

Healthy Families New York Promotes Success at School

Study Highlights

HFNY:

- Reduced rates of retention in first grade
- Increased the percentage of children who scored above grade level on behaviors that promote learning
- Increased the percentage of girls who scored above grade level academically
- Decreased the percentage of girls who scored below grade level academically

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Healthy Families New York (HFNY) Home Visiting Program

HFNY is voluntary home visiting program for expectant and new parents at risk for child maltreatment. Based on the Healthy Families America model, trained paraprofessionals use a strengths-based approach to service provision and provide intensive in-home services until the child enters

school or Head Start. The goals of HFNY are to promote positive parenting skills and parent-child bonding and interaction, prevent child abuse and neglect, promote optimal prenatal care and child health and development, and enhance family self-sufficiency.



Healthy Families New York Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT): School Record Component

In 2000, an RCT was initiated at three HFNY sites. Families eligible for HFNY at each site were randomly assigned to either an intervention group that was offered HFNY services or to a control group that was given information on and referrals to appropriate services other than home visiting.

Baseline interviews were conducted with 1,173 women (intervention, n=579; control, n=594). Mothers were again interviewed in their homes around the time of the child's first, second, third, and seventh birthdays.

At Year seven, field staff completed 942 interviews with the original study participants. A release form authorizing the researchers to obtain the target child's first grade school records was collected during the Year seven

informed consent process. Of the 942 mothers interviewed at that time, 766 provided releases with complete information. The releases were sent to over 175 different schools in 15 states to request the records.

Despite numerous difficulties in getting the records, we received 577 useable first grade records. The school record sample was generally representative of the baseline characteristics examined.

For more details on this study, see Kirkland, K., & Mitchell-Herzfeld, S. (2012). *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Home Visiting Services in Promoting Children's Adjustment in School: Final Report to the Pew Center on the States*. Rensselaer, New York: New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

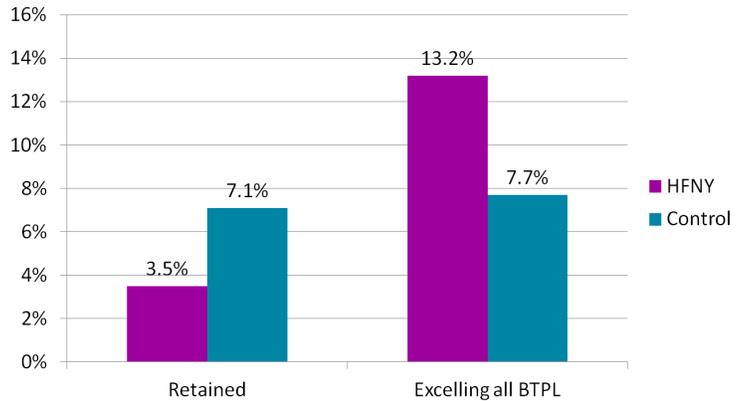
HFNY Improves Children’s Academic Outcomes

“Home-visited children were half as likely to repeat first grade.”

Children in the home-visited group were less likely to repeat first grade (3.5%) than those in the control group (7.1%, $p=.03$).

A larger percentage of children in the home-visited group performed above grade level on all three behaviors that

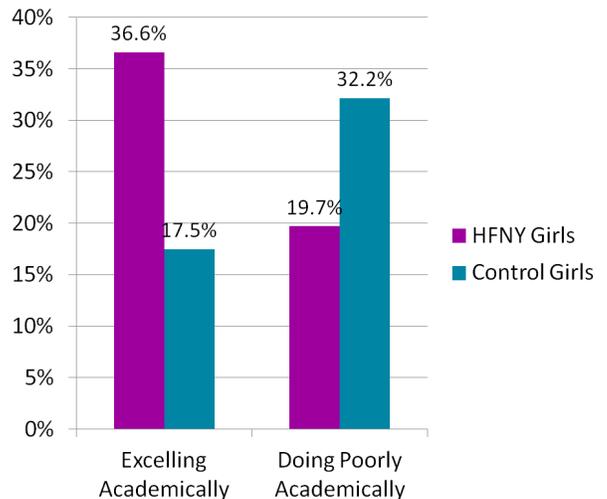
promote learning (BTPL): working or playing cooperatively with others, following directions or classroom rules, and completing home or class work on time (13.2% versus 7.7%, $p=.03$) than children in the control group.



“Home-visited children were 70% more likely to perform above grade level on behaviors that promote learning.”

HFNY Particularly Effective for Girls

Girls in the HFNY group were more likely to perform above grade level academically (on reading, math, and all 3 BTPL) (32.6% vs. 17.5%, $p<.01$) and less likely to perform below grade level academically (on reading, math or any of the 3 BTPL) (19.7% vs. 32.2%, $p=.02$) than girls in the control group.



“Home visiting services were especially effective for girls.”

The Intensity of HFNY Services Matters

“Children who received high intensity services were more likely to perform above grade level.”

The intensity of home visits was a significant predictor of children’s outcomes. Children who had a higher percentage of HFNY service levels where they received at least 75 percent of their expected visits were 2.28 times more likely to perform above grade level academically ($p=.05$) and 47.4 percent less likely to perform below grade level academically ($p=.10$).

