
**CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE**

Commentary on “Early Childrearing Practices and Their Relationship to Academic Performance in Mexican American Children”

“How should I apply this information?”

The assessment of parent developmental expectations and nurturing behaviors is important for those providing early intervention. Based on the assumptions of this study of Mexican American families, it may be necessary to spend additional time on family education with those parents who have lower developmental expectations and fewer discipline and nurturing behaviors. In light of the positive relationship between maternal education and cognitive skills of school-aged children, it may also be prudent to consider the clarity of instruction provided to parents regarding intervention being given to their children and to the intervention clinicians expect the parents to provide at home. The parents’ educational level must be considered when thinking of the cognitive component of interventions. Although this is not exactly in the center of physical therapists’ scope of practice, clinicians should support parental behaviors through education regarding the positive aspects of their child’s development and encourage higher developmental expectations.

“What should I be mindful about when applying this information?”

The results presented were derived from a small sample and, although they do demonstrate positive predictive relationships, the findings lack direct correlation to clinical practice. The authors suggest that physical therapists can help parents identify their child’s strengths and raise their developmental expectations by addressing the lack of exposure to knowledge of child development for the child and the parent. When applying this information, the reader should be mindful that the results do not specifically support a cultural bias toward Mexican American families. It would be beneficial for future research to include other cultural/ethnic groups for comparison. It would be important to understand the effect of socioeconomic status, culture and ethnicity, education, parental expectations, and nurturing behaviors on developmental outcomes. This study may be helpful as a catalyst for studies using the information gathered from the Bayley Scales of Infant Development, 3rd Edition, or the Developmental Assessment of Young Children, 2nd Edition, to identify possible correlations with delays in all domains of development.

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