


Research Brief

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A Spotlight on Professional Development in Head Start: FACES Spring 2017

Professional development (PD; such as workshops, training, and coaching) can support early childhood leaders in maintaining high quality programs (Bloom et al. 2013; Douglass 2017; Whalen et al. 2016) and can improve early childhood teachers' practice and children's school readiness (Zaslow et al. 2010). Consistent with evidence about the importance of PD, the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) lay out specific PD requirements for Head Start staff around coaching, training, and curricular support.¹

Using nationally representative data from the spring 2017 round of the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014–2018 (FACES 2014), we examine the PD experiences of Head Start staff (see the text box on page 2 for definitions of the staff we discuss in this brief). We first describe the landscape of PD for a variety of staff in Head Start, including comparisons between program and center directors. We then address two specific types of PD that support classroom quality improvements: (1) coaching and (2) assessment and curriculum supports (Egert et al. 2018; Harding et al. 2019 a; Kraft et al. 2018; Weiland et al. 2018). We also examine whether selected PD supports vary by program agency type, program size, teacher experience, and teacher education. Specifically, we address the following research questions:

Landscape of PD

1. What PD activities and resources do Head Start directors and their staff receive and use?
 - 1a. *Are there differences in the PD activities and resources that program and center directors report they and their staff receive and use?*
2. What PD activities do programs and centers offer Head Start staff?
 - 2a. *How do these PD activities differ by program agency type and size?*

Coaching

3. What are the characteristics of coaching for staff in Head Start programs?
4. What coaching do Head Start teachers receive?
 - 4a. *How does this coaching vary by teachers' experience and education?*

Assessment and curriculum supports

5. What training and support do teachers receive to conduct assessments and implement the curriculum?
 - 5a. *How does the amount of this training vary by program agency type and size and teachers' experience and education?*

Key definitions of Head Start staff in FACES

A team of individuals works in Head Start programs and centers to support operations and provide services to children. In this brief, we describe PD for the following types of staff.

Staff refers to the range of people who work in Head Start programs and centers, from leaders (such as program and center directors) to employees working directly with children or families. Some questions in the FACES 2014 program and center director surveys asked about the PD available specifically to teachers, family child care providers, or home visitors as a group, and other questions asked about staff more broadly (without defining whom this includes).

Head Start program directors lead programs (grantee or delegate agencies) that provide direct services. Programs might operate more than one Head Start center.

Head Start center directors lead local early care and education settings that provide direct services to children.

Coaches provide relationship-based support to help staff build knowledge and skills through observation or assessment, targeted feedback, guidance, and other forms of support. Throughout this brief, we use the term coach, but most questions in the surveys referred to mentors and coaches. Although there are conceptual differences in these roles, the terms are often used interchangeably in practice.

Teachers work directly with children in the classroom. For the FACES teacher survey, centers identified the lead or primary teacher from a selected classroom to respond.

We discuss these research questions in three sections—the landscape of PD, coaching, and assessment and curriculum supports—according to how these topics were asked about in the surveys, though some types of PD overlap across these categories. For example, coaching might focus on supporting teachers to implement the curriculum. In each section, we provide the research and policy context motivating our research questions. We examine PD from several perspectives, including reports from program directors, center directors, and teachers.

We examine whether specific PD supports vary by program agency type and size (research questions 2a and 5a).^{2,3} We examine differences by program agency type—community action agencies (CAAs; 40 percent of programs), school-based programs (12 percent), and all other agency types (47 percent).⁴

We also examine differences by program size—small (enrollment of fewer than 300 children; 46 percent of programs), medium (enrollment of at least 300 but fewer than 600 children; 31 percent), large (enrollment of at least 600 but fewer than 1,200 children; 16 percent), or very large (enrollment of at least 1,200 children; 8 percent).⁵

Next, we examine whether certain PD supports for teachers vary by teachers' experience and education (research questions 4a and 5a). We explore differences in teachers' PD experiences according to whether they are new to teaching in Head Start (0–2 years; 24 percent of teachers), have some Head Start teaching experience (3–9 years; 39 percent), or are very experienced Head Start teachers (10 or more years; 38 percent).^{6,7,8} We also examine whether teachers' receipt of PD differs by whether teachers have an associate's degree or less

education (28 percent) versus a bachelor's degree or more education (72 percent).⁹ We examine these subgroups because programs have considerable freedom in selecting PD experiences and allocating resources to meet the needs of their specific staff. However, readers should keep in mind that finding subgroup differences in PD does not mean that these subgroup characteristics cause differences in PD; other factors associated with subgroups could explain the findings.

The landscape of PD

PD can target different categories of staff within Head Start programs, from support staff to directors. As leaders in their organizations, Head Start directors influence decisions that can improve service delivery (Bryk et al. 2010; Hamre et al. 2017). Early care and education program leaders influence funding, organizational climate, communication, collaboration, staff job satisfaction, staff morale, use of data for decision making, allocation of resources, and strategies for community and family engagement (Tout et al. 2015). Little research has examined early childhood directors' PD experiences, though some evidence indicates that directors benefit from PD activities. For example, directors who participated in leadership academies found these useful for their jobs and for networking (Ryan et al. 2011). The Office of Head Start (OHS) provides both directors and their staff with training and technical assistance (T/TA) resources with the goal of helping improve program quality. In addition to these resources, program and center directors can seek outside support to meet their specific PD needs.

Although the HSPPS govern the PD decisions of programs, programs retain considerable freedom in selecting PD experiences and allocating resources to meet the needs of their staff. Therefore, in FACES, programs might differ in the PD they offer to staff. While PD may vary by the specific staff needs within programs, it might also vary for programs adhering to additional standards or regulations depending on program agency type. For example, early childhood teachers in programs under

school districts often participate in PD that does not specifically focus on young children because of district requirements (Hamre et al. 2017). The PD available to staff might also vary by program size because larger programs might have larger budgets and more sophisticated infrastructure. For example, prior research found Head Start teachers in large programs were more likely to receive coaching than teachers in medium or small programs (Alamillo et al. 2018). Describing the landscape of PD provides insight into the broad range of supports available to Head Start staff.

1. What PD activities and resources do Head Start directors and their staff receive and use? Are there differences in the activities and resources that program and center directors report they and their staff receive and use?

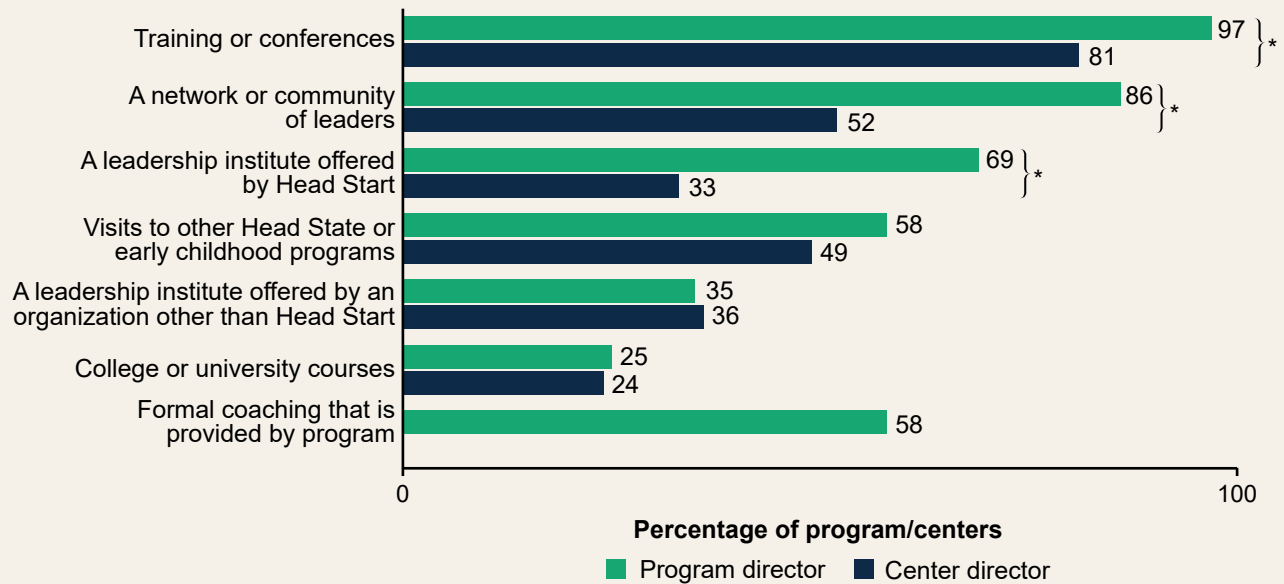
We asked program and center directors whether they had participated in six specific PD activities in the past 12 months (center directors were asked about one additional PD activity for a total of seven). Then we asked directors how frequently they or their staff access or use four OHS T/TA resources.

Program and center director PD participation

Program directors most commonly report participating in training or conferences related to their role as a manager or leader. Following this activity, they most commonly report participating in the following two activities: (1) a network or community of Head Start and other early childhood program leaders organized by someone outside of their program, for example, a professional organization and (2) a leadership institute offered by Head Start (Figure 1). On average, program directors report participating in about four of six PD activities.

As with program directors, center directors commonly report participating in training or conferences and a network or community of leaders. Many center directors also report participating in formal coaching provided by their program (Figure 1). On average, center directors report participating in about three of seven PD activities.

Figure 1. Fewer center directors than program directors report participating in some PD activities focused on higher-level leadership



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Program Director and Center Director Surveys.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start programs (for program directors) and all Head Start centers (for center directors).

FACES 2014 did not ask program directors whether they received formal coaching.

*Asterisk indicates that the differences between groups are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

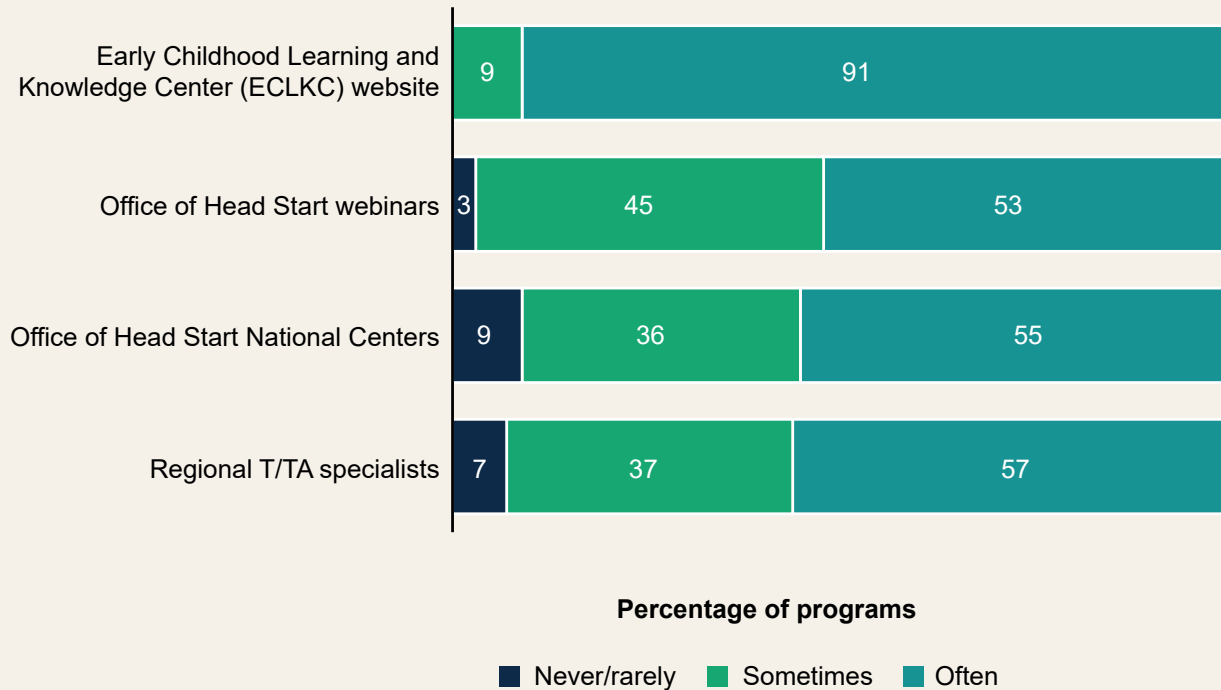
Center directors are less likely to report participating in some PD activities focused on higher-level leadership than program directors.

Fewer center directors than program directors report participating in the following three activities: training or conferences, a network or community of leaders, and a leadership institute offered by Head Start (Figure 1), though many center directors also report participating in these activities.¹⁰ These findings indicate that program directors more commonly report participating in some activities focused on higher-level leadership, although they did not more commonly report participating in a leadership institute offered by an organization other than Head Start.

Use of OHS T/TA system resources

More than half of program directors report they or other staff often use OHS T/TA system resources, particularly the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website. More than 90 percent of program directors report that they or other staff in their programs often use resources and information from the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website (Figure 2). More than half of program directors report they or other staff often use OHS webinars, regional T/TA specialists, and OHS National Centers. Few program directors report never or rarely using any of the resources.¹¹

Figure 2. More than half of program directors report they or other staff often use four Office of Head Start training and technical assistance system resources



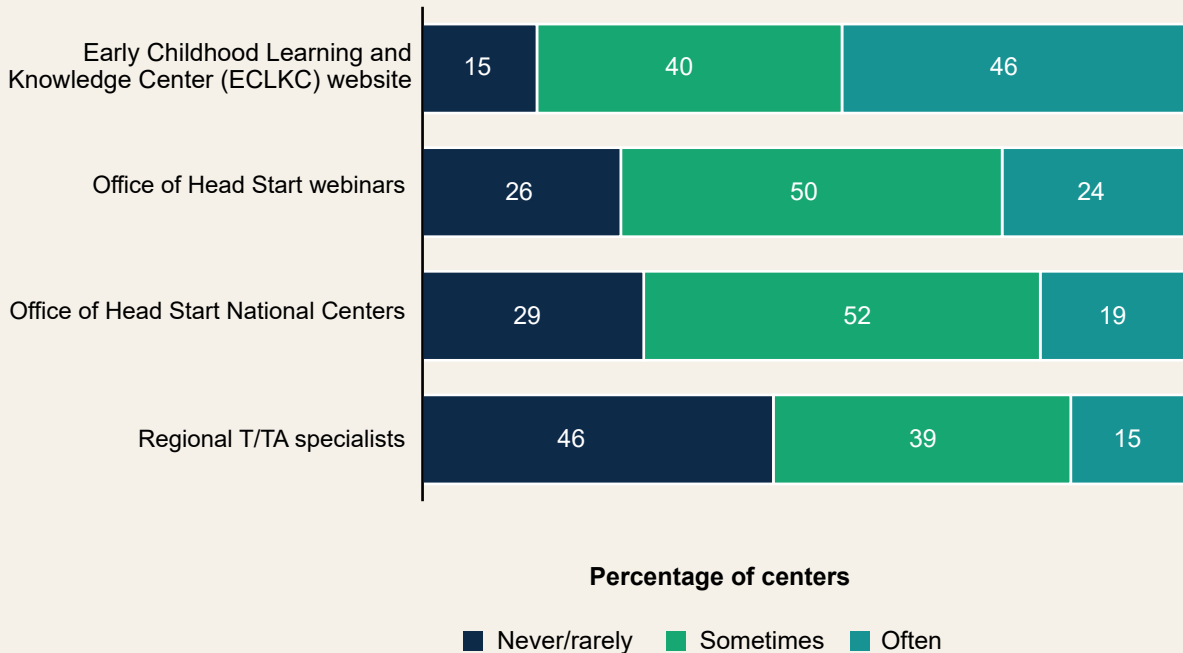
Source: Spring 2017 FACES Program Director Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start programs.
 Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
 T/TA = training and technical assistance.

Fewer than half of center directors report they or other staff often use OHS T/TA system resources; instead, many center directors report they or other staff sometimes use these supports. About forty to fifty percent of center directors report they or their staff sometimes use the four OHS T/TA system resources (Figure 3).

More program directors than center directors report they or their staff often use OHS T/TA resources. A significantly higher percentage of

program directors report they or other staff in their programs often use OHS T/TA resources relative to center directors. This could reflect that program directors report on staff who work for programs, such as managers of service areas, as well as staff in centers, or it might reflect that these resources are more in line with the type of planning and activities conducted by program directors. Alternatively, program and center directors may have different understanding of what T/TA resources staff access.

Figure 3. Fewer than half of center directors report they or other staff often use four Office of Head Start training and technical assistance system resources



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Center Director Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start centers.
 Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
 T/TA = training and technical assistance.

2. What PD activities and resources do programs and centers offer Head Start staff? How do these PD activities and resources differ by program agency type and size?

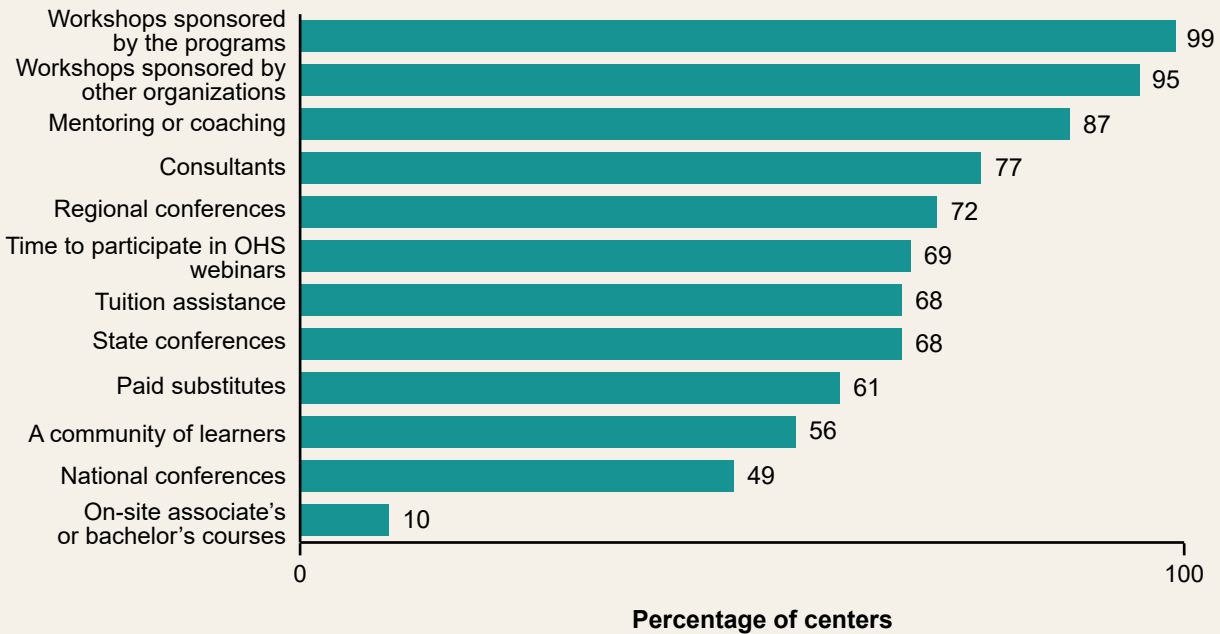
To understand the broad landscape of PD, we asked center directors whether programs or centers offer 12 PD activities to teachers, family child care providers, or home visitors. We report center directors’ responses because center directors oversee the daily operation of centers and have an on-the-ground perspective of the full range of PD available to staff in their centers.

More than half of center directors report many PD activities, such as tuition assistance and regional conferences, are available to staff. Center directors report workshops sponsored by the program and workshops sponsored by other organizations are the two most common PD activities available to staff

(Figure 4). On-site associate’s or bachelor’s degree courses are the least commonly available support and are reported by less than half of center directors. Center directors report that programs or centers offer, on average, about 8 of 12 PD activities to staff.¹²

Center directors in school districts are more likely to report providing paid substitutes and less likely to report providing tuition assistance than center directors in CAAs and other types of agencies. Center directors in school systems report providing paid substitutes to allow their staff time to prepare, train, and/or plan (82 percent) more often than do directors from CAAs and other types of agencies (59 and 54 percent, respectively). Programs or centers in school districts might be more likely to provide substitutes because school districts might have formal substitute teacher programs. Center directors in school districts report offering tuition assistance (35 percent) less often than do directors from CAAs and other types of agencies

Figure 4. More than half of center directors report programs or centers offer many PD activities to staff



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Center Director Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start centers.
 OHS = Office of Head Start.

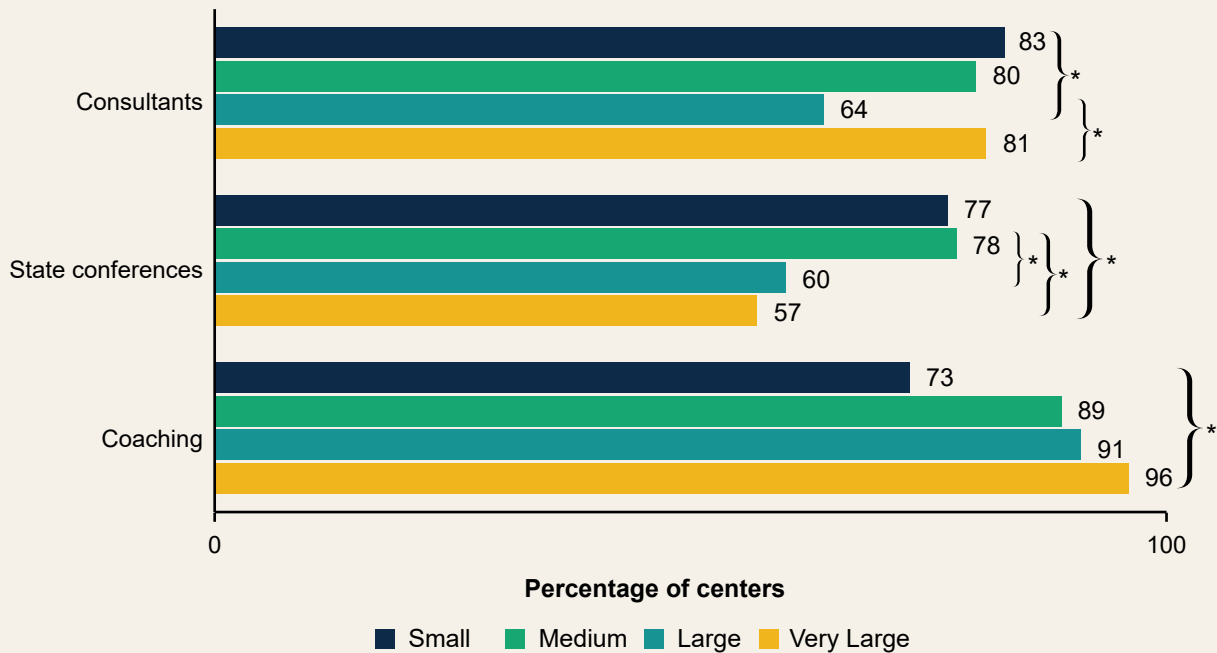
(76 and 73 percent, respectively). They might be less likely to provide tuition support because more Head Start teachers in school districts have a graduate or professional degree (Alamillo et al. 2018). The other 10 PD activities available to staff do not vary by agency type, perhaps because these activities are equally important across different types of agencies.

Center directors in smaller programs are more likely to report different types of PD than those in larger programs. Program size is associated with center directors' reports of offering consultants, state conferences, and coaching (Figure 5) but not with the other nine staff PD activities. Specifically, center directors in small and very large programs report hiring consultants to work directly with staff more often than do directors in large programs. Center directors in small and medium programs report offering staff opportunities to attend state conferences more often than do directors in very

large programs. Center directors in medium programs also report offering this type of PD more often than do directors in large programs. Center directors in very large programs report providing coaching to staff more often than do directors in small programs. These mixed results suggest neither smaller nor larger programs have a consistent advantage in offering more types of PD (Alamillo et al. 2018).

In this section, overall, the results illustrate that Head Start staff use a range of PD activities and resources. Program directors are more likely to use certain PD activities and resources than center directors. There are some differences in the PD activities available to staff in programs in different agencies and of different sizes, but most PD activities are similarly available across groups.

Figure 5. Center directors in programs of various sizes report significant differences in offering three PD activities to staff



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Center Director Survey and 2016–2017 Program Information Report, an annual report of grantee-level data.

Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start centers.

Small programs have enrollment of fewer than 300 children, medium programs have enrollment of at least 300 but fewer than 600 children, large programs have enrollment of at least 600 but fewer than 1,200 children, very large programs have enrollment of at least 1,200 children.

*Asterisk indicates that the differences between groups are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Coaching

Tailored one-on-one support through coaching can be a successful strategy for raising the quality of teaching and the learning environment in early childhood classrooms (Egert et al. 2018; Kraft et al. 2018; Neuman and Cunningham 2009). Coaching enables teachers to discuss and reflect on their practice and apply new ideas and skills while receiving feedback from an expert (Weiland et al. 2018). Many approaches to coaching are available for early care and education programs to choose from, but little evidence exists to support specific coaching approaches. Some evidence from K–12 research does suggest that peer coaching by highly skilled teacher colleagues is a promising strategy

(Papay et al. 2016), whereas coaching by a supervisor or administrator might be challenging given their other responsibilities (Kraft and Gilmour 2016).

The HSPPS require programs to implement a research-based, coordinated coaching strategy for education staff but do not require a specific approach. The HSPPS also require programs to develop a strategy to provide intensive coaching to staff who will benefit most, but programs are able to tailor those strategies to their specific needs. Therefore, Head Start programs have options in choosing how to implement coaching for staff and, in FACES, coaching might vary across teachers with different experience or education. Although limited research has examined variation in PD by teachers'

characteristics, coaching might be particularly important for new teachers: research in K–12 settings shows that substantially more first-year teachers planned to stay in teaching when they had a coach and received regular coaching (Eberhard et al. 2000). Given the high levels of turnover among early childhood teachers (Bernstein et al. 2019; Wells 2015), providing coaching to less experienced teachers could be similarly important. Teachers' coaching experiences might also vary by their education because teachers with a bachelor's degree might have received more pre-service training. Therefore, programs might provide less frequent coaching to teachers who have higher levels of education, or those teachers might choose to participate in less coaching. On the other hand, research about the importance of coaching for early childhood teacher practice suggests coaching is useful for all teachers without distinguishing their experience or education (Egert et al. 2018; Kraft et al. 2018; Neuman and Cunningham 2009).

3. What are the characteristics of coaching for staff in Head Start programs?

Here, we describe program directors' reports of their approach to coaching, which provides a broad overview of the characteristics of coaching in Head Start programs.¹³ Some of the initial questions in the coaching section of the survey referred to coaching for teachers, family child care providers, or home visitors, and other questions more generally referred to "staff."

Most Head Start programs have coaches, and most coaching occurs in person. More than three-quarters of programs have coaches. Among these programs, the majority of program directors report that all coaching occurs in person (81 percent). Some programs combine in-person coaching with a remote or web-based supplement (14 percent). A very small percentage of programs use coaching that is primarily remote or web based (5 percent).

Programs use multiple approaches to coaching, with many using practice-based coaching. Most programs use some practice-based coaching

(79 percent). According to the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (2014), this approach is a cyclical process of planning goals and action steps, engaging in focused observation, and reflecting on and sharing feedback about teaching practices. A smaller percentage use some coaching tied to a specific curriculum (32 percent) or relationship-based coaching (21 percent). Relationship-based coaching emphasizes a strong relationship between the coach and staff as important for motivating change. A few programs use MyTeachingPartner™, a web-mediated form of individualized coaching based on video recordings of the classroom (2 percent).

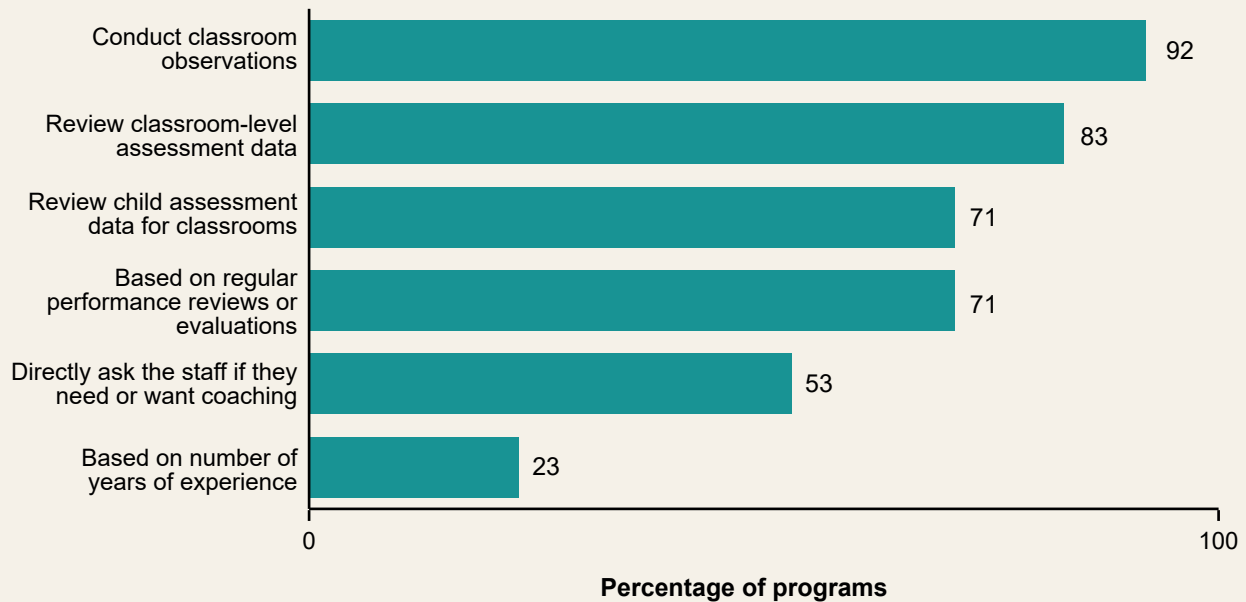
The majority of programs hire coaches as staff instead of using consultants; in about half of programs, coaches also supervise the staff they coach. Most programs hire coaches as program staff, whereas only about one-third use hired consultants.¹⁴ About half of program directors report that some (38 percent) or all (16 percent) of their staff receive coaching from their own supervisor.

Most programs use classroom observations and classroom-level assessment data to determine who receives coaching. Of those programs with coaches, only one-third report that all staff receive coaching. To determine which staff receive coaching, most programs conduct classroom observations or review classroom-level assessment data (Figure 6). Fewer programs ask staff whether they want or need coaching or determine this need based on years of experience.

4. What coaching do Head Start teachers receive? How does this coaching vary by teachers' experience and education?

We now move from describing the coaching that program directors report is available to staff to examining teachers' experiences of coaching. We asked teachers who report they have a coach about the frequency with which they receive coaching. We asked all teachers whether their supervisor or coach uses certain coaching methods to support them to improve their practice.

Figure 6. Programs use a variety of strategies to determine which staff receive coaching



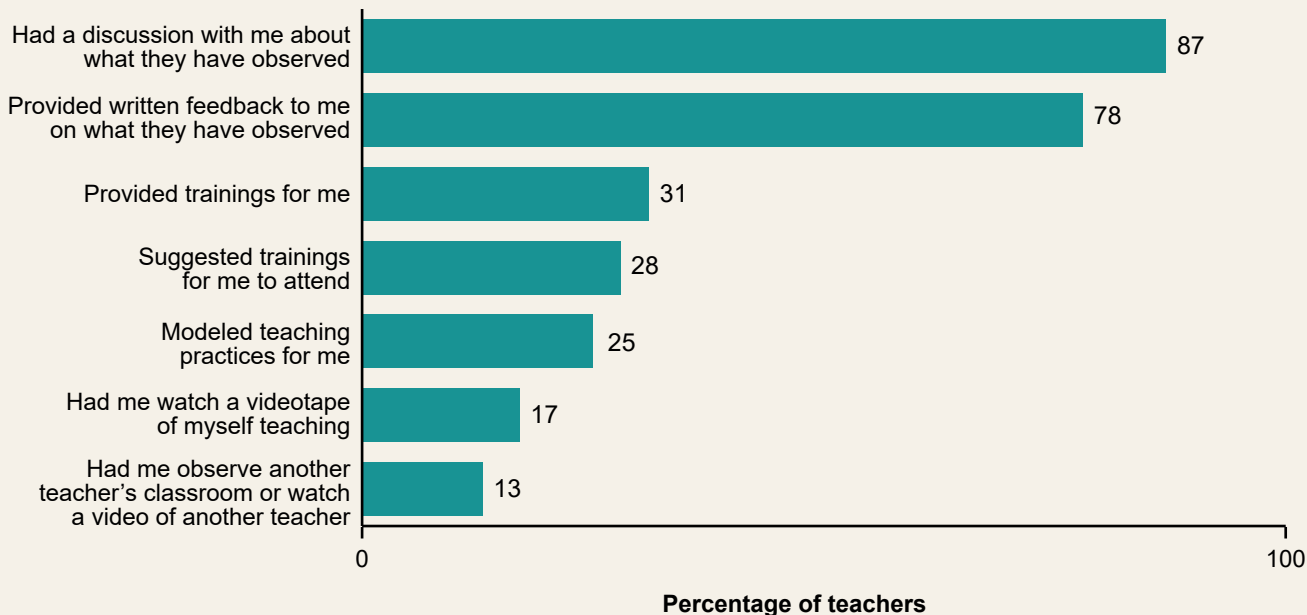
Source: Spring 2017 FACES Program Director Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start programs.

Most teachers receive coaching one to two times per month, and the frequency with which they receive coaching does not vary by their experience or education. Overall, 80 percent of teachers have a coach. Of those with a coach, teachers most commonly report their coach visits their classroom at least once every two weeks (44 percent). More than one-third of teachers report their coach visits their classroom once a month (36 percent). Fewer teachers report their coach visits their classroom less than once a month (20 percent). Teachers are equally likely to have a coach and receive coaching at similar frequency regardless of their experience

or education, which could reflect the importance that Head Start places on coaching for improving teaching (HSPPS, 2016).

Most teachers report their supervisor or coach gives oral or written feedback. More than three-quarters of all teachers report their supervisor or coach uses two specific coaching methods: discussing what they observed with the teacher and providing written feedback on what they observed (Figure 7). Fewer than one-third of teachers report their supervisor or coach uses the other coaching methods.

Figure 7. Most teachers report their supervisor or coach gives oral or written feedback



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Teacher Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

Teachers report their supervisors or coaches use similar methods regardless of teachers' experience or education. Only one of seven coaching methods differs by experience or education: A greater percentage of teachers with a bachelor's degree or more education report a supervisor or coach recommending that they observe another teacher's classroom or watch a video of another teacher, compared with teachers with an associate's degree or less education (15 versus 9 percent). Although this question asked teachers whether their coach uses this method to support them in improving their own practice, it is possible that teachers with higher education levels are asked to observe other teachers' classrooms to provide feedback to those teachers, rather than to improve their own skills. In general, teachers report similar coaching methods across education and experience, indicating that coaches might not tailor their methods according to teachers' experience or education.

In this section, we see that coaching is common in Head Start. Most coaching in programs is in person, practice based, and provided by hired staff. Most teachers receive coaching at least once a month, and this typically involves discussion or written feedback about what coaches observed. Teachers' coaching experiences are similar regardless of their experience and education.

Assessment and curriculum supports

Some PD helps teachers conduct child assessments or implement the curriculum. The HSPPS require programs to conduct standardized and structured assessments of children. Teachers can use assessments of children's progress to inform and individualize instruction (National Association for the Education of Young Children 2009; Yoshikawa et al. 2013). Teachers might require training on how to conduct and use assessment data to inform

instruction in the classroom. The HSPPS also require programs to use an evidence-based curriculum and to support staff in effective implementation. High quality curricula with intentional play-based activities can support children's learning (Chaudry et al. 2017), and experts suggest that PD designed to support curriculum use is particularly important for fostering quality teaching practices (Weiland et al. 2018).

As with other kinds of PD, we might see variation across programs in how training on assessments and curriculum is implemented. The amount of training might vary by program agency type. For example, teachers in programs in school districts might participate in more curriculum training if the district has a strong focus on curriculum in later grades. Training might also vary by program size because larger programs might be able to provide more training due to economies of scale. Finally, teachers who have more experience and education might participate in less assessment or curriculum training because resources are limited and there might be greater needs for less experienced teachers.

5. What training and support do teachers receive to conduct assessments and implement the curriculum? How does the amount of this training vary by program agency type and size or by teachers' experience and education?

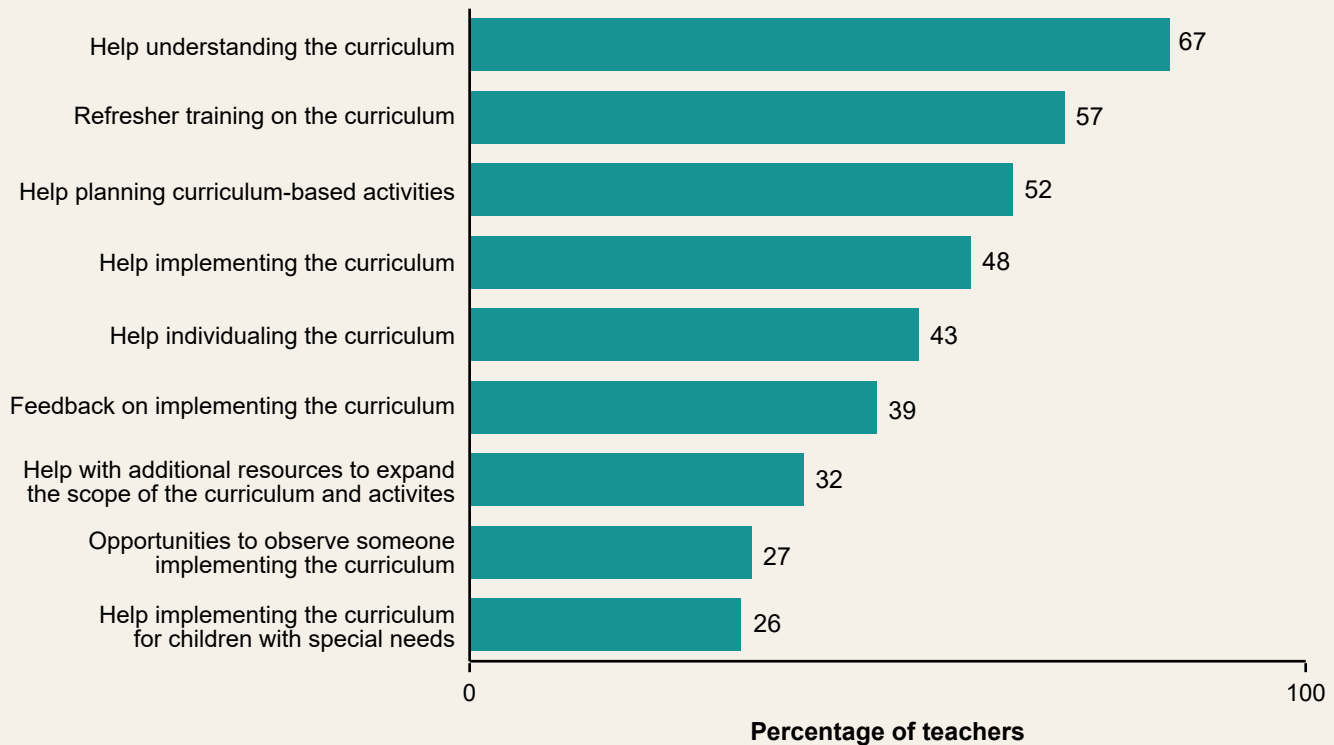
We asked teachers to report the amount of training they received on their main child assessment tool and main curriculum in the past 12 months. We also asked teachers whether they received nine supports for implementing their main curriculum.

Three-quarters of teachers report receiving training on their main child assessment tool; the amount of training does not vary by program agency type or size or teachers' experience or education. Teachers report receiving an average of 6.8 hours of training on their main child assessment tool in the past year (ranging from 0 to 48 hours or more).¹⁵

Most teachers (81 percent) report receiving training on their main curriculum—teachers in very large programs participate in more curriculum training than teachers in small programs, but the amount of curriculum training does not vary by agency type or teachers' experience or education. Teachers report receiving an average of 9.7 hours of training on their main or primary curriculum in the past year (ranging from 0 to 48 hours or more).¹⁵ Most teachers, on average, report a similar amount of training on their main curriculum regardless of their agency type or experience or education. But teachers in small programs report significantly less training on their main curriculum (6.5 hours) than teachers in very large programs (11.7 hours). Larger programs might be able to provide more curriculum training because they have more funding and infrastructure.

To support implementation of their main curriculum, teachers are most likely to receive help understanding the curriculum. Overall, one-quarter to two-thirds of teachers report receiving each of nine curriculum supports (Figure 8). Teachers are least likely to receive help implementing the curriculum for children with special needs. On average, teachers report receiving about four of nine different supports for implementing the curriculum.¹²

Figure 8. Teachers receive a range of supports for implementing their main curriculum



Source: Spring 2017 FACES Teacher Survey.
 Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all Head Start teachers.

In this section, we see that teachers receive about a day of training on their main assessment tool and main curriculum, on average. Generally, teachers receive similar amounts of training regardless of the type of program they are in and their experience and education, but teachers in very large programs receive more curriculum training than teachers in small programs.

Conclusions and implications

This brief describes PD for Head Start staff, including the broad landscape of PD and a close examination of two types of PD that support quality classrooms: (1) coaching and (2) support for conducting child assessments and implementing the curriculum (Egert et al. 2018; Harding et al. 2019a; Weiland et al. 2018).

The information about the landscape of PD suggests that Head Start directors and their staff have access to and use a range of PD activities and OHS T/TA system resources. Some PD activities, particularly higher-level leadership activities, such as participation in a network or community of program leaders, are more common among program directors than center directors. Given the importance of leadership for driving improvements across centers (Bryk et al. 2010; Hamre et al. 2017), policymakers and program directors might want to ensure center directors have similar access to higher-level leadership activities as program directors do. Similarly, program directors are more likely than center directors to report they or their staff use OHS T/TA system resources. Policymakers might want to target additional resources to center directors and their staff.

Many PD activities are available to Head Start staff in programs of all types and sizes. There are few differences in center directors' reports of the specific PD supports available to staff or in the amount of assessment and curriculum training teachers receive according to agency type or size. This finding is consistent with the idea that PD is an important focus across Head Start, as outlined in the HSPPS. Nonetheless, the availability of certain supports does differ by agency type or size. Center directors from programs in school districts more often report having formal substitutes available to staff but less often report having tuition support available to staff than other programs. Similarly, smaller programs more often provide some PD supports (for example, attendance at state conferences) and less often provide other PD supports (for example, coaching). These findings can provide information to help target specific PD supports; for example, policymakers might want to provide additional supports to small programs to help them implement coaching, given the emphasis on coaching for improving classroom quality and children's outcomes.

In line with the emphasis of the HSPPS on coaching and assessment and curriculum use, we find that

most teachers have a coach and receive training on conducting child assessments and implementing the curriculum. This is encouraging given that some experts call the combination of a strong curriculum with coaching for teachers the "strongest hope model" for promoting children's development in early care and education (Weiland et al. 2018; Yoshikawa et al. 2013). We did not find patterns in teachers' coaching experiences or receipt of assessment or curriculum training by teachers' experience or education. Rather we found that teachers experience similar amounts of coaching and training regardless of their experience, which is consistent with the finding that fewer than one-quarter of Head Start program directors report that they use teachers' experience to determine who receives coaching. Instead, program directors commonly report they use classroom observations and assessment data to determine to which staff they offer PD supports.

In sum, FACES 2014 data describe varied use of PD activities, including coaching and training on assessments and curriculum. Some differences in PD align with program characteristics, while some differences might reflect program training needs.

Head Start FACES

This research brief draws upon the spring 2017 data from FACES 2014. FACES provides information at the national level about Head Start programs, centers, and classrooms and about the children and families that Head Start serves.

Head Start is a national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children through providing educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to enrolled children and their families. The program places special emphasis on helping preschoolers develop the reading, language, social-emotional, mathematics, and science skills they need to be successful in school. It also seeks to engage parents in their children's learning and to promote progress toward the parents' own educational, literacy, and employment goals (Administration for Children and Families 2019). The Head Start program aims to achieve these goals by providing comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and their families through grants to local public agencies and to private nonprofit and for-profit organizations

Methods

For FACES 2014, we selected a sample of Head Start programs from the 2012–2013 Head Start Program Information Report. In spring 2017, we updated the sample of programs to ensure it was nationally representative of all Head Start programs at that time. We visited two centers per program and selected two classrooms per center for participation. In spring 2017, 178 programs, 350 centers, and 647 classrooms participated in the study. Within these 178 programs, Mathematica staff completed surveys with 576 teachers, 320 center directors, and 165 program directors, and observations in 643 Head Start classrooms. Findings are weighted to represent the population of Head Start teachers, classrooms, centers, and programs.

More information on the FACES 2014 methodology and measurement and tables for the findings presented here are available in the report “A Portrait of Head Start Classrooms and Programs: FACES Spring 2017 Data Tables and Study Design” (Bernstein et al. 2019). Tables with descriptive data not included in the FACES Spring 2017 Data Tables and Study Design report are included in an Appendix (Harding et al. 2019b). In addition, this brief includes significance testing not included in the Spring 2017 Data Tables and Study Design report.² For all comparisons throughout the brief, all cited differences are statistically significant at the .05 level or lower.

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Endnotes

¹ The new HSPPS were released in September 2016, but programs had until August 2017 to comply with the PD requirements. Therefore, when FACES Spring 2017 data were collected, the HSPPS might not have been not fully implemented.

² To assess whether there are statistically significant differences across subgroups with multiple categories (program agency type, program size, and teachers' experience), we first conduct overall tests to examine whether there are any differences in PD across the groups. For continuous outcomes, we use the F-test from a regression analysis, and for categorical outcomes, we use the Rao-Scott chi-square test. If the overall test is statistically significant, we then conduct t-tests to test differences between specific groups. For teachers' education, which only has two groups, we use t-tests to examine differences. All cited differences are statistically significant at the .05 level and lower.

³ We use the 2016–2017 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) to categorize programs by agency type and size.

⁴ "All other agency types" includes private or public non-profits (non-CAA), private or public for-profits, and government agencies (non-CAA). Private or public nonprofits (non-CAA) make up 88.3 percent of this group, and 10.4 percent are government agencies (non-CAA). The remaining 1 percent are private or public for-profits.

⁵ We use cumulative child enrollment to determine subgroups based on program size.

⁶ We define these categories of teachers' experience based on (1) the distribution of teachers' experience in FACES 2014 and (2) the assumption that teachers with up to 2 years of experience should be considered new to teaching and teachers who have been teaching for 10 or more years should be considered very experienced.

⁷ Examining years of experience teaching in Head Start by groups rather than exact number of years reduces the variation in the variable. To address this, we also conduct regression analyses using the continuous number of years teaching to predict PD. All results from the supplementary analyses are consistent with the findings reported in the brief.

⁸ For these analyses, we use teachers' reports of years of teaching in Head Start. FACES 2014 also ask about years of teaching in general. Both of these variables are strongly correlated ($p = 0.72$, $p < .001$), so we expect similar results across these variables.

⁹ We use these categories of teachers' education because the HSPPS require 50 percent of teachers to have a bachelor's degree.

¹⁰ We compare reports from program and center directors by conducting t-tests to examine differences. We create stacked variables for each of the corresponding PD supports and apply the appropriate weight for each participant.

¹¹ We combine the "never" and "rarely" answer options for reporting use of OHS T/TA system resources because so few directors select "never."

¹² The questions about the PD activities programs and centers offer staff, how programs determine which staff need coaching, and the coaching methods supervisors or coaches use also include a category for "other;" we do not include this category in analyses. Only a small percentage of respondents report "other" supports.

¹³ Throughout this brief, we use the term coaching, but most questions in the surveys referred to both mentoring and coaching.

¹⁴ Directors were asked whether coaches were: (1) staff hired by their program who spend more than half of their time as coaches, (2) staff hired by their program who spend less than half their time as coaches, or (3) consultants or contractors hired by their program to serve as coaches.

¹⁵ Teachers' reports of their hours of assessment and curriculum training include zero if they did not report any training. The responses are top-skewed (assessment training range = 0–105; curriculum training range = 0–225), and we top-code responses to a maximum of 48 hours to reflect more than one week of assessment or curriculum training. For the subgroup analyses, we square the hours of training variables.

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