DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 313 155 PS 018 432

AUTHOR Jarvis, Carolyn H.; And Others
TITLE Summer Kindergarten Program, July-August, 1988. OREA Evaluation Section Report.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, NY. Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment.
PUB DATE 22 May 89
NOTE 80p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; Check Lists; *Classroom Environment; Community Characteristics; Community Programs; Educational Practices; Family Characteristics; *Kindergarten; *Parent Participation; *Preschool Teachers; Primary Education; Profiles; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; *School Readiness; Staff Development; *Summer Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Developmentally Appropriate Programs; New York (New York); Program Characteristics

ABSTRACT

An evaluation of the 1988 implementation of New York City's 29-day-long Summer Kindergarten program for children entering first grade with little or no kindergarten experience is presented. A total of 9,444 children were enrolled in 436 classes in 171 schools located in 32 community school districts. The program ran from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM, Monday through Friday, and included breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Each classroom of 22 children was staffed by a teacher and an educational paraprofessional. A sample of 32 schools was randomly selected from the participating schools. Data for the evaluation were collected in a variety of ways. Any information that was available for the entire population of students or staff was analyzed and included in this report. Findings suggest that, given the short time available for planning and setting up classrooms and an unexpectedly large enrollment, the program was well implemented. Most program staff had had previous early childhood experience. Classroom activities were largely experiential. Over 95 percent of the parents believed the program had helped their children grow academically and socially. Sections of the report concern background, program administration, the children, the staff, the classrooms, parent involvement, child and family case studies, conclusions and recommendations. A checklist is appended for use in assessing the developmental appropriateness of classrooms. (RH)

OREA Evaluation Section Report
John Schoener, Administrator

SUMMER KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

July-August, 1988

Prepared by

Early Childhood Evaluation Unit
Carolyn H. Jarvis, Evaluation Manager
King Beach III, Evaluation Consultant

New York City Public Schools
Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment
Robert Tobias, Director

NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

5/22/89

A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The Summer Kindergarten Program was planned for children who were to enter first grade in September 1988, and who had little or no prior kindergarten experience. Kindergarten children recommended by their kindergarten teachers, children living in temporary housing, and children with limited proficiency in English were also enrolled in the 29-day program. The program began July 5 and ended August 12, 1988.

Although the program was originally planned for 5,000 children, 9,444 children were enrolled in 436 classes in 171 schools located in 32 community school districts. The program ran from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM, Monday through Friday, and included breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Each classroom of 22 children was staffed by a teacher and an educational paraprofessional. A school-based coordinator and family assistant were hired in schools with at least three classes. Within each district, a district-wide supervisor was responsible for overall supervision and coordination, including ongoing recruitment, parental involvement, staff development, and data collection.

Given the short time available for planning and setting up classrooms and an unexpectedly large enrollment, the program was well implemented. Most program staff had previous early childhood experience. Classroom activities were largely experiential. Over 95 percent of the parents believed the program had helped their children grow academically and socially.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OREA recommends that the program be continued. In the future, however, it is essential that more time be allotted for program planning; informing community school districts, teachers, and parents about the program; recruiting and enrolling students; hiring and orienting staff; ordering classroom supplies; and locating and setting up classrooms. The following suggestions are made to improve the educational component of the program:

- The emphasis on developmentally and individually appropriate activities should be continued. More information and training should be provided to program staff about the importance of multicultural education and how to integrate a multicultural perspective into program classrooms.

- Children with limited proficiency in English should be more actively recruited for participation in the program and language proficiency should be a consideration in staff assignments.

- Methods should be devised to provide summer program teachers with information about the children in their class, so the teachers can better plan individualized activities. Information about the children's progress in the summer program should be passed on to their first grade teachers in the fall.

The following suggestions are made to improve the parent involvement component of the program:

- Family assistants should be hired, and family rooms should be set up in every school.

- The role and responsibilities of the family assistant should be more carefully defined. Family assistants should be provided with additional preservice training and inservice support for working with parents and communities.

- Parent-teacher conferences should be scheduled at least once during the summer program. Some activities need to be planned so that working parents can be informed and involved in the program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

I. INTRODUCTION

Each year over 12,000 children in New York City enter first grade with no prior New York City public school kindergarten experience. They are at risk; studies indicate that children entering the first grade without prior kindergarten experience have a higher first grade holdover rate--a higher failure rate--than those with kindergarten experience. A special research report prepared by the New York City Board of Education in 1987 found that 51 percent of second graders with New York City public school kindergarten experience scored above grade level on the citywide reading test, while only 33 percent of those without this experience achieved equivalent results.

Many of the children without kindergarten experience are at risk because of interrelated cultural and economic reasons that include limited English proficiency and homelessness. Too often children at risk become, ten or twelve years later, children who have failed, children who have dropped out, children without high school diplomas.

Research indicates that children's earliest school experiences play a crucial role in determining the course of their later learning and development. That is, children who fail as they begin school are apt to form attitudes of failure that affect them throughout the remainder of their schooling, whereas children who flourish in the beginning are likely to establish positive attitudes towards school, and are more likely to succeed throughout their schooling experience.

The Summer Kindergarten program was initiated in spring 1988 as "part of a comprehensive effort at providing quality early education that impacts positively on pupils' long-term school performance and social-emotional behavior."* The program came about as a way to help ensure that school-age at-risk children in 1988 would be successful members of the high school graduating class of the year 2000.

The Program operated for 29 days from July 5 to August 12, 1988. It was implemented in 438 classes in 171 schools throughout the 32 school districts of New York City. A total of 9,444 children were enrolled.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Monies for staff and supplies were largely provided from tax levy funds (90 percent), supplemented with a small amount (10 percent) from the State Chancellor's Fund. The initial funding allocation of $521 per child was based on the district estimates of the number of children to be enrolled in the program. (See Figure 1.)

Because the program was housed in schools which were already open for the U.S.D.A. summer food program, school opening costs --including the cost of security guards and maintenance personnel --did not have to be included in the Summer Kindergarten program budget. The summer food program provided Summer Kindergarten pupils with free breakfasts, snacks, and lunches.

---

*Board of Education of the City of New York, Office of the Chancellor, Special Circular No. 48, 1987-88, May 24, 1988.

FIGURE 1

Summer Kindergarten Funding Allocations

Classroom Costs	
Teacher and educational assistant	$ 6,129
Classroom supplies	700
School-wide Costs (per class based on three classes per school)	
Site coordinator and family assistant	1,991
Parent involvement supplies	50
Space cleaning	686
District-wide Costs (per class based on three schools per district with three classes per school)	
District supervisor and school secretary	860
Supplies	11
Total Costs Per Class	$10,427
Total Costs Per Child (based on 20 children per class)	$ 521

Central administrators had initially planned for an enrollment of 5,000 children in the program, underestimating the actual enrollment figure of 9,444 children by almost half. When districts submitted their projected enrollments in early June, the total estimate of around 9,000 children was almost double the original projection.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES

The Summer Kindergarten program was designed to ensure that the earliest school experiences of its enrollees would be positive and successful. The Summer Kindergarten program therefore emphasized developmentally appropriate practices.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (N.A.E.Y.C.) defines developmentally appropriate practices as those which provide "a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of [their] families." The N.A.E.Y.C. position statement, which "reflects the most current knowledge of teaching and learning as derived from research, theory and practice," also states that formal academic instruction "is antithetical to what we know about how young children learn. Programs should be tailored to meet the needs of children, rather than expecting children to adjust to the demands of a specific program."

To the extent possible, the Summer Kindergarten program was tailored to meet the needs of the children and their families. The teaching and support staff was hired with this in mind, and a curriculum was developed based on the N.A.E.Y.C. guidelines and other similar studies. The curriculum emphasized experiential learning, rather than directed instruction, and a multicultural approach. In this way, the Summer Kindergarten program attempted to provide both an age-appropriate and individually-appropriate environment to facilitate successful learning.

THE EVALUATION STUDY

OREA conducted a comprehensive study of the implementation of the Summer Kindergarten program. Data for the evaluation were collected in a variety of ways. Any information that was available for the entire population of students or staff was analyzed and included in this report.

To study classroom implementation and its effects on children, a sample of 32 schools was randomly selected from the 171 schools in the program. One-day site visits to observe classroom activities and interview program staff were made to a total of 78 classrooms by OREA field consultants. In addition, field staff conducted in-depth case studies of 24 Summer Kindergarten children and their families in 10 of the 32 sample schools.

Descriptive Student Statistics

OREA developed a Pupil Information Form to collect relevant information about Summer Kindergarten children. These data included eligibility criteria, sex, age, home language, preschool and kindergarten experience, and attendance. The forms were distributed to all Summer Kindergarten teachers who completed and returned them to OREA for processing.

Summer Kindergarten Staff Training and Experience

The Early Childhood Education Unit conducted a survey of the positions held by Summer Kindergarten teachers, site coordinators, and district supervisors during the school year

prior to the summer program. This information, which was collected in all 32 districts, was analyzed by OREA. In addition, during the site visits, OREA staff interviewed the site coordinators, classroom teachers, educational assistants, and family workers about their training and teaching experience.

Program Planning and Administration

OREA staff attended most Board of Education meetings concerning the summer program and conducted informal interviews with central school system administrators about city-wide planning and implementation decisions. In addition, documents about the program were collected and analyzed. These documents included Chancellor's Special Circulars and other official Board of Education publications, press releases, newspaper articles, and handouts distributed at meetings.

Program Implementation

Field staff used a standard observation system developed to collect information about supplies and equipment, classroom activities, and adult/child interactions. During the site visits, all school-based Summer Kindergarten staff in the 32 sample schools were interviewed about program implementation, staff roles and relationships, staff development, and parent involvement. Questionnaires were mailed to all district supervisors. These questionnaires asked for information about the district supervisors' activities, staff development, classroom implementation in their districts, general perceptions

about the program, and recommendations for program improvement. Additional information about program implementation was collected through the child and family case studies.

Parent Questionnaires. Parent questionnaires were developed to collect information about parents' involvement with the summer program and their assessment of its effects on their children. These questionnaires were sent to a randomly selected sample of 3,011 Summer Kindergarten parents in October 1988.

Child and Family Case Studies. Field consultants observed each case study child twice each week for five weeks. They maintained narrative records of their observations which focused on the individual child's activities and relationships with staff and other children in the classroom. While in the classrooms, field staff completed a Behavior Rating Scale form developed by ABT Associates (1987) to assess children's social skills with both peers and adults in the classroom, and the children's task orientation and task strategies for each child. In addition, they conducted informal interviews with the child, the classroom teacher and educational assistant, the family worker and at least one of the child's parents or guardians. Family interviews were done in the child's home whenever possible. Field staff also collected information about the case study school and the surrounding community.

II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The New York City Board of Education began planning the Summer Kindergarten program in May 1988. The program guidelines developed by central administrators called for the citywide program to operate from July 5 to August 12, 1988 with approximately 5,000 children enrolled in classes of 22 students each. Within each school district, the classes had to be grouped at schools within walking distance of the student's homes, because no bus service was provided. Additionally, classes were limited to schools with U.S.D.A. summer meal programs, since these programs would provide breakfast and lunch to the Summer Kindergarten children.

The Early Childhood Education Unit produced Bright Beginnings: Summer Kindergarten, a curriculum and teaching guide which emphasized developmentally appropriate experiential activities among small groups of children through a variety of classroom activities. Bright Beginnings was distributed to all teachers and supervisors in the summer program.

The central Early Childhood Education Unit ordered classroom supplies in early June so that they would be delivered in time for teachers to prepare their classrooms before the children arrived. Lunchroom decoration kits were provided by the Bureau of School Lunches.

Under the direction of the central board, the 32 school districts were to recruit and enroll students, hire classroom

personnel, arrange with the meal programs for the feeding of the kindergarten students, and otherwise prepare for the program.

Teachers were responsible for maintaining enrollment and attendance records. They also were required to set up individual folders for each child for use in parent conferences and informal assessments of each child's progress. The folders were to include samples of the children's work and anecdotal records.

III. SUMMER KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

ELIGIBILITY

To attend the Summer Kindergarten Program, children were supposed to be old enough to enter first grade in September 1988 and have fewer than 60 days of New York City public school kindergarten experience. Children with more than 60 days of New York City kindergarten experience were also admitted if they met one or more of the following criteria:

1. Children who tested in kindergarten as limited English proficient (LEP).*
2. Children who were hotel or shelter residents.
3. Children whose kindergarten teachers felt they would benefit from the summer program.

Many children were deemed eligible to participate under a combination of criteria.

Table 1 presents the number and percentages of students enrolled in the Summer Kindergarten program under the various criteria. Although it was never intended as a discrete criterion for eligibility, having 60 or more days of New York City public kindergarten experience was frequently cited as the sole reason children were enrolled in the program. As indicated, 42.8 percent of the children were teacher-recommended based on other criteria.

---

*Children who score below the 21st percentile on the Language Assessment Battery are considered limited English proficient (LEP).

TABLE 1

Percentages of Summer Kindergarten Students
by Various Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility Criteria	Number	Percent
No NYC Public Kindergarten Experience	1,172	13.7%
Less than 60 Days of NYC Public Kindergarten Experience	418	4.9
Hotel or Shelter Resident	74	0.9
Teacher-Recommended Based on Limited English Proficiency	1,338	15.6
Teacher-Recommended Based on Other Criteria	3,671	42.8
More than 60 days of NYC Public Kindergarten Experience - Sole Response[a]	1,900	22.1
	8,573[b]	100.0%

[a] Greater than 60 days of New York City public kindergarten experience was not intended to be a criteria unto itself. Rather, students who had more than 60 days of experience were to be enrolled using an additional criteria such as LEP or teacher recommendation.

[b] Number of students with valid responses out of the total enrollment of 9,444.

Limited English proficiency was the next most frequently cited reason why children were enrolled in the program. Although 41 percent of the students enrolled in the program spoke a language other than English at home, only 16 percent were considered limited English proficient (LEP). Since LEP children were specifically targeted for the program, one might assume that the percentage of LEP children in the program would be greater than in the regular kindergarten population. In fact, the reverse proved true. About 22 percent of the kindergarten population had limited English skills compared to 16 percent of the children in the summer program.

Although summer program guidelines emphasized the need to enroll children living in hotels or shelters, and school district supervisors were given lists of children known to be living in temporary housing, only 74 students were listed as hotel/shelter children. One reason for the small number of hotel/shelter children enrolled may be that shelters are short-term living facilities and the families may have already moved by the time efforts were made to contact them. Hotel families are more stable, and were easier to contact. However, in 1988 there were many year-round and summer programs competing to serve hotel children. In one district, for example, in addition to the Summer Kindergarten program provided by the Board of Education, education/daycare/day trip/sleepaway programs for hotel children were available through the Salvation Army, Head Start, the Big Apple Games, Camp Homeward Bound, the Fresh Air Fund, HRA Crisis

Intervention, and the Victim Services Agency.

AGE AND GENDER

A total of 9,444 students were enrolled in the Summer Kindergarten classes. Since all program participants were expected to enter first grade in September 1988, they were supposed to be six years old by December 31, 1988. This translates into a range of 5.7 to 6.6 years of age at the start of the program. In fact, while the average age of program participants was 5.9 years, the age range of the children was from 4.5 to 7.8 years. Almost a quarter of the children (22.4 percent) were underage and a few (2.5 percent) were overage.

It is likely that the overage children had been held over in kindergarten or first grade, and that their teachers felt that a summer program would benefit them. It is possible that the underage children were enrolled because the eligibility criteria were misunderstood. While the overage children were eligible because they may have been entering first grade, the younger children who were going into kindergarten for the first time in the fall should not have been allowed to participate.

There were slightly more girls (53 percent) enrolled in the program than boys (47 percent).

HOME LANGUAGE

The majority of the children (59 percent) spoke English at home, 29 percent spoke Spanish, and six percent spoke Chinese. The remainder spoke a variety of other languages. As previously

stated, only 16 percent of the program participants were LEP children.

PRIOR KINDERGARTEN EXPERIENCE

Two-thirds of the children enrolled in the program had some New York City public school kindergarten experience. Another 5.3 percent had attended kindergarten outside of the New York City public school system. Of the 2,459 students who had had no previous kindergarten experience, most (59 percent) were underage and were scheduled to attend kindergarten in September.

ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE

Over 50 percent of the children were enrolled by the first day of the program, 89 percent were enrolled by the end of the first week, and 97 percent by the end of the second week. (See Table 2.) Once enrolled, children in the program attended an average of 73 percent of the days.

TABLE 2

Percentage of Students Enrolled in the Program by Date of Enrollment

Date of Enrollment	Cumulative Total	Cumulative Percent
Start of Program	5,075	54%
Second Day	7,115	76
End of First Week	8,295	89
End of Second Week	9,070	97
Beginning of Third Week and Beyond	9,370[a]	100

[a] Number of students with valid responses out of the total enrollment of 9,444.

- Almost 90 percent of the students were enrolled in the program by the end of the first week.

These enrollment and attendance numbers are impressive, given the short lead time between program inception and implementation. Moreover, the program was not mandatory; it took place in classrooms without fans or air conditioners during an extremely hot summer; and, unlike other programs in the same schools, it operated on Fridays. As a result, Friday attendance was consistently low and depressed the overall average. Possibly, families that had children in other programs at the schools did not send their children to kindergarten when their other children stayed at home.

IV. SUMMER KINDERGARTEN STAFF

STAFFING LEVELS AND PRESCRIBED ROLES

According to the Chancellor's directives, the program was to be staffed with one teacher and one educational assistant per classroom, one family assistant and one kindergarten coordinator for each school with at least three classes, one district early childhood supervisor in each district with a program in at least three of its schools, and one office aide in each school district.

School districts were to hire teachers who had experience or were licensed in early childhood education; and, since children with limited English proficiency ability were those targeted for the program, priority was to be given, where and when appropriate, to bilingual and E.S.L. early childhood staff. Preference in hiring was to be given to:

- regularly appointed Early Childhood teachers serving in the school selected for the program;
- regularly appointed Early Childhood teachers working in the district;
- regularly appointed Common Branches teachers with early childhood experience serving in the selected school; and
- regularly appointed Common Branches teachers with early childhood experience serving in the district.

The family assistants were given responsibility for implementing parent involvement activities and assisting in other aspects of the program. Bilingual applicants had priority.

Site coordinators were given responsibility for attendance, nutrition, health and immunization, staff development, and other activities. Early childhood teachers with experience in staff development were to be given priority for this position.

The district Early Childhood supervisor was given responsibility for overall supervision and coordination of the program within the district, ongoing staff development, and data collection. The office aide performed administrative duties and assisted the district Early Childhood supervisor.

Community school districts were expected to advertise for the positions in accordance with district policy and in conformance with United Federation of Teachers (U.F.T.) guidelines.

STAFF CHARACTERISTICS

Previous Experience

In accordance with the original plans, a majority of the school-based staff had considerable experience in positions comparable to those they held in the summer kindergarten program. Furthermore, the majority of teachers, site coordinators, and district supervisors had worked during the previous school year in positions directly related to their summer kindergarten assignments.

The 438 teachers in the program had an average of 9.8 years of teaching experience. Of the 76 teachers in the evaluation sample, 18.4 percent had taught prekindergarten and/or kindergarten, 57.9 percent had taught both prekindergarten/ kindergarten and first through third grades, and 21.1 percent had

only first through third grade experience. A few (2.5 percent) had no teaching experience.

The 438 educational assistants had an average of 12.6 years of school experience. Of the 76 educational assistants who were interviewed, 26.7 percent had prekindergarten/kindergarten experience, 59.2 percent had prekindergarten/kindergarten and primary grade experience, while 14.1 percent had only primary grade experience.

The family assistant job title was new in some districts; nevertheless, most of the family assistants in the evaluation sample had previous school experience as family assistants or family workers. Many of the 111 family assistants lived in the community where they worked, and this increased their ability to fulfill their job responsibilities.

Site coordinators averaged 6.7 years of school-based experience. More than one-third (36.9 percent) of the site coordinators were principals or assistant principals during the 1987-88 school year, 13.6 percent were supervisors or coordinators, and 29.1 percent were teachers. (See Table 3.)

Most of the district coordinators (74 percent) held the position of principal or assistant principal during the previous school year, 22.2 percent held other supervisory or administrative positions, and 3.7 percent were teachers.

TABLE 3

Percentages of Summer Kindergarten Staff by Job Title and Years of School Experience

Years of Experience	Summer Kindergarten Job Title			
	Site Coordinator[a] (N=20)	Teacher (N=78)	Educational Assistant (N=76)	Family Assistant[b] (N=19)
0	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	15.8%
1 - 3	35.0	10.3	26.3	36.8
4 - 9	40.0	37.2	9.2	15.8
10 - 15	10.0	33.3	17.1	5.3
16 - 25	15.0	16.7	47.4	26.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[a] Previous jobs held by site coordinators included Day Care/Head Start Director, principal, Project Giant Step teacher specialist, and district staff person.

[b] Previous jobs held by family assistants, included family worker, paraprofessional, school aide and assistant teacher. Note that only experience as a family worker was comparable to the summer kindergarten position of family assistant. The majority (63.2 percent) of the family assistants had previously worked as a family worker.

Bilingualism

A third of the teachers, 44 percent of the educational assistants, and 50 percent of the family assistants in the sample schools were fluent in a language besides English.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Two hours of initial staff development were provided for district Early Childhood supervisors on June 22, 1988. A week later, the supervisors provided six hours of preservice training and staff development activities for all other program staff. Copies of Bright Beginnings* were distributed to all teachers to help them plan classroom activities.

Most of the teachers were assigned to work in schools different from those in which they taught during the school year. They were, therefore, given time to set up and organize their classrooms in the week before the arrival of students.

STAFF ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Chancellor Green's Special Circular No. 48, 1987-88 provided the basis for job descriptions. Site coordinators were to be responsible for program coordination and supervision. Family assistants were to be responsible for implementing parent activities, assisting the site coordinator, and recruiting. Educational assistants were to assist the classroom teacher.

---

*Division of Curriculum and Instruction. (1988). Bright Beginnings. New York: Board of Education of the City of New York.

Table 4 shows how staff described their roles in the summer program. Roles and relationships for site coordinators and educational assistants were adequately defined. The time they said they spent on various tasks on a daily basis was consistent with their job descriptions.

In contrast, only one-third of the family assistants said they spent most of their time involving parents with the program. Another third reported they spent most of their time monitoring children's attendance. The remaining family assistants spent the majority of time in a variety of activities, including assisting the site coordinator with clerical tasks and helping individual children and families with home problems.

The phrase "assisting in other aspects of the program" in the family assistants' job description sometimes created problems in their relationships with the other program workers. It seemed to put the family assistants in the position of carrying out whatever responsibilities the teachers and site coordinators felt necessary. For instance, most family assistants (79 percent) reported that they worked in the classrooms on a daily basis. Forty-two percent assisted the children with meals and snacks, 37 percent assisted the teachers in classroom activities, and 32 percent worked with individual children who needed extra support. When they assisted teachers, and worked with children who needed extra support, their role often overlapped those of the educational assistant.

TABLE 4

Major Job Responsibilities Described
by Summer Kindergarten Staff

Role and Responsibilities	Percentage of Staff
Site Coordinators (N=22)	
Supporting, Consulting, Supervising Class Staff	95.5%
Coordination and/or Facilitation of Relationships	86.4
Paperwork	72.7
Planning/Supervising/Implementing Parent Program	59.1
Educational Assistants (N=77)	
Assisting the Teacher With Instructional Activities	93.5
Classroom Management (Attendance, Set-ups and Clean-ups, Snacks, etc.)	39.0
Supervising Children at Breakfast and Lunch	29.9
Miscellaneous Other Tasks	16.9
Family Assistant (N=19)	
Involving Parents in Child's School, Including Feeling Comfortable In Schools	68.4
Dealing with Home/Family Problems	47.4
Planning Conducting and Encouraging Attendance at Workshops	36.8
Monitoring Attendance	26.3

V. SUMMER KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Most of the classrooms visited had the necessary supplies and materials, although few classes had large play equipment for indoor or outdoor use. Traditional academic materials such as textbooks were emphasized less than storybooks, mathematics manipulatives, and arts and crafts items. (See Tables 5 and 6.)

Multicultural education was an expressed program goal, and the teachers' guide, Bright Beginnings, stressed the importance of promoting children's appreciation of their own ethnicity, culture and language as well as respect and understanding for peoples of different cultures and backgrounds. Half of the classrooms had materials such as books, dolls, games, etc., which reflected the children's ethnic backgrounds. About 25 percent were observed to have cultural or ethnic displays.

Approximately one-third of the teachers expressed some dissatisfaction with supplies and materials, noting there was often not enough to go around. The supply order had been based on a projected enrollment of 5,000 children. Because the actual enrollment was almost twice that teachers in most schools had to share the classroom supply kits. The five teachers who were in schools with single kindergarten classes were highly satisfied with the supplies and equipment they had received, presumably because they did not have to share their supply kits.

Site coordinators' responses regarding equipment and supplies were consistent with the teachers' answers. In

TABLE 5

Percentage of Classrooms in Which
Instructional Materials were Observed and Used,
Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Instructional Materials	Observed N=76	Observed and Used N=76
Language/Reading Games	62%	28%
Language Experience Materials	80	41
Storybooks	97	61
Children's Textbooks and Workbooks	25	12
Alphabet Charts	76	15
Experience Charts	66	21
Other Instructional Charts	71	17
Math Manipulatives	88	51
Pets	11	3
Nature Science Materials	50	18
Calendar/Weather Charts	79	33
Writing Materials	84	62
Arts and Crafts Material	100	91

TABLE 6

Percentage of Classrooms in Which
Games, Toys, and Play Equipment were Observed and Used,
Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Games, Toys, Play Equipment	Observed N=76	Observed and Used N=76
Building Blocks - Unit	88%	63%
Building Blocks - Hollow	41	24
Small Toys	90	61
Construction Toys	96	70
Puzzles (Manipulatives)	99	26
Games	61	34
Housekeeping Furnitures	97	71
Housekeeping Accessories	100	74
Dramatic Play Materials	63	41
Carpentry Materials	12	4
Sand Table	20	11
Water Table	42	26
Small Play Equipment	66	25
Indoor Large Play Equipment	1	0
Outdoor Large Play Equipment	32	21

addition, they commented that the six-week program did not allow adequate time to order additional supplies before the program ended. Teachers could, if they wished, purchase supplies themselves and be reimbursed later. They were, however, often reluctant to do this.

The supply shortage resulted from the short lead time between program planning and implementation, a circumstance peculiar to the program in 1988. In subsequent years, there should be adequate time to obtain more accurate enrollment projections from school districts, and enough time to order supplies.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Field evaluators time-sampled classroom activities in ten minutes intervals for two hours in each of the 78 classrooms included in the Summer Kindergarten program sample. On average, three to four different activities involving children and adults were recorded during each ten minute observation.

For the analysis, the 22 activities on the observation form were grouped into two categories of educational activities and three categories of other non-educational activities. Educational activities were classified as experiential or directed instructional. The other classroom activities were classified as social interaction/observation, non-interactive/class management, and negative interaction/discipline. These other activities, while often necessary, do not contribute directly to the children's cognitive development.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Experiential Activities

Experiential activities develop and strengthen children's awareness of properties and relationships by providing opportunities to explore physical and social relationships. As Table 7 shows, observers noted a much higher percentage of experiential activities (arts and crafts, block play, and singing, etc.) than directed instructional activities (writing or beginning mathematics). The high proportion of experiential activities versus directed instructional activities was consistent with the program's goal of developmental appropriateness.

TABLE 7

Percentages of Instances of Summer Kindergarten Classroom Activities by Type of Activity

Type of Activity	Percentage of Instances
Experiential	61.1%
Instructional	24.4
Social Interaction/Observation	11.1
Non-Interactive/Class Management	2.2
Negative Interaction Discipline	1.2
	100.0

Experiential activities can be divided into three types: (1) exploratory--largely self-oriented, open-ended activities such as block play, sand and water play, arts and crafts, dramatic play, and play with manipulatives such as construction toys; (2) active play--indoor and outdoor activities which provide children the opportunity to exercise their large muscles; and (3) daily routines--organized socialization experiences such as group time, singing, and snack time.

Most (75 percent) of the experiential activities were exploratory activities. (See Table 8.) Active play accounted for less than ten percent of the experiential activities, which might be partially explained by the unusually hot weather, and the absence of fans and outdoor sprinklers. Furthermore, few schools had sufficiently large outdoor or indoor play equipment.

Most experiential activities involved individual children or small groups rather than large groups or the whole class. The children worked independently of adults in about three-quarters of these activities.

Directed Instructional Activities

Approximately 25 percent of the directed instructional activities were large group or whole class activities with adult participation. Instructional activities were those activities designed to teach specific academic skills in oral language,

Table 8

Percentage of Instances of Experiential Activities
by Classroom Groups, Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Experiential Activities	One Child	Small Group	Large/Total Group	Total
Exploratory				
Arts and Crafts	24.2%	14.9 %	1.8%	25.9%
Puzzles/Table Games	7.6	15.4	0.0	23.1
Sand/Water Play	1.8	5.5	0.8	8.1
Blocks	0.9	10.4	0.2	11.5
Dramatic Play/ Housekeeping	1.9	12.3	0.0	14.2
Active Play				
Active Play	0.3	0.6	0.4	1.3
Outdoor Play	0.5	4.6	1.9	7.1
Daily Routines				
Group Time	0.0	0.0	4.2	4.2
Singing	0.3	1.2	2.8	4.3
Snack	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
Total	22.6	65.0	12.4	100.0

beginning reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science. Overall, approximately equal percentages of instructional activities occurred in large or total groups, small groups, or with individual children.

About a third of all instructional activities were coded as oral language, either speaking or listening. Oral language skills precede and are critically important to the formation of reading and writing skills. Oral language activities are an appropriate form of focused learning for young children, and are particularly useful for those who are learning English as a second language. Examples of speaking activities include fingerplays or poems, small group discussions, puppetry, and storytelling. Listening activities include any activities in which the child actively listens but produces little or no language himself. Examples of such activities are listening to stories, or playing games such as "Simon Says" which require children to react physically to verbal directions. Overall, speaking activities occurred more frequently than listening.

Approximately 20 percent of the instructional activities were beginning reading. These involved children looking at or talking about books or focusing on likenesses and differences in size, shape, color, or form in games. Recognizing names, other words, or letters was also considered reading. Approximately half the reading activities involved children working independently of adults.

About 20 percent of the instructional activities were "early writing." This category included development of formal writing skills as well as activities related to the development of graphic symbols, such as tracing shapes or letters, using templates to create outlines, and producing real or imaginary letters or words. Approximately one-third of the "early writing" activities involved children working independently of adults.

Approximately 20 percent of the instructional activities were "beginning math awareness." This category included any activity involving numbers, computation, measurement, mathematics concepts, or logical thinking: e.g., comparing sizes, learning to change money, reading scales, and telling time. Approximately half of the mathematics activities involved children working independently of adults.

Less than 10 percent of the instructional activities were coded as social studies or science.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other non-educational activities are necessary for the smooth functioning of the classroom, but take time away from the "real business" of the classroom.

As Table 7 shows, only 14 percent of the activities were non-educational, (Social Interaction/Observation, Non-Interactive/Class Management, and Negative Interaction/ Discipline), a very positive finding. Furthermore, only 1.2 percent of all the activities were identified as negative or disciplinary, an equally positive fact.

Social Interaction/observation refers to activities which are generally pro-social but not part of the planned educational activities. For example, while the whole class listens to the teacher reading a story, two children sit at the back of the room chatting with each other. This category also includes times when children or adults observe others without directly participating in the activity.

Non-interactive/class management activities occur when children or adults are not engaged in a specific activity or social interaction; or, in the case of adults, when they are engaged in classroom management activities.

Negative interaction/discipline refers to instances where children interact with each other in a negative manner such as by yelling, hitting, and kicking. It also includes all episodes when an adult sets limits, settles disputes between children, or punishes a child. Only 1.2 percent of the classroom activities were negative or disciplinary.

STAFF/CHILD INTERACTIONS

Teachers and children were actively engaged in educational activities in 86 percent of the observations. Teachers divided their work with children almost equally between experiential activities and instructional activities. (See Table 9.)

TABLE 9

Percentage of Instances of Classroom Activities Involving the Teacher, Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Type of Activity	Percentage of Instances
Experiential	42.6%
Instructional	43.8
Social Interaction/Observation	11.5
Non-Interactive/Class Management	0.7
Negative Interaction Discipline	1.3
	100.0

In most cases, teachers' past experience appeared to have little bearing on the types of activities which took place in their classrooms. However, teachers who had less than six years of teaching experience and who had taught only grades one through three prior to the Summer Kindergarten program used more directed instructional activities (40 percent) in the classroom than teachers who had experience teaching kindergarten or prekindergarten (28 percent). This suggests that Summer Kindergarten teachers who had never taught in kindergarten or prekindergarten may have carried over the academic orientation of the primary grades into the summer program.

Educational assistants were observed to interact more often with children during experiential activities than during instructional activities. (See Table 10.)

TABLE 10

Percentage of Instances of Classroom Activities Involving Educational Assistants, Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Type of Activity	Percentage of Instances
Experiential	49.6%
Instructional	33.7
Social Interaction/Observation	14.7
Non-Interactive/Class Management	1.5
Negative Interaction Discipline	0.5
	100.0

VI. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement in their children's education is a critical facet of developmentally appropriate education and, inarguably, an important factor in their children's long-term success.* However, what parental involvement is and how it is accomplished are debatable issues, and often remain more a part of the rhetoric of educational programs than of their reality.

An expressed intent of the Summer Kindergarten program was to increase parents' involvement in their children's school and education. A section of the guide titled Bright Beginnings was devoted to enhancing parental involvement in the program. The guide recommended activities in which parents could be involved, and topics that could be discussed between teachers and parents.

About half the teachers (54 percent) and more than three-quarters of the educational assistants (79 percent) said that they had been involved in activities with the parents. The most frequent types of activities included informal discussions with parents, and inviting parents to attend special class activities. (See Table 11.) Site coordinators said they worked with the family assistant to set up the parent room (82 percent), and talked with the parents (46 percent). Family assistants said they helped the parents to feel more welcome and more comfortable in the schools (68 percent), helped families with problems (60 percent), and planned parent workshops (37 percent).

---

*Comer, J. (1988). Educating Poor Minority Children. Scientific America. 259 (5), 42-48.

Table 11

Percentages of Staff Involved in Different Types of Parent-Related Activities, Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Staff and Types of Activities	Percentages of Staff
Teachers (N=78)	
- discussed parent activities with family assistant	1.3%
- planned workshops	12.8
- invited parents to join local field trips	15.4
- invited parents to class for special activities	29.5
- informally talked with parents at arrival/dismissal	30.8
- invited parents to assist in the class	11.5
- other	7.7
Educational Assistants (N=77)	
- informally talked with parents at arrival/dismissal	45.5%
- invited parents to join local field trips	7.8
- translated for the teacher	9.1
- shared information to make parents feel comfortable	29.9
- informally talked with parents to make them feel comfortable	51.9
- other	13.0
Site Coordinators (N=22)	
- supervised family assistant	27.3%
- worked with family assistant to set up parent room	81.8
- performed administrative tasks related to parents	9.1
- talked with parents	45.5
- other	9.1
Family Assistants (N=19)	
- planned and conducted workshops	36.7%
- got parents to be comfortable with and involved in the school	68.4
- helped families with problems	60.2
- followed up on poor attendance	26.3
- acted as liaison between school and families	21.2
- worked with troubled children	10.5
- performed clerical tasks related to families	10.5
- other	10.5

Almost all of the site coordinators (95 percent) and family assistants (94 percent) believed that the parental involvement activities were helpful to very helpful.

The case studies and parent interviews indicated that only half of the parents or caretakers visited the school or spoke with their child's teacher. About one-third of the parents were involved in a school-initiated activity to support their child in the classroom (e.g., making educational materials), and 29 percent had spent time in the parent room at their child's school. (Field staff reported that family rooms had not been set up in several of the schools they visited.)

In a separate evaluation, a follow-up questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of parents of the 1988 Summer Kindergarten students. The parents' responses to the questionnaire generally confirmed the level of parent involvement indicated by the site visits and case studies. As reported in Table 12, 36 percent of the parents responding to the question attended at least one workshop, and 28 percent visited the family room.

Half of the parents responding to the questionnaire reported that they worked outside their homes. Considering their enthusiasm for the Summer Kindergarten program--95 percent of the parents felt that the program was good for their children, and 96 percent of the parents felt that the program should be continued--the lower rate of parental involvement may reflect the fact that many parents were unable to participate because they were working.

TABLE 12

Parents' Activities And Involvement
Summer Kindergarten Program, 1988

Statement	Number of Parents Responding Yes	Percentage of Parents Responding Yes (N = 789)
It was easy to talk with the family assistant about my child	400	50.7%
There was a special parents' room	327	41.4
There was at least one special workshop for parents	325	41.2
I attended at least one parent workshop	280	35.5
I joined in activities in the parents' room	220	27.9

[1] Parents were asked to respond Yes, No, or Don't Know to a series of statements about the Summer Kindergarten program.

[2] Only schools with more than three classes were staffed with a family assistant. The questionnaire sent to parents did not ask which parents had children in schools with a family assistant and which parents did not.

[3] Some schools designated a special space for use as a parents' room, while others did not.

VII. CHILD AND FAMILY CASE STUDIES

The purposes of the child and family case studies were to closely examine the appropriateness of the classroom activities in relation to individual children, to develop a deeper understanding of the children who attended the program and their families, and to construct a profile of the diversity of the communities in which the program's schools were based. The 24 children in the case study sample attended 12 different classes. Six classes contained two pupils apiece, three classes contained three children each in the study, and three classes each contained one student. In general, the children were selected for the study by their classroom teachers because they had little or no kindergarten experience. However, classes where all the children had attended kindergarten, the children were selected for the study because they seemed representative of the children in the class.

Developmentally Appropriate Classrooms

The Early Childhood Evaluation Unit used the position statement of the National Association of Early Childhood Education (NAEYC) on developmentally appropriate practices in the primary grades to derive an itemized checklist of developmentally appropriate and inappropriate practices.* Fifty-five pairs of

*Bredekamp, S. (Ed.) (1987) Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Program Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8. NAEYC: Washington, D.C. Part 7, pp. 62-78.

items were divided into three categories: curriculu , adult/child interaction, and relations between the family and the summer program. (See Appendix A.)

Information collected in nine of the classes in the case study sample was scored using the evaluation checklist. Appropriate items were coded positively, inappropriate items were coded negatively, and items for which there was insufficient information for judgment were coded as zero. A single rating or score was derived for each class on each item. Although each of the nine classes received an overall positive rating, indicating that there were more developmentally appropriate than inappropriate practices, the item category ratings varied widely, ranging from a negative 1.00 for adult/ child interactions in classroom G to a positive 1.94 for curriculum in classroom F. (See Table 13.)

TABLE 13

Mean Developmental Appropriateness Checklist Scores by Classroom, Summer Kindergarten Classroom, 1988

Item Category	Classroom								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Curriculum	1.07	1.19	1.48	.82	.67	1.94	.98	.83	.15
Adult-Child Interaction	1.08	.91	1.00	.42	.08	.83	-1.00	.25	.08
Family-Program Relation	-.07	.29	.79	1.79	1.21	.93	.43	.21	1.00
Overall	.69	.78	1.09	1.01	.65	1.23	.13	.43	.75

Classroom F received the highest mean overall rating (+1.23); class G had the lowest overall rating (+.13). Classroom F had consistently high positive ratings for curriculum, adult/child interaction, and family/program relations. Classroom G had a curriculum score half that of classroom F, and a negative adult/child interaction score.

When other information about the two classrooms was examined, no meaningful differences were found between the two classrooms in the percentages of educational activities or the way in which the children were grouped. The major differences between the two classes appeared to be in the teachers' interactions with the children. In classroom F, the most developmentally appropriate classroom, the teacher was observed interacting with the children in 11 of the 12 fifteen minute "snapshots." In six of the observations the teacher and the children were involved in experiential activities, while in three "snapshots" they were engaged in instructional activities. (Classroom management activities were recorded in the remaining two observation.) In contrast, in classroom G, the least developmentally appropriate classroom, the teacher was observed interacting with the children in only five of the 12 fifteen minute observations. In four observations they were involved in instructional activities and in one observation, experiential activities.

Information from the child case study narratives suggests that the teacher in classroom G expected the children to be able

to do more than they were capable of doing developmentally. Often the children were unable to meet her expectations. For example, the teacher would say to the children, "Open your workbooks to page 8. Color the leaves green, the trees brown, and the apples red." When the children did not remember the multiple oral directions and quickly carry them out, she criticized them and called them "slow." Children who cried were called "babyish."

The teacher in classroom F had had eight years of teaching experience: five years in prekindergarten and kindergarten, and three years in first grade. On the other hand, the teacher in classroom G had only two years of experience and had never taught in an early childhood classroom before. The differences in the teachers' background and experience may account for some of the observed differences in developmentally appropriate practice.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

The Child Behavior Rating Scale, an observation measure for children aged three to eight in school and preschool settings, was used to evaluate the social and task behaviors of all 24 Summer Kindergarten students in the case studies.

The scale assesses young students' interactions with peers and adults, and also measures their ability to cope independently with tasks. Competence implies skill in recognizing relevant cues, parameters, and rules of a situation, as well as skill in organizing and controlling both the self and the social or

material "other" to effectively reach chosen goals in a situation.

The scale is not designed to be used as a direct observational checklist. Rather, it is completed based on overall experience with and knowledge of the child. For the Summer Kindergarten program, field staff completed the scale for each of the children they observed during the final week of the program.

The 25 scale items form three general categories: social interaction with peers, social interactions with adults, and independent task mastery. Each of the 25 items is rated from one (child's behavior is rarely or never described by the item) to five (child's behavior is almost always or always described by the item).

Social interaction with adults included such items as "complies with adult directives, giving little or no verbal resistance, even when the child dislikes the task". Overall ratings of the children's social interactions with adults indicated that they frequently exhibited the behaviors described by the items, indicating a fairly high degree of competence in this area.

Social interaction with peers included items such as "Willing to share toys or other things with other children when playing." Although the children's social interactions with peers was rated slightly lower than their social interactions with

adults, they were still described as frequently exhibiting the desired behaviors.

Independent task mastery included items such as "Tries to solve problems on own before asking for help" and "Shows satisfaction or pride when he/she completes a task or product." Overall, independent task mastery behaviors were rated as occurring frequently or most of the time, indicating a relatively high degree of task mastery.

In general, by the end of the Summer Kindergarten program, the case study children frequently exhibited behaviors which were considered positive indicators of social competency and independent task mastery.

CASE STUDY FAMILIES

There was great cultural and ethnic diversity among the case study students' families. Of the 24 families, 17 were first generation immigrants: 15 from the Caribbean and two from Asia. The other seven families had lived in the United States for a number of generations. Overall, eleven of the families spoke English at home, five spoke Spanish, three spoke Spanish and English, three spoke Haitian-Creole, and two spoke Chinese.

Family size ranged from one household of two people (including the student) to five extended families consisting of up to 12 people. Thirteen of the 24 households were headed by a single parent: ten of these families were headed by mothers, one by the father, and two by grandmothers.

The parents' formal education varied greatly. Among the seven parents who were born in this country, the educational range was from the 11th grade to "some" college. Of the 17 immigrant parents, eight had between three and ten years of formal schooling, while nine had completed from 11th grade to four years of college. Fifteen of the caregivers said that they had liked school, and 11 mentioned that their own families had encouraged them to go to school. One mother who had grown up in the United States stated that in her home, "There was no such thing as not going to school." Another had been told by her family that school was the way to "a better life." A Dominican-born mother stated that she had been discouraged from going to school in the Dominican Republic because she was female.

The parents said that their children usually accompanied them in most domestic activities. Half the parents said they took their children to the park, and seven families went to church together regularly. Ten mentioned that they or the children's older siblings read storybooks or Bible stories to the children. At home, because they were young, the children had relatively few responsibilities: usually, personal cleanliness, minor housekeeping, and/or helping with younger siblings. Eleven of the children mentioned that after school they watched television--mainly cartoons or shows with child-oriented themes. One girl from a non-English speaking home said she liked cartoons the best because she could learn English from them.

The parents gave a number of reasons for enrolling their

children in the Summer Kindergarten program. They felt it would help their children be better prepared for school in September. They also hoped it would prevent the children from forgetting what they learned in school, and felt that it was a chance for them to be with other children, and would help them learn English. Several parents said they had talked to their children about school in an effort to help them adjust. They told their children to "listen to the teacher," to "pay attention," to "follow the school rules," and "don't misbehave."

All of the parents said they felt comfortable with what their children were being taught in the program. However, three Caribbean parents expressed concern over what they perceived as the general lack of discipline in schools in the United States. According to the parents, "Haiti's schools are more disciplined. Children respect authority and follow directions better there."

The parents said they had noticed many positive changes in their children since the Summer Kindergarten program began. Five parents mentioned that their children were more outgoing, more confident, and more talkative. Five other parents noticed that their children were less active and quieter since attending the program, and felt that this was a positive outcome. Several children seemed more mature to their guardians. Some of the parents noted that their children were writing and sometimes recognizing their own names, using numbers, counting in English, and picking up books and appearing to read. On the negative side, one parent feared that her child was picking up "bad habits

and words" at school. All of the concerns and fears expressed by the parents had to do with socialization rather than academic concerns. They wondered about their child's behavior and ability to get along with other children.

When asked about their own involvement with the schools, eleven of the parents stated that they would like to become involved in their children's schools through the Parents-Teachers Association, parent programs, classroom visits, or assisting with class trips. Two of the parents said they found it difficult to participate in school activities because they had younger children at home. One parent mentioned she had been able to go on class trips because she could take her younger children along.

As for their children's futures, 16 of the responding parents said that they wanted their children to grow up to be well-educated adults, go to college, and become professionals such as nurses, doctors, and lawyers.

COMMUNITY PROFILES

Another goal of the case study was to describe the communities in which the Summer Kindergarten students lived. The two communities about which the most information was collected are described below.

P.S. A is located across the street from a housing project in central Harlem. One avenue bordering the school is lined with abandoned stores and burned-out buildings. The other avenue is filled with small stores, though it is not clear what the stores actually sell. Uncollected garbage was piled on all of the

streets bordering the school, and rats were endemic. Members of the school staff and parents of the children warned the field consultant not to wear jewelry and not to carry a pocketbook because the streets were unsafe.

Many of the Summer Kindergarten students lived in the project across the street from P.S. A. The project grounds are well kept, and there are trees, benches and some playgrounds. The children and parents reported that rats are a tremendous problem in the project. One child reported that she used to sleep in her mother's bed, but now sleeps in her sister's bed because a rat lives under her mother's bed.

Because of the community problems, many parents do not allow their children to play outside, even when attended by adults. One mother buys and rents videotapes for her child to watch rather than letting her play outside. Many of the Summer Kindergarten children in P.S. A have witnessed robberies, shootings, drug sales, and drug usage despite their parents' efforts to shield them from the community. The parents reported that often children as young as five and six are used as drug runners.

There are a number of community centers and neighborhood associations in the community. One church sponsors sports for teenagers and an after-school program for younger children. The church also helps families who need food with food stamp applications and the like. An after-school center located in a nearby project provides assistance in mathematics and reading for

students from grade school through high school. A YMCA, the Police Athletic League, and a karate dojo all sponsor after-school sports activities for children. Most of the programs, however, are for children who are older than the Summer Kindergarten students.

P.S. B, located in Brooklyn, has an expressway on one side and the waterfront on the other. Two avenues form the second set of community boundaries. Most Summer Kindergarten children lived between these two avenues. One avenue is nearly deserted, surrounded by warehouses, and the site of much drug dealing. The other avenue is a hangout for prostitutes.

The community is a tapestry of families with many cultural heritages. Many families are recent immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean Islands. About half the residents are of Hispanic origin. The community has many young families, mostly working class, and many poor.

The Summer Kindergarten children from P.S. B play in a public park located on one of the avenues. While the park seems well kept, crack vials litter the play area, and teachers reported incidents of people "shooting up" or exposing themselves to the children. The park is the only available play space. P.S. B has no yard. A local middle school has a playground, but it cannot be used because it is collapsing.

A locally-based community organization is involved in physical construction and reconstruction of the community, and offers to families in the community a wide range of support

services such as counseling, in-home help by foster grandparents, an employment service, child care, after-school recreation programs, summer day camps, and training for teenagers in improvisational drama. The organization has shaped P.S. B into a community center. After nine years of working with families, the community group feels that it is part of the school. They hold many of their forums and activities at the school. A Parents-Teachers meeting at P.S. B during the 1988 Summer Kindergarten program was attended by 35 parents of the 50 students enrolled in the program, a very high figure indicating a reciprocal commitment between the school and the parents.

The two communities described above are different in many ways. However, it is clear from both that the Summer Kindergarten program cannot be viewed as functioning independently of the schools and communities in which it is based. The community affects what happens to the children outside and inside of school. Positive continuities must be established between the school, the families, and the community. Any program in a school will be affected by its students' families and communities if efforts are not made to link the school with the family and the community. The issue is whether the three can be linked in a mutually beneficial and constructive way.

CHILD PROFILES

In this section, brief profiles of four students who participated in the 1988 Summer Kindergarten program are

presented to illustrate the tremendous variation in the socio-economic backgrounds and cultural experiences of the students. While some variations provide cultural richness, a resource which should be built on in the classrooms, others exist as obstacles to learning for the children. These four children were chosen to represent the diversity of the Summer Kindergarten population and the children's varying degrees of previous formal school experience. It is important to remember that most of the children in the program were chosen because they were "at risk" due to limited English proficiency, residence in temporary housing, lack of prior kindergarten experience, or other teacher-determined criteria.

Nella D

Nella is the last of four children in an African-American household headed by her mother. Nella attended New York City public kindergarten during the 1987-88 school year, and was recommended by her kindergarten teacher for enrollment in the program. Nella was born two months prematurely and continues to be small for a six-year-old. According to her mother, her pediatrician has suggested that Nella's premature birth and continued small size may be a result of her father's heavy drug use at the time of her conception.

Not long after Nella's parents were married, they moved into a housing project in central Harlem. While the apartment is well maintained, little effort is made to keep the building clean. On

the way to and from school each day, Nella must pass addicts, homeless people, and the unemployed.

Nella's father, who had continued to use drugs, particularly crack, lost a job he had held for 15 years. When Nella entered the Summer Kindergarten program, her parents were estranged and in the process of divorcing. Nella and her three sisters have been left in the custody of her mother, a working woman with some college education.

Nella's Summer Kindergarten teacher reported that the other children did not particularly like Nella because of her personality and social behavior. She was unwilling to share things with her peers, and sulked when she could not pressure classmates and teachers into letting her have her way. Her classmates often avoided her because of her tendency to dominate them and complain to the teacher about them. Nella preferred to listen to the record player and "read" books on her own, retelling the recorded stories she had heard as she turned the pages. The teacher noted that Nella followed instructions well except when she was asked to share with other children.

Toward the end of the program, the educational assistant commented that Nella had "come out of her shell." Nella seemed able to relate better to large groups, had improved her ability to handle conflicts with other children, complained less to the teachers, and appeared more self-confident and more involved in the class. However, she still had not done well in making friends.

Danny T

Danny is almost six years old. He attended New York City public kindergarten in 1987-88. He is the third of five children in a Hispanic household. Danny and his brother and three sisters were born in the United States; his mother, father, and stepfather were born in Puerto Rico. He lives with his mother, stepfather, and siblings in a "welfare" hotel in Brooklyn. Danny's family occupies a two-bedroom apartment in the hotel.

The five children sleep in one bedroom with three single beds and a double bed with no headboard, no spreads, and no pillows. There are three dressers, a cardboard box holding toys, and framed pictures of Walt Disney characters on the walls. There are also a black-and-white television set and a portable radio. Overall, the room is spartan.

Danny's mother came to the United States with his father when she was sixteen. She had completed the 11th grade in Puerto Rico. Danny's stepfather attended high school in the New York City metropolitan area, and now works in construction in New Jersey. The Board of Education community coordinator assigned to the hotel criticized the family for having lived in the hotel for over a year and a half without making any attempt to find permanent housing.

Danny rides a bus provided for the hotel children to and from the Summer Kindergarten program each day. The Summer Kindergarten family assistant noted that the community surrounding Danny's hotel is a multi-cultural one with good

recreational programs and after-school centers.

Danny's teacher and educational assistant reported that Danny adjusted well to class, probably because of his previous kindergarten experience, though sometimes he cried and became angry when things did not go his way. Danny's best friend is a Hispanic boy who recently moved to the United States and speaks no English. Danny enjoyed most of the classroom activities, especially puzzles, drawing, singing songs, and blocks. Outside, he particularly enjoyed playing ball with his friends. The teacher noted that Danny was good at most subjects and "already knows his numbers."

Both Danny's teacher and his parents felt that the Summer Kindergarten program was important to him because it kept him in the school routine and prevented him from forgetting things he learned in school the previous year. Danny wants to be a policeman when he grows up.

Jerry M

Jerry is the oldest of three children. He is five years old and has two younger sisters. Jerry had never attended school before. Jerry is younger and smaller than most of his classmates.

Jerry and his family live in a rundown apartment building in Manhattan. The neighborhood is a heavy drug area and, according to Jerry's father, "prostitution, alcoholism, drugs, and homosexuality are very prevalent in the community."

Jerry's father is a Trinidadian-American who had been

married before. Jerry's father threw Jerry's mother out of their house because she had a drug habit, was a "very bad influence on the children." He took on the task of raising the three children alone, although he must frequently leave them with Jerry's maternal grandmother because of his work schedule.

Jerry's Summer Kindergarten teacher stated that at first Jerry had difficulty with self control, possibly because he had never attended school before. Jerry seemed infatuated with all the children his age and all the toys in his classroom, but was disorganized and needed constant reminders about where to put his personal belongings. According to his teacher, Jerry could not recognize shapes, the alphabet, or numbers, or show his age on his fingers. He also did not know his birthday, address, or telephone number. Socially, he was timid, though respectful, toward his teachers and adept at making friends among his peers.

Toward the end of the program, Jerry was able to draw shapes such as lines and circles; he exhibited more self control; and he had learned to clean up after himself. He liked to build with various materials and the other children liked to imitate his structures. Jerry seemed less hesitant about asking the teacher and educational assistant for help, but still needed assistance in recognizing letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. He also needed to learn to dress himself.

Jerry's father thought that Summer Kindergarten had prepared Jerry for the first grade, but wanted to send Jerry to private school where Jerry would be taught discipline, respect, and basic

education. Jerry wants to be a fireman when he grows up.

Beverly W

Beverly attended public school kindergarten in New York City in 1987-88. Beverly is the third youngest of eight children in an Asian-American extended household. Beverly was born in Hong Kong. She, her parents, and her younger sister have lived in the United States for only three years. They live with Beverly's paternal uncle and aunt and their six children, three of whom are away at college and are home only during the summer.

Beverly's father has had two years of Hong Kong university education, is fluent in English, and works in a grocery store owned by his brother. Beverly's mother speaks limited English and works in the same store. Both parents work long hours and it is difficult for them to care for Beverly while they work.

The home is in a Chinese neighborhood. Beverly's father believes that the neighborhood is not very friendly and that a lot of Chinese girls in the neighborhood are just "hanging around." The Summer Kindergarten program and a local park where Beverly sometimes meets classmates from her regular kindergarten class provided the only opportunities for Beverly to play with children who are not members of her family.

Beverly's father learned about the Summer Kindergarten program from the educational assistant in Beverly's regular kindergarten class. He felt that Summer Kindergarten would be good for Beverly since he and his wife work. He also wants Beverly to get a good education.

At home, Beverly liked to watch television and look at books.

At Summer Kindergarten, Beverly was particularly interested in writing and making picture stories, some of which were quite elaborate and detailed. She also enjoyed playing in the housekeeping corner and with manipulatives.

Beverly's teacher and educational assistant described her as self-sufficient, confident, pleasant, cooperative, caring, and a good listener. They noted that Beverly generally does not ask questions. She interacts well with both children and adults.

Beverly's father often asks her about school, and her mother helps her with her homework. Beverly's father feels that Beverly has become more talkative since the beginning of Summer Kindergarten; her teacher feels she has become more self-confident and is ready for first grade.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

The goal of the Summer Kindergarten was to provide a "developmentally appropriate kindergarten experience." Based on classroom observations, staff interviews, and case studies of individual children, we can conclude that, in general, the educational activities were appropriate for children of kindergarten age.

Nella, Danny, Jerry, and Beverly all have concerned parents who want their children to do well in school. According to their teachers and parents, they all benefitted from attending the 29-day summer program. Nella learned to get along better with her

peers; Danny learned how to count; Beverly became more self-confident and more talkative; and Jerry (who had never been in school before) learned to draw shapes and how to clean up after himself, and developed better self-control.

Nella, Danny, Jerry, and Beverly will all enter first grade in New York City public schools in September. The dispositions and attitudes about learning and school that children develop during their kindergarten, first, and second grade years determine their future success in school. According to Karl L. Alexander and Doris R. Entwisle, "Both U.S. and cross-national data suggest that by the end of the third grade, children are launched into achievement trajectories that they follow the rest of their school years. The development of learning patterns and maturational changes in cognitive structure between the ages of five and seven make this period a particularly critical one for school achievement."* To be successful, Nella, Danny, Jerry, and Beverly all need first-grade programs that are not only age-appropriate, based on a general understanding of the typical development of children who are six years old, but also individually appropriate, based on knowledge of their individual personalities, learning styles, and family backgrounds.

---

*Alexander, K. & Entwisle, D. (1988). Achievement in the First Two Years of School: Patterns and Processes. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development. 53 (218, No. 2 P. 1).

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the Summer Kindergarten Program was planned, staffed, and assigned locations within a short space of time, and enrolled nearly twice the number of children originally anticipated, the program was generally well-implemented. Most program staff had had previous experience in early childhood classrooms. Classrooms were supplied with age-appropriate educational materials and equipment. The teachers' guide, Bright Beginnings, was well received by classroom staff who found it helpful in planning classroom activities. Most classroom activities engaged children in hands-on, direct experience with a variety of concrete materials and provided them many opportunities to interact with other children and adults. Over 95 percent of the parents believed that the program had helped their children to grow both academically and socially.

RECOMMENDATIONS

OREA recommends that the program be continued. Many of the problems noted in this report could have been avoided or resolved if more time had been available for planning and setting up the program. In the future it is essential that sufficient time be allotted for program planning; informing community school districts, teachers, and parents about the program; recruiting and enrolling students; hiring and orienting staff; ordering classroom supplies; and locating and setting up classrooms.

The following suggestions are made to improve the educational component of the program:

- The emphasis on developmentally- and individually-appropriate activities should be continued. More information and training about the importance of multicultural education and how to integrate a multicultural perspective into program classrooms should be provided to program staff.
- Children who have limited proficiency in English should be actively recruited for participation in the program, and relevant language proficiency should be a consideration in staff assignments.
- Methods should be devised to provide the summer program teachers with information about the children which they can use to better plan individualized activities in their classrooms. Information about the children's progress in the summer program should be passed on to their first-grade teachers in the fall.

Because it is important that all parents have opportunities to become involved in their children's education, the following suggestions are made to improve the parental involvement component of the program:

- Family assistants should be hired, and family rooms should be set up in every school.
- The role and responsibilities of the family assistant should be more carefully delineated. Family assistants should be provided with additional preservice training and inservice support for working with parents and communities.
- Parent-teacher conferences should be scheduled at least once during the summer program. Some activities need to be planned so that working parents can be informed and involved in the program.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CLASSROOM CHECKLIST

Curriculum

Appropriate	Inappropriate
1. Teacher involves students in story-telling through questioning.	1. Teacher does not involve students in storytelling through questioning.
2. Library corner present.	2. Library corner not present.
3. Teacher provides time for children to select and read books from library corner.	3. Teacher does not provide time for children to select and read books from library corner.
4. Teacher allows for small group instruction.	4. Teacher does not allow for small group instruction.
5. Teacher provides experience charts and other printed material in classroom.	5. Teacher does not provide experience charts and other printed material in classroom.
6. Teacher provides opportunity for dramatic play with children.	6. Teacher does not provide opportunity for dramatic play with children.
7. Housekeeping corner present in classroom.	7. Housekeeping corner was not present in classroom.
8. Teacher provides children the opportunity to use housekeeping corner.	8. Teacher does not provide the children the opportunity to use housekeeping corner.
9. Teacher allows informal conversation between children.	9. Teacher does not allow informal conversation between children.
10. Teacher allows informal conversation with adults and children.	10. Teacher does not allow informal conversation with adults and children.

Appropriate	Inappropriate
11. Manipulatives present in classroom (legos, puzzles, pegs).	11. Manipulatives not present in classroom (legos, puzzles, pegs).
12. Teacher provides children opportunity to play with manipulatives.	12. Teacher does not provide children opportunity to play with manipulatives.
13. Block corner present in classroom.	13. Block corner not present in classrcom.
14. Teacher provides children opportunity play with blocks.	14. Teacher does not provide children opportunity to play with blocks.
15. Art materials present in classroom (scissors, paint, glue, paper, etc.).	15. Art materials not present in classroom (scissors, paint, glue, paper, etc.).
16. Teacher provides opportunity for children to experiment with a variety of art materials.	16. Teacher does not provide an opportunity for children to experiment with a variety of art materials.
17. Woodworking corner present in classroom.	17. Woodworking corner not present in classroom.
18. Teacher provides hands-on experience with woodworking.	18. Teacher does not provide hands-on experience with woodworking.
19. Water play materials present.	19. Water play materials not present.
20. Teacher provides opportunity for children to play with water play materials.	2 Teacher does not provide opportunity for children to play with water play materials.
21. Sand play materials present in classroom.	21. Sand play materials not present in classroom.
22. Teacher provides opportunity for children to play with sand play materials.	22. Teacher does not provide opportunity for children to play with sand play materials.

Appropriate	Inappropriate
23. Cooking equipment in classroom (hot plate, microwave, etc.).	23. No cooking equipment in classroom (hot plate, microwave, etc.).
24. Teacher provides opportunity for hands-on experience with cooking.	24. Teacher does not provide opportunity for hands-on experience with cooking.
25. Math corner present.	25. No math corner present.
26. Teacher provides for hands-on experience with math material.	26. Teacher does not provide for hands-on experience with math material.
27. Science corner present.	27. No science corner present.
28. Teacher provides for hands-on experience with science materials.	28. Teacher does not provide for hands-on experience with science materials.
29. Record player/cassette present in classroom.	29. No record player/cassette present in classroom.
30. Teacher provides opportunity to sing and listen to music.	30. Teacher does not provide opportunity to sing and listen to music.
31. Musical instruments present in classroom.	31. No musical instruments present in classroom.
32. Teacher provides opportunity for children to express themselves through their use of musical instruments.	32. Teacher does not provide opportunity for children to express themselves through their use of musical instruments.
33. Teacher uses fingerplays with children.	33. Teacher does not use fingerplays with children.
34. Outdoor play is planned and integrated.	34. Outdoor play is unplanned (viewed as recess).

Appropriate	Inappropriate
35. Teacher planned field trips.	35. Teacher did not plan any field trips.
36. Multicultural materials present (puppets, books).	36. No multicultural materials present.
37. Teacher provides experience in multicultural activities.	37. Teacher does not provide experience in multicultural activities.
38. Mats/blankets present for rest time.	38. No mats/blankets present for rest time.
39. Teacher provides children opportunity to rest.	39. Teacher does not provide children opportunity to rest.
40. Teacher provided children with one or more consistent classroom routines.	40. Teacher does not provide children with one or more consistent classroom routines.
41. Adults provided for orderly distribution of lunch.	42. Adults did not provide for orderly distribution of lunch.
42. Adults provide atmosphere conducive to social interaction in the lunchroom.	42. Adults did not provide atmosphere conducive to social interaction in in the lunchroom.

Teacher/Para/Child Interaction

43. T/P circulates to individuals and small groups.	43. T/P does not circulate to individuals and small groups/.
44. T/P instructs while sitting low/ kneeling/eye contact.	44. T/P does not instruct while sitting low/ kneeling/eye contact.

Appropriate	Inappropriate
45. T/P asks open-ended questions.	45. T/P does not ask open-ended questions.
46. T/P sensitive to child's feelings and needs.	46. T/P not sensitive to child's feelings and needs.
47. T/P physically comforting to children.	47. T/P not physically comforting to children.
48. Teacher with E.C. license and/or experience.	48. Teacher with no E.C. license and/or experience.
Relations Between Home and Family	
49. T/P has contact with family.	49. T/P has no contact with family.
50. Family assistant present in school.	50. No family assistant present in school.
51. Family assistant has contact with family.	51. Family assistant has no contact with family.
52. Family room in school.	52. No family room in school.
53. Workshop(s) run by F.A. or S.B.C.	53. No workshops held.
54. Parent volunteers (on trips/in classroom).	54. No parent volunteers.
55. On-site bilingual person where appropriate.	55. No on-site bilingual person.

REFERENCES

Alexander, K. & Entwisle, D. (1988). Achievement in the First Two Years of School: Patterns and Processes. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development: 53 (218, No. 2 P. 1).

Bredekamp, S. (Ed.) (1987) Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Program Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8. NAEYC. Part 7, 62-78.

Comer, J. (1988). Educating Poor Minority Children. Scientific America 259 (5), 42-48.

Division of Curriculum and Instruction. (1988). Bright Beginnings. Ne. York: Board of Education of the City of New York.

Ramsey, Patricia G. (1989). Multicultural Education in Early Childhood, Multicultural Education. Young Children. 44 (4), 131-144.