

## A Dialogic Reading Intervention to Promote Resilience and Coping in Preschool Children

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### BACKGROUND & SIGNIFICANCE

Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers are an ideal setting to promote social-emotional competence (SEC) in preschool-aged children. Strong social-emotional development is protective against risk factors linked to the growing childhood mental health crisis. Over half of U.S. children experience  $\geq 1$  adverse childhood experience (ACE), making early SEC interventions critical to mitigating the childhood mental health crisis. SEC development is supported by shared reading, play, self-regulation practices, and strong educator involvement, with research highlighting the value of Dialogic Reading (DR) in promoting teacher-child relationships and enhancing social-emotional development.

### PROBLEM

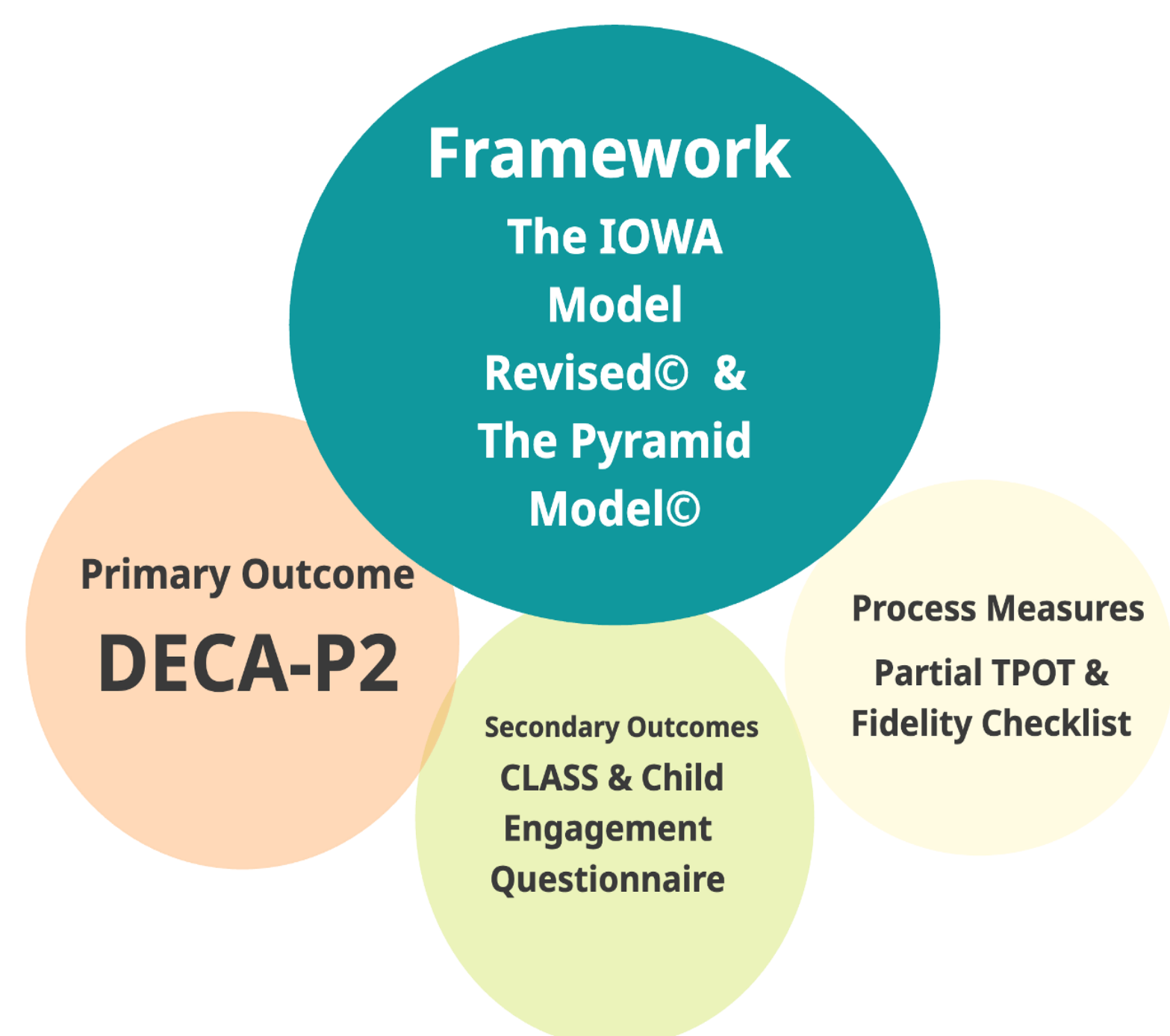
Insufficient development of social-emotional competence in early childhood leads to long-term consequences.

### PURPOSE & AIMS

Develop and implement an evidence-based, 14-week, educator-led DR intervention with pre-kindergarten (pre-K) children in a Midwestern ECE center to:

1. Improve SEC and promote resilience
2. Evaluate effectiveness and facilitate adoption into practice

### FRAMEWORK & OUTCOMES

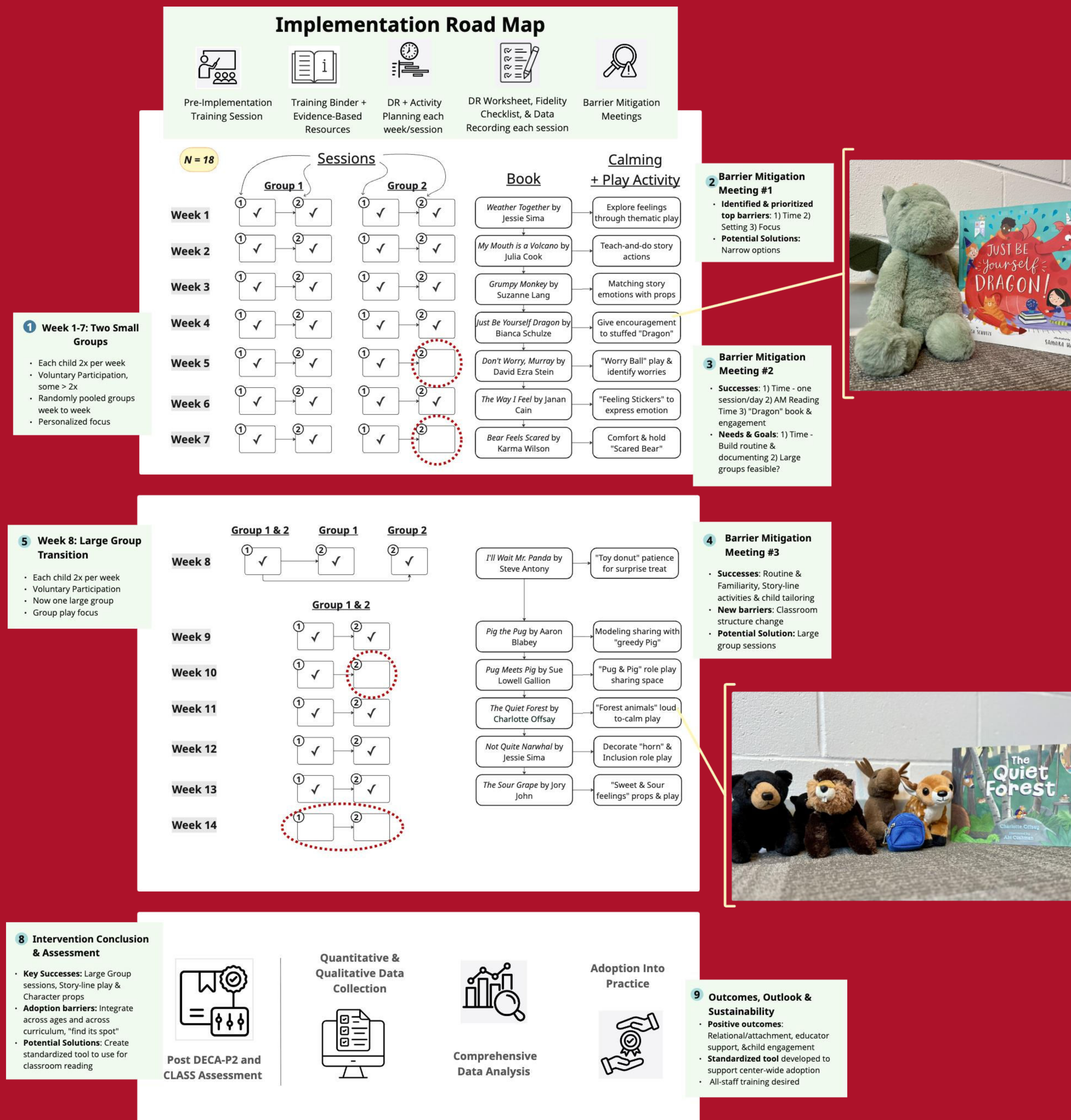


### METHODS

- Systematic review of resilience and DR literature to guide design, implementation, & evaluation
- Change in DECA-P2 subscales from pre-post intervention for non-randomized intervention group compared to the change in scores over time for the prior non-intervention cohort (control)
- Educator observations of group engagement recorded each session via questionnaire across three DECA-P2 domains

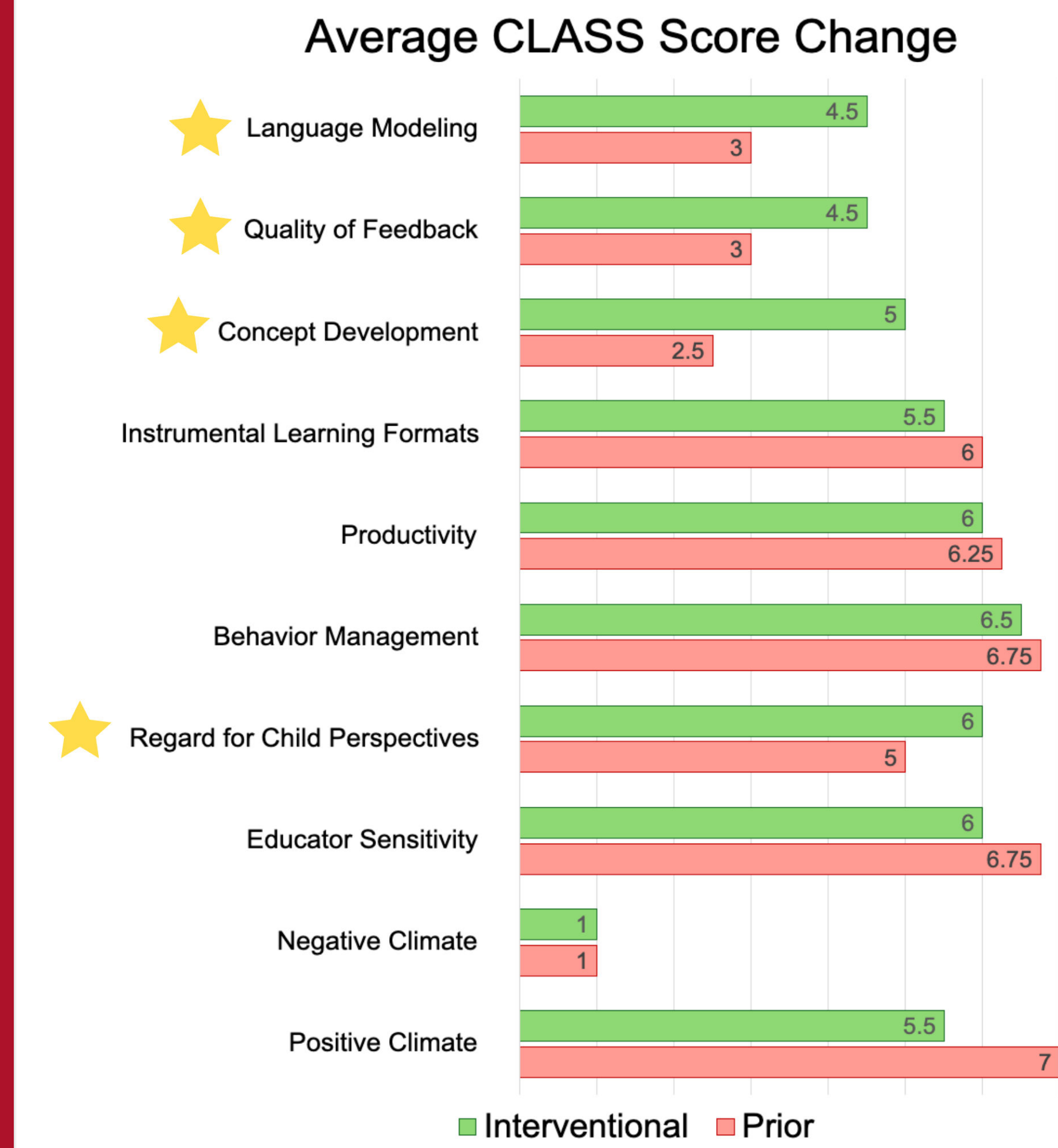
# A simple shift in story time can shape a child's emotional future.

In (P) preschool-aged children attending an ECE center, will (I) implementation of a social-emotional literacy and play-based intervention (O) improve resilience as measured by the DECA-P2, (C) compared to baseline DECA-P2 scores over a (T) three-month period?



### Secondary Outcomes:

- Child Engagement increased and variation stabilized over 13 weeks
- CLASS scores improved primarily across instructional support
- Attained highest scores for partial TPOTs conducted



### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

- Integrating Dialogic Reading (DR) into ECE curricula enhances resilience and coping skills in pre-K students by:
  - Significantly improving Attachment & Relationships
  - Fostering high engagement
  - Promoting educator support & professional development
- Implementation methods were effective to significantly reduce intervention barriers and site-wide practice adoption barriers at a low cost
- High educator fidelity despite implementation during significant program and leadership restructuring at the ECE center
- Results highlight the value of collaborative community partnerships between graduate nursing programs and ECE centers as a health promotion measure to impact resiliency prior to kindergarten enrollment
- Long term follow up will be necessary to measure the effect of early resilience-building on reducing downstream mental health risk and associated conditions

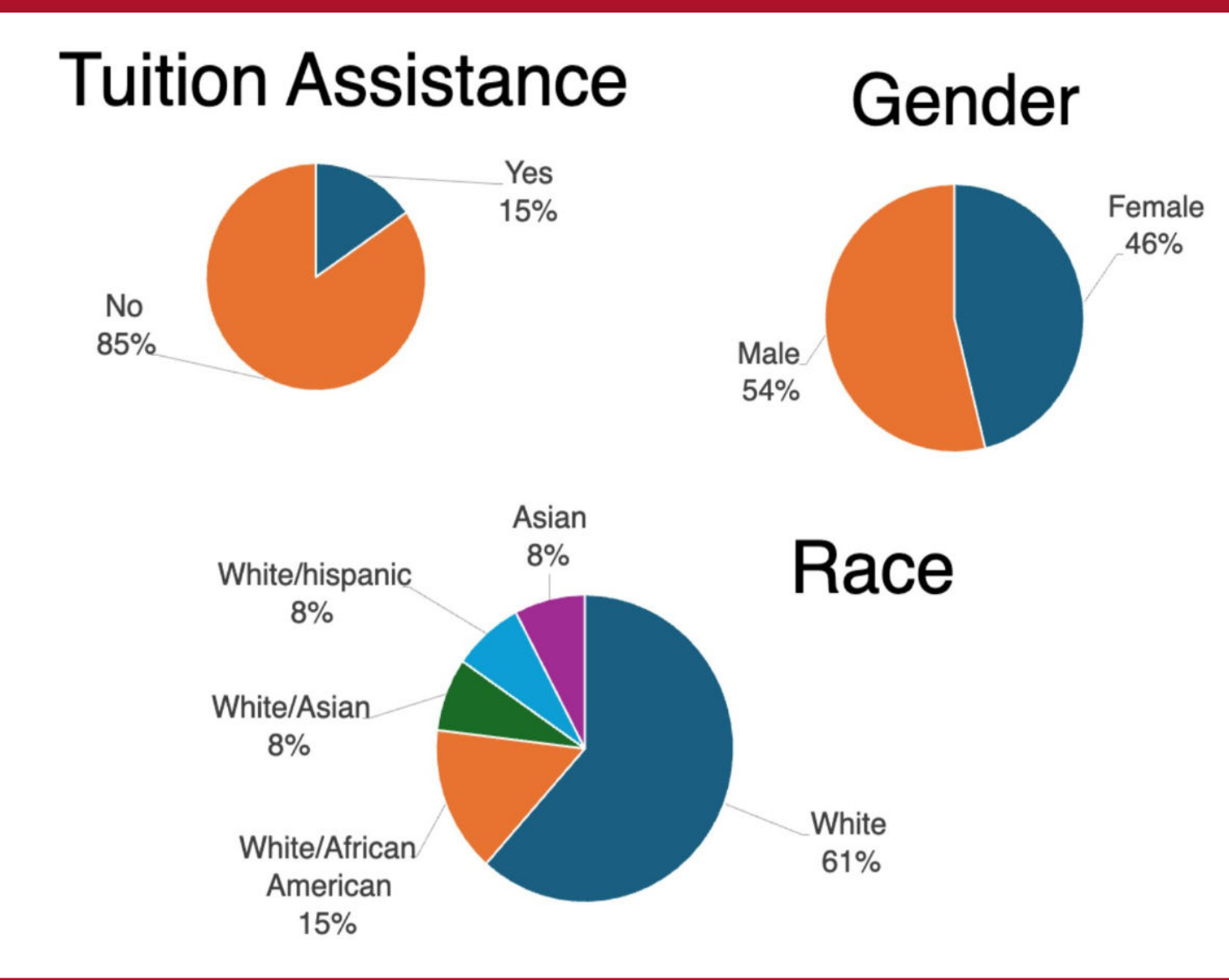
### IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Play activities are a feasible, low-cost practice for ECE settings to improve SEC, child engagement, and educator support & development
- Nurse-led public health partnerships can support sustainable SEC interventions

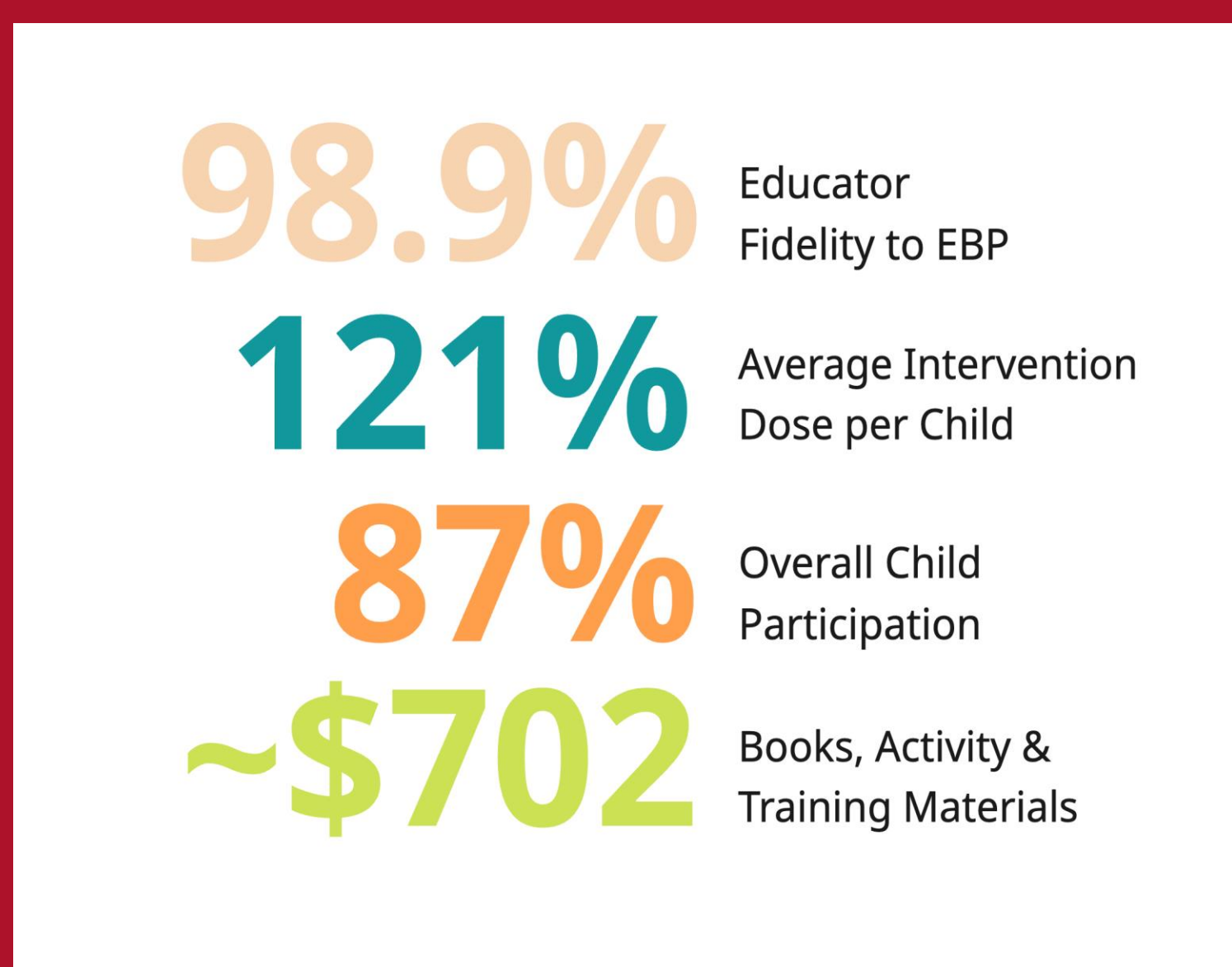
**Acknowledgements:** The authors sincerely thank the Site Director/Educator and Program Director for their invaluable leadership, collaboration, and contribution to the success of this project.



Scan for references



Participant Demographics for  $\geq 90\%$  Intervention Completion (n = 13)  
\*full demographic info not made available



## RESULTS

### Primary Outcomes:

- Significant positive difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in Attachment & Relationships (AT) after controlling for gender
- Initiative (IN) positively correlated with age across group, consistent with expected developmental progression
- DECA-P2 statistical improvements may reflect the strong relational focus of books and play activities