How Social Media and Computer Technology Can Help Students Succeed in School and Enhance Their Well-Being

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How Can Social Media Help Us?
Fast Track Research Group

• 20-year retrospective with 753 kindergarten students from multiple sites, mostly Euro- and African-American

• Teachers rated social competence on 8 item scale (e.g., “Cooperates” “Shares” “Helpful” - see handout)

• Among the findings, at age 25...
For every **one-point increase** on the 8 item scale, the child was...

- Twice as likely to attain a college degree in early adulthood;
- 54% more likely to earn a high school diploma; and
- 46% more likely to have a full-time job at the age of 25
For every one-point decrease on the 8 item scale, the child had a...

- 67% higher chance of having been arrested by early adulthood;
- 82% higher rate of recent marijuana usage; and
- 82% higher chance of being in or on a waiting list for public housing
Dunedin Study

• Followed a cohort of over 900 children in New Zealand for over 35 years
• Researchers showed that a child’s self-control at kindergarten age was a powerful predictor of a wide range of important outcomes later in life
• Including education, health, financial stability, and criminal conduct
• Stronger predictor than IQ or SES
PARENTS SEND US THE BEST KIDS THEY HAVE!
Imagine a hypothetical large city kindergarten classroom.

Conservatively, a 30% dropout rate converts to 9 students in a kindergarten class of 29.
The greater the number of individuals who own protective factors against a contagious agent, the lesser the likelihood that others will succumb to it.
Kindergarten year begins with (hypothetically) 3 children with significant behavioral challenges.

By the time the year is over, the students with the fewest protective factors have begun to succumb.
Creating “Behavioral Herd Immunity”

• Behavioral “contagion” is NOT a purely one-to-one correspondence (as are some diseases)
  – Social-emotional deficit is not a disease
  – Other very significant risk factors in play beyond peer effects

• BUT, social learning theory suggests:
  – Children engage in observational learning and use that information to adjust behavior (e.g., Bobo doll)
  – Teacher attention - in an array of forms - is reinforcing to many externalizing children
  – Children with fewer social-emotional skills will tend to seek the reinforcer via the most familiar pathways
By kindergarten, child should...

1. Recognize own feeling states
2. Recognize feelings in others
3. Show self-control of aggression
4. Play cooperatively with age-mates
5. Solve problems non-violently

We’re READY!!
The Goal

Increase the percentage of children with protective social-emotional competencies who enter kindergarten.
If more students arrive with the necessary protective factors to resist, the percentage with acquired risks who move on is reduced.

Kindergarten year begins with (hypothetically) 3 children with significant behavioral challenges.
The Questions

• Defining the knowledge and skill sets –
  – Which are the most critical?

• Reaching the hard to reach –
  – Can interest, motivation and persistence be generated?

• Changing parenting behavior –
  – Is the medium the message?
Two-Pronged Approach

Number 1:

- **High Quality Preschool** for all children 3-4 using *National Association for the Education of Young Children* (NAEYC) and *National Institute for Early Education Research* (NIEER) standards
- **High Scope or Creative Curriculum**
- Florida’s Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten
Two-Pronged Approach

Number 2:

• Parenting Skills Development
  – The Parent Academy
  – ACT – Raising Safe Kids (Melissa Institute)
  – Others – Florida Dept. of Children and Families

• How can Internet technology and social media be used to reach and train parents?
Use of Online Resources for Parent Training


http://www.jmir.org/2012/5/e139/ - Development and Testing of a Multimedia Internet-Based System for Fidelity and Monitoring of Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2744504/pdf/nihms131714.pdf/?tool=pmcentrez - Expanding the Reach of Preventive Interventions: Development of an Internet-based Training for Parents of Infants

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4548016/ - Decrease in Behavioral Problems and Trauma Symptoms Among At-Risk Adopted Children Following Web-Based Trauma-Informed Parent Training Intervention


http://jgcp.ku.edu/1d-web-based-parenting-intervention-mothers - Web-based Parenting Intervention for Mothers of Infants At-Risk for Maltreatment
Stanford Study

- *One Step at a Time: The Effects of an Early Literacy Text Messaging Program for Parents of Preschoolers* (York & Loeb, 2014)

- Low income families -- but 80% had unlimited texting

- Three texts every week: FACT, TIP, GROWTH

- Total cost about one dollar per family

- Being piloted in MDCPS – VPK (?)
**FACT:** Beginning word sounds are essential for reading. You can help your child learn to read by saying the beginning sound of words.

**TIP:** Say two words to your child that start with the same sound, like happy & healthy. Ask: can you hear the “hhh” sound in happy & healthy?

**GROWTH:** By saying beginning word sounds, like “ttt” in taco & tomato, you’re preparing your child 4K. Now, have your child make the “ttt” sound
Kindergarten students whose parents were exposed to social and emotional training using computer technology and social media will show higher levels of observed social and emotional skills at entrance.
What If?

- Parents were taught how to increase their child’s social and emotional competency via social media and other Internet technology?
  - May be a stronger predictor of school success and positive later life outcomes than academic skills alone
  - May help provide that protective factor that contributes to herd behavioral immunity
**FACT:** Because there are many children and few adults, schools use **rules** to help keep order. Learning to use a rule to guide behavior is a skill.

**TIP:** Teach your child a simple rule to guide his or her behavior, such as, “The rule is wash your hands before supper.” or “The rule is brush your teeth before bedtime.”

**GROWTH:** By setting and using rules, you are preparing your child for success in a classroom of many other children. Ask your child to suggest a rule.
FACT: Young children will use aggression to show anger or resolve conflict if they have not learned another way.

TIP: Teach your child to say, “I don’t like it when you do that.” when he or she is upset at another child’s behavior. Practice it first.

GROWTH: By teaching non-violence, your child will have more choices when he or she is upset by another child. Praise your child for using non-violence.
Pew Research Center Data

- **90%** of adults 18-29 use social media
- **50%** of adults with lowest income use SM
- **71%** of all online adults use Facebook
- **23%** of all online adults use Twitter
- **26%** of all online adults use Instagram
- **52%** of online adults now use 2 or more social media sites, up from **42%** in 2013
• Start a Facebook page **dedicated solely** to parents raising preschool children...and friend everybody
• Publicize and direct parents to page
• Have a Tip of the Day...Every day
• Allow parents to post their own problem-solving successes
• Post short reviews of relevant toys, books, and media
• Post related video links from YouTube or home made from Vimeo
• Start an SEL Parent Twitter account
• Use multiple media to build following
• Use hashtags to training tips and information (e.g., #4kparents)

• Produce 30-second video models of tips for Twitter or Facebook

• [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voqBgdtKq_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voqBgdtKq_U)
Reduction in crime as a result of one year increase in schooling


- Murder 30%
- Assault 30%
- Vehicle theft 20%
- Arson 13%
- Burglary 6%
- Larceny 6%
Savings in crimes prevented as a result of 1% increase in male high school graduation

(Moretti, 2007)

- Murder: $1.12 billion
- Rape: $139 million
- Robbery: $8.6 million
- Assault: $368 million
- Burglary: $9.3 million
- Larceny/theft: $7 million
- Car theft: $18 million
- Arson: $18 million
The Challenge

• Are we leaving a potentially valuable tool to increase school success sitting in the box?
• $110,000 per year to house a child in corrections vs. cost of a single Social Media Training Specialist position
• Melissa Institute’s role
• Higher education role
• Parent Academy role
• Your role