

The RELATIONSHIP between Social-Emotional Health, Well-Being, and Learning to Read



Learning to read sets children up for a lifetime of opportunity



Unfortunately, by the 4th grade, 66% of children in the U.S. are unable to read proficiently¹



A child's path to success both in life and with reading can be filled with barriers; our job is to find ways to offer necessary supports



There are a variety of supports that correlate with reading proficiency and that can mediate barriers to success; when these are in place, children thrive both in learning to read and leading productive lives

BIOLOGICAL FACTORS



Barrier

Learning to read can be difficult when the response of a child's brain to sound is compromised (e.g., children who are deaf, hard of hearing, have an auditory processing disorder, or experience recurrent ear infections)

Support

Learning to read is much easier when children have the ability to process the sounds in noise, particularly consonants and vowels

2-7%

of children have an auditory processing disorder²

2 in 100 children

under the age of 18 are affected to some degree by hearing loss³

HOME AND SOCIETAL FACTORS



Barrier

Learning to read is hampered when the environment is limited in terms of oral language models, exposure to print, and read alouds

Support

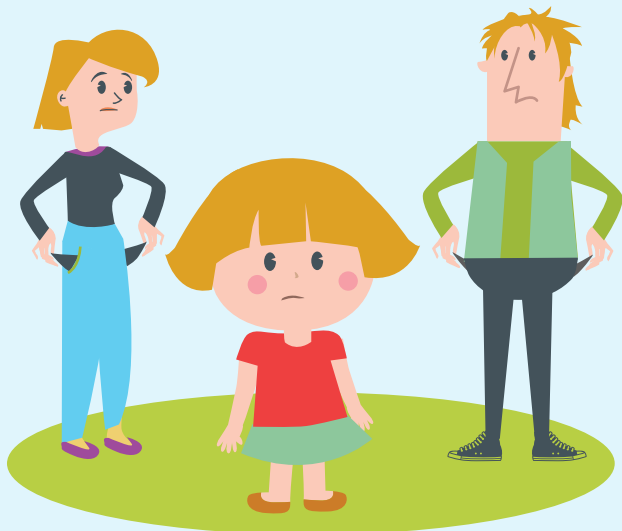
Learning to read is supported when exposure, practice, and feedback related to oral and written language skills are routinely provided

By adolescence, there is an

85% achievement gap

between children from families that have the lowest levels of education vs. the highest levels of education ⁴

The amount of adult verbal input predicts the rate of vocabulary growth in young children ⁵



Barrier

Learning to read and academic success, along with mental health, general health, and nutrition, are negatively impacted by poverty

Support

Learning to read is much easier when parental warmth, responsiveness, and the ability to provide cognitive stimulation, proper nutrition, and access to healthcare exists; this is often only possible when there is familial financial stability, through a combination of increased family time and resources

Only 1/5 of low-income 4th graders

can read proficiently, while more than half of 4th graders from high-income families are proficient ⁶

The effects of poverty impact school readiness far more than other confounding and contributing factors such as family structure, race/ethnicity, mother's age at child's birth, and immigrant status ⁷



Barrier

Learning to read is harder for children experiencing chronic stress, trauma, and who lack instruction or models of impulse control

Support

Learning to read is more successful when instruction and support for learning self-regulations skills is provided across home, school, and community contexts; financial and familial stability impacts the ability of families to provide such support "Sensitive, consistent, and responsive parenting in the first 5 years of life are among the strongest predictors of children's social and behavioral well-being, especially for children exposed to high levels of stress" ⁸

Two-thirds

of children age 16 or younger have experienced a traumatic event at some point in their lives ⁹

Children are almost 3x as likely to experience behavior challenges, be diagnosed with a behavior-related disorder, or be held back at least one grade when they experience two or more traumatic events ¹⁰

4) Bradbury, Corak, Waldfogel, & Washbrook, 2011

7) Isaacs, 2012

5) Brown & Pretti-Frontczak, 2016

9) The National Child Traumatic Stress Network [NCTSN], 2014

6) Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014

10) Bettencourt, Gross, & Ho, 2016

SCHOOL AND POLITICAL FACTORS



Barrier

Learning to read is tough when early care and educational opportunities don't provide adequate learning opportunities for English language learners

Support

Learning to read is reinforced by early care and educational opportunities that provide a strong basis in a first language as well as support for learning English

4.4 million U.S. public school students are English language learners¹¹



Barrier

Learning to read is a challenge when educational priorities include an emphasis on testing, test scores, and setting arbitrary benchmarks of child success and progress

Support

Learning to read is more successful when educational priorities include fostering strong adult-child relationships as a component of early care and education

71%

of school districts reduced time in at least one subject in order to expand the time allotted for the tested subjects of reading and math¹²

Children need literacy and language opportunities across subjects and settings in order to be literate by 4th grade



Barrier

Learning to read is compromised when the start of formal reading instruction is designed to “speed up” learning of isolated literacy skills

Support

Learning to read is more effective when authentic learning opportunities related to all areas of development and learning during play and every day routines and events are provided

“...children who participate in high-quality preschool programs have better health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes than those who do not participate”¹³

Teachers can effectively implement social-emotional learning programs; when they do, children across age groups, geographic location, and background net **an average 11 % gain** in academic performance, including literacy¹⁴

11) U.S. Department of Education, 2015a

12) Spann, 2015, p.3

13) U.S. Department of Education, pp. 1-2, 2015b

14) Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011



Barrier

Learning to read is challenging when the quality and quantity of explicit vocabulary instruction is lacking

Support

Learning to read is simplified when early care providers and educators deliver meaningful and explicit vocabulary instruction across the daily routine



Vocabulary is one of the strongest predictors of early literacy and mathematics skills ¹⁵

Vocabulary rich instruction in preschool predicts children's reading comprehension and word knowledge in 4th grade ¹⁶

"As many as 1 million state-licensed and nationally credentialed early childhood educators are at-risk for functional illiteracy; their reading and writing skills are inadequate to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level" ¹⁷



Barrier

Learning to read is impeded by state policies that retain children who are not reading proficiently by 3rd grade, often defined as a score on a test

Support

Learning to read is productive when states promote 3rd grade reading proficiency by providing ample literacy opportunities and resources and measure student progress through authentic assessment

Grade retention has been shown to increase the risk of dropping out by 20-50%...and nationally, retention costs taxpayers over **\$18 billion each year** ¹⁸

More than 15 states and the District of Columbia require 3rd grade students to pass state-specific reading benchmarks or face retention ¹⁹

15) Brown, 2015

16) Christakis, 2016, January/February

17) Strauss, 2015, February, para. 3

18) Xia & Glennie, 2005

19) Pew Charitable Trusts, 2013

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