

# The Nurturing Parenting (NP) program is designed to foster positive parenting practices within families.

The *Pathways to Success Partnership*, a joint collaboration between *Shelby County Schools* (SCS) and the *Urban Child Institute*, has been researching factors associated with positive early childhood development, kindergarten readiness, and later academic achievement for several years.

Recently, they teamed with the *PeopleFirst Initiative* and the *Early Success Coalition* to study whether implementing an intentional positive parenting program in selected SCS pre-kindergarten (pre-k) classrooms will positively impact children’s success in school, as well as the interactions that parents and teachers have with those children.

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Pre-k teachers from six schools in SCS have attended training sessions this fall to help them create an NP-informed curriculum for the parents of their pre-k students. These teachers have scheduled four parent meetings this school year to teach this curriculum to their students’ parents.\*

The teachers have also designed small modules (“homework”) to keep parents engaged in the curriculum between the four parent-teacher sessions. Parents have also received easy-reader books to take home that were de-

veloped by the publishers of the NP curriculum.

**This NP-informed curriculum is being provided in addition to the high-quality pre-k curriculum present within typical SCS pre-k classes.**

Each of these six schools also has at least one pre-k classroom that did not receive the NP-informed curriculum. The teachers from those classrooms did not receive NP training, will not use an NP-informed curriculum during their parent engagement activities, and the easy-reader books were not supplied to the parents. These pre-k classrooms will operate as typical SCS pre-k classrooms would. This study design allows for comparisons between the children, parents, and teachers in these classrooms with the students, parents, and teachers in the classrooms that have received the NP-informed curriculum.

Because the NP program is designed to foster positive parenting interactions, and positive parenting is known to influence several dimensions of positive development and school success,<sup>2</sup> we are comparing several dimensions to evaluate whether using an NP-informed curriculum in SCS pre-k will result in positive outcomes for children, families, and schools:

**First**, children’s cognitive development will be assessed using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary

Test at the beginning and end of the pre-k year, as well as the Istation Early Reading assessment at the end of the pre-k year.

**Second**, parents’ attitudes and beliefs toward parent-child interactions and child rearing will be assessed using the Adult-Adolescent Parent Inventory at the beginning and the end of the pre-k year.

**Third**, teacher-child interactions will be assessed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System teacher observation at the beginning and end of the pre-k year.

Table 1 summarizes these assessments that will be used to evaluate child-level, parent-level, and teacher-level outcomes over the course of the pre-k school year.

Table 1. Nurturing Parenting Program (NPP) evaluation: Planned assessments for NPP parent group and Non-NPP parent group at fall (pre-test) and spring (post-test) testing periods, pre-k school year

NPP group and Non-NPP group (Comparison group)	
Pre-Test (Fall)	Post-Test (Spring)
<b>Children</b>	
PPVT	PPVT
-	Istation Early Reading
<b>Parents</b>	
AAPI-2	AAPI-2
<b>Teachers/Classroom</b>	
CLASS	CLASS

Note. PPVT: Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. AAPI-2: Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (2nd edition). CLASS: Classroom Assessment Scoring System.

\* One of these meetings has already been held, with positive overall feedback from the participating teachers.



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**Moreover, children's outcomes will be followed as they progress into their kindergarten year:**

First, as a part of an annual study opportunity, the Pathways to Success Partnership asked the parents of all pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students to complete a one-page survey on their child's socio-emotional development at five of the six schools in the study as a part of student registration.<sup>3</sup> These schools will be surveyed again at next year's registration, and the results of entering kindergartners from both the NP group and the comparison group will be compared. Second, children's kindergarten readiness information will be compared for children who were in the NP classrooms with the children who were in the comparison classrooms.

Positive early development encompasses many dimensions, including the physical, the cognitive, and the socio-emotional. Furthermore, children need positive support from their parents and teachers in order to learn and thrive. This study is designed to evaluate three key areas:

1. Whether implementing an NP-informed curriculum will help to influence parent-child and teacher-child interactions over the pre-k year,
2. Whether implementing an NP-informed curriculum will help to influence children's cognitive and socio-emotional development over the pre-k year, and
3. Whether implementing an NP-informed curriculum in pre-k will influence children's kindergarten readiness in the subsequent year

**The results of this study will help to inform whether implementation of an NP-informed curriculum will help to foster positive parenting practices and, in doing so, support children's development and kindergarten readiness.**

This evaluation is made possible by its many partners, including Shelby County Schools, the Urban Child Institute, the People-First Initiative, and the Early Success Coalition.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Family Development Resources. (2014). *What Are Nurturing Programs?* Retrieved from [www.nurturingparenting.com/NPLevels-Prevent.html](http://www.nurturingparenting.com/NPLevels-Prevent.html)

<sup>2</sup> The National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. (2013). *Understanding Family Engagement Outcomes: Research to Practice Series*. Retrieved from [eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/parent-child-relationships.pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/parent-child-relationships.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Samiei, S., Sell, M., & Imig, D. (2014). *Social-Emotional Development in Pre-Kindergartners and Kindergartners*. Retrieved from [www.memphisdatapartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/SCS\\_UCI\\_Brief2014\\_04.pdf](http://www.memphisdatapartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/SCS_UCI_Brief2014_04.pdf)

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