

The "Parent Connectors" Program

An empirical investigation of a parent support program

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What is Parent Connectors?

A telephone-based support for parents of children with emotional disturbances (ED).

- Trained family members serve as Parent Connectors to deliver family support to the parents in the study

Research Design

- Nine month pre-post design
- Two cohorts of Parent-Child dyads randomly assigned to two conditions

Comparison Group n=47

Teachers receive specialized training in increasing parent involvement

Experimental Group n=46

Teacher Training PLUS Parents receive weekly telephone calls from an experienced parent

Characteristics of Participants N=93

Student Gender

Male: n = 69 (74%)

Student Age

Mean age: 14.4

Age range: 10 to 19

People in the home

Mean # of persons: 4.5

Mean # of children: 2.8

Household Income

Median: \$25,200

Above Poverty Level: n = 50 (54%)

Below Poverty Level: n = 40 (43%)

Student Ethnicity

White n = 23 (25%)

Black n = 53 (57%)

Bi-racial n = 7 (8%)

Hispanic n = 7 (8%)

SDQ Total Difficulties

	Time1	Time2
Abnormal	n = 64 (69%)	44 (47%)
Borderline	n = 14 (15%)	17 (18%)
Normal	n = 15 (16%)	32 (34%)



Theoretical Framework (Adapted from Heflinger, Northrup, Sonnichsen, Brannan, 1998, page 263)

Delivering Support

Parent Connectors use a contact log to record:

- Every attempt to contact a parent by telephone
- The length of time spent talking to the parent
- Topics discussed during the call

These logs are collected by the Project Facilitator, who meets with the Connectors to ensure fidelity to the study.

For the 46 parents over the nine-month time periods:

- Parent Connectors on average made 53 phone calls to each parent
- Offered on average 4.7 hours of individualized support & information
- Topics most discussed were issues dealing with family life & school

Next Steps

- Complete analysis of all variables in the model:

Parent:

Involvement in school
Caregiver strain
Empowerment
Personal control
Stress

Child:

Attendance
Discipline referrals
Academic achievement
Emotional functioning
Use of mental health services

More Information

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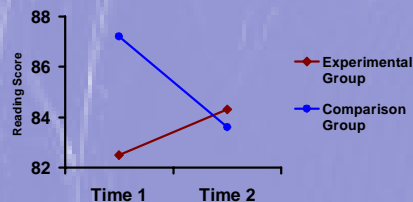
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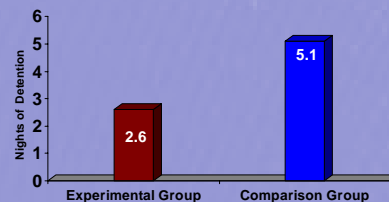
Reading Scores

Average Reading Scores For The Two Groups Over Time



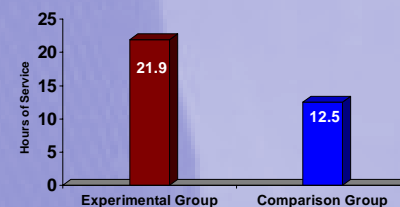
Nights in Detention

Average Number of Nights in Detention During Study Year



Hours of School Counselor Service

Average Hours of Counselor Services During Study Year



Parent Self Efficacy

Vanderbilt Mental Health Services Efficacy Questionnaire Over Time

