

Enhancing Professional Development

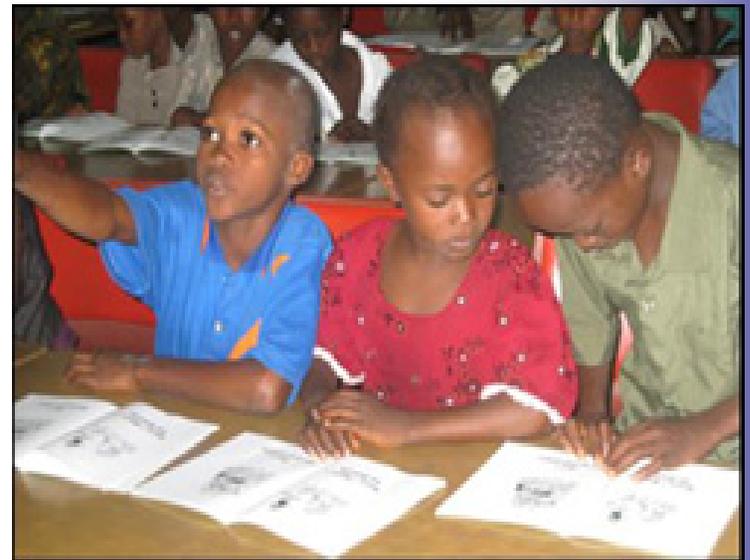
Project Great Start Professional Development Initiative

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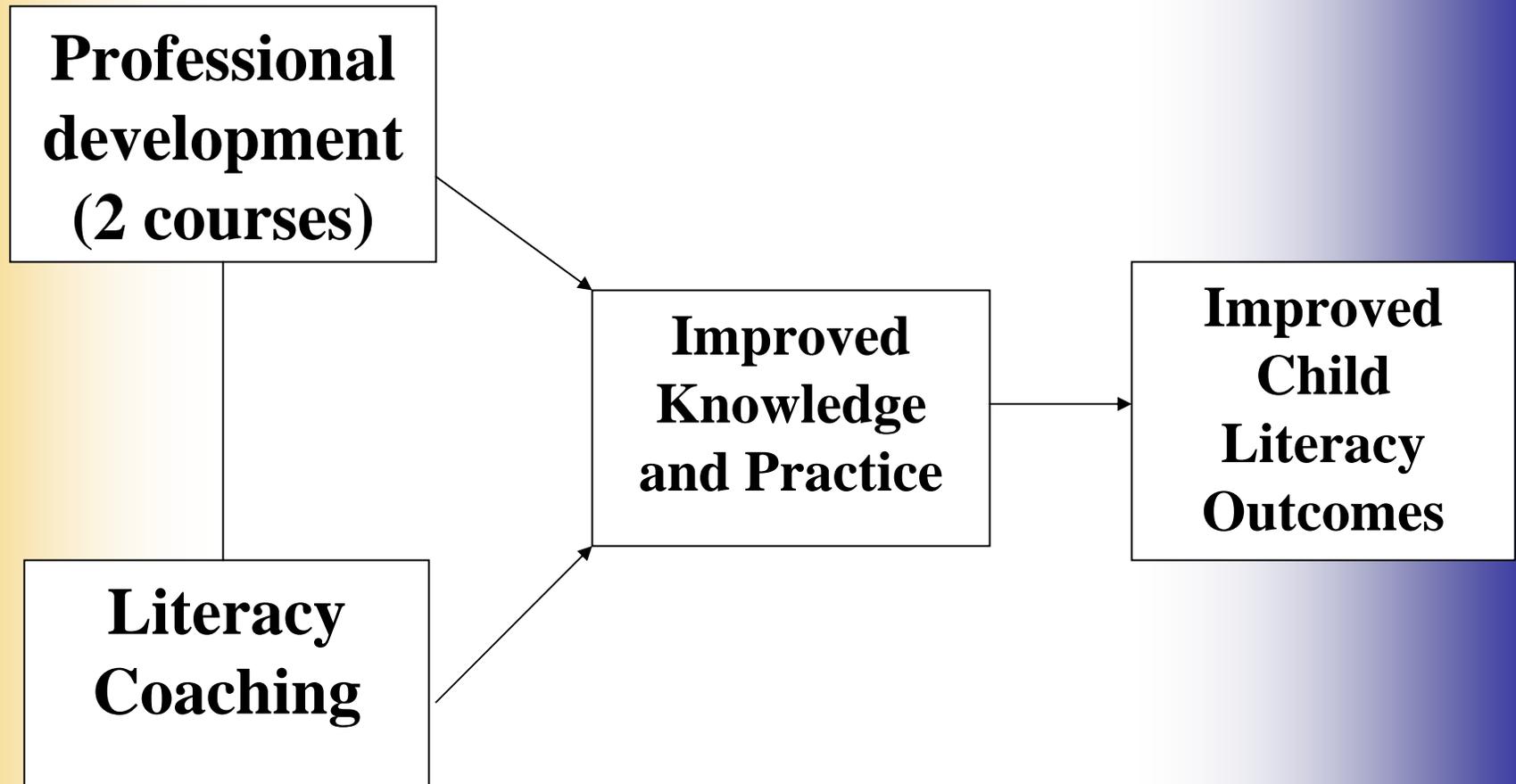


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- Improving teacher professional development in child care settings *can* improve children's literacy achievement



Conceptual Model



Sample

- Child care providers working with disadvantaged children in four Michigan cities (N=336)
- Center- and home-based settings
- Treatment Conditions:
 - *Course with coaching (N=85)
 - *Course only (N=124)
 - *Control Group (N=127)
- Three to four children per provider (N=1008)



Professional Development: Language and Literacy Course

- Research-based Core Competencies
- Syllabi aligned across courses at all four Community Colleges



Coaching

- Random assignment
- Trained and supported by Community Colleges using a research-based coaching model
- Up to 8 months of weekly coaching sessions



Measures: Language and Literacy Practice

*Early Language and Literacy Classroom
Observation (ELLCO) (Smith & Dickinson, 2002)

*Child/Home Early Language and Literacy
Observation (CHELLO) (Neuman, Dwyer, & Koh, in
press)

*Shared Items



Measures: Child Outcomes

*Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III) (Dunn & Dunn, 1997)

*Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001)

Letter-Word Identification

Applied Problems

*Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Pre-K (PALS) (Invernizzi, Sullivan, Meier, & Swank, 2002)

Beginning Sounds Awareness

Nursery Rhymes Awareness

*Concepts of Writing



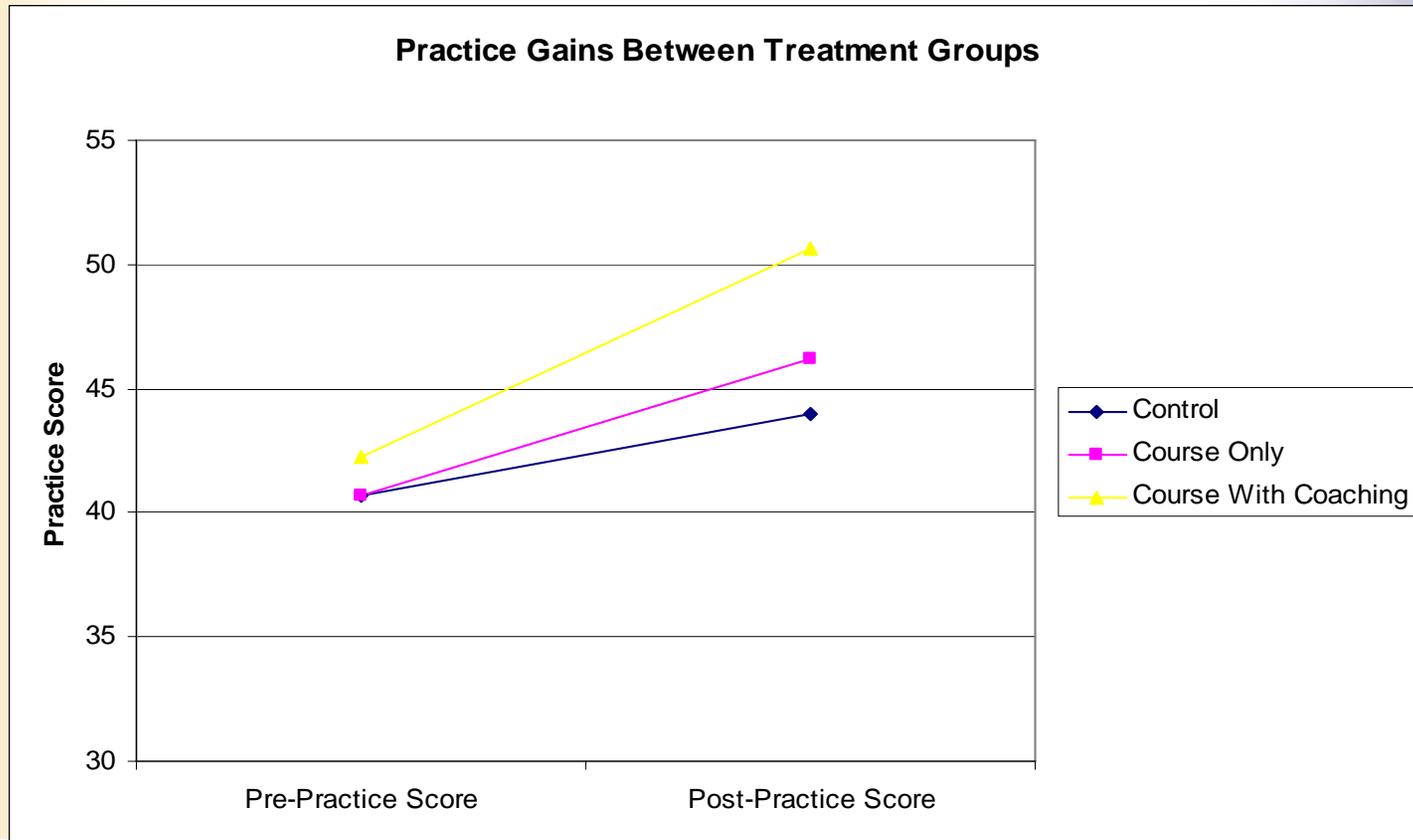
Key Research Questions



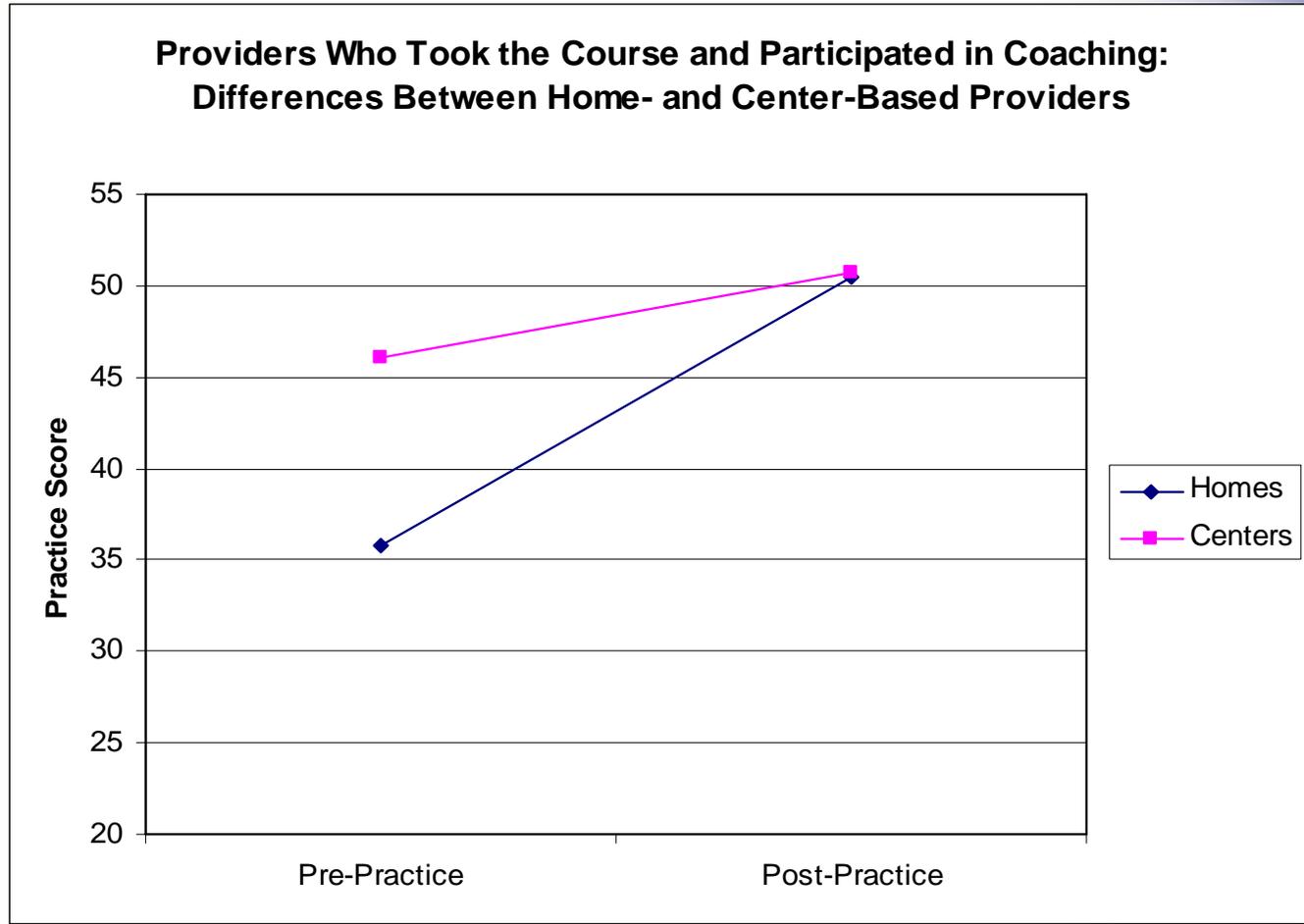
1. Does professional development improve teacher knowledge
2. Does professional development improve practice?
 - a. Is this professional development model equally effective for improving practice in both home-and center-based settings?
2. Does improved practice influence children's achievement?



Does professional development, in the form of language and literacy coursework and coaching, improve language and literacy practice?



Is this professional development model equally effective for improving practice in both home- and center-based settings?



How does improved practice influence children's achievement?

Experiencing larger improvements in practice seems to lead to larger child growth on important outcomes

- PPVT
- Concepts of Writing



Key Findings

- Coaching matters for improving practice
- Coaching is especially beneficial for home-based providers
- Improvements in practice lead to improvements in children's achievement



An In-depth Look at Coaching

- What is Coaching?
- Exemplary Elements of Coaching
- The Coaching Cycle
 - Troubleshooting challenges
 - Sharing solutions



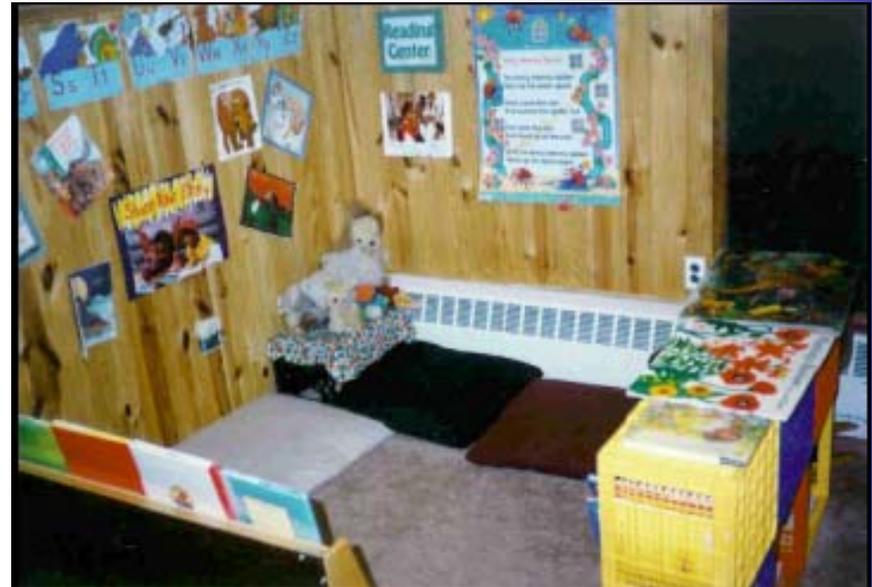
What is Coaching?

- Professional development training
- Forms of Coaching
 - Technical
 - Problem Solving
 - Team-Building
 - Reflective Practice
- Focus of Coaching
 - Content
 - Student



Technical Coaching

- Helps teachers apply new practices and strategies
- Effective and skillful implementation
- Structure & organization of educational setting to provide better learning opportunities
- Coach as “expert”



Problem-Solving Coaching

- Identify and solve a specific problem
- Focus on struggling learners, problem behaviors identified by teacher
- Solution-focused
- Collaborative



Team-Building Coaching

- Teachers work together across different classrooms
- Develop a “community of learners”
- Increases dialogue about instructional practices, challenges, students
- Collaborative



Reflective Practice Coaching

- Key aspect of most effective coaching interactions
- Collaborative reflection between coach and teacher on instruction, planning
- Coach as guide



Diagnostic/Prescriptive Coaching

- Helps teachers understand & acquire skills in teaching essential content
- Identify theory and research relevant to daily practice
- Build teacher knowledge base



Focus on Child

- Analysis of children's work and assessment data
- Interpret child behavior appropriately
- Grouping practices
- Instructional materials



Exemplary Elements of Coaching



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On-Site

- “Here and Now”
- Modeling (Demonstration, Co-Teaching) leads to greater “buy in”
- Least disruptive to teacher’s schedule
- Coaches better able to identify specific areas for improvement



Balanced and Sustained

- One-time workshops ineffective
- Intensive - need time
- Ongoing - weekly, throughout year



Good Coaches Don't Dictate

- Facilitate reflection
- Observe
- Listen
- Know when to push
- Know when to stand back



Children Benefit from Strong Teacher-Coach Interactions

- Achievement levels rise as teacher-coach interaction levels rise
- Establish rapport
- Trust
- Respect
- Concern for the learner



Provide Feedback



- Immediate
- Descriptive - not evaluative
- Be specific
- Focus on behavior, not the person
- Share information rather than advise
- Explore alternatives
- Always start with positive
- Don't overload with too much at once



Match/Complement Teachers' Behavioral Style

- Get to know personality
- Knowledge of topic
- Technical skill
- Styles of communication/learning



Promote Professional Reflection



- Goal: Improved practices
- Self-analysis
- Self-directed learning
- Must devote adequate time



Coaches Must be Well Trained

- Interpersonal skills
- Content knowledge
- Pedagogical knowledge
- Knowledge of curriculum
- Awareness of coaching resources
- Knowledge of practice of coaching



Good Coaching is Collaborative

- Teachers as equals
- Reflect, plan and work together
- Regular debriefing
- Sharing ideas



Prioritize



- Assist teachers in identifying their own professional development needs
- Strengths and weaknesses



The Coaching Cycle



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Reflection

- Open-ended
- Based on data gathered in observation



Reflection Example

“[We] met to review a draft of the published schedule. We continued to brainstorm about room arrangement and how to best support children and their play. We observed the loud loft play interrupting the children who were attempting to look at books. We saw books left on the floor and trampled. We also saw that the pretend play items end up scattered around all areas of the room.”



Set a Goal

New Goal: Create a space in the classroom for a developed and nurturing Reading Center

Children's Literacy Skill Development

- Oral language
- Phonological awareness
- Print concepts
- Written expressions
- Letter knowledge



Identify Desired Outcomes

- When you think about the goal you have set, what do you want to see in your classroom?
“a safe, quiet reading area as well as a manageable, imaginative pretend play area to support meaningful, productive play.”
- What do you want your children to be doing?
“utilizing and benefiting from having a new Reading Center”
- What do you expect to be doing?
“guiding and supporting children”



Identify Strategies

- Identify and build on strengths
- What new strategies could you try?



Newly opened Reading Center. Opened with limited books as teacher and coach introduced the area and guided the children through caring for their new books and space.



Create an Action Plan

- Tasks – what and who
- Materials and Resources
- Deadlines



Enjoying the newly opened Reading Center



Before and After - Writing Center



Before



After

Added a variety of new materials, journals for written expression.



Before and After – Block Play



Placed blocks in larger, labeled container.



Before and After – Dramatic Play Area



Organized and labeled dramatic play center.



Challenges of Coaching

- “Buy in” - commitment
- Authority to make changes
- Resources
- Time



Small Group Activity

20 minutes



- Troubleshooting Challenges
 - Brainstorming Solutions



Scenario #1

- Sandy has 16 years experience in early childhood education. She currently runs her own family day care. Her coach, Carol, is frustrated because Sandy is resistant to many of her suggestions. When Carol makes a new suggestion, Sandy often responds, “I already tried that and it didn’t work”.

What advice do you have for Sandy and Carol to improve their coaching relationship?



Scenario #2

- Brenda works in a Head Start program and has been working with a coach weekly for the past month. Brenda really wants to try some of the new strategies she is learning from her coach, but the lead teacher in her classroom is not very receptive to making changes in the program.

How can Brenda and her coach make the best of the this situation?



Scenario #3

- Due to time constraints and lack of additional support staff, Alice (coach) and Debbie rarely have a chance to debrief together at the end of their coaching session. Alice is also growing more concerned about the fact that Debbie often leaves the room when Alice is introducing a new activity to the children.

What are some issues Alice and Debbie need to address to maximize the effectiveness of the coaching process?



Scenario #4

- Tammy has 12 years experience in child care and feels that the coaching intervention is a complete waste of her time. Although she cares greatly about the children, she feels she is too busy to reflect on her practice, set new goals, or make any changes to her daily routine. She feels she is being forced to have a coach by her center director and resents the imposition on her time. “After all”, she thinks, “what do I have to learn from a coach that I don’t already know?”

How might Tammy and her coach begin to establish a good rapport with each other?



Scenario #5

- Karen works in a center with very few resources. Her classroom currently has no designated reading area. The few books Karen has, she keeps out of the children's reach because she doesn't want them to be damaged. So far, her coach has been unsuccessful in convincing her to put the books down for the children.

How could Karen and her coach work together to make the books accessible to the children while also keeping them in good condition?



Wrap Up Q & A



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Contact Information

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<http://www.soe.umich.edu/greatstart/index.html>

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