

Preschool Expulsion

Carlson, J. S., Mackrain, M. A., van Egeren, L. A., Brophy-Herb, H., Kirk, R. H., Marciniak, D., & ... Tableman, B. (2012). Implementing a statewide early childhood mental health consultation approach to preventing childcare expulsion. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 33*(3), 265-273. doi:10.1002/imhj.21336

School expulsion and suspension have become ever more prevalent during preschool. Although promoting positive mental health during early childhood has been found to be linked to better school adjustment and positive academic outcomes, much remains to be learned. The present article describes an early childhood mental health consultative services program and preliminary results of fidelity to the approach by consultants across 31 counties in Michigan. Carlson and colleagues provide an overview of the lessons learned over the last decade about development, implementation and evaluation of effective early childhood mental health consultation programs that support the prevention of expulsion during the early years. The authors provide suggestions about advancing research in this area, particularly as to how such programs relate to improvements in child outcomes, suggesting that relying solely on the ECMHC process is insufficient and other factors should be considered.

Garrity, S., Longstreth, S., Salcedo-Potter, N., & Staub, A. (2016). Using the Teaching and Guidance Policy Essentials Checklist to Build and Support Effective Early Childhood Systems. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 44*(3), 209-216. doi:10.1007/s10643-015-0713-6

Preschool expulsion is highly correlated with challenging behaviors exhibited by children within the school environment, and children from low-income backgrounds are at greater risk for experiencing behavior problems. Previous research has shown that children labelled with a behavior problem in preschool tend to experience problems throughout the elementary years as well as during adolescence. There is a need to address this problem in early childhood. The authors of the present article suggest what is needed is a “teaching and guidance policy essentials checklist” (TAG-PEC) to assess the quality of early childhood discipline practices. Based on data from 282 guidance policies using the checklist, Garrity and colleagues found that many discipline policies are not high quality. Although the sample size is small the authors nevertheless suggest the results can be used to help early childhood professionals develop evidence-based high-quality discipline systems that support children, families and teachers.

Gilliam, W. S., Maupin, A. N., & Reyes, C. R. (2016). Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Results of a Statewide Random-Controlled Evaluation. *Journal Of The American Academy Of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 55*(9), 754-761. doi:10.1016/j.jaac.2016.06.006

Challenging classroom behaviors can lead to preschool expulsion. It has been suggested that mental health providers offer guidance to early childhood teachers and other professionals on how to address problems to avoid expulsion. Few randomized-controlled evaluations of early childhood mental health consultations have been published to support this proposal. Using a randomized control treatment design this article examines the effect of a statewide mental

health program on decreasing challenging child behavior problems and improving classroom quality. The findings from the evaluation show that incorporating mental health services into early childhood settings can lead to a reduction of early problem behaviors. The authors provide additional clinical guidance for the reader.

Gilliam, W. S., & Shahar, G. (2006). Preschool and child care expulsion and suspension: Rates and predictors in one state. *Infants & Young Children, 19*(3), 228-245. doi:10.1097/00001163-200607000-00007

Over the last several years, preschool expulsion has been on the rise. Expelling a child from school is seen as the strictest form of discipline. To get a sense of what leads teachers to expel a preschool child the authors of the current article examine the rates and predictors of preschool expulsion in a randomly selected group of teachers in Massachusetts during a 12-month period. The authors found that preschool expulsion was more than 34 times the K-12 rate and more than 13 times the national K-12 rate. Classrooms with greater numbers of Latino children and teachers with poorer job satisfaction led to a higher number of suspensions. Higher levels of teacher stress tended to predict increased preschool expulsion. The findings are discussed in the context of early childhood education policy and provision of mental health consultation services.

Perry, D., Dunne, M., McFadden, L., & Campbell, D. (2008). Reducing the Risk for Preschool Expulsion: Mental Health Consultation for Young Children with Challenging Behaviors. *Journal of Child & Family Studies, 17*(1), 44-54. doi:10.1007/s10826-007-9140-7

With the rise of preschool expulsion providing children with mental health counseling has become a priority. It has been suggested that young children who have access to mental health counseling have fewer incidences of expulsion. The pathways through which this happens are a little less clear. The current article examines the relationship between providing childcare providers with effective strategies that they can use with young children who are at risk for expulsion and the reduction in expulsion. The findings suggest that children who are risk for expulsion and receive individualized consultation show an increase in prosocial behaviors and fewer problem behaviors. The authors point out that the study is limited due to weaknesses in the design, implementation of the outcome evaluation, and program implementation. They nevertheless suggest that results support the need for early mental health consultation.

Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Winton, A. W., Karazsia, B. T., & Singh, J. (2013). Mindfulness training for teachers changes the behavior of their preschool students. *Research In Human Development, 10*(3), 211-233. doi:10.1080/15427609.2013.818484

The research shows that about 10% to 25% of preschool children engage in challenging behaviors in the school setting. To date there are few studies that have examined teacher's management of preschool children's behavior. There has been a recent move to introduce mindfulness techniques into teacher training to reduce stress, improve well-being and assist with classroom management. This article measured the effects of an 8-week mindfulness

training course taken by preschool teachers on the children in their classroom. The authors found that during the mindfulness training sessions children's challenging behaviors decreased and they were more receptive to teacher's requests. Although the findings are limited and not generalizable because of the design, Singh and colleagues suggest that results demonstrate the effects of mindfulness training with teachers having a positive effect on children's behavior.

Upshur, C., Wenz-Gross, M., & Reed, G. (2013). A Pilot Study of a Primary Prevention Curriculum to Address Preschool Behavior Problems. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 34(5), 309–327. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-013-0316-1>

Providing early intervention and prevention is critical for addressing preschool expulsion. Addressing behavioral problems early is important because left unchecked they can lead to poor mental health and academic achievement outcomes. To date there are few curricula that address social emotional development and those show mixed evidence of success. To address the gap in the literature the present study tested the Second Step Pre/Kindergarten Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum to see if it could improve behavior problems and prosocial skills as rated by the teacher; improve the classroom climate, and finally improve the teacher's interaction skills. The trends in the results suggest classroom climate and teacher interaction outcomes improved. Despite the positive findings the study has a number of limitations with the authors suggesting that future research should include larger sample sizes and carefully document the control classrooms curricula, include direct childhood assessments, and examine the pathways through which the child's behavior might change.