

Understanding and Improving Quality in Early Childhood Home Visits

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Introduction

- Home visitors and program administrators work hard to establish parent-provider relationships, deliver effective educational content, maintain sensitivity to family's diverse needs, and engage parents and children in activities.
- However, it is not easy to excel in all those areas all of the time.
- This study tested whether the Recipe 4 Success curriculum might improve multiple aspects of home visits at once.

Method

- 242 families (37% white, 25% Black, 19% Latinx, 17% Multiracial, and 2% Asian) with a 2-year-old were randomly assigned to continue receiving regular Early Head Start home visits or Recipe 4 Success.
- Recipe 4 Success was co-developed by Early Head Start administrators, home visitors, and university researchers. It consisted of 12 detailed and structured cooking lessons that were designed to teach parents how to sensitively scaffold their toddlers' development of self-regulation.
- Measures of quality were based on audio recordings of over 500 home visits (2-3 per family).
- Latent profile analysis was used to empirically identify distinct experiences within home visits.

40% of regular home visits were high in five indicators of quality compared to 83% of home visits that followed a more structured curriculum

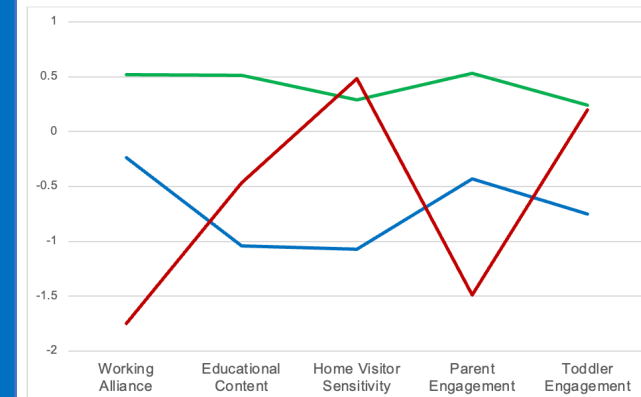


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Figure 1

Profiles of Home Visit Quality



Note. y-axis represents standardized scores in which a score of +/- 1 indicates 1 standard deviation above or below the sample mean.

Results

Significant differences between regular home visits and Recipe 4 Success home visits were identified within each profile:

- **Exemplary (profile in green):** 40% of regular home visits vs 83% of Recipe 4 Success home visits.
- **Room to grow (profile in blue):** 33% of regular home visits vs 12% of Recipe 4 Success home visits.
- **Child-focused (profile in red):** 27% of regular home visits vs 5% of Recipe 4 Success home visits.

Discussion

- In regular home visits, there was considerable variation in the quality of home visits families received.
- In Recipe 4 Success, a vast majority of families received home visits of exemplary quality.
- This study highlights the value of implementing detailed and structured curricula as a means of quality improvement.