Helping Lane County Children & Families be “Ready for Kindergarten”

Year 1 Findings from the Kids in Transition to School (KITS) Program

What is KITS? KITS is a 16 week program that provides group-based kindergarten readiness activities for children and parenting groups for family members. To learn about whether the program is effective, Portland State University collected information from parents and children. Information presented here includes data from 219 participating KITS families and 51 families who did not participate in KITS.

Here’s what we learned about program outcomes in 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KITS parents felt their discipline was more effective compared to parents who didn’t get KITS.</th>
<th>KITS parents felt more ready to support children in school compared to parents who didn’t get KITS.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before KITS</td>
<td>After KITS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KITS</td>
<td>No KITS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Families with relatively diverse experiences and characteristics did KITS

- 83% White
- 16% Latino
- 4% African American
- 4% Other
- 4% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 2% Alaska Native/American Indian

✔ 57% - of children had been in Head Start or another Preschool prior to KITS
Program attendance was important for outcomes

*By the end of the program, families who attended more regularly:*

- Provided more child activities (like singing & playing games)
- Read more often to their children
- Felt more positive about the school and teachers
- Used more effective discipline strategies like encouraging positive behavior

KITS children with high KITS attendance had better self control skills at the end of KITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KITS Kids</th>
<th>Control Kids</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.82</td>
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</table>

But, attendance was challenging, especially for parents:

- For the **child readiness groups**, 83% attended at least half of the classes; 42% attended three-fourths of the sessions
- For the **parent groups**, 47% attended at least half but only 22% attended three-fourths of the sessions
- **Summer attendance was better:** Average attendance for children in the summer was 80%; this fell to 38% during the fall

KITS fall sessions are being re-structured for 2017, with more sessions planned for the summer because of these findings. Parents suggested offering more variety in the times for parent groups, especially evening hours for working parents.