Pandemic Stress: Supporting Young Children, Families, and the Early Childhood Workforce

Walter S. Gilliam, PhD
Edward Zigler Center in Child Development & Social Policy
Yale Child Study Center

Twitter: @WalterGilliam

Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Advocates for Children of New Jersey
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Early Expulsions, Suspensions, and Other Exclusions

Harm children now...

- Denies access to early education
- Undermines child/family relationship with schools/education
- Obscures root causes that should be addressed
- Further calcifies biases regarding whom we serve and whom we exclude

Harm children later...

- Academic failure and disengagement
- School dropout
- Increased rates of law enforcement contact and later incarceration
Expulsion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Rate per 1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreK</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Rates per Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preschool Suspension</th>
<th>2.0%</th>
<th>~174,309</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Expulsion</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>~17,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>~191,557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MetLife Stadium 82,500  
SHI (Rutgers) Stadium 52,454  
Princeton Stadium 27,800  
Red Bull Stadium 25,189

In the Parking Lot = 3,614

Preschool Expulsion & Adult Incarceration Rates

**Rate per 1,000**

- **Preschool Expulsion/Suspension**
  - 2005 Teacher-Report \(^a\): 6.7
  - 2016 Parent-Report \(^b\): 7.5

- **Adult Incarceration**
  - 2019 Vero Data \(^c\): 6.4

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**Notes:**

Gender & Race Disparities from Preschool to Prison

Boys/Men Compared to Girls/Women

- Teachers: 4.6x
- Schools: 4.2x
- Parents: 4.7x
- U.S DOJ: 5.8x

Black Compared to White

- Teachers: 1.7x
- Schools: 2.2x
- Parents: 3.6x
- U.S DOJ: 3.3x

References:

Early Expulsion/Suspension Predict:

1. Negative school attitudes
2. Academic failure and grade retention
3. Later expulsion and suspension
4. High school drop-out (10x)
5. Incarceration (8x)


Children of incarcerated parents are at 3 times greater risk of being expelled from preschool.

ACEs & Preschool Expulsion/Suspension

Domestic Violence $\text{OR} = 10.6, \ p<.001$
Family Mental Illness $\text{OR} = 9.8, \ p<.001$
Adult Substance Abuse $\text{OR} = 4.8, \ p<.001$
Victim/Witness of Violence $\text{OR} = 4.5, \ p<.01$
Poverty $\text{OR} = 3.9, \ p<.001$
Parental Divorce $\text{OR} = 3.3, \ p<.001$
Parental Incarceration $\text{OR} = 3.0, \ p<.01$

Teacher Stress & Expulsion

Impact of COVID-19 on Early Educators (PRELIM!)

Illness & Loss
- Tested Positive for COVID-19: 14.6%
- Hospitalized for COVID-19: 0.5% (ICU = 21.6%; Intubated = 15.3%)
- House member hospitalized: 1.7% (House member died = 0.6%)

Economic Stress
- Unemployed 3 months into Pandemic: 35%
- Program Closed at some time due: 44.6%

Racial Aggression/Exclusion
- Experienced: 6.9% (Someone close 12.6%)
- Witnessed: 15.5%

Note. Preliminary data from an ongoing study of >21,000 child care providers longitudinally followed during the pandemic. Findings from >57,000 first reported in Gilliam et al., Covid-19 transmission in US child care programs, *Pediatrics* 2021,147(1).
Impact of COVID-19 on Early Educators (PRELIM!)

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**Depression (Pre-pandemic norm = 9.6%)**
- May/June 2020: 42%
- May/June 2021: 35%

**Elevated Stress (Pre-pandemic norm = 7%)**
- May/June 2020: 20%
- May/June 2021: 19%

Note: Preliminary data from an ongoing study of >21,000 child care providers longitudinally followed during the pandemic. Findings from >57,000 first reported in Gilliam et al., Covid-19 transmission in US child care programs, *Pediatrics* 2021, 147(1).
Impact of COVID-19 on Young Children (PRELIM!)

At Least 1 Child with Family Member Hospitalized 24.2% (5+ = 17.8%)
At Least 1 Child with Family Member Died 11.9% (5+ = 6.5%)

Children More Externalizing (Aggressive, Oppositional, Hyperactive, etc.)
• At least a few in group 56.0% (About half or more = 16.3%)

Children More Internalizing (Shy, Withdrawn, Anxious, Worried, Clingy, etc.)
• At least a few in group 55.3% (About half or more = 9.9%)

Children More Bio/Physical (Sleep, Eating, Wetting/Soiling, Unexplainable Pain, etc.)
• At least a few in group 37.4% (About half or more = 6.0%)

Note. Preliminary data from an ongoing study of >21,000 child care providers longitudinally followed during the pandemic. Findings from >57,000 first reported in Gilliam et al., Covid-19 transmission in US child care programs, Pediatrics 2021,147(1).
Child/Family Stress $\times$ Teacher Stress $= \text{Expulsions}$

Child/Family Stress$^2 \times \text{Teacher Stress}^2 = \text{Expulsions}^4$
“I am looking for insight on legalities involving asking a child to leave a program if we are unable to meet their needs. There is no IEP in place and the child is preschool age.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.”
And then there is bias...
Yale Implicit Bias Study

Video Courtesy of NPR

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Results of a Statewide Random-Controlled Evaluation

Walter S. Gilboa, MD, Angela M. Maupin, MD, Erin R. Reyes

Objective: Despite current federal recommendations calling for increased funding for early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) programs, the evidence supporting the program's effectiveness is limited. This study aimed to evaluate the effects of ECMHC on enhancing early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHc) outcomes

Methods: This study included 145 children and 66 preschool teachers randomized to either the intervention group or the control group. The intervention group received ECMHC services for 1 year. The control group received usual care.

Results: The study found that ECMHC had a positive impact on children's mental health outcomes, including decreased behavior problems and increased social skills.

Conclusion: ECMHC is an effective tool for improving the mental health of young children. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of ECMHC.

Keywords: early childhood mental health consultation, intervention, randomized controlled trial, mental health outcomes.
Social Justice & Civil Rights Are Often Matters of Access
YOU HAVE the FREEDOM to VOTE
Thanks to...

• Our Funders
  • A.L. Mailman Family Foundation
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  • Scholastic, Inc.
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Thanks to...

- The early educators, parents and children participating in our studies

Our subjects in all these studies are children. They are our partners in this learning enterprise, and we have a special responsibility to use this knowledge—not to fill up journals, but to make the lives of these children better.

Edward Zigler (2007)
THANK YOU!

Twitter: @WalterGilliam