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New Data Illustrate that Parent as Teachers Early Childhood Program
Produces Positive Results for Children and Parents in School and at Home

Students in Sunnyside Unified School District excelled on English,
Reading & math tests assessments despite national averages reports

TUCSON, AZ – (January 28, 2019) — Compelling new research published this week in the Child and Youth Services Review reveals that children who participated in Parents as Teachers (PAT) evidence-based home visitation program in the Sunnyside Unified School District are performing significantly better on English, reading and math assessment tests compared to their peers who did not participate in the PAT program. Their parents also demonstrated significantly improved parenting qualities over time in the program.

This news comes on the heels of reports from the National Assessment of Educational Progress that 70 percent of fourth-graders in Arizona don’t read proficiently. However, the ground-breaking peer-reviewed study entitled Parents as Teachers home visiting intervention: A path to improved academic outcomes, school behavior, and parenting skills documented statistically significant findings for the 625-983 children in grades 3-12 who participated in the Sunnyside PAT program.

The study, conducted by LeCroy & Milligan Associates, Inc., a Tucson-based research and evaluation firm that specializes in social services and education program evaluation and training, revealed that the PAT students, when compared to a matched sample of their non-PAT peers:

- Performed significantly better on Arizona’s English Language Arts assessment.
- Performed significantly better on phonics and reading comprehension tests.
- Demonstrated a significantly larger gain in Arizona’s math assessment.
- Had significantly lower average absence rates (for four school years).
- Had significantly higher average scores in Arizona reading and writing assessments among English learners.
- And showed fewer in-school suspension days (for one school year).

For the more than 300 parents that participated in the study, the findings showed that they:

- Demonstrated significantly improved parenting quality while in the program.
- Showed significant improvements in Protective Factors which are: Family functioning; social support; and concrete support.

"Because the study shows that children and their families succeed on numerous indicators – well beyond the early grades – we are confident that our evidence-based model generates a significant impact for families,” said Allison Kemner, vice president of research and quality at Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc., headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri.

The Arizona Department of Education found that students who don’t read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school and that 90 percent of high school dropouts struggled with reading in third grade. Statistics show that 32 million adults in the U.S. are illiterate — about 13 percent of all U.S. adults.
In 2003, Tucson-based organization Literacy Connects reported that 530,000 adults in Arizona read at or below a fifth-grade reading level.

Responding to the national averages and results from the Child and Youth Services Review study, Joan Katz, director of the Sunnyside Parents as Teachers program, said: “Sunnyside and Parents as Teachers are working to help move the national academic achievement needle upward for Arizona children and families. This recent study shows us that when we meet families where they are and provide sustainable parenting tools, families with young children are more likely to succeed. It’s an amazing program we provide and now we know it’s working for Tucson families.”

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About Parents as Teachers-Tucson: Parents as Teachers provides parents with information and assistance to enhance the child’s intellectual, language, social, and physical development from birth to age five through personal home visits, screenings, Stay and Play events, library/story time, and, evening programs for fathers and their children. All activities are designed to ensure that children enter kindergarten, safe, healthy and ready to learn and that parents continue to be involved in their child’s education.  www.tucsonpat.org

About Parents as Teacher National Center, Inc.: Parents as Teachers builds strong communities, thriving families and children that are healthy, safe and ready to learn by matching parents and caregivers with trained professionals during a child’s earliest years in life, from pregnancy through kindergarten. Parents as Teachers internationally-recognized evidence-based home visiting model is backed by 35 years of research with proven outcomes for children and families and currently serves 121,000 families in all 50 U.S. states, 115 Tribal organizations, five other countries, and one U.S. territory. Headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, Parents as Teachers affiliates operate in various settings, including health departments, hospitals, schools, and faith-based and nonprofit organizations. For more information, visit www.parentsasteachers.org or Twitter @NatlPAT.