



University of Pittsburgh/Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC

Principal Investigator:

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Project Title:

Early Childhood Partnership's **Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET)**: A University-Head Start Applied Research Collaborative in Appalachia (www.uclid.org)

Funding Agency and Research Project Period:

US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE): 2008-2011

Project Abstract:

The University of Pittsburgh and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, in a collaborative effort with Head Start partners in the Appalachian region, will be implementing the Early Childhood Partnership's **Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET)** model to conduct applied research on mentoring in order to promote effective Head Start teaching practices. Teachers assigned to the mentoring group (experimental) will receive an instructional module and on-site COMET mentoring training throughout the Head Start school year. Year 1 will consist of developing training content, strategies and measures, hiring project staff, and random selection of Head Start classrooms into mentoring (experimental) or control (no mentoring) groups. In Year 2 investigators will implement the COMET model by recording in-vivo classroom observations, conducting weekly individual mentoring sessions and monthly group mentoring sessions, and tracking progress observations of teaching practices to promote early school success skills in early literacy and social and self-regulatory behaviors in children. In Year 3 the COMET model will be implemented in the control groups. Analyses will include both E-C statistical analyses to document the efficacy of the COMET model and path analysis methods to identify specific professional development mentoring features that contribute to changes in both teacher and child behaviors. Results are expected to show the COMET model will mediate the development of desired instructional and management behaviors. In addition, it is expected that Head Start children taught by teachers who model desired instructional and management behaviors will have better early school success competencies (e.g., early literacy and social/self-control behaviors) at kindergarten transition than children whose teachers do not demonstrate these behaviors.

Sample:

174 Head Start Teachers
118 Head Start Classrooms
1,763 Head Start Children

Measures:

▪ **Teachers and Mentoring:**

Inventory of Practices to Promote Social and Emotional Competence (IPPSC)
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)
Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO)
SPECS Mentoring Monitor

▪ **Children:**

Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scale (PKBS-2) and/or
Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE)
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and/or
Basic School Skills Inventory (BSSI-3)