



# Parents as Teachers Model Goals

Revised 2025

Parents as Teachers® is an evidence-based home visiting model that promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. The home visiting model can be offered prenatally through kindergarten and is replicated by various types of organizations including health departments, nonprofit organizations, hospitals, and school districts.

The Parents as Teachers model offers a cohesive package of services for families with young children and is framed around four dynamic components: Personal Visits, Group Connections, Child Screenings, and Resource Network. These components are guided by explicit fidelity and quality standards that guide program service delivery and successful replication of the program.

Our home visiting professionals meet families where they are comfortable; each personal visit includes a focus on parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being.

Parents as Teachers evidence-based model is backed by more than 40 years of independent research including many evidence recognitions in the U.S. and Internationally.

## U.S. Recognitions

California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse (CEBC) for Child Welfare: [cebc4cw.org](http://cebc4cw.org), 2018.

Child Trends What Works Programs Database: [Childtrends.org/programs](http://Childtrends.org/programs), 2010.

Community-based Child Abuse Prevention's (CBCAP) Matrix of Evidence-Based Programs: [friendsnrc.org/evidence-based-practice-in-cbcap/evidencebasedpractice-directory](http://friendsnrc.org/evidence-based-practice-in-cbcap/evidencebasedpractice-directory), 2015.

Educational Program That Works by the National Diffusion Network: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED381535>, 1995.

Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness for Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting program (MIECHV): <http://homvee.acf.hhs.gov>, 2013.

Proven and Promising Practices website: [promisingpractices.net](http://promisingpractices.net), 2014.

Results First Clearinghouse Database: [www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/data-visualizations/2015/results-first-clearinghouse-database](http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/data-visualizations/2015/results-first-clearinghouse-database), 2021

Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse: <https://preventionservices.abtsites.com>, 2019.

## International Recognitions

Early Impact Foundation - United Kingdom, a database of effective early intervention programs: [eif.org.uk](http://eif.org.uk), 2021.

Grüne Liste Prävention – Germany, a database of programs that aim to prevent violence, crime, addictive behavior and other problem behaviors among children and adolescents: <https://www.gruene-liste-praevention.de/nano.cms/datenbank/information>, 2020.

National Academy of Parenting Practices' (U.K.) Commissioning Toolkit: [Nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive](http://Nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive), 2014.

PGF wirkt! – Switzerland, a list of effective prevention and health promotion projects: [pgfwirkt.ch/de](http://pgfwirkt.ch/de), 2020.

Phineo Wirkt! program for working with children in poverty in German: [phineo.org](http://phineo.org), 2018.



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Parents as Teachers model goals have expanded to ensure we continue to meet the needs of families and communities. Research supports our model goals including:

- **Increase parent knowledge of early childhood development and improve positive parenting practices**

Caregivers in Parents as Teachers were more likely to read aloud, tell stories, say nursery rhymes, and sing to their children.<sup>1</sup> Over 75% of parents in Parents as Teachers reported taking their children to the library regularly and modeled enjoyment of reading and writing.<sup>2</sup> Parents also engaged in more language and were more likely to promote reading and have more books in the home.<sup>3,4</sup> Overall parenting quality and interactive reading scores increased from involvement in Parents as Teachers, and mothers demonstrated more sensitivity to their children, which was directly connected to positive outcomes on child vocabulary.<sup>5,6</sup> Parents also showed significant improvements in parent knowledge, parenting behavior, and parenting attitudes, indicated a greater awareness of health and safety hazards, and demonstrated more safety practices in the home.<sup>6,7,8,9,10,11,12</sup>

- **Provide early detection of developmental delays and connection to services**

Annually, Parents as Teachers identifies approximately 32,000 newly identified development delays or health, hearing, or vision concerns.<sup>13</sup> Early identification of delays can lead to interventions being applied in a timely manner. Over half of children in Parents as Teachers who screened for developmental delays overcame these delays by age 3.<sup>14</sup>

- **Improve parent, child, and family health and well-being**

Parents as Teachers interrupts the harmful effect of early life stress on the brains of young children and demonstrates long-lasting positive biological effects on the mental health of children living in high-risk families.<sup>15</sup> Parents and families also displayed less parental and family stress than families not in the program.<sup>16</sup> Children were more likely to meet American Academy of Pediatrics well-child visit recommendations, and participation in Parents as Teachers was significantly related to well-child visit attendance rates.<sup>6,8,40</sup> Children were better able to sleep through the night and had more adaptive behaviors (e.g., less bottle feeding at night, better behavior/self-control).<sup>17</sup> Caregivers had lower Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI) Risk Scores and improved health care literacy and self-care indicators.<sup>10,18</sup> Parents as Teachers delivered with a focus on health and obesity prevention reduced obesity, enhanced health, and improved dietary intake, knowledge, and parental modeling among Parents as Teachers parents compared to the comparison parents.<sup>19</sup> Parents as Teachers mothers gained less weight weekly and total during gestation and through 12 months postpartum compared to the comparison mothers and were significantly more likely to reduce their intake of soda and other sugar sweetened beverages, increase physical activity, and achieve a weight loss and reduced weight circumference.<sup>20,21,22</sup> Parents as Teachers mothers are also able to be screened for postpartum depression and referred to services when appropriate.<sup>41</sup>

- **Prevent child abuse and neglect**

Parents as Teachers children had a decreased likelihood of child maltreatment substantiations (as measured by Child Protective Services maltreatment data) and were less likely to go to the emergency room to be treated for injury compared to children not in Parents as Teachers.<sup>9,11,23,24</sup> Parents as Teachers participation was also associated with a significantly lower likelihood of Child Protective Services reinvolvement and was related to 50% fewer cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect.<sup>25,26</sup>

- **Increase children's school readiness and success**

Children before age 3 demonstrated better adaptive behavior and higher levels of self-control, and scored significantly higher on initiative, achievement, social development, cognition, language development, vocabulary, persistence in task mastery, and executive function.<sup>1,3,9,10,17,27,28,29,30,31</sup> As children enter the school system, those who participated in Parents as Teachers perform better on third grade standardized tests in math, phonics, and comprehension as well as reading and writing (for English Language Learners).<sup>32,33</sup> Additionally, absence rates and suspension rates are lower for children that received Parents as Teachers.<sup>6,32</sup>





## ● Improve family economic well-being

Education and employment goals are among the top five types of goals set by caregivers at enrollment with Parents as Teachers. Parents as Teachers caregivers are more likely to gain employment (16% higher than comparison caregivers), enroll in high school (69% higher than comparison caregivers), and enroll in college (12% higher than comparison caregivers).<sup>34,35</sup> In MIECHV-funded Parents as Teachers programs, caregivers were also more likely to receive education or training, to use nonparental childcare, and were less likely to receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.<sup>9</sup> Parents as Teachers plus financial empowerment and education resulted in higher knowledge and uptake of Earned Income Tax Credit.<sup>36</sup>

## ● Strengthen community capacity and connectedness

Making referrals to additional community resources and services is an important way for Parents as Teachers to support families. Evaluation findings demonstrate the average number of referrals per family increased from 1.9 to 4.1 with Parents as Teachers.<sup>37</sup> Also, connections to referrals increased from 86.8% to 93.8% and were greater for Parents as Teachers caregivers.<sup>10,37</sup> Parents also experienced increases in social support in the areas of tangible support, positive interactions, informational support, affectionate support, and emotional support.<sup>38</sup> Parents as Teachers participation also encourages parents' active participation in their child's learning inside and outside of the home. In addition to Parents as Teachers parents being more likely to enroll their children in preschool, parents were more likely to attend parent-teacher conferences, PTA/PTO meetings and school events, volunteer in the classroom, and talk with their children's teacher.<sup>4,39</sup>

A comprehensive review of Parents as Teachers evidence can be found here:

<https://parentsasteachers.org/research-and-results>.

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