



Four Decades of the Chicago Longitudinal Study: 7 Implications for Early Childhood Research

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hcrc.umn.edu

clstudy.org

cpcp3.org

Cohort Studies

Main downsides are costs and commitment. One must be in it for the long haul. Data collection costs are way higher now, but partnerships can overcome challenges.

The advantages are many but the main one is the capacity to profile and understand changes in behavior and development over time and in context. Wholistic understanding highly valued.

Chicago Longitudinal Study

Currently Ages 44-45 years old.

91.2% recovery rate for follow-up.

Born in 1979-1980 (93% Black; 7% Latino).

911 (92.1%) attended the Child-Parent Centers (CPC) beginning at ages 3-4y (fall 1983-sp 1985).

Participation could continue up to 3rd grade.

493 (89.6%) in matched comparison group with usual services in district (15% Head Start) from mostly randomly selected schools in similar neighborhoods.

7 Implications/Lessons

1. Value health & well-being as ultimate goal, not school achievement.
2. Consider a life-span orientation in planning, data collection, and projects (> partial).
3. Interdisciplinarity is essential to success.
4. Data collection plan must be rigorous and take utilize all data sources (primary and records).

7 Implications/Lessons

5. Leverage all aspects of study as much as possible (may be most important).
6. Advances innovation in measures, methods, & research approaches.
7. Promotes priority on sources and mechanisms of long-term & sustained effects.

2. Follow life-span approach as much as possible

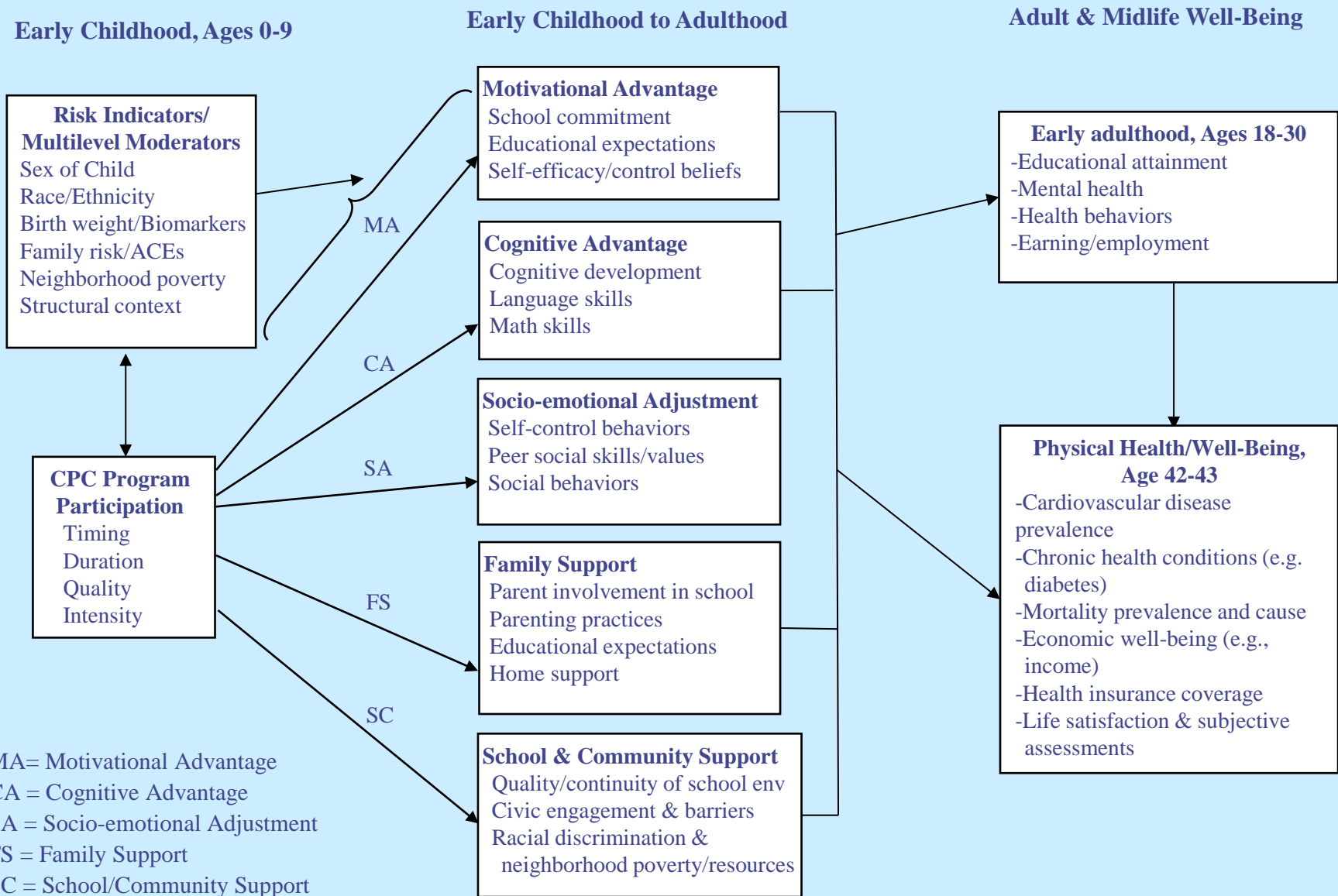


Figure 1. Five-Hypothesis Model Paths to Life Course Well-Being in the CLS (Reynolds, 2000, 2019).

For simplicity paths among mediators and from CPC to outcomes are not shown; Moderators (modifiers) at later ages also not shown.

CBA is Life-span Orientation

2013 SOTU Address on Preschool for All Initiative highlighted 7-dollar return of preschool from CPC and Perry studies

Can address all domains of well-being and intergenerational benefits

Child-Parent Centers Continuity System

Collaborative Leadership
Aligned Curriculum
Continuity and Stability

Early
Ed

P

K

1-3

Achievement

Well-Being

Effective Learning Experiences
Professional Development
Parent Involvement & Engagement



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3. Interdisciplinary approach is essential.

Fields of Influence & Work

Education

Psychology (and subfields)

Economics

Public Policy

Human development

Social Work

Evaluation studies

Prevention science

Public health & health sciences

Preventive medicine

Sociology

Statistics

Philosophy of Science

History

4. Make rigorous data collection plan.

CLS Data Collection in Brief

Birth records (1979-1980)

Program data (1983-1989)

Head Teacher Survey (1990-1991)

District test scores/progress (1985-2000; annual)

8 consecutive years of teacher surveys (1986-1993)

3 parent surveys (1988, 1990/1992, 1997)

4 consecutive years of student surveys (1989-1992)

High school student survey (1995, 1998)

Qualitative ("100") project (1991/1995)

3 adult participant surveys (2000, 2002-04, 2012-17)

Health exam with biomarkers (2017-2019)

Covid survey (2021)

CLS Data Collection in Brief

CJS records (juvenile & adult)

Child welfare records

Employment & income

Higher ed records (National Student Clearinghouse)

GED/community college data

Public aid (parent & participant)

Census data (neighborhoods)

School report cards (school-level info)

Social Security Death Index

Address & participant tracking

We collected way too much data!!

Follow the good-enough rule.

Establish a core plan based on goals, resources, data quality review, expertise, and capacity to get high response rates in any surveys/interviews.

Take advantage of available records data.

Archive everything in detail.

Data security and confidentiality is essential.

5. Leverages knowledge for new uses and projects.

Follow-on Studies & Projects

Midwest CPC Expansion Project (5 districts)

Full-Day PreK expansion in Chicago/St. Paul districts

CPC SIB/Pay for Success Project (City of Chicago)

CPC P-3 program manual

CLS health study (with NWU)

CPC work in other districts

Instructional tools

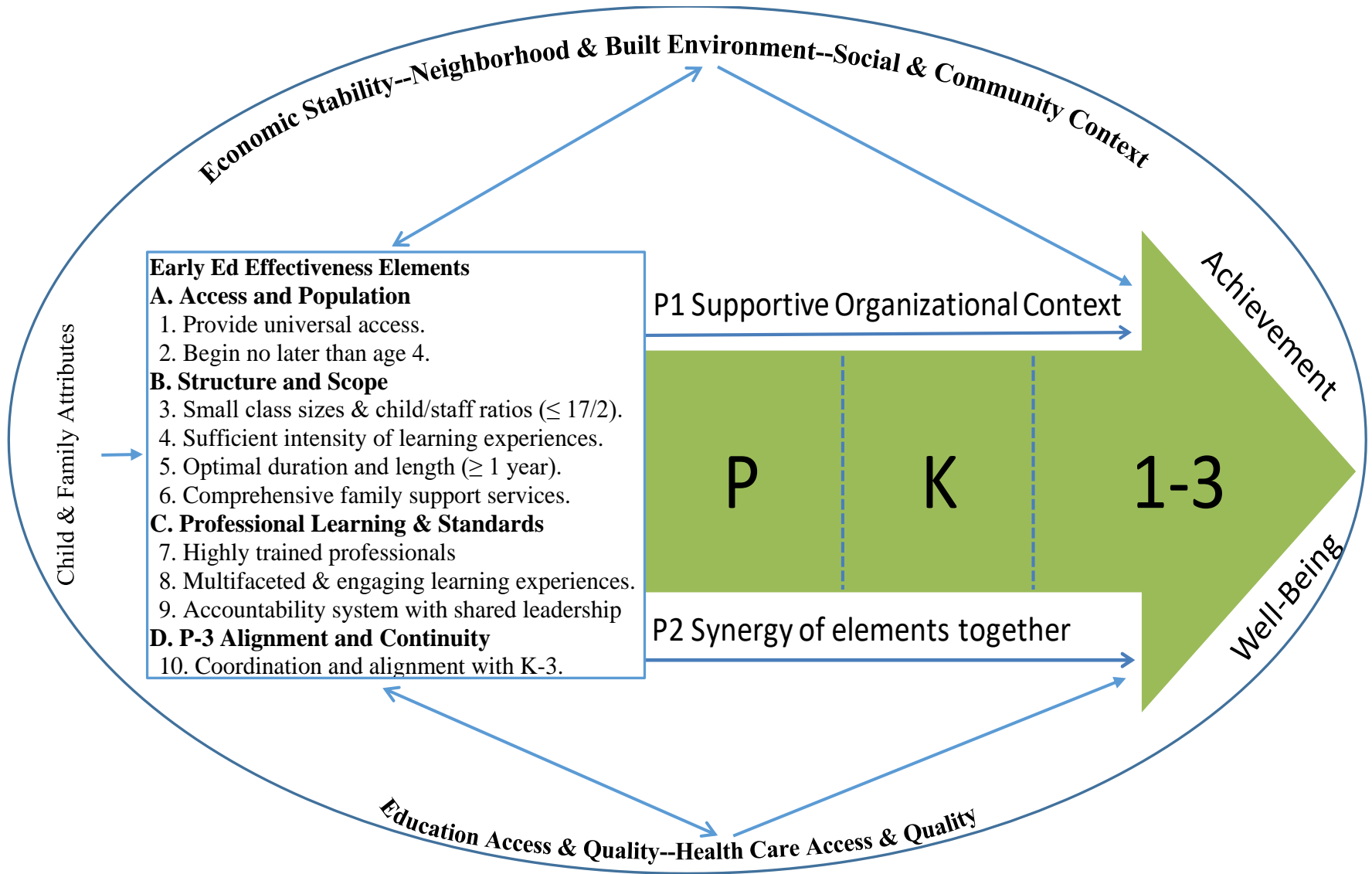


Figure. Ten Essential Elements of Early Childhood Programs and Socio-Structural Influences on Achievement & Well-Being.