AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Jody A. Alaniz for the degree of Master of Science in Human Development and Family Studies presented on December 8, 2006.

Abstract approved: _______________________________________________________

Leslie Richards

Few parenting curricula exist that are culturally-appropriate to the Mexican-immigrant population served by many programs. The Even Start family literacy program has four integrated components, making it more difficult to find appropriate curricula for the families they serve. During Winter 2006, discussion groups were conducted with participants in two Even Start programs in Oregon to gain information and insight from participating parents to use in the development of the parenting curriculum used. During Spring 2006, the programs that participated in the discussion groups received the parenting curriculum that they had helped develop: one program received the entire, integrated curriculum, the other program initially received only the parenting component of the curriculum.

This study used a mixed-methods approach to examine and compare the gains in knowledge made by the program participants. The quantitative data were not statistically significant and therefore, the hypotheses could not be supported by the quantitative data. The qualitative data illustrated gains in parenting knowledge among both groups and greater gains made by the treatment group. The qualitative data also revealed that the curriculum was culturally-appropriate according to participants.
Findings from this study may have implications for future research. Both groups showed evidence of gains in parenting knowledge regardless of whether they received the integrated or non-integrated curriculum, demonstrating that receipt of a culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum using either format will produce some gains. This study however, could not produce statistically significant quantitative results due to the small sample size and a possible ceiling effect with the treatment group of the measure used. Generalizability is limited as this curriculum was developed for a very specific population and program. All measures examined short-term and not long-term gains. This study does however serve as one model for the development of a culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum. This study also presents one model for the evaluating integration versus non-integration of components in Even Start programs. This study is encouraging that there are gains to participants’ knowledge when integrating components and that providing culturally-appropriate curricula is feasible and beneficial.
Master of Science thesis of Jody A. Alaniz presented on December 8, 2006.

APPROVED:

Major Professor, representing Human Development and Family Sciences

Chair of the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences

Dean of the Graduate School

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Jody A. Alaniz, Author
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and guidance of my major professor, Dr. Leslie Richards. The encouragement and enthusiasm expressed by Dr. Richards was invaluable in my graduate experience.

I would also like to thank the programs who opened their doors and gave of their valuable time, energy, and expertise. Without the support of program staff and participants, this project would not have been possible.

Special appreciation goes to my family who supported me most during the challenging times. To my husband Joe for encouraging me to follow my dream and believing that my work is important. To my son Julian for being my diversion whenever I needed one. To my mother Jan for knowing, and always telling me that I could do anything.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Hispanic or Latino population is growing rapidly in many parts of the United States, including Oregon, and now is the largest ethnic minority group in the United States (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Mexicans make up a majority of this rapidly growing group at more than 66% according to 2002 data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003). In Oregon, Mexicans make up 78% of the Hispanic population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). The Mexican population faces acculturation issues upon immigration to the U.S. that can continue long after immigrating. They often come here not knowing English or how the systems in the U.S. work, but have to be able to maneuver systems for themselves and their children with little social support. Acculturation is expected to occur quickly, but is a very slow process, especially for adults (Martinez, 2006). Many of the Mexicans who immigrate are of child-bearing years and later have American-born children. Raising children in a bilingual, bicultural context presents various parenting challenges. Many of these parents turn to community programs for support and information.

Even Start is one such program. Even Start focuses on family literacy through parenting education, adult education, early childhood education, and parent-child interaction. Even Start is expected to integrate the four components, although there are no studies that compare similar program populations of Spanish-speaking, Mexican
immigrants, determining if integration is a better method for learning. The majority of parents actively involved in the Even Start programs in Oregon are Spanish-speaking, Mexican immigrant mothers, yet there is little curricula available that targets this population. This research project proposed to: 1) develop a culturally-appropriate parent education curriculum, designed specifically for Spanish-speaking, Mexican immigrant mothers attending Even Start literacy programs, 2) pilot test it in two Even Start programs, and 3) assess learning gains immediately after the curriculum has been delivered. This thesis sought to compare the effects of integrating and not integrating a culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum on participating parents by measuring parenting knowledge gains. This information is important as it could change how Mexican mothers and children receive services in Even Start as well as parenting, health care, and education.

**Mexican Immigrant Families**

The majority of Spanish-speaking families participating in Even Start programs in Oregon are Mexican immigrants, including all of the study participants. Many Mexicans immigrate to the United States and have children, starting their families here. These families face many challenges including that of acculturating and the challenge of parenting in a new country. These parents come from a country with one culture and raise their children in a country with a different culture. It is a challenge for Mexican immigrant parents to raise their children in a country with norms that conflict with their values and beliefs (Martinez, 2006). Their children are learning very quickly to speak English, to dress “like Americans”, to listen to popular music in English, and they’re
making American friends. For parents, acculturating to this new culture takes more time, thus creating an acculturation gap between them and their children (Martinez). Charles Martinez, who researches effects of culturally-appropriate parenting curricula on Mexican immigrant parents and children, explains that this acculturation gap can cause parents to think their child is ashamed of their culture or it can cause parents to question themselves in their parenting. Consequently parent-child interaction may occur less frequently and/or may not be a rich experience for the parent or the child, or either.

Mexican immigrant women typically arrive in the U.S. knowing little or no English, having very low education levels, little social support, and very low incomes. These factors may have dramatic influences on their parenting role and make parenting more difficult (Zambrana, Silva-Palacios, and Powell, 1992). If a mother is socially isolated and has only one support person (typically her partner), it may be difficult for her to not follow the advice that person provides out of fear of hurting the relationship with that family member. Parenting advice may not seem right to the mother, but without having received information to dispute the advice received, she may not know what else to do and follow it, wanting the best for her child.

This research project is important because there is currently little research specific to Mexican immigrant parents aside of the work of Martinez. Bornstein and Cote (2004) assert that little is understood specifically about parenting knowledge among immigrant families. The parenting curriculum in this study covered two main topics – appropriate developmental expectations and healthy family nutrition. These topics were identified as urgently needed by professionals experienced in working with Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant families, including Even Start staff. Their suggestions also came from what
parents had told them they want. With just a few years of education, these are not topics about which Mexican women typically learn or know a lot. They are however, important topics in parenting young children. Without proper nutrition or basic developmental needs being met, a child may not be able to reach his/her full potential. Child development and nutrition education are a basis for parent education, crucial for Mexican immigrant mothers and their children.

**Even Start Family Literacy Programs**

The National Even Start Association refers to Even Start programs as partnerships between schools and their community, that aid in ending the cycle of poverty and illiteracy (2006). In 1989 the federal government implemented the Even Start Literacy Program as the center of the focus on family literacy (Ricciuti, St. Pierre, Lee, Parsad, & Rimdzius, 2004). Family literacy, the basis of Even Start programs, can be defined as “literacy beliefs and practices among family members and the intergenerational transfer of literacy to children” (Wasik & Herrmann, 2004; p. 3). The main focus of Even Start programs’ is to improve families’ literacy skills (RMC Research Corporation, 2001) with the premise that parents are the first teachers of their children. Even Start works toward this goal through the implementation of four components: Adult Education, Early Childhood Education, Parenting Education, and Interactive Literacy Activities.

While programs are mandated to integrate the four components, many are not able to do so very successfully. Integration is described in the *Even Start Guide to Quality* as connecting “instruction within and across components through meaningful and consistent
program messages and planning, and to have service providers work with the whole family, thereby providing an intensive experience intended to change intergenerational patterns associated with low levels of literacy” (RMC Research Corporation, 2001; p. 26). The objective is that families receive consistent messages that are reinforced emphasizing the value of education. Often program staff do not fully understand what true integration of the four components means. Furthermore, while intuitively it makes sense to require integration of curriculum across program components, there is little evidence that doing so increases learning gains. Because of the diversity of the fields of Even Start staff, instructors are often isolated in planning and instruction. For example, the Adult Educator may have a background in teaching Math or English as a Second Language and no experience with developmentally-appropriate activities for young children. That person would not easily be able to aid in planning or instruction for the Early Childhood Education or Parent Education program components.

The goal of parent education in Even Start programs is “to strengthen parents’ support of their young children’s literacy development and early school success” (RMC Research Corporation, 2001; p. 48). Requirements are in place to determine the number of hours per week participants take part in each of the four components, most of which is spent on adult education for parents and early childhood education (ECE) for their children. Parent education is recommended, and typically offered, for a fraction of the hours adult education is available each week. Because of the stress on adult education, the parent education component is often not the focus of program resources and is frequently overlooked. Many programs could do more to make parent education beneficial for participating families.
Parent Education

Parent education is important for both parents and children (LeTendre, 2002). Parents want what is best for their children, but often are not certain about what “best” is. Parenting is a broad topic area that cannot easily be covered in a high school course, leaving most people on their own with little, if any, parent education by the time they have children. Even Start participants are in the program because they have sought out the educational opportunities available there. These are people who want to improve the quality of their lives and their children’s lives. Parents participating in Even Start typically enter with low levels of education and therefore less likelihood of previous parenting education. Le Tendre asserts the importance of parent education, pointing out that investing in parents is investing in the entire family and that family’s future.

There are few parenting curricula readily available in Spanish appropriate for Even Start, and what is available in Spanish is often a translation from an English version. There is typically little, if any, variation to accommodate the different culture. Mexican immigrant families have a rich culture that, when seen as an asset can be used to aid in the parent education process and benefit both parents and children. This research project included the design of a curriculum specifically for the population that used it – Spanish-speaking, Mexican immigrant mothers in Even Start literacy programs. This curriculum was expected to increase parents’ knowledge of child development and nutrition.

Effects of Culture on Parenting
Acculturation is the process of adjusting to a nonnative culture (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgadi, 1991) with a low level of acculturation being the group that has adjusted the least and high acculturation as the group that has adjusted the most. Some of the factors that determine level of acculturation include nativity (Mexican vs. U.S. born), ethnic identity (Mexican vs. Anglo), and language use (Spanish vs. English). As Estella Martinez (1988) has noted, parenting issues cannot be explained simply by studying Hispanics or Mexicans as one group. She did a study on Mexican-Americans’ discipline style, but did not separate participants out by acculturation level. E. Martinez concluded that there is a lot of variability in the Mexican-American population and that the group as a whole could not be characterized as more permissive, authoritative or authoritarian. More concrete results could have been provided had participants been separated into high and low acculturation levels. This project addressed the issue of acculturation level specific to the participants in the study in order to ensure a more culturally-appropriate experience.

**The Ecological Model**

The ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986) is a perspective commonly used to explain the development of individuals. The model (shown in Figure 1) has four main parts that explain development; 1) microsystem, 2) mesosystem, 3) exosystem, and 4) macrosystem. Microsystem settings are those closest to the individual, such as family and church and, in the context of this study, the Even Start program. The mesosystem is the important linkage between microsystem settings. The mesosystem acknowledges that there are crucial connections made between settings that contribute greatly to the
development of an individual. Rather than only a series of independent contexts affecting an individual, there are dynamic interactions between settings that have even greater effects on an individual. Exosystem settings are those just outside the microsystem such as the larger community and this system was not a focus of the model for this study. Finally, the macrosystem is an even broader group of settings that affect the individual including economics, nationality, and culture.

Researchers of acculturation’s effects on parenting have used the ecological model in the past (Dumka, Roosa, & Jackson, 1997; Martinez & Eddy, 2005). The ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) was applied to this project with a focus on the microsystem, the mesosystem, and the
macrosystem. Even Start is a microsystem setting influenced by the culture of the participants. Participants’ culture is part of the macrosystem and includes beliefs, values, religion, and language. This project proposed that by incorporating participants’ culture into a parenting curriculum in Even Start, mesosystem linkages between the Even Start program and the families’ homes would be made. As a result, a better learning environment would have been created for parents and their children to learn together, creating an immediate gain in knowledge for all participants.

In addition to the mesosystem linkages made between the context of the Even Start program and participants’ home contexts, linkages were expected within the program for the treatment group. By integrating the curriculum throughout all four components of the Even Start program, further gains were expected. By integrating lessons throughout the program into Adult Education, Early Childhood Education, and Interactive Literacy Activities along with Parent Education and connecting those settings, more linkages were expected to be made. It was expected that for the comparison group, the program not initially integrating the four components, gains in parental knowledge were not expected to be as great. All of these systems fit together to create explanations for the influence that a culturally-appropriate, integrated curriculum has on Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge.

**Research Questions**

This study was guided by two research questions:

1) What effect does a parenting curriculum, delivered to an Even Start program, have on Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?
2) Does integrating the parenting curriculum across all four components of an Even Start program result in greater gains in Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?

Chapter Summary

This study examined the effects on parenting knowledge of a culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum designed for Even Start mothers, integrated in all four components of the Even Start program. The ecological model is the theoretical basis for the approach used in the development of the curriculum. This framework is appropriate because Even Start has four separate components that were integrated in a culturally-appropriate manner for this project. This framework guides the hypothesis that the integrated curriculum would produce a greater increase in parent knowledge. This theory aids in understanding the complex interactions of the Even Start program and its effects on Spanish-speaking program participants.

CHAPTER 2

Even Start: Integration of the Four Components

Integration of the four components in Even Start programs is a federal requirement (RMC Research Corporation, 2001), but is a difficult model to address correctly. According to the Guide to Quality for Even Start programs, integration of components ensures that “for each family member, learning in a variety of situations and
mastery of new information and skills is thorough and complete” (RMC Research Corporation). This approach has been described as the core of family literacy with the idea that integration of the four components is more effective than presentation of each component independently (Askov, 2001). This idea is supported by the ecological model as the effect of the interactions between the program components on program participants has a greater effect than if the components were independent of one another.

There is currently no empirical evidence that integrating the four components is a better model than presenting the different components independent of the others, although integration is frequently described as the most effective way to deliver services in Even Start. In a 2004 Even Start Evaluation report by the U.S. Department of Education, improved outcomes as a result of integration are explained as a “hypothesis” of the family literacy model (Ricciuti, St. Pierre, Lee, Parsad, & Rimdzius, 2004; p. 7). There are also no recommendations in the literature on how to measure effectiveness of the integration model. Integration is a challenge for programs because the instructor for each component may be a different person with no education or expertise in the other component disciplines. This model expects that Even Start staff of very different disciplines work together to present a quality, integrated curriculum without empirical evidence that such a model is better than any other. This research project sought to measure gains and retention of parenting knowledge of an integrated curriculum by comparing it with a non-integrated curriculum in order to provide empirical evidence of an integrated model’s effectiveness.
Effects of Acculturation and SES on Parenting

Research has found significant relationships between acculturation and parenting styles (Cardona, Nicholson, and Fox, 2000; Dumka, Roosa, and Jackson, 1997; Kolobe, 2004) and between SES and parenting styles (Cardona, et. al). Gutierrez, Sameroff, and Karrer (1988) compared low and highly acculturated Mexican mothers to Anglo-American mothers on explanations of child development. They found that mothers with low levels of acculturation used less complex explanations of development than did more highly acculturated mothers when shown parenting vignettes. The authors however, also stressed the importance of SES in their findings. They found that among high SES mothers, highly acculturated mothers gave higher level responses than the low acculturated mothers. They hypothesize that “neither cultural group nor social status alone was sufficient” (p. 253) in explaining the high scores since only the high SES, highly acculturated mothers gave more complex developmental explanations for the vignettes. Gutierrez, et. al, (1988) found confounding effects of both acculturation and SES in their study.

Kolobe (2004) divided her study sample of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans by acculturation level and SES. Similar to the Gutierrez, et. al (1998) study, Kolobe found variation by acculturation level. Another study separated participants by citing research that supports the idea that SES is a determinant of parenting style (Cardona, Nicholson, & Fox, 2000). They also cited research that found that parenting styles vary among Hispanics depending on acculturation, education, and income level and recommended studying variations within the group (as cited in Cardona, Nicholson, & Fox, 2000). This approach allows for controlling for one or the other so that the relationships between SES
and parenting, and acculturation and parenting can be separated. The literature on SES and acculturation level as related to parenting created a basis for the curriculum development. As participants in the Even Start programs in this study were predicted to have lower acculturation levels, lower education, and lower income levels, the curriculum contained more basic information rather than assuming knowledge in either subject.

Parent Education

The literature on Mexicans’ parenting tends to focus on three main areas: discipline, nurturing, and developmental expectations (Gutierrez, Sameroff, & Karrer, 1988, Kolobe, 2004). Most studies have used the Parent Behavior Checklist (PBC) measure, which contains three subscales: parents’ discipline, how parents promote children’s psychological growth (nurturing), and parents’ developmental expectations (Kolobe, 2004). Due to the scope of this project, the focus was on developmental expectations and nutrition. Both of these topics were seen as a crucial basis for successful parenting in the research and by program staff serving the sample population. The focus of the parent education literature specific to Even Start centers on application of the parent education component and its importance (Ponzetti and Dulin, 1997; Powell & D’Angelo, 2000).

Developmental Expectations

Gutierrez, Sameroff, and Karrer (1988), conducted a study exploring the appropriateness of mothers’ expectations for a child’s age and the complexity of mothers’ explanations for the child’s behavior. This study used the PBC to assess appropriateness
of participants’ developmental expectations and a series of vignettes to assess the complexity of the mothers’ developmental explanations for the children’s behavior in the scenarios. They found that Mexican mothers with low levels of acculturation showed a less complex understanding of development (Gutierrez, et. al, 1988). Another researcher examined appropriateness of developmental expectations for children’s behavior by sampling Mexican mother-infant pairs (Kolobe, 2004). The author found that mothers with lower acculturation levels scored lower on the developmental expectations subscale of the PBC than did the more highly acculturated mothers. The research supports developmental expectations as an area deserving of focus for low acculturated Mexican mothers.

Bornstein and Cote (2004) conducted a study with immigrant mothers of toddlers and found that they scored lower on parenting knowledge and experienced more difficulty in answering child development and parent-child interaction questions than did European American mothers. The authors recommended appropriate developmental expectations as an area for intervention with immigrant parents. They explained that mothers who do not have an accurate understanding of developmental milestones may not recognize a need for intervention that could prevent long-term problems in their children. They also stress the challenges to parent-child interaction if the parent does not have correct knowledge of child development. They illustrate this through the example of a mother who thinks that hours of crying per day is normal for an infant and therefore does not respond appropriately to his/her cries. In their study, more than 1 in 3 immigrant mothers thought that their responses to their children in the first few months of life determined whether their child would grow up to be happy and well-adjusted. They stated
that another 1 in 3 were not sure if that were true, providing evidence for the importance of appropriate child development education for immigrant mothers as these mothers may have unrealistic expectations of themselves as parents.

**Nutrition**

A challenge to the review of the literature on nutrition related to parent education was the lack of research specific to Even Start. Child nutrition is arguably an important topic for parents that Even Start programs should prioritize in their parent education component. Research addressing the importance of child nutrition is readily accessible. Sigman (1995) reviewed a three country study (including Mexico) from the 1980s that examined children’s nutrition and assessed their cognitive outcomes. They looked at diet quantity (adequacy of protein-energy intake) and diet quality (availability of animal products). In the Mexican population school-age children with better quality diets, associated with animal-source iron and zinc, scored higher on cognitive measures. They also found that the mother’s nutrition during an infant’s first six months was correlated with behavioral development. Sigman suggests that poor nutrition can lead to mental deficiencies in children by compromising their exploration and learning. This conclusion is supported by Sherman, Pollitt, and Brown (1994) who describe the lack of interest undernourished children typically have in their social environment, leading to less likelihood of establishing relationships as well as exploring and learning from their environment.

Sherman, Pollitt, and Brown (1994) remind us of the effect of poverty on nutrition and refer to poverty as the “primary factor associated with poor nutritional
status” in the United States (p. 3). They assert that even moderate undernutrition can have long-term effects on children’s cognitive development and that this relationship is not common knowledge among the general public. The authors suggest incorporating nutrition education into programs to improve the nutrition of young children, and therefore their cognitive development. They state that the effects of undernutrition can be reduced or eliminated with adequate food intake and support from school and home environments.

Young, Anderson, Beckstrom, Bellows, and Johnson (2004) sought to develop a nutrition intervention for pre-school age children. They stress the importance of creating an intervention specifically for a target audience, using the audience’s input and existing research. They developed an intervention, aiming to address specific behaviors for a specific audience with reinforcement from environments encouraging the targeted behavior. From the research reviewed in their article, the authors concluded that “positively influencing food preferences during early childhood may aid in the establishment of lifelong healthy food habits” (p. 251). Nutrition is a topic crucial to parenting education for both parents and children’s health and well-being. As found by Ponzetti and Dulin (1997), nutrition appears to be one of the least frequently presented topics in Even Start parent education. Children have nutritional needs which must be met in order to be healthy and parents need information so they can take an active role in order to meet their children’s nutritional needs.
Even Start Parent Education

Ponzetti and Dulin (1997) referred to the lack of research on family literacy parent education practices. The authors explored the parent education component in Even Start programs across the state of Washington. They described the educational methods and content in the Washington programs as, “as comprehensive as those offered…I nationwide”, citing St. Pierre, Swartz, Murray, Deck, and Nickel (1993). Ponzetti and Dulin found discipline and guidance to be the topic presented most frequently, with nutrition as one of the two least frequent topics. Child development was grouped in the “human development” topic category, presented just over half as frequently as discipline and guidance on average. The authors described the parent education component in Even Start as the most elusive program component. Ponzetti and Dulin explain the importance of the parent education component stating that it is “the most critical component of family literacy because it provides the rationale for a family-focused, as opposed to a child- or adult-focused, approach to literacy attainment” (p. 23).

There are resources provided to Even Start staff to provide suggestions for appropriate parent education and expectations for Even Start parenting education. One source is the Guide to Improving Parenting Education in Even Start Family Literacy Programs (Powell & D’Angelo, 2000). Goals recommended for Even Start parents, specific to parent education, are to: “engage in language-rich parent-child interactions, provide supports for literacy in the family, hold appropriate expectations for children’s learning and development, actively embrace the parenting role, and form and maintain connections with community and other resources” (p. 6). These goals were the focus of this project.
Cultural Appropriateness

Cultural appropriateness, in this study, refers to the incorporation of the Mexican culture into the curriculum throughout the process of developing the curriculum. Culturally-appropriate curriculum could not then be translated into another language and used with a different population with expectations of similar results. Bruch, Jehangir, Jacobs, and Ghere (2004) discussed the necessity for multicultural approaches to be bidirectional or multidirectional. They believe that educational systems should influence students and students should influence educational systems in the context of culture. The authors also referred to a “gap between theory and practice in multicultural education” (p. 14). This project addressed culture by first asking parents what they needed from their education in a discussion group (explained in depth in Chapter 3), and then designing the curriculum around that feedback.

The work of Charles Martinez and his colleagues is very relevant to my study (Forgatch and Martinez, 1999; Castro, Barrera, & Martinez, 2004; Martinez & Eddy, 2005). In the Martinez and Eddy (2005) study, a culturally adapted intervention was used that included role playing, modeling, and home teaching to teach various parenting skills to parents of middle school aged youths. They reported that a culturally adapted parenting curriculum led to improved outcomes in both parents and youths. They cited numerous researchers, including Castro, Barrera, & Martinez (2004), Gorman and Balter (1997), and Kumpfer, Alvarado, Smith, and Bellamy (2002), who all agree that similar adaptations increase participation among parents and outcomes for both parents and children. Castro et al. described two forms of cultural adaptation: modification of content and modification of delivery which refer to curriculum content and presentation (e.g.
delivery person). They recommend addressing these areas for modification to ensure a more culturally relevant curriculum, both of which were addressed in this project.

Martinez (2006) asked if “special” populations are so special that they require a specialized intervention approach. In his research with Mexican immigrants, he has concluded that they do. Martinez refers to the issue of the acculturation gap between Mexican immigrant parents and their American-born children that widens as time passes. In his intervention with this population, Martinez describes American traditions, explaining them to parents in a way they would understand. For example, explaining the concept of a “sleep-over” which does not exist in the Mexican culture or as a word in the Spanish language. He suggested teaching methods for parent education with Mexican immigrants, including skits and role playing as well as pictures and dichos (common sayings) instead of written hand-outs (2006). Martinez refers to the approach taken in this thesis as the “Square One Approach” which assumes no generalizability, is developed within a culturally specified framework, and has limited external validity. This approach works when a curriculum is developed for a specific group, typically a specific program, and not expected to be used or generalized for another group.

Chapter Summary

Researchers agree that both acculturation and SES have effects on parenting styles and that there is great variation within the group labeled as Mexican or Hispanic. The approach currently recommended suggests looking at the variation within the groups rather than generalizing across a group that has shown so much variability. Researchers have consistently found a lack of understanding of developmental expectations among
Mexicans with low acculturation levels and recommend child development as an area for parent education with this population. Overall, there is a lack of research on nutrition in parent education specific to Even Start, although clear links have been made between children’s nutrition and healthy development. Researchers have examined the goals of Even Start parenting education and explained its importance as well as the improvements that need to be made. Integration of program components is a requirement for Even Start programs and evidence is needed to support integration as best practices for these programs. A culturally-appropriate approach to the development of parenting curriculum has been addressed for Spanish-speakers and Mexican immigrants in a broad sense. This approach has proven successful for both parents and children and is recommended in the literature for best practices.

CHAPTER 3

Research Design

A culturally-appropriate parent education curriculum intervention was delivered in two Even Start programs in Oregon. In January 2006 Even Start parents in each of these programs first took part in a discussion group that focused on their experiences, thoughts, and opinions of parenting education. The purpose of the discussion group was to ensure cultural-appropriateness by determining participants’ preferred topics related to child development and nutrition and their preferred teaching methods. In addition to gaining information from the parents about their preferences for specific topics and teaching methods, demographic data was also collected in order to better identify the
specific population served by the participating programs. This included participants’ acculturation level, as well as socioeconomic status (SES). All participants were identified as having a low acculturation level, but there was variation on the SES variables. This curriculum was developed so as to be culturally-appropriate for immigrants with low acculturation levels. Nuances of the Mexican immigrant culture and input from participating parents were incorporated into the curriculum. Translation and application of this curriculum to any other population would not be appropriate.

Once the data from the discussion groups were analyzed, the curriculum was completed. To test whether integrating a parenting education topic across all components of the Even Start program results in better learning gains, one Even Start program in this study pilot-tested the culturally-appropriate parenting curricula only in parent education classes, while the other program was provided with strategies for integrating the curricula into all of the other Even Start components. The curriculum took two full program weeks to administer and occurred in May 2006. Programs serve families four days a week. The first week’s topic was appropriate developmental expectations, and the second week’s topic was healthy nutrition. The developmental expectations curriculum focused on developmental milestones, developmentally-appropriate activities, and age-appropriate communication. The healthy nutrition curriculum focused on healthy foods, recommended servings, portion sizes, and physical activity. After all data for this project were collected, the program that did not receive the integrated curriculum, received all materials provided to the other program to fully integrate the curriculum units across Even Start components.
Procedures

Background Research

In preparation for developing a parenting curriculum, I reviewed parenting curricula on various topics, created for different groups. The Make Parenting a Pleasure (Saks, Hyman, Reilly, & Rusch, 1996) curriculum is a successful program from which formatting and some topics were drawn. After having an idea of the format, specific topics and teaching methods needed to be addressed. I met with several staff members from both participating programs. I had extensive, formal conversations with both program coordinators, parent educators from both programs, and brief, informal conversations with other staff, including early childhood teachers and assistants. Conversations covered parent education requirements for Even Start, literacy levels of participants, parents’ desired parenting topics, and topics not sufficiently covered by readily-available curricula. These conversations resulted in the topic selection, length of the classes, and some of the level of material to be presented.

Discussion Group

Discussion groups with participating parents were held in each of the pilot test sites. The discussion groups focused on the mothers’ experiences, thoughts, and opinions of parent education topics and teaching methods. Parents were informed on two separate occasions that their participation was voluntary; once a couple of days prior to the discussion group and again immediately before the discussion group. All parents in attendance on the day of the discussion group participated (a total of 28; 14 from each program). I facilitated the discussion and no program staff members were present in order
to gain more information and more honest answers from participants. Parents were also informed that the information shared would not be received by Even Start staff and would not affect their services in any way. Responses were written either on paper or an overhead where parents could see the information they were providing.

The data collected from the discussion groups were then put into lists of topics previously received, desired child development topics, desired nutrition topics, most preferred teaching methods, and least preferred teaching methods. Those lists were referred to during the development of the curriculum and influenced the resulting curriculum. Statements that were made by parents in both programs had more influence on the curriculum than statements made in just one program. For example, parents in both programs wanted to learn about how to communicate with children of different ages about difficult topics like puberty and sex. Participants stated that where they are from parents don’t talk about those things so they don’t know what to say or not say, but know they want to answer their children’s questions appropriately. This topic was not intended as a topic in the curriculum, but was added since both groups expressed a need for such information. Both groups also said that they learn better when they can do activities to practice what they learn, so more activities were added to the curriculum than initially intended. Participants also influenced the hand-outs selected and formatting of hand-outs I developed. They wanted all written materials in Spanish, with pictures, and preferably larger print. Input provided by program participants in the discussion groups thus aided in the culturally-appropriate development of the curricula.
Curriculum

Two important processes in addition to recommendations on cultural-appropriateness guided the development of this curriculum: The Seven Steps of Planning (Vella, 1994) and Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956). The Seven Steps of Planning in adult education design refer to asking: Who?, Why?, When?, Where?, What for?, What?, and How?. These questions were all asked and addressed in the development of the curriculum in order to create a comprehensive and appropriate design for the curriculum. Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives classifies learning objectives into three main areas: Affective, Psychomotor, and Cognitive. Since the focus of the pre-posttest measures were knowledge-based, the cognitive classification of Bloom’s taxonomy was the focus of the learning objectives for this curriculum.

Upon completion of the curriculum, both pieces; developmental expectations and healthy nutrition were reviewed by qualified professionals. The developmental expectations section was reviewed by a research associate with a PhD who has over 20 years experience with parenting education, including use of parenting curricula. The reviewer of the healthy nutrition section of the curriculum is a Nutrition Education Program Instructor with the Extension Service and has a master’s degree in public health with a focus on International Health and Nutrition. Both reviewers examined the curriculum for accuracy, ease of explanations, relevance of activities, and connection of information presented to the pre-posttests. Minor changes were made in accordance with the reviewers’ recommendations before the curriculum’s application.

To maintain anonymity, pseudonyms have been used for the names of the towns where the programs are located. The Spring Valley program received the curriculum
which integrates understanding of developmental expectations and nutrition across all four Even Start components: Adult Education, Parent Education, Early Childhood Education, and Interactive Literacy Activities. In this treatment, parents and children learned, in depth, about the same topics at the same time. Those parents were also provided options for age-appropriate activities to do at home at least once a week with their children related to what they were learning about in the parenting class. I attended the Spring Valley program’s planning meeting to provide them with the curricula and accompanying materials, provide an explanation of its use, as well as answer questions staff applying the curricula had. During that meeting integration of components was a central focus. Centralia served as the comparison group, initially receiving only the parenting education curriculum to be delivered as regular parenting education topics, with no additional information provided about integrating the information into other program components. Staff members were asked to plan and instruct the other components as they normally would. Centralia received the fully integrated curriculum to use in their program once all data for this project were collected. The curriculum took both programs two weeks to administer. One week of the integrated curriculum can be reviewed in Appendix A.

The focus of the curriculum development was on Parent Education with the idea that program staff in the treatment program would have more flexibility with the activities provided for the other three program components. Staff members were required to complete a certain number of activities which varied, depending on the week’s topic and the program component. Staff had the ability to add to the curriculum in order to best fit the participants in their respective program. However, any additions or changes to the
curriculum were required to have the same goals and focus of the rest of that week’s curriculum. As the comparison group, the Centralia program received only the Parent Education curriculum component and therefore did not have the same parameters for instruction in the other components. I observed in both programs during the application of the parent education component and parts of the other components. This was to determine if the curriculum was presented as intended and if the participants were present throughout both of the parenting classes. Since the curriculum development process is a major part of integration and I completed that, I was mainly observing to see if the programs applied the curriculum as expected to ensure integration and non-integration in the respective programs. Rather than observing in the other components in the Centralia program, preliminary lesson plans were provided verbally and written lesson plans were provided after the two weeks. This method was used to ensure the lack of integration in the comparison group without creating discomfort for participants or staff that who were not actively participating in the study (e.g. the children and their teachers). The developmental expectations curriculum focused on why understanding development is important for parents, developmental milestones, and parents’ role in teaching their children. The nutrition curriculum focused on the main food groups, reading the food pyramid, and appropriate servings for children.

The first day of the first week of the curriculum, participants signed the informed consent if they were willing to participate in the testing. All parents present in both programs chose to sign the informed consent form. They then completed the demographic questionnaire and a pretest of their knowledge related to the two topics that were to be presented. That same measure was used as a post-test immediately after
The parent education components were instructed on Wednesdays in both groups and post-tests were administered on Friday, the last day of the second week for both programs. At the same time as the post-test, participants also answered open-ended questions about their experiences over the past two weeks and opinions about the curriculum. This qualitative piece aided in understanding the effects of the cultural-appropriateness of the curriculum as well as the integration of the four components. Copies of the informed consent and the demographic questionnaire are attached in Appendix B. The pre-test and post-test instruments can be found in Appendix C. Literacy level of participants was considered when designing the forms, however I was available for participants who could not read all or parts of the questions or those who could not write. There was one participant in one of the programs with two years of education who could not write and I transcribed her answers as she stated them to me. Attendance data were collected for the two weeks on the last day of the study in order to drop participants who missed more than two of the eight program days. Low attendance was not anticipated as regular attendance is a requirement for Even Start participants to be in the program.

Sample

A total of 30-46 participants were expected between the two Even Start programs, but the sample size was 24. The sample size was smaller than expected for two reasons; 1) attendance was very low in the larger, treatment program the day of the pretest which excluded all of those parents from participating in the data collection and 2) four participants from the comparison group were absent on the two days that the post-test
could be completed so they were dropped from the sample. More than half of the total participants were in the group that received the fully integrated curriculum. All participants were Spanish-speaking, immigrant mothers and had at least one child under the age of eight as is a requirement for Even Start participants. All participants were born in Mexico and had low acculturation levels. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on any demographic variables as shown below in Table 1.

Table 1.

Descriptives of Participants’ Characteristics by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Treatment Group</th>
<th>Comparison Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Mean = 29.23</td>
<td>Mean = 27.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 22-37</td>
<td>Range = 19-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Mean = 9.38</td>
<td>Mean = 8.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 2-16</td>
<td>Range = 6-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Very low: n = 3</td>
<td>Very low: n = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low: n = 3</td>
<td>Low: n = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above poverty: n = 7</td>
<td>Above poverty: n = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>Low: n = 13</td>
<td>Low: n = 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High: n = 0</td>
<td>High: n = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months in Even Start</td>
<td>Mean = 15.62</td>
<td>Mean = 15.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 1-36</td>
<td>Range = 3-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martial Status</td>
<td>Married: n = 9</td>
<td>Married: n = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnered: n = 4</td>
<td>Partnered: n = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>Mean = 2.08</td>
<td>Mean = 2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 1-4</td>
<td>Range = 1-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 24 participants. Standardized solutions are reported.
†p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.
Ethical Treatment of Participants

Participants were able to choose not to participate in the discussion group and in the demographic survey and acculturation data collection. They were also informed that further data collection was voluntary. The parent educator, who was well known to the participants, presented the parenting curriculum. The staff presenting the other components received suggested information and activities to present, but were allowed to alter them as needed for their specific classes and participants. Using program staff known to participants allowed for an uninterrupted flow in the educational presentation in all four components. The curriculum was administered by programs so that it was part of their daily educational activities that were required for participation in the program. The program not initially receiving the fully integrated curriculum and accompanying materials received these resources at the end of the data collection.

Measures

Multiple measures were utilized in this study: a demographic survey, an acculturation scale, a measure of parenting knowledge, and a short qualitative questionnaire. The demographic survey included SES data, age, education level, family composition, and time in Even Start and is titled the Parent Education Questionnaire (included in Appendix B). The Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (Marín, Sabogal, VanOss, Otero-Sabogal, and Pérez-Stable, 1987) includes five items based on language use including language spoken in general, language spoken as a child, and language spoken in the home. Responses are averaged to differentiate between less and more acculturated respondents. This short acculturation scale was taken from a longer version,
but does not sacrifice validity or reliability. Marín, et al. reported an alpha coefficient of .90 on the items in the short scale to show reliability and a correlation of .69 (p < .001), with the longer measure reflecting the validity of the short scale. In their analyses, the five items in the scale were highly correlated at .86 (p < .001). The authors stated that their results are comparable to those of other acculturation scales.

The pre and post-test measures contain the same quantitative items, with the post-test containing four qualitative questions not in the pretest. The quantitative items testing specific information presented in the curriculum were reviewed by the same people who reviewed the curriculum. They reviewed those questions to ensure they matched the information provided in the curriculum and that the questions would not be too easy or too difficult. As with the curriculum, recommended changes were made to the questions. The Test of Parent Knowledge I (pretest) and the Test of Parent Knowledge II (post-test) are both included in Appendix C. All of the measures are included as attachments in English and Spanish.

**Hypotheses**

After a review of the literature, I hypothesized that:

1) participants in both groups will show gains in parenting knowledge of the topics presented in this project.

2) participants who received the fully integrated curriculum will show greater gains than the group receiving only the parenting component.
Data Analyses

A t-test comparing participants’ pre and post-test scores was used to determine the
gains made overall by each of the two programs. A paired t-test was used to determine
which program made greater gains as suggested in Gravetter and Wallnau (2004).
Correlations were employed to examine variables that contributed significantly to the
results. Qualitative data were transcribed in Spanish then translated into English. The
translations were then reviewed by two native Spanish-speakers and corrections to the
translations were made. I used coding frames to organize the data into two groups –
treatment and comparison groups as recommended by Berg (2004). After multiple
reviews of the qualitative data, analytic categories were developed and systematically
applied to the data. Content analysis of the qualitative data focused on participants’
reviews of the curriculum and what they learned from it in order to answer the main
research questions. The coding scheme is shown below in Table 2 and tables of the coded
data separated by program can be found in Appendix D.

Table 2.
Participants’ Evaluations Coding Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POS</td>
<td>Positive statement about the curriculum or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teaching style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>Negative statement about the curriculum or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teaching style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNWL</td>
<td>Knowledge or understanding gained from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKL</td>
<td>Skill or behavior learned from the knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APLC</td>
<td>Change in behavior made as a result of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge gained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Missing Data**

Any cases with missing acculturation or SES data will not be used. Similarly, any cases missing either the pretest or post-test were not be used. If the participant answered less than 80% of the items on a measure, the case was not used. Missing data in the form of an unanswered question did not occur.

**Chapter Summary**

Using a pretest, intervention, post-test, research design, this study evaluated the change in parenting knowledge among Even Start mothers. A mixed-methods quantitative and qualitative approach was employed for the discussion group to allow for the most accurate and appropriate use of the information received from participants. Quantitative methods were used to gather specific data in order to determine acculturation and SES levels and provide a score for parents’ knowledge. An additional qualitative measure addressed participants’ experiences and opinions of a culturally-appropriate curriculum. Hypotheses testing occurred by applying the parenting education component in one program and the fully integrated curriculum in another program.

**CHAPTER 4**

**Introduction**

Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were utilized to answer the questions asked in this study. The data were used to test if participants in both groups showed gains in parenting knowledge and if participants who received the fully
integrated curriculum showed greater gains than the comparison group. Initial focus was on the quantitative data which provided less information than anticipated due to a scale with a possible ceiling effect for the treatment group and a small sample size (n = 11, n = 13). As a result, more emphasis was placed on analysis of the qualitative data in addressing the two research questions. No participants were dropped as a result of poor attendance as the only participants who missed more than one day missed one of the data collection points and were dropped for that reason.

Quantitative Results

First, pre and post-test scores were analyzed to determine what gains, if any, were made by both the treatment and comparison group. Both groups were not found to have made statistically significant gains from the pretest to the post-test. A t-test was used to determine the difference in mean gains between the treatment and comparison groups. The comparison group made modestly greater gains than did the treatment group (m = 1.09 vs .69). A possible ceiling effect was found with the treatment group which aids in explaining the results. Almost half of the treatment group participants scored 18 or more (on a scale of 1-20) on the pretest compared to none in the comparison group, allowing the comparison group more chance for improvement. The treatment group scored higher on the 20 point pretest scale (m = 16.77) than the comparison group (m = 14.27), although not statistically significant. It is important to note that the treatment group’s pretest scores were higher than the comparison group’s post-test scores (m = 15.36). With the small sample size of both the treatment and comparison groups, no statistical significance was found when comparing pretest or post-test scores or gains (t = .51, ns).
Groups were not found to have made statistically significant gains or significantly
different gains from each other. Table 3 shows the pretest and post-test scores and t-test
results by program.

Table 3.

*Mean, Range, and T-test Scores for Pre and Post-tests by Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>Mean = 16.77</td>
<td>Mean = 14.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 13-19</td>
<td>Range = 12-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Mean = 17.46</td>
<td>Mean = 15.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range = 15-20</td>
<td>Range = 13-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-test</td>
<td>t = -1.32 (ns)</td>
<td>t = -1.88 (ns)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative Results

To ensure accuracy of coding participants’ comments, the data were coded using
the original Spanish statements. A table of the coded data was then created using the
English translations. Both the original Spanish data and English coded qualitative data
are attached in Appendix D. There were two purposes of the qualitative data collected for
this study; 1) to determine participants’ views of the cultural-appropriateness of the
curriculum and 2) to aid in answering the research questions about gains made by each of
the groups. The qualitative data gathered in the form of short answers to open-ended
questions informed the latter more so than the question of cultural-appropriateness.
However, both purposes were fulfilled after analyzing the data.
Cultural-Appropriateness

In order to receive the least biased responses, the questions about the curriculum were asked without specifically using terminology related to culture. Participants were asked to write about their thoughts and experiences during the study time period and about anything that was different from their previous experiences in Even Start. Responses were similar between the treatment and comparison groups. Both groups had both positive and negative comments and both groups commented on the curriculum itself and the presentation of the curriculum. Overall, participants appreciated the curriculum and made comments about how it was applicable to their lives. A participant from the treatment group wrote, “It was very interesting. . . The two themes are very interesting for us, parents, and the material that you gave us was very good.” A participant from the comparison group also wrote about her positive experience with the curriculum, “What I learned – many new things that I didn’t know and everything was explained well.” These comments are representative of the majority of the comments made by participants on these questions.

Negative feedback was received, but some was too vague to know if it was specific to the curriculum, to the teaching style, or some other dynamic in the classroom during the study. For example, a participant from the comparison group stated that, “. . . I believe that there are times that they want to impart some ideas of which I do not agree.” It is unclear if this statement is a reflection of the cultural-appropriateness of the curriculum. There were no comments specifically reflective of the cultural-appropriateness of the curriculum or lack thereof, although many comments were helpful. Specific feedback that could aid in the improvement of the curriculum was received. For
example, two comparison group participants reported that the nutrition component was complicated at times. One explained, “The information on nutrition is very important although a little complicated in how much portions are. I would like it if it were less complicated.” A treatment group participant also wrote that “. . . the explanation of the teachers should have been more active and clear”. This comment may reflect an area for improvement in the curriculum or an area where the instructor did not follow the curriculum.

A lack of fidelity to one of the components of the parenting component was observed with the treatment group. The instructor did less than half of the required activities and spent significantly more time on each activity than needed. For example, she spent 20 minutes on an ice breaker activity that needed only 5 minutes. The time extension was not due to participant need as many lost interest in activities that were significantly extended. As a result of the increased use of time, many activities in the curriculum were not completed. Overall, comments on the curriculum were positive, expressing appreciation for the new information and materials, “During this course the class has been different – new things new ideas. The class as it is is pleasant.”

Gains

To measure gains, participants were asked to identify the most important thing they learned from each of the two components - developmental expectations and healthy nutrition. These questions elicited a greater number of responses from both groups than the general questions about the curriculum. Comments about learning from the curriculum were coded as either; 1) knowledge, 2) skills, or 3) application. Table 4 shows
the number of comments in each category by program and the number of participants in each program whose comments were coded in each category. Some participants made more comments than others. Both the treatment and comparison group made gains, although the depth of those gains varied by group.

Table 4.

Qualitative Coding of Comments by Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Participants Commenting</th>
<th>Number of Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Treatment = 11, Comparison = 9</td>
<td>Treatment = 22, Comparison = 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Treatment = 9, Comparison = 4</td>
<td>Treatment = 11, Comparison = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Treatment = 6, Comparison = 0</td>
<td>Treatment = 7, Comparison = 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Treatment group, n = 13*
*Comparison group, n = 11*

*Parenting Knowledge*

Comments coded as gains in parenting knowledge were those that expressed something learned that had not been translated into a new skill. For example, “It is good that they eat well so that their bones develop to be strong and healthy.” This participant learned a reason why healthy nutrition is important, but had not yet translated that knowledge into a skill. The majority of gains for both the treatment and the comparison group were in this category, however the depth of these statements varied by group. For the developmental expectations component, comparison group participants wrote
comments such as, “The importance of play and reading in the development of the child and learning.” and “That each child reacts according to their ages and that it is important to know child development.” A participant in the treatment group commented on her new knowledge also related to the importance of play and understanding of child development. She wrote, “Knowing about my daughters’ development is something very important that I learned. Because this way I can know how they are changing their behavior and their feelings.” Although both groups expressed gains in their knowledge, this comment from a treatment group participant clearly shows a deeper level of understanding of the concepts learned about development. The knowledge that comparison group participants expressed showed that they learned something new, but their statements do not reflect why what they learned is true. They learned that reading to children and knowing about child development are important, but not necessarily why. The treatment group participant learned that knowing about her child’s development is important because then she understands more about her daughter’s behavior and feelings. This is a connection that the comparison group participants did not make.

Findings were similar with the healthy nutrition curriculum. Participants in the comparison group made statements about what they learned such as, “The importance of the nutrition in children and the physical activities.” and “I have learned a little more on adequate nutrition and from which food groups they are.” Participants in the treatment group also made comments about the nutrition component stating, “The nutrition class about development of the body. . . If vegetables are eaten, that is what the children will eat because this is what they see adults eat.” and “That it is very important that children eat healthy and nutritiously so that they have good physical and intellectual
development.” These statements are representative of those made by the entire group. Both groups express gains made, but the depth of knowledge gained by the treatment group appears to be greater than that of the comparison group. There were 13 comments coded as gains in parenting knowledge for the comparison group compared to 22 for the treatment group. This is also evidence that the treatment group gained greater understanding than the comparison group. Writing skill was considered as a factor in participants’ responses, however groups are not statistically significantly different on education level or time in Even Start (see Table 1). All responses were written in Spanish and translated, so English skills were not a factor.

**Parenting Skills**

Comments coded as gains in parenting skills were those that expressed knowledge that resulted in a new ability or behavior. For example, “To eat more vegetables and consume less fat or less fatty foods. Also to consume fruit.” This participant translated knowledge about healthy food into the skill of consuming more healthy foods and less fat. She now knows something specific she can do to help her family to eat healthier. The second greatest number of gains for both the treatment and the comparison groups were in this category however, as with gains in knowledge, the depth of these statements varied by group. With the developmental expectations component, there was one comment made by a comparison group participant who wrote, “The development and the role of play – all of this information is very good to obtain in order to be more playful with our children and to bring a more relaxed life with them.” This participant took the information learned in class and translated it into specific behaviors she can apply to her
parenting. Participants in the treatment group also made gains in parenting skills which was illustrated by comments such as, “That we as parents can teach them at any age and be able to make it so they have other abilities . . . by just playing with them and giving them a little time.” Both the treatment and comparison groups made comments about specific behaviors that reflected gains in parenting skills.

This was expressed in the nutrition component as well. Participants from both groups wrote comments about their newly learned skills, however comments from treatment group participants were more specific about behaviors they can change as a result of their new knowledge. For example, one treatment group participant stated, “...now I know that it is very important to give them food that has iron like lentils and beans, vegetables, fruits, and also that them going outside to play helps them to be healthy...” Another treatment group participant commented about what she learned; “the portions that I should give to my family, especially to my daughter and about the foods that have iron vitamins.” Both of these statements reflect specific changes in behavior that these participants now have the knowledge to make. Comparison group participants also made comments about new skills they had gained such as, “How to combine the five nutritional groups and try to have the nutrition at home be more balanced.” and “That it is very important to give healthy food to my children and offer them more vegetables and fruits.” These are examples of participants who took knowledge from the curriculum and developed skills they can use at home. Two differences were found in the parenting skills data. The treatment groups’ responses were more specific and there were more comments overall. Comparison group participants commented on offering more healthy foods like fruits and vegetables whereas the treatment group specified healthy foods and groups
with a connection to the nutrients children need. This connection was not reflected in any of the comparison group data, demonstrating a greater depth of understanding gained by the treatment group. The quantity of reported comments coded in this category was also greater for the treatment group. I received five comments from the comparison group that could be coded as gains in parenting skills and 11 from the treatment group. This is a considerable difference as the treatment group had only two more participants than the comparison group, but more than twice as many reported gains in parenting skills.

Application of Knowledge

More evident of a difference in gains is in the category of participants’ application of what they learned. There were seven such comments by the treatment group and none from the comparison group. Comments coded as gains in application of knowledge were those that expressed use of the knowledge learned from the curriculum. These comments reflected actual changes that participants had made as a result of new knowledge. For example, “The teacher gave us a sheet that had games the children learn and they like it because they are having fun.” This participant learned about age-appropriate activities she could do at home with her children and used those activities. Other treatment group participants made comments such as, “. . . I learned to choose the correct foods at mealtime.” and “The way to eat healthy, for us to now be able to teach them good nutritional habits in the home. CHILDREN EAT WHAT DADDY AND MOMMY EAT AT HOME. . .” Another treatment group participant commented, “Nutrition is something that interests me a lot because my older daughter didn’t eat very much and like they taught us about how to vary the food and now everything is going well.” These comments
illustrate a change made at home as a result of what these participants learned from the curriculum. This is the only area where no gains were found with one of the participant groups. As a result of no reports of gains in application of knowledge, the treatment group was found to have made greater gains than the comparison group in application of knowledge.

Summary

Analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data showed that both groups made gains in their parenting knowledge after receiving the curriculum as stated in the hypothesis. The quantitative data did not support the hypothesis that the treatment group would make greater gains in parenting knowledge than the comparison group. Factors contributing to this finding included: a small sample size and a possible ceiling effect on the pre/posttest measure for the treatment group. The qualitative data aided in illustrating the gains in parenting knowledge found with both groups and the greater gains made by the treatment group.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The following research questions were examined in this thesis:
1) What effect does a parenting curriculum, delivered to an Even Start program, have on Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?
2) Does integrating the parenting curriculum across all four components of an Even Start program result in greater gains in Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?

**Research Question #1**

What effect does a parenting curriculum, delivered to an Even Start program, have on Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?

The quantitative data showed possible gains for both groups, but sample sizes were too small to achieve statistical significance. The qualitative data showed gains in parenting knowledge for both groups of participants. In order to clarify results and reach a conclusion, the evaluation principle *triangulation* was used (Davidson, 2005). Davidson describes *triangulation* as “Using two or more methods or sources of data to investigate something.” (p. 248). The weak gains in parenting knowledge in the pretest-post-test comparison led to extensive examination of the qualitative data. Observational data gathered during the parenting classes also contributed to the investigation. The pretest and post-test examined gains in specific parenting information taught from the curriculum. The qualitative data showed self-defined gains made by participants in the areas of: knowledge, skills, and application. Finally, I observed the parenting classes in both programs to ensure that the curriculum was implemented and done so as provided and to observe attendance throughout the classes. The parenting knowledge pre and post-test comparison revealed no significant gains, however the qualitative data participants provided demonstrated gains made by both groups. Observations found that both programs applied the curriculum and that all participants were present for the duration of both classes. One of the two classes presented in the treatment program was not presented
as provided and explained. This may have affected what gains were made, but did not appear to affect whether or not they were made by the treatment group when examining all of the data. Each of the methods and sources of data collection showed gains, strengthening the finding that both groups made gains in their parenting knowledge during this study. Theory supports these findings. As explained by the ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986), the culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum created linkages between the participants’ Even Start programs and homes, forming a better learning environment for them. These connections supported the gains participants made.

Research Question #2

Does integrating the parenting curriculum across all four components of an Even Start program result in greater gains in Mexican immigrant mothers’ parenting knowledge?

Results were not as clear when comparing gains between the two groups as when examining gains overall. The pretest-post-test comparison showed the treatment group did not make significantly greater gains than the comparison group, and the comparison group actually had slightly higher (but non-significant) gains in knowledge. This contradicts the hypothesis that the treatment group would make greater gains. When examining pretest scores, a possible ceiling effect was found. The treatment group’s average pretest score was 16.77, which is 3.5 points above the comparison group’s average pretest score. For the treatment group participants who scored 18 or more out of 20 on the pretest, there was little room for improvement. The ceiling effect and the small sample size aid in explaining the lack of significant quantitative findings.
The qualitative data provided by participants illustrated a clearer picture of what participants learned. The treatment group expressed more gains in the areas of knowledge, skills, and application of what they had learned than did the comparison group. The treatment group also made more comments in the areas that require greater understanding of information; skill and application of knowledge. Very few participants in the comparison group made statements about new skills they had learned or how they had applied what they learned. Of the 13 treatment group participants, 12 made comments reflecting gains in either skills or application compared to four of the 11 comparison group participants. The qualitative data support the expected finding that the treatment group made greater gains than the comparison group.

Finally, observation can be used to triangulate the findings to reach a conclusion supported by all of the data. I observed all four components in the treatment group, ensuring that the curriculum was integrated. Lesson plans were collected from both programs to further ensure integration or non-integration. It was found that the treatment program did integrate the four components in their program during the study and the comparison group did not. The ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986) supports the integration approach to learning as it works to create connections between the different parts of the program in order to create a better learning environment. This happens by helping participants to make connections with the support of the staff and program rather than expecting them to make the connections on their own. The qualitative data, observations, and theory all contribute to the finding that the program that used the integrated curriculum appeared to gain a much richer understanding of the information presented in the curriculum, despite the non-significant quantitative findings.
As with the first research question, triangulation was used to draw conclusions. As stated by E. Jane Davidson (2005), the strengths of one data collection method or source can help counterbalance the weaknesses of another and is preferable. The strong qualitative data, such as the quantity and depth of responses by the treatment group, and observations regarding this research question served to counterbalance the weakness of the quantitative data.

**Limitations**

Although this thesis was successful in answering the proposed research questions, there were limitations to the study. There was a small sample and the sample represented a very specific group, making generalizability a challenge. The findings are generalizable to other Even Start programs serving similar populations (e.g. Mexican immigrants with low acculturation levels). Another limitation is that this study examined only immediate, short-term gains made by participants. Retesting after a couple of weeks or months may have informed this study further and aided in better understanding the effects of the integrated model. There were individuals in both groups who showed greater gains in both the quantitative and qualitative data than their group’s counterparts. It was not in the scope of this study to examine gains at the individual level which may also contribute to increased understanding of the effects of the integrated model.

**Implications for Research**

Many lessons were learned during this study that have implications for future research. First, the development of a culturally-appropriate parenting curriculum is an
important process when expecting recipients of that curriculum to make gains, especially with a specific population. This study demonstrates a research-based approach to developing such a curriculum. Second, it is likely that integration is a better model for learning in Even Start programs than non-integration and this study serves as one model for evaluating success of integration. Finally, although a program does not integrate curricula across all program components, participants may be making gains as demonstrated in the parent education component in this study.

**Summary**

All participants made gains in parenting knowledge during this study and treatment group participants appear to have made greater gains. These conclusions could not have been reached without the process of triangulation. By examining gains from different data methods and sources, the findings are stronger than they would have been if only quantitative or only qualitative methods had been used. Observation during the study and theory further support the findings.

The ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986) supports the notion that integration of components in Even Start programs is a better model for learning than non-integration. By integrating the curriculum across all program components, the number and details provided in the comments made by mothers in the treatment group, reflected the fact that they seemed to have obtained a much richer understanding of how developmental milestones and healthy nutrition were directly related to their own parenting practices, creating even greater gains in their parenting knowledge during the study. Integration and connecting settings were at the forefront of this study from
hypotheses formation to the conclusions. As well as supporting the findings of this study the ecological model informed the study, leading to the hypotheses and aiding in the development of the curriculum.

Both limitations and contributions of this study were examined. This study serves as a first step in developing a model to evaluate the delivery of a culturally-appropriate, integrated parenting curriculum. However, a larger sample than this study had could contribute to stronger findings in future studies. Future studies could also look at long-term gains and possible explanations for gains on the individual level. This study supports the use of culturally-appropriate parenting curricula and the integrated model for Even Start programs.
References


Parent Education – Developmental Expectations Curriculum

The Developmental Expectations curriculum is to be completed over the span of one program week (before the nutrition activities). The activities listed are required and need to be completed as written. The focus of this week’s curriculum is to teach parents about developmental milestones and developmentally-appropriate activities for children. Materials needed for each activity are listed when materials are required, as is approximate time needed for each activity. This is a two hour curriculum although the activities can be shortened or lengthened slightly if needed as determined by the participating parents. Please read over and become familiar with all materials and hand-outs as part of lesson-planning for this class.

Outcomes
Upon completion of this curriculum component, parents will have increased knowledge of child development, specifically:

- Parents will recognize at least three developmental milestones.
- Parents will understand why it is important to know about child development relative to their role as parents.
- Parents will identify at least three realistic developmental expectations of children.

1. **Welcome/Agenda** – 2 minutes
   
   **Materials needed:** Class agenda written where parents can see (provided).
   
   Welcome parents to the parenting class and explain the day’s topic (developmental expectations).

   Explain that:
   
   - Knowing what to expect from children helps parents know what to teach their children.
   - Understanding what is typical development helps parents have less frustration related to their children.
   - Learning about typical development helps parents see that some behaviors are expected at certain ages.

   Read through the agenda with them (can be on the board, an overhead, copies for each person).
**2. Ice Breaker – 15 minutes**  
**Materials needed:** paper and pen/pencil  
Have parents break into pairs and share the following information with each other:

- Name
- Number of children
- Age(s) of children
- Something their child(ren) are learning or recently learned

Parents can share as much or as little as they choose. Make it clear that what they share may be shared with the class. They can write down what the other person says. The second step of this activity is that they will then share with the class what they learned about their partner. If you have a small class, everyone can share. If it is a large class and there is not enough time, you can have people volunteer so that everyone who wants to share has an opportunity to do so.

When the parents share, point out similarities and differences between what people say: ages of children, what they are learning... After the sharing is completed, tell the class that everyone in the class has different needs as parents and that everyone's children have different needs related to development.

**3. Discussion - What is development? – 10 minutes**  
**Materials needed:** paper and pen/pencil

1. Write (where everyone can see) “What is development?” Ask the class to write their thoughts about the answer to your question. Then ask parents to share their ideas (voluntarily). Write their answers where they can see (e.g. board, overhead).

   * Make sure their responses include the following ideas:
   - growing and changing
   - age
   - learning
   - constancy – always happening

   * Add these if not thought of by the class. (You do not have to use these exact words.)

2. With the parents' help, give a thorough definition using their words. Write it where they can see. Ask them if anything is missing that is important.

**4. Discussion - Why is development important? – 10 minutes**  
**Materials needed:** paper and pen/pencil
1. Write (where everyone can see) “Why is it important to know about child development?” Ask the class to write their thoughts about the answer to your question. Then ask parents to share their ideas (voluntarily).

2. Write their answers where they can see (e.g. board, overhead). Provide the following answers if not given by the class and give examples as needed:
   - Know what to expect the child to be able to do
   - Know when to seek help (e.g. from professionals)
   - Enjoy children more (more patience, knowledge of abilities & activities)

* Transition: “Knowing about children’s development helps us know what to expect from our own children.”

5. Lecture/Activity - What should I expect of my child? - 20 minutes

1. Explain the connection of age to development. (You do not have to use these exact words.) “There are certain things that almost all children do at certain ages, like learning to walk around one year. All children are different, but in order to know if your child is developing like other typical children, you can think about when they learn different things and if they are ‘on-time’.”

2. Write the following age groups where the class can see. Ask them to name things that children typically learn at that age (developmental milestones). Do this for each of the five age groups. Acknowledge that some things can overlap (like walking – 0-1 or 1-2 years) and still be “on-time”.

   1. 0-1 year (talk - words, roll over, crawl, eat solids, walk)
   2. 1-2 years (walk, use phrases, run, fear of strangers)
   3. 2-3 years (more fears, speak in sentences, jumping, potty training)
   4. 3-5 years (letters, numbers, potty training, read, ride a bike)
   5. 6-8 years (read, write, ride a bike, mathematics)

* Be sure to include all of the underlined skills on the list.

3. Talk to parents about what they can do if their child is not “on time” with development. Ask them what they would do with their concerns. Offer the following suggestions if not offered by parents. *Use the example of potty training which is expected between two and three years. Ask:  “What if your child just turned three and has used the toilet, but is not out of diapers?”
and “What if your child is four years old and has never used the toilet or shown any interest in doing so?” Talk about how these two scenarios are very different and warrant different actions. Discuss:

1. Professionals who can help (doctor, home visitor, teacher…)
2. Parents can help their children a lot! (lead-in to age-appropriate activities)

* Tell parents that sometimes children have developmental delays that require professionals’ assistance, but parents can work to teach their children things to help them develop new skills at an appropriate age.

* Give parents “Developmental Milestones” hand-out to take home and read.

* Break – Take a break here, if one is needed. (5-10 minutes)

6. Activities – How can I help my child? - 30 minutes

Materials needed: paper and pen/pencil and copies of “Just Playing”

1. Write (where everyone can see) “How can I help my child with his/her development?” Ask the class to write their thoughts about the answer to your question. Then ask parents to share their ideas (voluntarily).

2. Write their answers where they can see (e.g. board, overhead). Provide the following answers if not given by the class and give examples as needed:
   - Be involved with them – listen to them, visit their school
   - Teach them – read, talk, sing
   - Play with them – Children learn through play

* You will now go into more depth…

3. Read “Just Playing” to the parents as they each follow along with their own copy. Ask parents to share their thoughts about this poem. What they thought about while you were reading, what they learned, what they might change now.

4. SKIT - Explain to the class that you will be pretending to be a mother and her two year-old son/daughter. Perform the skit with another staff member with whom you practiced earlier.
   
   * If time allows, do twice with the child as school-age the second time to demonstrate age-appropriate interaction. Thank the other staff member
for participating and excuse him/her if they need to leave. Debrief with class about what they saw and what they learned.


1. Ask the class to think about questions they have related to child development and what is appropriate to expect from children. Unless parents immediately share questions, start with teaching sharing. (You do not have to use these exact words.)

“A lot of parents feel frustrated when their children will not share. Is this something that has happened to anyone here? It’s very common. It’s very common because learning to share is part of developing for young children. We are not born knowing how to share, right? Sharing is especially challenging with toddlers. That is because that is when they learn about ownership – what is mine. Does anyone have a toddler who uses the word mine?

They are learning about ownership by watching the people around them, but they cannot yet understand the concept of sharing. Expecting an 18 month old child to share when asked is not an appropriate expectation. You can try to teach your child to share after they turn two, but understand that this is still a difficult concept for such a young child. By not expecting your child to share until they are ready, you relieve stress for yourself and your child.”

Ask parents if it makes sense to them, if they see why knowing about development in this case can help them work with their children differently to teach them new things – like sharing, and to change their expectations to fit with what their child has the ability to do.

2. Discuss age-appropriate communication with children when discussing challenging subjects (e.g. puberty, where babies come from). Ask parents what they think. Ask specifically what they would tell a 4 year-old and what they would tell an 8 year-old about where babies come from. It is recommended that they answer only what the child is asking, not to give more details than the child needs at their age. Also, factual information is important without providing too many details that are too much for a young child.

* Example: A three year-old asks, ”Where do babies come from?”

Inappropriate – The parent tells the child about men’s and women’s body parts and how conception happens.
**Appropriate** – The parent tells the child that when two people love each other, sometimes they make a baby and it grows in the mommy’s tummy until it is born.

**Tell parents:** The child is probably content with the second answer at the age of three. The first answer may be too much for such a young child to understand, but may be appropriate for a 12 or 13 year-old.

Suggest parents think about what they would tell their child(ren) about puberty, smoking, drugs… before their children ask. Tell parents to talk to their pediatrician or their home visitor and to practice what they will say so that they are comfortable talking about it. That way, when they are surprised one day with a challenging question, they will be able to give an answer that both they and their children are comfortable with.

3. Answer any additional questions parents have about development and if you and the parents do not know the answer, discuss a plan to find out the answer. Do not answer a question or let parents follow advice that may not be correct or in the best interest of their children. If parents offer suggestions that may be problematic, thank them for their suggestions and talk about why that may not work and what to do to make that suggestion work. Acknowledge the problematic suggestion and address it in a respectful way. *Refer parents to their pediatrician or home visitor for more information.*

8. **Home Activity – Developmentally-appropriate interaction** – 5 minutes

*Materials needed:* Home Activities hand-out (1 for each parent)

Before (or while) handing out the list of Home Activities, explain the purpose of the activities to the class. (You do not have to use these exact words.)

“We talked earlier about child development and that parents can help their children develop by playing with them, teaching them new things, and interacting with them. So before the next time we meet, your homework assignment is to spend at least 15 minutes with each of your children doing an activity with them that is appropriate for their age and development. Playing with your child every day can also help reduce negative behaviors you see in your children. Often children act out because they want attention. You will be giving them that, so think about how their behavior changes after spending this time with them.”

Tell the parents that they may do other activities that are appropriate, but if they are not sure or want ideas, to do one or more of those on the list provided. Tell them to focus only on their child during the activity and afterward, to think about
what happened, what their child’s reaction was, and how they felt. Tell them there will be time to talk about this activity in next week’s class.


Materials needed: Agenda used previously (in the Welcome) and notes from activities #3, 5, and 6.

Review the topics discussed (agenda) and what the class learned (summarize).

Restate:
- the definition of development (activity #3)
- what developmental milestones are for (activity #5)
- what parents can do to help their children develop (activity #6)
- homework assignment

* Thank the parents for coming and for their participation in today’s class.

**Adult Education – Developmental Expectations Curriculum**

The Developmental Expectations activities are to be completed over the span of one program week (before the nutrition activities). All activities are suggested options and not all of them can be completed in one week. Other activities can be done during the Adult Education time if the focus is related to the themes listed. The focus of this week’s curriculum is how things grow and change (e.g. plants, people, animals…) and developmentally-appropriate activities. Any activities added to this week’s curriculum should have the same focus.

Activities suggested below can be modified as needed to create a more appropriate learning experience for the program participants. The amount of time spent on each activity will also vary, depending on the needs of program participants. Materials needed for each activity are listed for any activities for which they are needed. There is a logical sequence to the activities listed which should be considered when planning the week’s lessons.

**Suggested Activities**

1. Writing

Materials needed: paper and pencil/pen

Talk to parents about how they are their child(ren)’s first teacher. Tell them that children learn what they see. Write where parents can see, “What is something you want to stop or start doing as a better example for your child(ren)?” Give parents
time to think about and write, individually, their answer to this question. You can have parents volunteer to share what they wrote, but this step is not necessary. Tell parents again that they are their children’s first teachers and that their children are learning from their parents actions even if they do not mean to teach their children something.

2. Writing/Reading  
Materials needed: paper and pencil/pen  
Write so that parents can see, “Write about a time you learned something new.” Tell parents that they will be sharing what they write. Give parents time to think about and write, individually, their answer to this question. Have parents read what they wrote aloud to another person. You can then have a discussion about what that was like for the parents, especially if they have never read aloud in class before.

3. Speaking  
Tell parents that they will be working on speaking. Write where parents can see, “Share a time when you tried to teach your child something new, but were unsuccessful. What happened? How did you feel?” Give parents time to think about, individually, their answers to this question. Tell them that there is no right or wrong answer. This activity is to help them gain confidence in their speaking abilities and to learn from their mistakes. Have parents share what their thoughts are about the question. Ask parents what they learned from what happened. Tell them that people learn from mistakes, adults and children.

4. Writing/Speaking  
Materials needed: paper and pencil/pen  
Talk to parents about how quickly children learn and change. Write where parents can see, “What changes have you seen in your child in the past week; in the past month; in the past year?” Parents can answer all three parts or just one, but need to specify the time they are writing about. They can also do this for one or all of their children. Give parents time to think about and write, individually, their answers to this question. Have parents volunteer to share what they wrote about and what they learned from this exercise. This exercise helps parents think about how quickly their children learn and grow which they may not have time to notice in their everyday lives.

5. Writing  
Materials needed: paper and pencil/pen  
Talk to parents about how children are constantly learning and that they learn from playing. Write so that parents can see, “What is your child learning right now?” You can give examples: the alphabet, walking, sharing,
making friends, to tie their shoes, multiplication... Parents should answer this question for all of their children. Give parents time to think about and write, individually, their answers to this question. You can have parents volunteer to share what they wrote, but this step is not necessary. Tell them again that their children are always learning: physically, socially, mentally, just like they are and they need support to help them learn. This exercise helps parents realize some activities they can help their children with.

6. ESL

**Materials needed:** animal vocabulary list

This week, the children are learning about animals. If the parents have not already learned the names of animals and related words in English, teach that this week.

7. ESL

**Materials needed:** communication vocabulary list

Parents need to be able to communicate with professionals including doctors, teachers, and counselors. Sometimes these professionals do not speak Spanish or the office support staff they may encounter do not speak Spanish. Being able to communicate effectively in English with professionals is very important for parents. If the parents have not already learned key phrases and related words (e.g. development, physical, emotional, social, difficulties, activities) in English for communication with a professional, work on that this week. You can have parents role play, using only English: a teacher and a parent, a parent and a doctor, a parent calling a clinic to make an appointment...

8. ESL

**Materials needed:** lotería (Bingo) game

Provide each parent with one lotería card. Use a lotería game with words they are currently learning (e.g. numbers, animals, body parts). The cards will be in English and the teacher(s) will read the words in English. Have parents repeat the word back after the teacher says it. *There will probably be duplicate cards, so keep that in mind if you offer prizes when there is a winner. (This activity can be done more than once this week if you use different lotería cards.)

9. Computer/Reading

**Materials needed:** computers with internet access and printer

This week in Parenting Education, the parents are learning about developmentally-appropriate activities. Have the parents look up information on the internet that is specific to their child(ren)’s age. Once information has been gathered, have the parents read what they have found. Then have a discussion about what they found and the sources. Talk to parents about how to know if the information they find on the internet is reliable and accurate or not. Talk about what “.edu”, “.com”, “.org” mean.
Early Childhood Education – Developmental Expectations Curriculum

The Developmental Expectations activities are to be completed over the span of one program week (before the nutrition activities). Some of the activities listed are required and need to be completed as written. Other activities are listed as optional; you can use all or incorporate them with other age-appropriate related activities. The focus of this week’s curriculum is to teach children about how things grow and change (e.g. plants, people, animals…) and to focus on making multiple age-appropriate activities available to all children during their day. Any activities added to this week’s curriculum should have the same focus.

Activities suggested below can be modified as needed to create a more appropriate learning experience for the children in each classroom. Age recommendations are listed for each activity as a general idea, but may vary depending upon the abilities of each child. Please note that activities can be slightly altered to make them more appropriate for specific children. Materials needed for each activity are listed if activities require materials other than the books provided.

Required Activities

Day 1:

1. Large Group Reading – Read Plantan un jardín/Plant a Garden. (2-5 years)
   The book can be read in Spanish or English, or both. You may want to read it twice. Talk with children about what the characters are doing in the book. Ask children if they have planted something before and/or seen a plant grow. “What happened?” *Lead-in to planting activity.

2. Nature/Science Activity – Children plant lima beans. (2-5 years)
   Materials needed: 2 inch pots/containers (1 for each child), potting soil, water, lima beans
   Use paper cup/pot approximately 2 inches in diameter for each child. They will fill with dirt up to about 1 inch from the top, then put in one lima bean one inch under the soil. Then water and put near the window for sunlight. (Teacher(s) should make a few extra in case some do not grow.) Write “lima bean” on the containers, or on tape to put on the containers, for the children.
   During activity, discuss why each step is necessary: dirt = nutrients/warmth, water = nutrients (thirsty), sunlight = nutrients/warmth – and that all are necessary to grow. Talk about what people need to grow: food, water, sun… Tell the children that they will water their beans everyday/every other day so that they will grow and soon they will grow like the plants in the book (Plantan un jardín). Ask children what they think the plants will look like. (Beans should sprout in about a week.)
*There is an accompanying optional activity along with this book listed in the Optional Activities section.

**Day 2-4:**

3. **Group Reading** – Read *Dulces Sueños.* (0-2 years)
   This is a Spanish board book, most appropriate for infants and toddlers. It can be read in small or large groups. It should also be available for infants and toddlers to look at during free time. Talk about what the babies in the pictures are doing and why people need to sleep - to rest to have energy to play and work and grow and learn... Teacher(s) can also talk about the parts of the face in Spanish, English, or both. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)

4. **Group Reading** – *My Puppy Playtime* (0-2 years)
   This book is in English only and is about a child playing with his puppy. As teaching English is encouraged in Even Start programs, some (if not all) of this book should be read or presented in English. Encourage child(ren) to touch the book and notice the different textures and talk about how it feels (soft, hard…). This book should also be available for infants and toddlers to look at during free time. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)

5. **Group Reading** - *¿Has visto estas aves?* (2-5 years)
   This is Spanish book about birds. Discussion can take place about the mother bird taking care of her babies, what babies need to grow, birds (like people) are all different, that birds have wings to fly and people have feet to walk, how seasons change… *There is an accompanying optional activity along with this book listed in the Optional Activities section. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)

6. **Group Reading** – *Es la hora de...* (2-5 years)
   This book is in Spanish and is about a child’s day. Discussion can be around clocks and time and what the children do during the day and why (eat for energy, play for exercise, and learn and grow…). *There is an accompanying optional activity related to this book listed in the Optional Activities section. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)

7. **Group Reading** – *Clifford Grows Up* (2-5 years)
   This book is in English only. As teaching English is encouraged in Even Start programs, some (if not all) of this book should be read or presented in English. Discussion should focus on how animals and people grow and some grow faster than others and some bigger than others, but all people and animals grow. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)
8. **Group Reading/Music** – *En aquel prado: Una Antigua rima de números* (2-5 years)

This is a book and a tape in Spanish. The tape plays a song which is written and illustrated in the accompanying book. Discussion can take place around the differences between different animals: colors, noises they make, where they live, how big they are… Children can dance to this song as a music activity. (This activity can take place more than once during the week.)

9. **Free Time** – Read/Look at books. (0-5 years)

**Materials needed:** Children’s books for 0-5 year olds related to the topics listed.

Books about growing, changing, developing should be available this week for children during classroom free time. Topics may include: caterpillars changing to butterflies, babies or children learning new things (to walk, ride a bike…), children with disabilities to teach that people develop differently.

10. **Snack Time** – Conversation (0-5 years)

Teacher(s) should talk to children about why people need food, how it helps us grow, makes us strong, gives us energy… Also talk about how animals, insects, and plants also need food to grow and be healthy.

**Optional Activities**

1. **Art Activity** – Planting Coloring Page (2-5 years)

**Materials needed:** coloring tools and copies of the planting coloring page

This activity can go along with the required activities related to planting. Children color the coloring page of the cat planting and watering its garden. Talk to the children about what the cat is doing and what they did. Help children see the soil, water, and sun – what they look like, feel like, and the different colors of each… Show them the plants that have sprouted in the picture and talk about what their plants will look like.

2. **Nature Activity** – Bird Watching (0-5 years)

This activity can go along with the book *¿Has visto estas aves?*. Depending on the weather, children can do this activity outside or from inside, looking out the window. Have them look for birds and talk about what the birds are doing. If there are birds to see, point them out to the infants and toddlers to see. If no birds can be seen, talk about the other wildlife you see or where the birds might be.

3. **Art Activity** – Bird Coloring Page (2-5 years)

**Materials needed:** coloring tools and copies of the bird coloring page

This activity can go along with the book *¿Has visto estas aves?*. Children color the page with baby birds in a nest with the mother bird. Teacher(s) can talk to
children about where birds live, what the mother birds do for the baby birds, how
they communicate (sing instead of talk)…

4. **Art Activity** – Make Clocks (2-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** paper plates, markers/crayons, metal brads, cardstock, scissors, hole punch.
   
   Each child will make their own clock to take home after learning about it in
   the classroom. Write numbers on paper plate as they are on a clock or have child
   write them, depending on their abilities. Poke a hole or use the hole punch in
   the center of the plate. Have the child cut two strips of cardstock for the clock's hands,
   one about 3 inches long and one about 4 inches long and ¼ inch wide. Poke a hole
   or use the hole punch to put a centered hole near the end of each piece of cardstock.
   Line the holes in the hands up to the hole in the plate and place a brad through,
   securing it on the back.
   
   Make sure the hands move easily, but will stay in place when the clock is held
   upright. Children can decorate their clocks as well. Talk to children about how the
   hands move and have them practice moving them. (There are activities listed below
   that the children can do with their clocks.)

5. **Group Activity** - *Es la hora de...* (3-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** *Es la hora de...* book and the children’s clocks (see activity #4)
   
   Read the book *Es la hora de...* and as you read and
   look at each page, have the children put their clocks to the
   time in each picture. This activity may be easier in small
   groups or one-on-one.

6. **Group Activity** – Set Clocks (3-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** classroom clock and the children’s clocks (see activity #4)
   
   Talk to children about times of the day when they all do certain activites (e.g.
   eat snack at 10:30) and have them set their clocks to that time. Then when it is snack
   time, have them look at their clocks and the classroom clock and see that they show
   the same time. Teacher(s) can also have children set the clock for what time they
   leave, then point out the classroom clock when it reaches that time or is very close to
   that time.

7. **Physical Activity** – Balance (6-18 months)
   
   **Materials needed:** phone books and/or mats, butcher/wrapping paper, tape
   
   Before the children arrive, wrap some old phone books in colored paper
   (preferably solid colors) and lay on the floor in an open, safe area. Teacher(s) can use
   mats also. The children can crawl, climb, and walk on these to learn better balance
   and about different levels. Talk to the children about up, down, over, on, around…

8. **Problem-solving Activity** – Hide-and-Seek (6-18 months)
   
   **Materials needed:** container and small toys
Show the child a toy, then put it in a container. Have the child find the toy in the container and take it out. Depending on the child’s age and ability, the teacher(s) can use more than one container and/or put a lid on the container that the child can practice removing in order to find the toy.

9. Physical Activity – Jumping (1-2 years)
   Materials needed: butcher paper, tape, and scissors
   Before the children arrive, cut a circle out of colored butcher paper so that the circle is approximately 24 inches in diameter. Then cut out a star from another color of butcher paper and tape it to the center of the circle. Tape the circle securely to the floor in a safe, open area. The teacher(s) encourages the child(ren) to jump onto the star from outside the circle then to jump from the star to the outside of the circle. Talk to the children about jumping, up, in, out, on…

10. Free Time Activity – Big Blocks (1-2 years)
    Materials needed: empty cereal boxes (or other food boxes) and tape
    Before the children arrive, gather as many empty cereal boxes as you find and tape them shut. These will serve as easy to build with, large, light-weight blocks for toddlers. They should be available for free time in an area large enough for a few children to play with at the same time.

11. Dramatic Activity – Puppets (0-2 years)
    Materials needed: puppets (finger or hand)
    Do an informal puppet show for the child(ren). For infants, hide the puppets and have them pop out from behind your back or from under a table.

12. Free Time Activity – Floor Pictures (5-12 months)
    Materials needed: colorful pictures and tape
    Find some colorful pictures (pictures the older children have colored, magazine pictures…) and tape them to the floor in a safe, open area accessible to crawling children. These will provide stimulation and conversation pieces for this age group. The pictures should be changed when the children to lose interest.

13. Nature/Science Free Time Activity – Living Things (0-5 years)
    Materials needed: depends on what living thing is brought in the classroom
    If the classroom doesn’t already have living things, bring in plants, fish, class pet on an ongoing basis. Encourage children to check in on these living things to see how they are changing and talk about the changes. Older children can help to feed and care for the new living things.

14. Nature/Science Group Activity – Living Things (0-5 years)
    Have a staff member/volunteer bring in their pet to “show-and-tell” for the children. They can talk about what their pet eats, how it plays, where it lives (cage,
backyard…), and how it has grown. They could bring old pictures of the pet to show how small it was and how big it is now.

15. **Nature/Science Activity** – Tadpole to Frog (2-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** pictures of tadpoles and frogs (clip art, drawings, book, video…)

   Show children pictures/book of tadpoles and frogs. Parallel the growth of a tadpole into a frog and a human baby into a “big kid”.
   Tadpole > learns to swim > grows legs > learns to walk > loses tail > learns to jump > Frog Baby > learns to crawl > gets stronger > learns to walk > gets stronger > runs… > “Big kid”

16. **Math Activity** – Bag of Cotton Balls (2-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** paper bag, cotton balls

   This activity works best in small groups or one-on-one. Fill a paper bag with cotton balls and have the child reach in and pull out a handful of cotton balls. The child then puts the cotton balls on the table or floor and counts them with the teacher. Children who can count higher can use more cotton balls. Teacher(s) can also encourage children to count in both Spanish and English.

17. **Small Group Activity** – Memory (3-5 years)
   
   **Materials needed:** Memory game (bought or “home-made” version)

   Using the game Memory, explain the rules of play to a small group of interested children. (This can also be played one-on-one.) Add or take away pairs of cards to make the game appropriate for the children playing (e.g. less cards for children with shorter attention spans). Talk to the children about pairs, two, grouping, taking turns…

**Interactive Literacy Activities – Developmental Expectations**

The Developmental Expectations activities are to be completed over the span of one program week (before the nutrition activities). The activities listed are options and can all be used or can be incorporated with other age-appropriate activities. The focus of this week’s curriculum is to teach parents how to create various activities appropriate for their child(ren)’s age and abilities. Concepts include how things grow and change (e.g. plants, people, animals…). Any activities added to this week’s curriculum should have the same focus.

Activities suggested below can be modified as needed to create a more appropriate learning experience for the parents and children. Age recommendations are listed for each activity as a general idea, but may vary depending upon the abilities of each child. Please note that activities can be slightly altered to make them more appropriate for specific children and the parents should play a crucial role in doing so. Materials needed for each activity are listed if activities require materials.
Activity Options

1. **Music Activity** – Animal Songs (0-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** lyrics and/or tape/cd and stereo
   - Parents lead listening to and/or singing food songs.
   - Suggestions of popular Spanish songs include: Los elefantes (Un elefante se balanceaba), Estaba la pajara pinta, Los pollitos, La granja (Mi rancho), La vibora de la mar, La araña pequeña, ¿Quién llama a la ventana?, Cucú cantaba la rana.

2. **Game Activity** – Memory (2-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** Memory-type game (multiple)
   - Parents will learn how to play the game before playing with their children.
   - Parents will adapt the game so that it is appropriate for their child. They may take away a few pairs of cards or most of the pairs of cards, so that it is a challenging, but not frustrating, activity for their child(ren).

3. **Reading Activity** – Child’s Book (0-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** selection of books (enough for each child to have at least one)
   - Parents tell children that they want to read a book with them. The child selects what book they want to look at. The parent then “reads” the book so that it is developmentally appropriate for their child. This may mean reading the book as it is written, reading parts, not reading any of the words and talking about the book instead...

4. **Art Activity** – Tracing Shapes (2-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** paper, writing/drawing utensils, and a variety of traceable items (e.g. cans, boxes, books, cups)
   - Parents help children trace various items and write the names of the shapes in English and Spanish (if they can do both). Discussion is encouraged about shapes, sizes, counting, and what else is the same shape.

5. **Child’s Choice Activity** – Free Play (0-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** access to ECE classroom materials
   - Parents tell child they want to play with them and ask the child what they want to play. The parent follows the child’s lead in playing and adds to their imaginative play by asking questions and giving additional ideas. Parents have to follow the child’s lead and play along with the child’s ideas.

6. **Parent’s Choice Activity** – Structured Play (0-5 years)
   - **Materials needed:** access to ECE classroom materials
   - Parents are thinking this week about what their children are learning right now. Parents choose an activity to do with
their child to help the child master something they are learning to do right now (e.g. crawling, walking, putting together a puzzle, writing their name). The goal is not for the child to master the activity during this activity time, but for the parents to learn how to work with their child on a particular learning activity and experience the frustration and reward.
**Developmental Milestones** – These are skills and ages when they are expected to happen. *Remember, all children are different.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rolls over</td>
<td>3-5 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sits without support</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>says first words</td>
<td>10-13 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stands without help</td>
<td>10-14 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walks well</td>
<td>12-15 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walks up stairs with help</td>
<td>17-23 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kicks a ball (forward)</td>
<td>20-25 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaks short sentences</td>
<td>22-27 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throws and catches ball</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses forks and spoons</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ties shoelaces</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses longer, more complex sentences</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identifies gender and race</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makes friends</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improves writing and typing skills</td>
<td>6-12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understands different perspectives</td>
<td>6-12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compares themselves to others</td>
<td>6-12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>growth spurt (girls – 10 years, boys – 12 years)</td>
<td>6-12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puberty (girls – 11-12 years, boys – 13-14 years)</td>
<td>10-15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses logic</td>
<td>12-20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focuses on him/herself</td>
<td>12-20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Just Playing

When I'm building in the block room,
Please don't say I'm "just playing".
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
About balance and shapes.

When I'm getting all dressed up,
Setting the table, caring for the babies.
Don't get the idea I'm "just playing".
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a mother or father some day.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint,
Or standing at an easel, or molding and shaping clay,
Please don't let me hear you say, "he's just playing".
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm expressing myself and being creative.
I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair
"Reading" to an imaginary audience,
Please don't forget to laugh and think I'm "just playing".
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the brushes for bugs,
Or packing my pockets with choice things I find,
Don't pass it off as "just playing".
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle,
Or some "plaything" at my school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted in "play"
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.
When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don’t think that because I enjoy it, it is just “play”.
I’m learning to follow direction and see differences.
I may be a chef someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body,
Please don’t say I’m “just playing”.
For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I’ve done at school today,
And I say, “I played”.
Please don’t misunderstand me.
For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning to enjoy and be successful in work.
I’m preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I’m a child and my work is play.

By Anita Wadley
From: Canfield, J. and Hansen, M. V. (1999) in Chicken Soup for the Unsinkable Soul.
Appendix B

Informed Consent and Demographic Questionnaire

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Even Start Parent Education Curriculum
Principal Investigator: Leslie Richards, PhD, HDFS
Co-Investigator(s): Jody Alaniz, HDFS

What is the purpose of this study?

You are invited to participate in a study designed to test the effectiveness of a curriculum designed specifically for the Spanish-speaking parents in Even Start. You will receive the curriculum during your regular day in Even Start and you will fill out some forms before and after receiving the curriculum. The project is part of a student thesis and may be used for publication and presentations. We are researching this in order to understand the better way to integrate the curriculum for Spanish-speaking parents in Even Start.

What is the purpose of this form?

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide if you will participate in this study or not. Please read the form carefully. You can ask questions about the research, possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

Why am I being invited to participate in this study?

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a mother, you speak Spanish, and you are participating in the Even Start program.

What will happen during this study and for how long will it last?

If you participate in this study, you will fill out a questionnaire about your life and your family if you did not do it previously. Also, you will fill out a form on the themes in the curriculum. It will take approximately 15 minutes. Then, you will receive the curriculum in Even Start for two weeks. After the two weeks, you will fill out the same form again and you will have the opportunity to express your thoughts about the curriculum. The investigator, Jody Alaniz, will be present in the classes for part of the two weeks.

What are the risks of this study?

The only possible risk or discomfort in this study related to the procedures described is embarrassment for not being sure of an answer on the form. You should know that we believe that
no parent should know everything. It is important you understand that no Even Start staff will see your tests.

**What are the benefits of this study?**

You can benefit by participating in this study because you will have the opportunity to participate in a curriculum designed, in part, by mothers like you. You can receive new information to share with your family.

**Will I be paid for participating?**

You will not be paid for participating in this study, but you will receive a Spanish children’s book to keep and a Spanish book for yourself that you will be able to keep.

**Who will see the information I provide?**

The information you provide during this study will be kept confidential to the extent the law allows. To help protect your confidentiality, we will keep all of the information in a secure location and only members of the research team will have access to the information. If the results of this study are published, your identity will not be revealed to the public.

**Do I have a choice to participate in this study or not?**

If you decide to participate in this study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any of the benefits or rights that you normally have if you decide not to participate. You can end your participation in this study at any time and still maintain the benefits and rights that you had before volunteering. If you decide not to participate in this study, your decision will have no effect on the services you are currently receiving from Even Start.

You will not be treated differently if you decide not to continue participation in this research. As a participant, you are free to not answer any questions if you prefer not to. If you choose to leave the project before if ends, the researchers can keep your information and that information can be included in reports of this research.

**What happens if I have questions?**

If you have any questions about this project, please contact: Dr. Leslie Richards, (541) 737-1071, LeslieRichards@oregonstate.edu or Jody Alaniz, (503) 362-5814, alanizj@onid.orst.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please call Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at (541) 737-4933 or e-mail IRB@oregonstate.edu.

Your signature indicates that this research has been explained to you, your questions have been answered, and you agree to participate in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.
Participant’s name (written):_____________________________________________________

_________________________________________         ____________________________

(Participant’s signature)           (Date)
Parent Education Questionnaire

Name: ________________________________

1. How old are you (years)?
   ______

2. What is your marital status?
   ____ Single
   ____ Married
   ____ Partnered
   ____ Divorced
   ____ Separated
   ____ Other (Please describe)
   ____________________________________________________________________

3. In what country were you born?
   ______________________
   
a. How many years did you live there?
   ______
   
b. How long have you lived continually in the U.S.?
   _____ years _____ months

4. In general, what language do you read and speak?
   ____ Spanish only           ____ Spanish better than English
   ____ Both equally            ____ English better than Spanish
   ____ English only

5. What language(s) did you speak when you were a child?
   ____ Spanish only           ____ Spanish better than English
   ____ Both equally            ____ English better than Spanish
   ____ English only

6. In general, what language do you speak in your home?
   ____ Spanish only           ____ Spanish better than English
   ____ Both equally            ____ English better than Spanish
7. In general, in what language(s) do you think?
   ____ Spanish only    ____ Spanish better than English
   ____ Both equally    ____ English better than Spanish
   ____ English only

8. In general, in what language(s) do you speak with your friend(s)?
   ____ Spanish only    ____ Spanish better than English
   ____ Both equally    ____ English better than Spanish
   ____ English only

9. How many years of schooling have you completed? (Circle one.)
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15
   16

10. Are you working for pay?
    ____ Yes    ____ No

   a. If you are working, how much do you work?
      ____ Full-time    ____ Part-time    ____ Migrant/Seasonal

11. On average, how much does your family earn each month (before taxes)?
    ____ $0 to $99 per month    ____ $2000 to $2500 per month
    ____ $100 to $500 per month    ____ $2501 to $3000 per month
    ____ $501 to 1000 per month    ____ $3001 to $3500 per month
    ____ $1001 to 1500 per month    ____ $3501 to $4000 per month
    ____ $1501 to 2000 per month    ____ $4001 and more per month

12. How much do you all receive per month total including jobs, money from the government, social services, or other services (before taxes)?
    ____ $0 to $99 per month    ____ $2000 to $2500 per month
    ____ $100 to $500 per month    ____ $2501 to $3000 per month
    ____ $501 to 1000 per month    ____ $3001 to $3500 per month
1001 to 1500 per month  $3501 to $4000 per month
$1501 to 2000 per month  $4001 and more per month

13. How many people live in your home?

14. Aside of yourself and your partner/spouse, how many other adults live in the home?

15. Aside from your children, how many other children live in the home?

16. How many children do you have?

17. What are their ages?

18. For how long have you been in the Even Start program?

19. Have you attended parenting classes here or somewhere else?
   Yes  ____  No  ____
Cuestionario Sobre La Educación de Padres

Nombre: ________________________________

1. ¿Cuántos años tiene usted?
   ______

2. ¿Cuál es su estado civil?
   ____ Soltera
   ____ Casada
   ____ Juntada
   ____ Divorciada
   ____ Separada
   ____ Otra (Por favor, describe)
   __________________________________________

3. ¿En qué país nació usted?
   ______________________
   a. ¿Cuántos años vivió allá?
      ______
   b. ¿Cuánto tiempo ha vivido continuamente en los EEUU?
      _____ años _____ meses

4. Por lo general, ¿qué idioma lee y habla?
   ____ Solamente español    ____ Español mejor que ingles
   ____ Ambos por igual       ____ Inglés mejor que español
   ____ Solamente inglés

5. ¿Cuál fue el idioma(s) que habló cuando era una niña?
   ____ Solamente español    ____ Español mejor que ingles
   ____ Ambos por igual       ____ Inglés mejor que español
   ____ Solamente inglés

6. Por lo general, ¿en qué idioma(s) habla en su casa?
   ____ Solamente español    ____ Español mejor que ingles
   ____ Ambos por igual       ____ Inglés mejor que español
7. Por lo general, ¿en qué idioma(s) piensa?
   _____ Solamente español  _____ Español mejor que inglés
   _____ Ambos por igual  _____ Inglés mejor que español
   _____ Solamente inglés

8. Por lo general, ¿en qué idioma(s) habla con sus amigos(as)?
   _____ Solamente español  _____ Español mejor que inglés
   _____ Ambos por igual  _____ Inglés mejor que español
   _____ Solamente inglés

9. ¿Cuántos años ha cumplido usted en la escuela? (Ponga un círculo.)
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16

10. ¿Está trabajando por un sueldo?
    _____ Sí  _____ No

    a. Si está trabajando, ¿cuánto tiempo trabaja?
    _____ Tiempo completo  _____ Medio Tiempo  _____ Migrante

11. ¿Cuánto dinero gana su familia generalmente cada mes (antes de los impuestos)?
    _____ $0 a $99 al mes  _____ $200 a $2500 al mes
    _____ $100 a $500 al mes  _____ $2501 a $3000 al mes
    _____ $501 a $1000 al mes  _____ $3001 a $3500 al mes
    _____ $1001 a $1500 al mes  _____ $3501 a $4000 al mes
    _____ $1501 a $2000 al mes  _____ $4001 y más al mes

12. ¿Cuánto reciben al mes en total incluyendo trabajos, el dinero que les da el gobierno, servicios sociales, u otros servicios (antes de los impuestos)?
    _____ $0 a $99 al mes  _____ $200 a $2500 al mes
    _____ $100 a $500 al mes  _____ $2501 a $3000 al mes
    _____ $501 a $1000 al mes  _____ $3001 a $3500 al mes
    _____ $1001 a $1500 al mes  _____ $3501 a $4000 al mes
    _____ $1501 a $2000 al mes  _____ $4001 y más al mes
13. ¿Cuántas personas viven en su hogar? 

________

14. ¿Aparte de Ud. y un esposo, cuántos otros adultos viven en el hogar?

________

15. ¿Aparte de sus hijos, cuántos otros niños viven en el hogar?

________

16. ¿Cuántos niños tiene usted?

________

17. ¿Qué son sus edades?

________________________________________________________

18. ¿Cuánto tiempo Ud. ha estado en el programa de Even Start?

________________________________________________________________________

19. ¿Ud. ha asistido clases para padres aquí o en otro lugar?

  Si _____  No _____
Appendix C

Pre/Post-test

Parent Education Form

Name: ___________________________________ Date: _____________

This test is not graded and will not affect you or your services in Even Start in any way. This form is confidential and is only accessible to the researchers collecting this information.

We do not expect anyone to be able to answer all of these questions correctly. We just want to know what you know at this time. Please answer every question to the best of your ability. Mark only one answer for each question.

1. A two year-old should always be able to share with others.
   _____ True   _____ False

2. Parents can teach new skills to their children at any age.
   _____ True   _____ False

3. Learning about child development helps parents know what to expect of their children.
   _____ True   _____ False

4. If a child is not walking by 12 months, there is probably something wrong.
   _____ True   _____ False

5. Parents can reduce negative behavior in their children by playing with them every day.
   _____ True   _____ False

6. There are abilities that typical children are expected to have at certain ages.
   _____ True   _____ False

7. Children learn by playing.
   _____ True   _____ False

8. If I have questions about my child’s development, I can get information from a professional like my child’s doctor.
   _____ True   _____ False
9. Children should typically be expected to potty train between 1 and 2 years of age.
   ____ True  ____ False

10. If your child asks about a difficult subject like puberty or sex, you should tell them everything you know no matter their age.
    ____ True  ____ False

11. A tortilla with beans, and salsa and pineapple juice is a healthy meal.
    ____ True  ____ False

12. Nutrition and physical activity are both important to a child’s health.
    ____ True  ____ False

13. Raw carrots and chewing gum are safe and healthy for children under the age of 4.
    ____ True  ____ False

14. The food groups are: fruits, vegetables, meat and beans, milk, and grains.
    ____ True  ____ False

15. If a child can eat a large hamburger, then that is the correct portion size for him/her no matter their age.
    ____ True  ____ False

16. When planning your child(ren)’s meals, it is best to offer them a variety of foods.
    ____ True  ____ False

17. Adults and children have different nutritional needs.
    ____ True  ____ False

18. Adults and children need the same size portions of food.
    ____ True  ____ False

19. Children don’t need physical activity when it’s cold or raining outside.
    ____ True  ____ False

20. Children need more grains than meats each day.
    ____ True  ____ False
21. Please write any thoughts you have about your experiences in class during the last two weeks.

A. Was anything different? Please explain.

B. What is the most important thing you learned about developmental expectations?

C. What is the most important thing you learned about healthy nutrition?
Forma de educación de padres II

Nombre: _______________________________ Fecha: ____________

Este examen no recibirá un grado y no afectará a Ud. ni sus servicios en Even Start en ninguna manera. Esta forma es confidencial y sólo es accesible a las quienes están haciendo este estudio y coleccionando esta información.

No esperamos que nadie podrá contestar todas estas preguntas correctamente. Sólo queremos saber lo que sepa en este momento. Por favor contesta cada pregunta lo mejor que pueda. Marque sólo una respuesta para cada pregunta.

1. Un niño de dos años siempre debe de poder a compartir con otros.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

2. Padres pueden a enseñar cosas a sus hijos/hijas a cualquiera edad.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

3. Aprendiendo de desarrollo de los niños ayuda a los padres a saber que esperar de sus hijos/hijas.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

4. Si un niño no camina a los 12 meses o antes, es probable que hay algo mal.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

5. Padres pueden a reducir comportamiento negativo en sus hijos por jugar con ellos todos los días.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

6. Hay habilidades en niños típicos que están esperados a ciertas edades.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

7. Los niños aprenden por jugar.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

8. Si yo tengo preguntas del desarrollo de mi hijo/hija, yo puedo a recibir información de un profesional como el doctor de mi hijo/hija.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso

9. Normalmente, los niños deben de estar esperados a ir al baño solos entre 1 y 2 años.  
   ____  Verdadero  ____  Falso
10. Si su hijo/hija pregunta de una tema difícil como pubertad o sexo, Ud. debe decirle todo que sepa Ud. no importa la edad del niño/niña.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

11. Una tortilla con frijoles y salsa y jugo de piña es una comida saludable.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

12. Nutrición y actividad física son importantes para la salud de un/a niño/a.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

13. Zanahorias crudas y chicle están seguros y saludables para niños de menos que 4 años.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

14. Los grupos de comida son: frutas, verduras, carne y frijoles, productos lácteos, y granos.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

15. Si un niño puede a comer una hamburguesa grande, entonces es la porción correcta para él no importa su edad.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

16. Cuando está planeando las comidas de sus hijos/hijas, lo mejor es ofrecerles una variedad de comidas.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

17. Adultos y niños tienen necesidades nutricionales diferentes.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

18. Adultos y niños necesitan las mismas porciones de comida.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

19. Los niños no necesitan actividad física cuando está frío o lloviendo afuera.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

20. Los niños necesitan más de granos que carnes y frijoles cada día.
   _____ Verdadero _____ Falso

21. Favor de escribir algunos pensamientos que Ud. tiene de sus experiencias en la clase durante las dos semanas pasadas.
A. ¿Había algo diferente? Favor de explicar.

B. ¿Qué es la cosa más importante que Ud. aprendió de las esperanzas del desarrollo?

C. ¿Qué es la cosa más importante que Ud. aprendió de nutrición saludable?
### Appendix D

Coded Data

#### Comparison Group Qualitative Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Response(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POS</strong></td>
<td>“. . . everything was explained well.” (023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everything is good for me. (027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No, everything was good. (023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The classes have been different and for me they are good. Thank you. (027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During this course the class has been different – new things new ideas. The class as it is is pleasant. (025)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What I learned – many new things that I didn’t know and everything was explained well. (023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everything is good for me. (027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes because everyday it was over the same themes but in a different way. (017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No, everything was good. (023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For me everything is important. Thank you for the classes. (022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEG</strong></td>
<td>There were a lot of confusions that were not clarified. (026)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes that I believe that there are times that they want to impart some ideas of which I do not agree. (019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The information on nutrition is very important although a little complicated in how much portions are. I would like it if it were less complicated. (019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNWL</strong></td>
<td>I have learned a little more on adequate nutrition and from which food groups they are. (017)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The importance of the nutrition in children and the physical activities. (022)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- For me it was everything because of everything I learned a little and it all helped me a lot. (017)
- The importance of play and reading in the development of the child and learning. (019)
- To be more aware of every stage of my children in their development in order to be able to help them. (016)
- The most important thing I did was to remember what they explained to me before. (015)
- I learned that it is very important to be attentive to development and to give attention to each new thing that they do. (022)
- I learned that there are different stages of development and each stage is different. (025)
- That each child reacts according to their ages and that it is important to know child development. (023)
- I reinforced them a little. (026)
- What I learned was about the portions of foods. (027)
- The food groups and which are the healthiest portions or foods. (017)
- The most important that I learned is that it is not good to eat food with a lot of fat. (023)

### SKL

- The development and the role of play – all of this information is very good to obtain in order to be more playful with our children and to bring a more relaxed life with them. (019)
- How to help my daughter in her development. (015)
- How to combine the five nutritional groups and try to have the nutrition at home be more balanced. (019)
- That it is very important to give healthy food to my children and offer them more vegetables and fruits. (016)
- I learned how we can balance our diet, everything that can make a nutritious food and the quantity or portions of food. (025)

### APLC
## Treatment Group Qualitative Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code:</th>
<th>Response(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **POS** | The experience that I have is that the listening to the problems and advice of other classmates helps me to better solve problems. (006)  
• “It was very interesting . . . The 2 themes are very interesting for us, parents, and the material that you gave us was very good.” (009)  
• The difference for us these two weeks is that everything was done in group. Also everyone participated and had different opinions. I as a mother did activities in the home and we had a lot of fun. (002)  
• I remembered the information from WIC and the information helps to remember the information. I remembered about when my children were little. I remembered when they learned in each stage. (011)  
• I think that you always learn something new and different. (008) |
| **NEG** | “. . . the explanation of the teachers should have been more active and clear.” (009)  
• Like for example, they told us that children from 3 to 5 years know how to tie their shoelaces and my son doesn’t know how to. (003) |
| **KNWL** | The first week I realized that my daughters learn everything through playing, experimenting, and observing. The second week is that nutrition is as important within the family, in this way one learns to eat healthy. Also to be active with our children in order to have good health. (002)  
• What I learned is that there is development. That you have to have a good diet, well balance in order to be healthy. (012)  
• I learned which foods are nutritious for me and my family. I also learned about portions that a child and an adult should eat, what foods to eat in the mornings and which ones in the evening. (001)  
• “The nutrition class about development of the body . . . If
vegetables are eaten, that is what the children will eat because this is what they see adults eat.” (013)

- I learned about development and good nutrition. (005)
- I think that you always learn something new and different. (008)
- Before these talks I had some doubts about nutrition. (001)
- Knowing about my daughters’ development is something very important that I learned. Because this way I can know how they are changing their behavior and their feelings. (002)
- It is good that they eat well so that their bones develop to be strong and healthy. (005)
- Everything – everything is very interesting. (011)
- Development is a stage of physical, emotional growth and in human beings. (006)
- That there are different changes that make the organism and that one continues learning at every stage. (012)
- That it is very important that children eat healthy and nutritiously so that they have good physical and intellectual development. (008)
- To better understand my daughters and about the activities - that they can develop according to their age. (001)
- That development is fundamental from the time one is a baby because there are better results in the long-run. (010)
- “. . . they taught us about how to vary the food . . .” (002)
- That whatever thing as simple as beans with tortillas can be a very healthy food for them. (003)
- I learned that children should eat all foods and portions necessary for their age. (006)
- “That we have to provide a balanced diet . . . and that adults and children have to eat different portions.” (012)
- What nutrition is. It is the way that the body absorbs nutrients from food for the development of the entire organism. (013)
- That a healthy and balanced diet helps every person to create
| SKL | health and healthy learning. (010)  
|     | • The foods that can be dangerous for small children and the variety of healthy foods. (009)  
|     | • To me it helped me a lot because like I didn’t know a lot about development and now I know that it is very important to give them food that has iron like lentils and beans, vegetables, fruits, and also that them going outside to play helps them to be healthy and to have good health. (005)  
|     | • I like the nutrition class because from this I learned a lot to always give my children something nutritious and healthy. (008)  
|     | • That we as parents can teach them at any age and be able to make it so they have other abilities that are not appropriate for their age like playing alone and sharing a little time. (003)  
|     | • The activities that can be done with children that are age-appropriate. (009)  
|     | • The portions that I should give to my family, especially to my daughter and about the foods that have iron vitamins. (005)  
|     | • How to feed them healthy and that it is important for your heart and your health, your bones. (011)  
|     | • “...that when we buy the food that we always see what it contains...” (012)  
|     | • To eat more vegetables and consume less fat or less fatty foods. Also to consume fruit. (008)  
|     | • How I can prepare varied and healthy food...” (001)  
|     | • The importance that offering my family nutritious, balanced, healthy foods has, for their development and their future life, and by doing that I am demonstrating my love and my affection for them. (007)  
|     | • To provide a balanced diet, our children can have better development. (004)  
| APLC | • The teacher gave us a sheet that had games the children learn and they like it because they are having fun. (003)  

• To play is to learn and not just to occupy the time in some activity. To give them attention with quality, quality time. (007)

• Before I didn’t pay much attention to what they were learning from playing. (007)

• “The way to eat healthy, for us to now be able to teach them good nutritional habits in the home. CHILDREN EAT WHAT DADDY AND MOMMY EAT AT HOME. . .” (013)

• I learned to give myself time to be with my children and allow that I be a more aware mother but always to be attentive to everything. (006)

• Nutrition is something that interests me a lot because my older daughter doesn’t eat very much and like they taught us about how to vary the food and now everything is going well. (002)

• “. . . I learned to choose the correct foods at mealtime.” (001)
Qualitative Data: Before Coded and Transferred to Table Above

Non-integrated Treatment Group

Question 1

- Las clases han sido diferentes y para mi están bien. Gracias. (027)
- Yo he aprendido un poco más sobre como llevar acabo una alimentación adecuada y de cuales son los grupos de alimentas que existen. (017)
- La información sobre nutricion es muy importante aunque un poco complicada en cuanto porciones me gustaria que fuera menos complicada. El crecimiento y el rol del juego toda esa informacion es muy buena obtenerla para ser mas jugetonas con nuestros hijos y llevar una vida mas relajada con ellos. (019)
- La importancia de la nutricion en los niños y las actividades fisicas. (022)
- Durante este curso la clase ha sido diferente – nuevas cosas nuevas ideas. La clase en si es amena. (025)
- Que aprendi muchas cosas nuevas que no sabia y todo estuvo bien explicado. (023)
- Hubo muchas confusiones que no fueron aclaradas. (026)

Question 2

- Todo esta bien para mi. (027)
- Sí porque cada dia era sobre los mismos temas pero de diferente manera. (017)
- Sí que creo que hay veces que quieren imponer algunas ideas de las cuales yo no estoy de acuerdo. (019)
- No, todo estuvo bien. (023)

Question 3

- Las cosas. (027)
- Para mi fue todo porque de todo aprendi un poco y me ayudaron mucho. (017)
- La importancia del juego y lectura en el desarrollo del niño y aprendizaje. (019)
- Estar más pendiente de cada etapa de mis hijos en su desarrollo para poder ayudarlos. (016)
- La cosa mas importante es que hice un recordatorio de lo que antes me explicaron. (015)
- Opredi (Aprendi) que es muy importante estar altento del desarrollo y poner atencion a cada cosa nueva que hacen. (022)
- Aprendi que hay diferentes etapas del desarrollo y cada etapa es diferente. (025)
- Que cada niño reacciona segun sus edades y que es imporante saber del desarrollo de los niños. (023)
- Las renforse un poco. (026)
Question 4

- Lo que yo aprendi de las proporciones de las comidas. (027)
- Los grupos de alimentos y cuales son las porciones o la comida mas saludable. (017)
- Como combinar los cinco grupos nutricionales y tratar que la alimentacion en casa sea mas balanceada. (019)
- Que es muy importante darles comida saludable a mis hijos y ofrecerles mas verduras y frutas. (016)
- Como ayudar a mi niña en su desarrollo. (015)
- Para mi todo es importante. Gracias por las clases. (022)
- Aprendia como podemos balancear nuestros alimentos todo lo que puede llevar una comida nutritiva y la cantidad o porciones de comer. (025)
- Lo mas importante que aprendi es que no es bueno comer comida con mucha grasa. (023)
- Las renforse un poco. (026)

Integrated Treatment Group

Question 1

- La primera semana me di cuenta que mis niñas aprenden todo en jugando, experimentando, y observando. La segunda semana es que la nutricion es tan importante dentro de la familia esa manera uno aprende a comer sanamente. Tambien ser activo con nuestros hijos para tener una buena salud. (002)
- La maestra nos dio una hoja que contiene juegos los niños aprenden y les encanta porque se estan divirtiendo. (003)
- A mi me ayudado mucho porque como no sabia mucho de el desarrollo ahora se que es muy importante darles comida que tenga yerro como las lentejas y frijoles verduras frutas, y tambien que salgan afuera a jugar les ayuda a a estar sanos y a tener una buena salud. (005)
- La experiencia que tengo es que el escuchar los problemas y consejos de otras compañeras me ayuda a solucionar mejor los problemas. (006)
- Que aprendi que era el derrollo. Que hay que tener una nutricion bien balanceada para estar saludable. (012)
- Me gusta la clase de nutricion porque de eso, aprendo mucho para darles a mis hijos siempre algo nutritivo y saludable. (008)
- Aprendi cuales alimentos son nutritivos para mi y mi familia. Aprendi tambien sobre porciones que un niño y un adulto debe comer. Que alimentos comer en las mañanas y cuales en la tarde. (001)
- El jugar es aprender y no solo ocupar el tiempo en alguna actividad. Darles atencion con calidad, tiempo de calidad. (007)
- La clase de nutricion de desarollo para el cuerpo. La forma de comer saludable, para nosotros poder en casa enseñarles buenos abitos alimenticios. "LOS NIÑOS
COMEN LO QUE PAPA Y MAMA COMEN EN CASA.” Si se comen verduras eso comen los niños porque eso ven que comen los adultos. (013)

- Fue muy interesante pero la explicación de los maestros debería ser más activa y clara. Los 2 temas son muy interesantes para nosotros, los padres, y el material que se dio fue muy bueno. (009)

Question 2

- Lo diferente que nos toco estas dos semanas es que todo se hizo en grupo. También todas participaron y tenían diferentes opiniones. Yo como madre hice actividades en casa y nos divertimos mucho. (002)
- Como por ejemplo, nos dijeron que los niños de 3 a 5 años saben amarrar las ahujetas de sus zapatos y mi hijo no lo sabe. (003)
- Yo aprendí acerca del desarrollo y la buena alimentación. (005)
- Me acorde la información de WIC y ayuda la información para recordar la información. Me acorde de cuando mis niños eran chiquitos. Me acorde de cuando aprenden en cada etapa. (011)
- Yo aprendí a darme tiempo para estar con mis hijos y que y deja que sea ‘mde pendiente pero siempre estar a tanto de todo. (006)
- Yo pienso que siempre se aprende algo nuevo y diferente. (008)
- Antes de estas pláticas tenía algunas dudas sobre alimentación. (001)

Question 3

- Sabiendo el desarrollo de mis hijas es algo muy importante que aprendí. Porque esa manera hoy puedo saber en como va cambiando su comportamiento y sus sentimientos. (002)
- Que nosotros como padres les podemos enseñar a cualquier edad y poder hacer que tenga otras habilidades que no van de acuerdo con su edad tan solo jugando y prestandoles un poco de tiempo. (003)
- Es bueno que se alimenten bien para que sus huesos se desarrolle fuertes y sanos. (005)
- Todo – todo es muy interesante. (011)
- El desarrollo es una etapa de crecimientos físicos, emocionales, en los seres humanos. (006)
- Que son diferentes cambios que hace el organismo y que uno ha aprendido de cada etapa. (012)
- Que es muy importante que los niños coman saludable y nutritivo para que tengan un buen desarrollo físico e intelectual. (008)
- A entender mejor el desarrollo de mis hijas y sobre las actividades que ellas pueden desarrollar de acuerdo a su edad. (001)
- Antes no le daba mucha importancia a lo que es el aprendizaje en el juego. (007)
• Que el desarrollo es fundamental desde cuando uno es bebé porque hay mejores resultados a larga plaza. (010)
• Las actividades que se pueden realizar con los niños de acuerdo a su edad. (009)

Question 4

• La nutrición es algo que me interesó mucho porque la niña más grande no come mucho y como nos enseñaron en cómo variarle la comida y ahora todo va por un buen camino. (002)
• Que cualquier cosa tan sencilla como los frijoles con tortillas puede ser una comida muy saludable para ellos. (003)
• Las porciones que les debo de dar a mi familia especialmente a mi hija y acerca de las comidas que contienen yerro vitamina. (005)
• Como darles saludable y qu ees importante para su corazón y su salud, sus huesos. (011)
• Aprendí que los niños deven de comer todos los alimentos y porciones necesarios de acuerdo a la edad. (006)
• Que tenemos que dar una alimentacion balanceada que cuando compramos la comida simple tenemos que ve que es lo que contiene y que los adultos y los niños tienen que comer diferentes porciones. (012)
• Comer más verduras y consumir menos grasa o menos alimentos grasosos. También consumir fruta. (008)
• Como yo puedo preparar una comida variada y saludable. Aprendí a escojer los alimentos correctos a la hora de comer. (001)
• La importancia que tiene el ofrecerle a mi familia alimentos nutritivos, balanceados y sanos, para su desarrollo y su vida futura, y de esta forma yo les estoy demostrando mi amor y mi cariño hacia ellos. (007)
• Que es la nutrición. Es la forma en la que el cuerpo absorbe los nutrientes de los alimentos para el desarrollo de todo el organismo. (013)
• Que dar una alimentacion balanceada a nuestros hijos puede tener un desarrollo mejor. (004)
• Que una nutricion saludable y equilibrada ayuda a toda persona a forjarse salud y aprendizaje sano. (010)
• Los alimentos que pueden ser peligrosos para los niños pequeños y la variedad de alimentos sanos. (009)