

Focus on Parenting  
for  
The Achievement Gap Taskforce  
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## Margolies research on School-Based Child Abuse Prevention

### COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL-BASED CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

1. FIGHT DENIAL & PROJECTION
2. TAKE A PRIMARY PREVENTION ORIENTATION
3. PROVIDE LOCAL SCHOOL AND DISTRICT-WIDE ABUSE PREVENTION TEAMS
4. PROVIDE ADEQUATE STAFF TRAINING, AND SCHOOL POLICY TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAM
5. PREVENT EDUCATOR & COMMUNITY LEADER ABUSE
6. INSURE SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS FOR PREGNANT TEENS AND NEW MOTHERS
7. PROVIDE PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN
8. PROVIDE CHILD VICTIMIZATION PREVENTION PROGRAMS WITH PROVEN EFFECTIVENESS
9. PROVIDE PARENTING AND ABUSE EDUCATION COMPONENTS FOR PARENTS
10. COLLABORATE WITH POLICE, COMMUNITY LEADERS, YOUTH PROGRAMS, & CHURCHES

# Headlines your not likely to see...

- ***Red Sox Acquire Jeter for 100 Mil/year – 5 year deal.***
- ***“Republican’s and Democrats Join Forces to Make Primary Prevention our National Priority”***

# Headline you did see...

- “Pope Declares Condoms Safe as Health Prevention for Heterosexuals, Gays, and Transvestites”
- “What’s so funny ‘bout peace, love and understanding?” E. Costello

# Goals and Objectives for Today

- Senator Harp: ‘We know that quality early childhood care and better parenting are components of closing the achievement gap – we want to know how to make significant improvements in these areas.’
- Describe what will make a community wide difference to raise parental involvement and expectations, and children’s accountability to study and learn

# Causes of Achievement Gap

- Achievement gap is systems/sociologically rooted problem (as well as educationally rooted)
- Achievement gaps exist across the world due to inequities related primarily to (various reviews):
  - Gender, race, poverty, prejudice, culture, national policies and emphases, medical care, early childhood care, pre-natal care, disability, parenting variables, teacher variables, teaching method variables, school quality variables
  - Early child care: 2/3 of measured “ability” at age 17 determined in first four years, much of that due to vocabulary experiences in the home; children “caught up though pre-school education lose gains in elementary school
  - Our focus: Parenting variables: Parental expectations, parent involvement in school, parenting skills, preparation to become a parent, nurturing from conception throughout development
  - Gap between children with prepared vs. unprepared parents

# Research on educational outcomes and variables related to parenting

- Educational Outcomes are Highly Related to:
  - Pre-natal and early child care
  - Importance parent places on education
  - Level of parental involvement in education
  - Child health and attendance
  - Child abuse history
  - Parenting skills
  - Fathering and co-parenting skills

# Special Problems for High and Low Achieving (Inner City) Students

- **Low SES**

- Poverty, absent parents, low parental expectations regarding education, high absenteeism (Maslow's needs), poor parental involvement, generations with history of poor school results.
- Higher proportion of special needs children related to trauma, child abuse, poor pre-natal care, poor health (Perry's pyramid of brain damage)
- Enter school with deficits
- Student and parent discouragement - seeing their gap as unchangeable
- Joining of negative peer families (gangs) to replace family

- **Mid and High SES Ceiling**

- Poor student engagement, less motivation to excel
- Lowered curriculum standards for broader achievement levels
- Variable parental expectations regarding education
- Learning environment difficulties, too much negative entertainment

# “Parenting” skills need to be taught

- “Educating all future parents, not just those at high risk for maltreating their children, should be a national priority. The United States currently places more emphasis on educating and licensing drivers than on preparing the next generation of parents.”  
U.S. Department of Justice, Juvenile Justice Bulletin, August, 1997.
- Prevention: Youth Development Series “We are living in a child illiterate society – we spend over a billion dollars each year to protect kids from their parents”  
Bruce Perry, M.D.
- “It is the primary role of society to teach men how to father” Margaret Mead

# Parenting Education

- Improving scope and utilization of existing and new parenting programs for adults.
- Developing educational programs for youth in human growth and development, and parenting.

# For Adults: A Population Approach to Parenting– e.g. Triple P

- Level 1 – All parents interested in information about promoting their child’s development
- Level 2 – Parent’s with specific concerns
- Level 3 – Parents with specific concerns who require consultation or skill development
- Level 4 – Parents with children with severe behavior problems
- Level 5 – Multiple family problems/parents at risk of child maltreatment

# For youth: Education in Human Growth and Development

- Content about how humans grow, develop, and learn, and what nurturing skills best fit human needs. Development of language, cognition, motivation to learn
- Parenting education for next generation
- Fatherhood training
- Child safety education, cycle of violence education
- Biology, neurobiology, how the brain learns and grows
- Mental health and wellness
- Integrates with SEL
- Engages all level students with high interest education about self/others/generations
- See ten curriculum objectives handout/Prepare Tomorrow's Parents Website

# School is the best place to teach parenting and HGD

- length, breadth, repetition important
- Parents don't take parenting education but will in the next generation
- Improved student engagement due to relevancy and high interest content
- SEL topics provide immediate improvements in engagement and attitude toward school
- Direct instruction works
- Instruction can be infused across curriculum and delivered in classes in mid, and high school
- Effective curriculums can serve as models for future curriculums

# Review of Research on HGD Education Impacting Educational and Life Outcomes

- Child safety literature
  - Teen pregnancy literature
- SEL programs – Reasoning, resilience, responsibility, emotional intelligence (Bracket)
- Parenting education for children
- Fatherhood literature

# Boy's Responsibility Class

- 1. "I never saw my father, only in pictures. My mom has heard from him but I remember him from when I was a baby but I heard of him that he wasn't doing that good in Puerto Rico because he had a lot of drugs. I really wish I could see him in real life not in a picture. Two ways I would like to be like my father is to work hard as he is to give money to us. Another way is to be strong like my father to protect myself the way he did. Two ways I would not like to be like my father is not to do drugs like him. Another reason is to be not wasting money just for some dumb stuff like drugs."
- 2. "My father has not been there for me but he still want to be the best father he can be. My father was in the streets till that day he got shot. God gave him a second chance of life because he is still living this day. But he is my father and I love him. Two ways I would like to be my father is to work hard and to talk two languages. Two ways I would not like to be my father is to be better than him and to not do drugs or sale drugs."
- 3. "I hate my father. I don't want to be anything like him".

# Primary Prevention is the answer

- ‘ It is not sufficient for teacher education...or single-bullet approaches like leadership, multiculturalism, curriculum, Head Start, charter schools, small schools or classes... accountability actions, summer reading programs...to shrink the gap by even one grade level’ - Portes
- An organized, sustainable, and comprehensive prevention approach is needed
- Comprehensive birth to five plans around the State include recommendation of parenting education for all students

# Toward Closing the Achievement Gap Through Parent Education: Specific Recommendations

- Population-based parenting program for the entire community, layered in intensity
  - Triple P – Sanders and colleagues
  - Nurturing programs - Bavoleck
- Education for students in their own growth and development and preparation for parenthood
  - Half year intensive course in middle school for all students
  - Half year intensive course in high school for all students
  - Required for graduation
  - Curriculum k-12 infused with social-emotional learning and human growth and development emphasis

# Four pronged approach to closing the gap

- Sustainable population-level based parenting program
- Education for 100% of students in their own growth and development and preparation for parenthood
- Effort must be scaled to size with other Educational reforms found critical and replicable.
- Longitudinal experimental design evaluations