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Parents as Teachers Impact on Parent Knowledge and Parenting Practices

Parents as Teachers knows that a parent is their child's first and most important teacher. Partnering with parents to increase their knowledge of early childhood development and improve their positive parenting practices is a key component of the work of Parents as Teachers. Positive childhood experiences (PCEs) are associated with improved long-term health and wellbeing, increased educational and employment opportunities, and overall economic stability.¹ Expanding parent knowledge of early childhood development and promoting positive parenting practices can also help promote children's school readiness and prevent child abuse and neglect. More than four decades of research indicates that Parents as Teachers helps parents in having knowledge and behaviors that support healthy child development and overall family well-being.



Parents improve their parenting knowledge and skills.

- Parents as Teachers caregivers showed significant improvements in parent knowledge, parenting behavior, parenting attitudes, parenting skills, and the home environment.^{2,3,4}
- Greater improvements were seen the longer families were enrolled in Parents as Teachers.⁴
- Teen mothers receiving Parents as Teachers showed greater improvement in knowledge about discipline and organized their home environment in a more appropriate way.⁵
- Caregivers in Parents as Teachers indicated a greater awareness of health and safety hazards and demonstrated more safety practices in the home.^{5,6}
- Caregivers had significant improvements in their parenting practices after six months of Parents as Teachers in the areas of parenting efficacy and hopefulness.²
- Mothers in Parents as Teachers demonstrate more sensitivity to their children, which is directly connected to improvements in child vocabulary.⁷
- Overall parenting quality and interactive reading scores increased from involvement in Parents as Teachers.²
- Parents as Teachers parents were more likely to enroll their children in preschool, request parent-teacher conferences, attend PTA/PTO meetings and school events, volunteer in the classroom, and talk with their child(ren)'s teacher.^{8,9}
- Caregivers reported that Parents as Teachers increases the amount of time they spend with their child(ren), involvement in their education, effective interaction, understanding of child development, and decreases behavioral concerns in toddlers.¹⁰

- More than 3 in 4 caregivers in Parents as Teachers reported taking their child(ren) to the library regularly and modeled enjoyment of reading and writing.¹¹
- Parents as Teachers caregivers were more likely to read aloud, tell stories, say nursery rhymes, and sing with their children.¹²
- Parents as Teachers parents engaged their children with more language and were more likely to promote reading in the home.¹¹

Children are safe, healthy, and ready to learn.

- Children in Parents as Teachers have a 22% decreased likelihood of child maltreatment substantiations (as measured by Child Protective Services maltreatment data).¹³
- Parents as Teachers is associated with a significantly lower likelihood of Child Protective Services recidivism for families that had prior engagement with Child Protective Services.¹⁴
- Parents as Teachers participation is related to 50% fewer cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.¹⁵
- Children in Parents as Teachers are less likely to go to the emergency room to be treated for injury.³
- Parents as Teachers families have more books in the home.¹⁰



Supporting a Child's Learning

"I began my journey with the Hi'ilei program from a referral by the Healthy Mothers program. As a first-time mom, I wanted to learn new ways to interact with my newborn baby. I wanted to learn how to bond and become closer to my son. From my participation with the Hi'ilei program, I learned about the different developmental domains and how to notice them. I never thought my son would be able to do some of the things he can do and how much fun it was to learn about what his upcoming milestones would be and how I can support him in his learning."

— Parent at Hi'ilei Program Parents as Teachers (Waianae, HI)

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