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Abstract Title: Developmental Milestone Educational Intervention to Enhance Parental Beliefs and Behaviors About Early Learning and Home Activities

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Background & Significance: Parents play a vital role in the growth and development of their children. Beliefs and behaviors regarding early learning, developmental milestone achievement, and home learning activities in young children vary among parents. Parental interventions that foster engagement with their children enrich early childhood development and enable parents to recognize when their child is not meeting age-specific developmental milestones.

Purpose: The aim of this project was to examine the impact of a developmental milestone educational intervention on parental beliefs and behaviors of early learning and home activities in parents of children ages 2 to 4 in a rural community.

Problem Statement: Early recognition of developmental delays by parents is crucial to children's overall health, welfare, and success. The development of an evidence-based developmental milestone educational intervention will allow parents to confidently assess their child's growth and development while promoting parental engagement.

Methods: IRB approval was obtained. The sample included 31 study participants who were recruited from a primary care clinic in a rural town. Participants were 18 years or older, had a child between the ages of 2 to 4 years, resided within the local, rural community, had access to email, and were able to read, write, and understand English. Parents completed the Parent Early Math and Literacy Learning Questionnaire before and after reviewing the educational handout for 6 weeks.

Results: The mean for the confidence subscale increased, and the mean for the anxiety subscale decreased. Although these findings were not statistically significant, they illustrate improvement post-intervention. The mean score for frequency of activities subscale slightly decreased, meaning home activities were performed less post-intervention.

Discussion/Conclusion: The findings indicate the need for further studies on this topic. Including a larger sample and providing more educational intervention on childhood development to parents might yield more favorable outcomes.

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IRB Approval: IRB approval granted from Troy University's Institutional Review Board on November 17, 2022.

Keywords: parental engagement, parental confidence, developmental milestones, child development