and healthy child development
• Making programs culturally relevant to improve program effectiveness and participation across diverse families
• Enhancing efforts to involve fathers, who are underrepresented in parenting research
Creating anti-racist/anti-bias family systems and strategies requires:

- Science is clear that families matter for children's development and learning.
- Home-school connection reduces inequitable learning opportunities and experiences.
- Authentic partnership with families should be viewed as a social justice strategy.
- Partnering with families is the one strategy to ensure children are healthy and thrive.
- The 4Es – Exploration, Expectation, Education, and Equipment – are foundational for partnership with families.

Take home message

IT TAKES A VILLAGE!

Thank you!

Questions?
Comments?

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