

**Program Evaluation
Parents as Teachers
Southern Boone County Schools
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Why does our school support this program?

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a home-school-community partnership which supports parents in their role as their child's first and most influential teachers. What began with four pilot sites in 1981 was implemented statewide with the passage of the Early Childhood Development Act of 1984 which mandated that every school district provide parents education and screening services to families with children ages prenatal to kindergarten entry. Parents in every Missouri school district can choose to take advantage of PAT services which include personal visits from certified parent educators, group meetings, developmental screenings, and connections with other community resources.

According to the Parents as Teachers National Center website, Parents as Teachers is listed as a model program by [Strengthening America's Families: Effective family programs for prevention of delinquency](#), listed as "What Works" in [Child Trends Guide to Effective Programs for Children and Youth](#) under "Parenting or Family Component" and "Home visiting", listed on the Proven and Promising Practices [web site](#), listed as a best practice on the Center for Substance Abuse Technologies [website](#), listed as a promising program by the [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\) Model Program Guide](#), given a Level 3 rating by [Helping America's Youth](#), listed as an "Educational Program that Works" by the [National Diffusion Network](#), 1995, cited as an evidence-based and promising program that prevents child maltreatment by [Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina](#), listed as evidence-based on [Health Matters in San Francisco](#) website developed by the Building a Healthier San Francisco coalition and the Healthy Communities Foundation, given Level 3 (promising) in scientific rating and Level 2 (medium) in relevance to child welfare rating by the [California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare](#).

According to state findings:

- * PAT children were significantly more advanced in development, problem solving, and social development at age three than comparison children.
- * 99.5% of participating families were free of child abuse and neglect.
- * School districts saw significant cost savings by reduced placement in special education, fewer retention, and less remedial reading.
- * Early gains were maintained in elementary school, based on standardized tests.
- * Significantly more PAT parents took an active role in their child's education.

What occurs within this program?

Personal Visits: One of three certified parent educators offers a personal visit with parents in their homes or virtually. Information is shared on growth and development, what to expect and look for, along with guidance to foster the child's language, cognitive, social-emotional, and motor skill development. The program also provides free educational materials for use in the home. Currently, we are offering:

- A visit every 4 weeks for families with children prenatal to kindergarten entry.
- A visit every 2 weeks for families with children prenatal to 3 years old who are considered low income.

Group Connections: Group connections include discussion, sharing experiences and/or speakers on topics such as reading, nutrition, safety, etc. Group connections address topics appropriate for prenatal to kindergarten entry. During a typical year we offer monthly group connections to our families. This year due to COVID-19 we have not been able to host any in person group events. We have had several virtual group connections including Songs and Storytime, Parent Cafes and a 10 week series on Conscious Discipline. We are planning to resume in person group events this summer with some outdoor events.

Developmental Screenings: Periodic evaluations of children's development of hearing, vision, and health are available and conducted in-home, the PAT room or in childcare centers in the district. Screenings are meant to be helpful to parents in evaluating their child's general progress and continuing development. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3rd Edition (ASQ-3) is used for children 3 months to 66 months. Along with the ASQ-3 we are also using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional 2nd Edition (ASQ:SE2) We are currently using the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning-4th edition (DIAL-4) to screen children 3 years old to kindergarten entry. The results of these screenings provide positive feedback in the areas of normal development and stepping stones for further assessment in areas of concern. We partner with Kids Sight for vision screenings and University Missouri Speech and Language School for hearing screenings twice a year. Referrals to health agencies, First Steps, and Early Childhood Special Education evaluation can be made based upon the results from these assessments.

Drop In and Play Sessions: Drop in and Plays have been suspended for this school year due to COVID-19 but we are hopeful that we will be able to resume them as soon as they are safe as we feel they are such a vital piece of our program. These informal gatherings of children and parents offer opportunities to come to "school" in the PAT room for fun, socialization, and to share resources. Some parents did not have positive experiences when they were in school, so Drop in and Play can be a non-threatening way to enter into the school system again, with a positive feeling.

Lend & Learn SoBoCo: Starting in 2003-2004, PAT became a participant in the Boone County Educare program called Lend & Learn. Under a grant, PAT was given toys and equipment that could be checked out by PAT families. These materials are available for check-out at any of the PAT room activities and may be brought by parent educators to a family's home on a personal visit for a family to borrow for a month. Materials are offered for all age groups.

Lending Library: Children's books and take-home book bags, complete with ideas for activities to extend a child's learning, are available in the PAT room. Child-rearing books, videos, and parenting magazines can be checked out by parents. Some books are donated, but most are accumulated from bonus points through Scholastic Book Clubs, a resource offered to parents on a monthly basis.

Facebook Page and Website: Parents as Teachers has a website that we use to keep parents up to date on what is happening and new families can also use it to enroll. Feel free to visit our page at sbcpat.weebly.com. We have a very active Facebook page that we use to keep parents engaged with the current happenings with our program and community.

End of Year Parent Satisfaction Survey: At the end of the school year, each parent is asked to complete an anonymous survey about the services offered during that year. They may share which components of our program helped them as they navigated their way through that year's challenges and successes. The information that is received from the surveys is used by the parent educators as we map out the services that will be offered the next school year.

Recruitment: PAT, as a school program, is unique in that children/parents do not always come to us. Families must first become aware of the program and its purpose, then voluntarily enroll. Southern Boone County Schools continue to develop appropriate human, technological, and financial resources to deliver the program and service in the most cost-effective manner possible. Yearly recruitment efforts continue and are ongoing to increase recognition and visibility to improve participation in the program and generate support. Recruitment efforts include district/teacher awareness through sharing of PAT information in each building. PAT information is included in the Primary Handbook and the district website. We also now have our own online enrollment form. This year the Boone County Journal has written a couple articles highlighting our program.

What data illustrate the effectiveness of this program?

In addition to research data described earlier on the PAT Program, the Southern Boone School District's program offers the following statistics as evidence of our program's effectiveness. The data are for the 2019-2020 school year.

Screening

- 229 children ages three months to kindergarten entry were screened in overall development, language, hearing and vision
- 39 children were identified with possible developmental delays and were referred for further evaluation.

Parent Education

- 120 families with children ages prenatal to kindergarten entry received parent education services.
- Of those 120 families we served 202 children.

Families Receiving Additional Services

Additional services are available to families who fit into one or more of the following 18 high-need categories:

- o Child Abuse or Neglect- 3 families served
 - o Child with disabilities or Chronic Health Condition- 9 families served
 - o Court-Appointed Legal Guardian and/or Foster Care-0 families served
 - o Death in Immediate Family-3 families served
 - o Domestic Violence-2 families served
 - o Homeless or UNstable Housing- 0 families served
 - o Incarcerated Parents- 3 families served
 - o Low Educational Attainment-1 families served
 - o Low Income-14 families served
 - o Military Family -2 family served
 - o Parent with Disabilities or Chronic Health Condition -11 families served
 - o Parent with Mental Illness-16 families served
 - o Recent Immigrant or Refugee Family-2 families served
 - o Single Parent Household -9 families served
 - o Speakers of Other Languages/English Language Learners-2 family served
 - o Substance Abuse-6 families served
 - o Teen Parent-1 families served
 - o Very Low Birth Weight- 1 families served
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- 23 of participating families with children ages prenatal to kindergarten met one of the high needs characteristics.
 - 15 of participating families with children ages prenatal to kindergarten entry met two of the high needs characteristics.
 - 6 of participating families with children ages prenatal to kindergarten entry met three or more of the high needs characteristics.

*It is estimated by the PAT National Center that if a child can avoid even one year of special education services, the state saves an average of \$3700.

What has changed in this program since the previous review?

COVID-19 Changes: We have had lots of changes this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are currently completing all of our visits virtually with families. Before each visit we are delivering a bag with the handouts, activity materials and books for the family. We are hopeful that we will return to homes next school year.

Screenings: We are offering screenings virtually or in the classroom to every child enrolled in Parents as Teachers.

Kindergarten screenings: Each year we also partner with kindergarten to provide screenings to all of our incoming kindergarteners. This year due to COVID-19 we are changing the way we complete these screenings. Parents as Teachers will be completing these screenings the last 2 weeks of school. This will allow very limited staff to be at risk for exposure to COVID-19 and will prevent any kindergarten teachers from being exposed.

Additional Resource: We provide a book to each child during their visits. We receive these books through donations from the community, Scholastic book orders and grants we apply for. We also accept diaper donations from community members. This allows us to give diapers to any family with the need at their home visits.

Professional Development: This year because of COVID-19 there have been several free and virtual opportunities for training. Our parent educators attended a 6 session trauma training in partnership with Resilience Builders. We were then able to expand on this training and have individualized training for our program and the Early Eagles program. Through this training we created a simple “Try this” Chart for parents to use. We just recently finished training with Mothers and Babies. This curriculum will supplement our Parents as Teachers curriculum as an intervention to prevent and reduce postpartum depression symptoms. We have also attended training sessions about autism, immunizations, virtual services and milestones.

What are the new trends or best practices in this field of education?

DESE updated their “Early Childhood Development Act” Administrative Manual to provide guidelines for the implementation and supervision of Parents as Teachers programming. Among the changes under the new guidelines are:

- Districts must offer at least personal visits, group connections, developmental screenings, and access to a resource network to all families.
- Personal visits are recommended as follows

- Monthly for non-high needs families
- Twice monthly for high needs families
- At least 12 group connections annually

Parents as Teachers National Center has recently updated their Essential Requirements, which are requirements for programs who wish to be considered an Affiliate- Blue Ribbon Program. Some of those requirements include:

- Offering a year round program
- Limiting the amount of visits a parent educator can make to
 - 48 visits a month for a first year full time parent educator with no other duties
 - 60 visits a month for a full time parent educator in their second year or beyond with no other duties (group connections, DESE reports, etc)
- Personal Visit requirements for PAT National Center
 - At least 12 visits annually for families with one or few high needs
 - At least 24 visits annually for families with two or more high needs

What are the strengths of this program in our district?

- Our PAT classroom which provides office space, room for the Lend & Learn Library, and a place for our Drop in and Plays.
- Consistency of staff has helped to create a strong, continuously improving program
- Certified parent educators who have degrees in Early Childhood Education and Human Development/Family Studies.
- One parent educator is eMINTS certified and has been implementing more technology into our program
- More professional development hours in most years than is required by both the PAT National Center and Southern Boone County Schools
- Strong results each year on the parent surveys
- Retention of PAT families from year to year
- Our ability to move seamlessly to virtual visits allowed us to continue visiting families without any gap in time.
- Last year we increased the funds we received from DESE by \$10, 611 and this year we have already increased the number of visits we have done in previous years by about 100 visits.

What next steps would better serve our students?

- Ability to provide the program as designed in the Parents as Teachers National Center Essential Requirements.
- Additional staff to accommodate the visit frequency recommended by Parents as Teachers National Center.
- Adequate staffing to allow a Parent Educator to act as coordinator and handle the day-to-day management of extra PAT duties. Ideally 0.5 FTE would be allotted for this position.