



## FRONT PORCH SERIES BROADCAST CALLS

### HEAD START CARES: THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACTS OF PRESCHOOL SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL INTERVENTIONS AT SCALE

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## QUESTIONS FROM THE AUGUST 25, 2014 FRONT PORCH SERIES BROADCAST CALL

**Q:** [Did] the model developers find anything surprising about the implementation and findings, and are they using those results to do any quality improvement in their models?

**A:** We presented the findings to the developers only shortly before they were released both times. But we did work with the developers fairly closely throughout the implementation process. First, just helping us to build the professional development model and think about what was needed, and then throughout, their trainers really helped support the coaches and support implementation. So both at the time that we shared the findings, but also throughout, we were giving feedback to the developers and they were working with us and giving us feedback as well.

I think they heard a lot of constructive information about how this was going in a wide variety of sites. When we talked with the developers at the end of implementation, one thing they shared was that they were not as prepared as they thought they would be for scaling up so quickly. To have to have the right number of trainers to start training in such a large number of sites was really overwhelming for them. And I think the CARES study helped them build their capacity that way.

In terms of whether they're using that information to help guide their future endeavors, I think that many are and seem to be, but we'll have to see if any of them chime in.

**Q:** Someone wanted to know if you need to be a school social worker or a psychologist in order to administer the assessments. Do you want to talk a little bit about some of the tools you used and what training or background is needed for some of those?

**A:** For the observations, we have a survey form. They use generally either retired teachers or people with Bachelor's-level degrees in education or psychology to do the observations of the classroom. I know that Teachstone also might have some recommendations for who is appropriate to do CLASS observations. But we generally thought that that was an appropriate level.

In terms of the assessments of children, we also use a similar level of person to do these assessments, but there was a heavy training component to both of those. [It] probably took about a full week of training, and then a lot of reliability checks to get people out into the field.

**Q:** How about some of the other tools, like the CLASS? Do you want to talk about any of those assessments, the kind of training people need?

**A:** The CLASS has a training that is pre-specified, and I think it takes about two or three days. Similarly, we used Bachelor's-level people, and you watch videos and are trained by the CLASS folks for a couple of days. Then you have to do a lot of reliability videos to get certified to go out into the field. Once you're released, we continued to do some reliability checks.

[For] the Adapted Teaching SRS, we created our own training, which also took about—I think—two days. Again, you watch videos. You code them together. You talk about what you're seeing and get everyone reliable on seeing the same measures. So there is a protocol for how to get people trained.

- Q:** Another question has to do with how you selected these three enhancement models. Someone wondered if other models like Conscious Discipline were considered. How did your group go about deciding these were the three to try out?
- A:** At the beginning of the study, there was a large review by Karen Bierman, who was an academic partner, as well as some people at MDRC, including Pamela Morris, the PI. They reviewed a number of different programs, looking for programs that had a couple of different components. The first was that they had evidence of impacts on a smaller scale. They had to have some sort of a randomized control trial. They also had to have been used in similar populations in the past, and also be manualized enough or ready enough to scale up.

And on top of that, we sort of layered that we were trying to find theoretically distinct programs. Within the PATHS' kind of explicit, emotions-based programming, PATHS rose to the top, but there were other programs that were reviewed. Many of them, at this point, certainly have a lot of evidence, and even at that point may have had some evidence, but maybe not quite as much as that program.

TOOLS [of the Mind—Play] was a little unique, in that at the time that CARES started, it was fairly new and there weren't other programs like it. But because it was so interesting and so theoretically distinct, we included that. But it also had evidence of smaller scale RCT.



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