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A comprehensive model of preschool through high school parent involvement with emphasis on the psychological facets

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Abstract

This article will review many forms of home-based parent involvement (e.g., shared reading; books at home; helping with homework; visiting museums; monitoring grades), parent beliefs (e.g., about the importance of school readiness skills; growth mindset for their children), parent expectations, parent-school relationships, and parent autonomy and relatedness support, which all promote achievement. The extent to which the psychological side of parent involvement promotes intrinsic motivation, engagement, and psychological wellbeing for children and adolescents around the world will also be examined. The forms of parent involvement that promote student expectations, student autonomous motivation, and academic engagement should receive more emphasis. In order to help parent involvement researchers, psychologists and educators, a pre-K through 12th grade parent involvement model is proposed. The psychological side of the parent involvement model can be readily memorized with the following acronym: Beliefs, Expectations, Autonomy Support, and Relationships (BEAR). Explanations are provided of how to apply BEAR in the schools and in future intervention research.

Keywords

parent involvement, autonomy support, psychological need satisfaction, self-determination theory, expectancy-value theory, home literacy, parent-school relationships

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Optimal parent involvement is crucial for promoting motivation to learn, academic engagement, psychological health, and learning among children (Froiland et al., 2013a; Jeynes, 2012; Moè et al., 2018). This article starts by making the case for why schools need help with parent involvement and why school psychologists need a clear model of parent involvement that highlights the important psychological aspects of parent involvement. Next, effective home-based parent involvement activities are examined, which will help readers become more familiar with behaviors that parents can engage in to promote achievement. After that, a new model for promoting the psychological side of parent involvement will be introduced (see Figure 1). Each aspect of the Beliefs, Expectations, Autonomy support, and Relationships (BEAR) model will be discussed in terms of how it promotes achievement, motivation, and psychological health. Finally, a vision will be shared for using the BEAR model to advance research and school-based practice.

Why schools need help with parent involvement

There are a variety of parent involvement interventions for PK-12 children that promote achievement via empowering parents to read more with their children, effectively help with homework, and building positive parent-teacher relationships (Jeynes, 2012, 2018). However, only some schools use these interventions (Epstein et al., 2019), whereas parent-teacher conferences have become formal schoolwide activities that are delivered in a relatively similar way across schools in the U.S. (Epstein & Becker, 1982). Without systematic implementation of parent education in home-based parent involvement, the burden is on individual teachers to voluntarily invest extra time in helping parents to improve home-based parent involvement (Epstein & Becker, 1982). At the elementary, middle school, and high school levels, relatively few teachers and administrators have adequate training on promoting parent involvement (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Pena, 2000). In fact, the vast majority of teachers did not take one class on parent involvement, as is the case with most school psychologists in graduate school (Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Manz et al., 2009). This means that many teachers, administrators, and school psychologists are not adequately trained to promote home-based parent involvement or the important psychological aspects of parent involvement.

Without proper training on promoting parent involvement, it is not surprising that schools do not implement rigorous parent involvement programs or interventions. Without interventions, parent involvement declines throughout the school years and secondary schools do less than elementary schools to support parent involvement via workshops, promoting parent involvement in learning activities at home, and communicating with parents (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). This should be addressed because parent involvement interventions actually have stronger effects on achievement in middle and high school (Jeynes, 2012). Likewise, via intervention studies in three different nations, there is growing support for interventions that teach parents to communicate with their children in an autonomy and relatedness supportive way that promotes motivation, engagement, and psychological

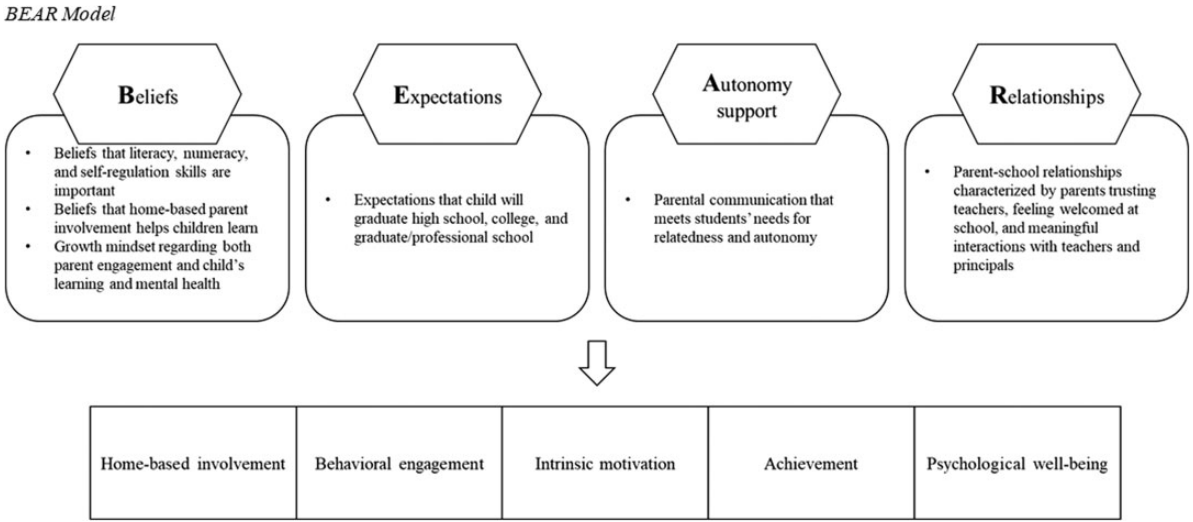

Figure 1. BEAR model.

wellbeing (Froiland, 2020), yet schools rarely provide training on healthy parent-child communication. Parent involvement researchers have just begun to develop and study parent expectations interventions, even though numerous studies have long indicated that parent expectations are one of the strongest predictors of academic achievement throughout the school years (Froiland & Davison, 2014; Jeynes, 2012). In addition, many parents across the U.S., Germany, and Spain, do not trust elementary, middle and high schools and/or do not feel welcomed by the school (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Froiland & Davison, 2014; Houri et al., 2019; Reparaz & Sotés-Elizalde, 2019). Given that schools across the world want to elevate student achievement and many are interested in promoting mental health (Froiland et al., 2015), it is surprising that more attention is not given to promoting parent involvement, which predicts student achievement, motivation, and wellbeing throughout the school years and beyond. It is also vital that school and educational psychologists champion the often ignored psychological aspects of optimal parent involvement.

Many principals and teachers emphasize parent-teacher conferences and other forms of school-based involvement, while placing less emphasis on home-based involvement (Gonzalez-DeHass & Willems, 2003; Lopez et al., 2001; Shartrand et al., 1994). However, attending parent-teacher conferences and other forms of school-based involvement are extremely weak predictors of school achievement, often non-significant when considering home-based involvement and controlling for prior achievement (Powell et al., 2012; Puccioni et al., 2020). Although school-based parent involvement may seem to be more directly in the purview of school leaders and teachers, it is important to focus on the aspects of parent involvement that promote motivation, achievement, and psychological wellbeing. The parent-school relationship can be strained when teachers assume that parents who do not show up to conferences or otherwise seem uninvolved do not care about their children's education, which is usually not the case (Lareau, 1987; Trotman, 2001). Parents have other barriers to involvement in meetings or workshops at school that are far more common than not caring or a lack of interest. For instance, a study of a parent involvement intervention among low socioeconomic status (SES) African American families found that less than 2% were not interested in parent involvement workshops, whereas common barriers to participation included transportation issues (nearly 20%), night classes (12.5%) and work schedule conflicts (over 45%; Mendez, 2010).

Although a national survey in the U.S. revealed that both principals and teachers wish that school psychologists would provide more workshops for parents (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004), relatively few school psychologists invest time in promoting parent involvement, often because they feel inadequately trained to promote parent involvement (e.g., they took no graduate classes on parent involvement). Fortunately, school psychologists who receive professional development in parent involvement increase their professional efficacy and invest more of their time in helping parents (Manz et al., 2009). School psychologists could likely help schools promote parent involvement more if they received in-depth training. Furthermore, a model based upon the

psychological aspects of parent involvement may empower them to emerge as key leaders in parent involvement, due to their expertise in psychological principles.

Parents would benefit from guidance in providing optimal parent involvement, due to possible unintended negative consequences of some types of involvement. For instance, longitudinal studies by Froiland et al. (2013a) and Hill and Tyson (2009) found that parents helping with homework and checking on grades predicted lower academic achievement among adolescents. Suggesting the importance of the psychological side of parent involvement, Cooper et al. (2000) found that parent help with homework was only useful in predicting achievement (standardized test scores and grades) and homework completion when it was characterized by autonomy support, otherwise it was negatively related to achievement. Schools are often unaware of the potential for parent monitoring of grades and homework to have negative effects. For instance, many schools now provide parents with instant electronic updates when a child receives a grade below a certain threshold. Without training in autonomy supportive communication, this can lead to parents who are worried about their children's grades and college prospects to interact in a controlling way with their child (e.g., "Why aren't you getting an A?" or yelling "You need to get this grade up to an A quickly, so that you keep your grade point average high"). In some cases, teachers use zeros as a placeholder for incomplete work that the student can turn in later, which leads to spurious grade alerts and false alarms experienced by the whole family (Ansberry, 2019).

If schools are going to provide parents with tools and encouragement to monitor student grades, it is important for them to also provide training on how to do this effectively (see the Parent Autonomy and Relatedness support sub-section). Fortunately, when parents are trained by parent involvement experts to help with homework, they are able to promote student achievement by helping with homework (Jeynes, 2012, 2018). In fact, there are many PK-12 parent involvement interventions that are effective in promoting increased achievement (Jeynes, 2012), emotional health (Froiland, 2011a), and engagement (Froiland, 2015).

Home-based parent involvement behaviors as crucial

In general, home-based parent involvement behaviors predict achievement better than parent involvement at school (Powell et al., 2012; Puccioni et al., 2020). In a meta-analysis, Jeynes (2005) found that attending school functions did not yield statistically significant effects on academic achievement, whereas various forms of home-based parent involvement did. In addition, home-based involvement is negatively related to inattention, hyperactivity, and conduct problems, whereas school-based involvement is unrelated to these outcomes (Froiland & Davison, 2016a; Puccioni et al., 2020). In a study of 144 Head Start students (96% African American) in the U.S., Fantuzzo et al. (2004) found that home-based parent involvement was positively associated with attention and receptive vocabulary, while negatively associated with conduct problems and hyperactivity. School-based involvement was not significantly associated with school readiness variables.

Puccioni et al. (2020) essentially replicated Fantuzzo et al.'s findings in a longitudinal and nationally representative study in the U.S., finding that home-based parent involvement in preschool predicted better reading and math achievement in kindergarten, whereas school-based involvement predicted lower achievement. Likewise, home-based involvement predicted less inattention, hyperactivity, and conduct problems, whereas school-based involvement was unrelated to social-emotional outcomes. Parents of African American children reported engaging in fewer home-based involvement activities than European American families, whereas African American and Latinx families engaged in more school-based involvement activities. Given the fact that home-based parent involvement activities were better predictors of school readiness than school-based involvement, preschool and kindergarten educators should especially support home-based parent involvement. Furthermore, low SES parents often engage in fewer home-based parent involvement activities, such that providing parent workshops and training in these areas could promote social justice, especially because preschool teachers' reports of their support of parent involvement is associated with greater parent perceptions of teacher support for parent involvement, which, in turn predicts more home-based involvement (Puccioni et al., 2020). Both schools and communities can help create a context in which low SES and other parents will be more likely to improve their involvement (Froiland et al., 2013b, 2014).

Home literacy: The classic form of home-based involvement

The quintessential home literacy activity is parent-child shared reading and the most important related provision is the number of books at home (Bus et al., 1995; Froiland et al., 2013b). Home literacy also includes parent interest in reading, how often parents read or write on their own, and discussing stories (Froiland et al., 2014; Puccioni et al., 2019). While home literacy is a robust predictor of reading achievement and home literacy interventions can effectively increase reading achievement (Jeynes, 2012), the home literacy environment has also been shown to predict the acquisition of early numeracy skills (Manolitsis et al., 2013; Puccioni et al., 2020; Sonnenschein & Galindo, 2015) and later mathematics development (Froiland et al., 2013a). For instance, Manolitsis et al. (2013) found that the home literacy environment that Greek parents provided predicted counting and math fluency just as well as the parents teaching math at home. In addition, home literacy (e.g., parent-child shared reading) may provide children with practice in self-regulatory behaviors that help in school, such as sitting still and paying attention (Froiland & Davison, 2016a; Puccioni et al., 2019; Son & Tineo, 2016). Son and Tineo (2016) observed that parents engage in many behaviors that help children to focus their attention on the reading material. Froiland and Davison (2016a) found that frequent parent-child shared reading puts children at a lower risk for inattention, hyperactivity, and ADHD.

Visiting museums, libraries, sporting events and other cultural learning events

Although home literacy practices are the most effective in increasing achievement, a number of other forms of parent involvement support literacy and knowledge development, such as visiting museums, aquariums, zoos, cultural learning events, places of worship and sporting events (Froiland, 2011b; Powell et al., 2012). Interestingly, parent involvement naturally develops from preschool to kindergarten, such that parents begin to bring their children to community-based learning activities more (Powell et al., 2012). While the benefits of community-based learning in supporting vocabulary and background knowledge is more obvious, mathematical development (e.g., skill in solving applied problems) also takes place for young children during community-based learning (Powell et al., 2012). For instance, a kindergarten student who likes a basketball team may be eager to subtract seven from ten to figure out that his team is leading by three points. High SES parents take their children to more community-based learning activities and rural parents are less likely than suburban and urban parents to attend zoos, museums, and aquariums, because they are often located in urban areas. While the effect of attending community-based learning activities with parents is less than one-fourth the effect of home literacy, it is still worthwhile for schools to promote this type of parent involvement (Froiland, 2011b).

In fact, families from small town and rural locales in the U.S. are significantly less likely to visit such community learning centers and this predicts lower broad achievement in kindergarten (Froiland, 2011b). However, SES and home literacy practices are better predictors of visiting community resources than being from a rural or small town area. Residing in a rural environment does not predict the most important aspects of home literacy, such as how often parents read with their children, tell stories, or the number of children's books the family owns (Clark et al., 2017). However, families with preschoolers in rural communities use computers less frequently and visit the library less often than families in suburban communities. Because rural children experience equal levels of home literacy and they experience certain community advantages (e.g., lower crime, more green spaces, more cohesive social networks), there is really no rural disadvantage in early literacy, even when accounting for less access to community resources, such as libraries and museums (Clark et al., 2017; Froiland, 2011b). Nonetheless, school psychologists and educators may wish to advocate for field trips to museums, zoos, and cultural centers and aquariums to promote greater general knowledge among rural students.

Helping with homework and checking on grades

Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2001) provide an analysis of the many different behaviors parents may display during homework. One recommendation they emphasize is that parents provide reinforcement contingencies for desired homework behavior. This could help to increase extrinsic motivation, which could lead to compliance and completing easy homework proficiently. However, if the parent relies on extrinsic

rewards and consequences as the primary source of motivation, students may perceive parental involvement with homework as controlling, which will likely decrease intrinsic motivation and happiness (Pomerantz et al., 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2017). Furthermore, studies have found that parent help with homework and checking on grades is related to lower achievement among adolescents (Froiland et al., 2013a; Hill & Tyson, 2009), which is likely due to adolescents' greater desire for independence and forming their unique identity. Adolescents may be especially sensitive to controlling parenting surrounding homework and grade checking, such as controlling questions (e.g., "Why haven't you started studying yet"), trying to do the work for the child (vs. providing suggestions when the child wants help), and not acknowledging the child's negative feelings about homework or school (Froiland, 2011a).

Students have more intrinsic motivation for homework when parents help them to realize that their love for the student is not dependent upon their performance (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020). In fact, parents can be taught how to effectively help children set intrinsic life goals and learning goals for homework, which promotes positive emotions toward learning and intrinsic motivation (Froiland, 2018). Intrinsic life goals applied to learning entail trying to understand something more, preparing to help others, or a focus on discovering interesting things via learning (Froiland, 2014, 2018). For instance, after one parent taught her daughter to set intrinsic life goals for homework, she created the goal, "Learn why people like their jobs and how their jobs contribute to our community" (Froiland, 2018, p. 10). After being taught by his parents to focus on intrinsic life goals for homework, another student repeatedly focused on developing stronger reading skills when reading assigned books at home in order to help younger children learn to read better. In both cases, the students developed an intrinsic life goal for homework, which predicts greater intrinsic motivation, engagement, positive emotions, sobriety and achievement (Froiland, 2011a; Froiland & Worrell, 2017 ; Froiland et al., 2020).

The healthy use of screen time

There is some controversy about whether screen time is positively related to hyperactivity among young children. Many studies have found that young children who watch more than two hours a day are at-risk for hyperactivity and ADHD (Christakis et al., 2004; Froiland & Davison, 2016a), whereas others have found that there is no relationship between screen time and hyperactivity. However, Froiland & Davison (2016a) found that parents who allow their preschool children to watch more television also read significantly less with them, suggesting that screen time may compete with reading time during a critical period of literacy growth. Furthermore, studies indicate that boys are negatively influenced by advertisements for alcohol companies as well as exposure to aggressive scenes (Aitken et al., 1988; Messner & de Oca, 2005). As there is still significant debate about the effects of screen time, it will not be considered a key part of the proposed

model for optimal parent involvement, but it is something to consider for both researchers and educators.

Before talking about the specific psychological components of parent involvement, it is important to point out that each of the psychological components are valuable in themselves, but they are also likely to enhance the effectiveness of home-based parent involvement behaviors. For instance, parent beliefs and expectations have been found to predict parent involvement in literacy and numeracy learning activities with their children (Froiland et al., 2013a; Puccioni et al., 2019). Likewise, Cooper et al. (2000) have provided evidence that parental help with homework only works when it is provided in an autonomy supportive (vs. controlling) way. Furthermore, low SES parents will often only engage in parent involvement training if they trust the school, child development expert, or psychologist providing the training (Powell et al., 1990).

A new model for promoting the psychological side of parent involvement

It is clear that parent involvement, particularly home-based parent involvement, has important implications for student success. Furthermore, it is clear that schools would benefit from a comprehensive parent involvement model focusing on the psychological aspects. The psychological side of parent involvement can be readily memorized with the following acronym: *B*eliefs, *E*xpectations, *A*utonomy Support, and *R*elationships (BEAR; see Figure 1). As depicted in the Figure 1, parent *beliefs* in the importance of education and self-regulation predict that students will develop greater achievement and self-regulation (Puccioni et al., 2020). Long-term *expectations* that their children will attain a high level of education further predict academic success, intrinsic motivation to learn, and engagement (Froiland & Davison, 2016b). It is important to point out that long-term expectations of educational attainment convey positive expectations about doing well along the way also. For instance, the parent who conveys an expectation that their elementary school child will eventually obtain a doctorate in science also expresses the implicit expectation that they will do well in science classes throughout elementary, secondary, and higher education. *Autonomy* supportive communication promotes happiness, intrinsic motivation, engagement, creativity, and a variety of other desirable outcomes (Allen et al., 2019; Froiland, 2011a; Froiland et al., 2019). However, parents may need to be prepared for the likelihood that years of autonomy supportive communication will result in a child who thinks for herself and feels comfortable challenging the merit of parents' rules and requests. Parent-school *relationships* are also an important part of parent involvement (Froiland & Davison, 2014; Houri et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2019). This aligns with the bio-ecological model of development which posits that the home-school mesosystem is crucial for healthy child development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). In conjunction with the BEAR model, schools are encouraged to also support

parents in key aspects of home-based involvement, such as creating a rich home literacy environment, helping with homework, monitoring screen use, and taking children to the library.

B-Beliefs

There are three types of parent beliefs that promote positive outcomes for children: 1) belief in the importance of various school readiness skills in preschool and kindergarten including knowing the alphabet, counting, paying attention, sharing, and communicating needs (Puccioni et al., 2019); 2) holding a growth mindset for their children (e.g., "I believe my child can become more intelligent and improve her achievement"; Andersen & Nielsen, 2016); and 3) believing that the parent has an important role to play in helping their child to learn (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).

Parent beliefs in the importance of various aspects of school readiness predict parent engagement in various home-based parent involvement activities, such as counting with their children, reading with their children and singing with their children (Puccioni et al., 2019). Both parent beliefs and the involvement that they promote predict student achievement, self-regulatory skills, and social emotional-competence (Puccioni et al., 2019). Importantly, in their study that represented children of all backgrounds across the U.S., only 1% of the variation in parent beliefs was explained by race/ethnicity, with African American families placing more emphasis on the importance of school readiness than European American parents, when controlling for SES. Latinx parents did not differ from European American parents on beliefs. Other studies have found that parents who believe that their help with homework will make a difference are more likely to help their students with homework (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Parents who do not believe that involvement will make a difference are likely to either not get involved or not get involved wholeheartedly. For instance, a study of families in Hong Kong revealed that parents who believe that they should not or could not teach children to express and understand their emotions were more likely to dismiss their children's emotions, thereby putting them at risk for lower emotional self-regulation (Chan, 2012).

One way that teachers can encourage parent involvement is by inviting parents to become involved (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Puccioni et al., 2020). Part of the power of this invitation is that the teacher is implying that the parent's involvement is important and likely to make a difference. However, for parents with low self-efficacy for parent involvement, it may be necessary for teachers to explicitly state that parent involvement is both important and likely to have a positive effect. In other words, teacher invitations for involvement are likely to be the most effective when they also convey a strong belief that parent involvement will help. However, as mentioned previously, helping with homework and checking on grades can have unintended negative consequences, such that they may predict lower achievement due to being paired with controlling communication (Froiland et al., 2013a; Froiland, 2014). Therefore, parent involvement interventionists may embrace the complexity of the

research and make sure that they pair any efforts to increase parent beliefs or parent involvement self-efficacy with parental autonomy support training.

Another important parent belief is holding a growth mindset for their children. Parents who hold a fixed mindset (e.g., "there is nothing I can do to change my child's ability") are more likely to be controlling, get frustrated with their child while helping with learning, and pressure their child about performance, rather than encouraging effort that leads to eventual mastery (Moorman & Pomerantz, 2010). In a study of over 1,500 second graders in Denmark, (Andersen & Nielsen, 2016), parents in the treatment group were taught to have a growth mindset regarding children's reading ability, regardless of their children's prior reading achievement. Parents also received high quality books and were taught to have a constructive approach, including enthusiastically talking about assigned books with children before and after they read them, posing open questions, answering children's questions, and praising their effort. This led to significant improvements in text comprehension, decoding, and writing skills. Families of low SES and immigrant status improved as much as other families. The intervention was especially effective for parents who started the intervention with a fixed mindset as they had more room for improvement in developing a growth mindset (Andersen & Nielsen, 2016). While it is important for parents to have a growth mindset for their children, it is also valuable for parents to believe that they can improve their parent involvement. This notion is supported by research in developmental psychology, which indicates that many parents improve aspects of their home-based involvement between preschool and first grade (Powell et al., 2012).

While parent beliefs about the importance of school readiness are particularly important for preschool and kindergarten students, parents with children of all ages can benefit from holding a growth mindset for their children and believing that they have an important role to play in supporting their children's learning.

E-Expectations

Parent expectations predict student achievement above and beyond prior achievement (Froiland et al., 2013a; Loughlin-Presnal & Bierman, 2017). This has been found for math, reading, and science achievement (Froiland & Davison, 2016b; Jeynes, 2018). Parent expectations in kindergarten are moderate predictors of parent expectations years later, suggesting that it may be wise to promote positive parent expectations when children are young (Froiland et al., 2013a; Loughlin-Presnal & Bierman, 2017). In fact, a study in Finland suggests that parent expectations begin to crystallize as early as preschool (Räty & Kasanen, 2010). However, parent expectations still predict positive outcomes during middle school and high school (Bandura et al., 2001; Froiland & Davison, 2014, 2016b) and are a rather puissant predictor of achievement, yet are usually ignored by educators (Jeynes, 2012). Bandura et al. (2001) also found that parent expectations predict career aspirations among Italian high school students.

In line with expectancy-value theory, parent expectations for their students' long-term educational attainment predict student expectations for long-term educational attainment years later (Froiland et al., 2013a; Froiland & Davison, 2016b). Whereas some authors have expressed concerns that expectations will pressure children, the research indicates that parent expectations for long-term educational attainment predict intrinsic motivation to learn, which is a pathway to engagement, happiness, lower risk for substance use, and achievement (Fan & Williams, 2010; Froiland & Davison, 2016b; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Froiland et al., 2020). High expectations only become problematic when parents convey them in a controlling way (e.g., "You have to be a doctor or lawyer, or you will disappoint the whole family").

Parent expectations and beliefs predict home-based parent involvement in early childhood, suggesting that parent-child shared reading and numeracy programs could be enhanced by seeking to elevate parent expectations and beliefs (Puccioni et al., 2019). Furthermore, it is possible that low SES parents' participation in home literacy interventions could be increased by elevating parent expectations that the sessions will empower them to help their children thrive.

Research on parent expectations has been conducted with many SES levels and ethnicities in the U.S. For instance, in a nationally representative longitudinal study of high school students, much of the Asian American advantage in mathematics growth from 9^{th} to 11^{th} grade, relative to European American students, is due to a cascade of positive effects related to higher parent expectations that their children will reach higher levels of educational attainment (Froiland & Davison, 2016b). Namely, parent expectations predict student expectations, intrinsic motivation for math, higher math course taking over the next 2.5 years and stronger mathematics growth. This study also found that the effect of SES on expectations was almost three times as high as the effect of any ethnicity, suggesting that low SES parents may need more help with expectations than children of any particular race/ethnicity (Froiland & Davison, 2016b). In accordance, Yamamoto and Holloway (2010) explain that Asian American parents have stronger expectations than European American parents in numerous studies, whereas some studies find that African American and Latinx parents have higher expectations than European America parents and others find that they have lower expectations. Another study found that Latinx, African American, and European American parents have equally high expectations for their children's long-term educational attainment (Froiland & Davison, 2014).

Recent research in Andalusia has also indicated that parent expectations are more likely to have a positive effect on achievement when they are rather harmonious with student expectations, whereas they are less effective when parent and student expectations are highly discordant (Marcenaro-Gutierrez & Lopez-Agudo, 2017). In Hong Kong, Pakistani parents are likely to have lower expectations for their children's educational attainment than their children hold for themselves; they are also likely to have lower expectations than parents who are native to Hong Kong (Chee & Ullah, 2020). Chee and Ullah (2020) suggest that bilingual

assistants, parents, and teachers share information with each other that could lead to higher parent expectations and conversations between parents and children that help them align their expectations. Students are more likely to optimally internalize parent expectations when parents convey them in an autonomy supportive way. Future studies should examine whether parent and student expectations are more likely to be discordant when parents are perceived by the student to be controlling. Furthermore, one could see if interventions combining training on autonomy and relatedness support and building positive expectations lead to a decrease in discordance between parent and student expectations.

A-Autonomy support

Many parents have negative, stressful, and controlling interactions with their children when discussing homework, grades, school, and learning (Ansberry, 2019; Froiland, 2013). This is a problem in the U.S., but even more of a problem in China (Pomerantz et al., 2014). Parents may respond to student apathy or resistance with a controlling style, which includes the following: emphasizing extrinsic rewards or consequences, using controlling questions (e.g., "Don't you think you should go upstairs and do your homework now?"), ignoring children's feelings and perspectives, creating arbitrary deadlines, rushing children, being impatient, and making children feel guilty for not working hard or getting a lower than expected grade. See Froiland (2014, 2020) for a full review of the components of the controlling style. Unfortunately, the controlling style is linked to low levels of intrinsic motivation and high levels of introjection, extrinsic motivation, depressive symptoms, and anxiety (Grolnick et al., 2002; Kenney-Benson & Pomerantz, 2005). Children of controlling parents also express less creativity, read less, are less altruistic, are less engaged, procrastinate more, and have lower levels of achievement than children of autonomy and relatedness supportive parents (Dumont et al., 2014; Froiland & Worrell, 2017; Won & Yu, 2018; Wuyts et al., 2017). Unfortunately, schools rarely train parents in autonomy supportive communication, and often model a controlling style of teaching (Heatly & Votruba-Drzal, 2017; Reeve, 2009; Su & Reeve, 2011). Furthermore, one team of researchers has inadvertently encouraged a controlling style of parent involvement by positing that parents are the best positioned to provide rewards and other contingencies for student participation in homework (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).

Although the main contrast with parental and autonomy support is the controlling style, it is also important to recognize that permissive parenting (where parents let children do whatever they want) is much different than autonomy support. Children of permissive parents often lack discipline and self-control. For instance, Whitney and Froiland (2015) found that students whose parents are permissive drink more beer and develop alcohol use disorder more often in college. Parents are more likely to be permissive with high school and college boys, which is one of the reasons that boys consume more alcohol and develop alcohol use disorder at higher rates than girls.

Interventions that teach parents to support children's psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness have been quite successful in improving students' intrinsic motivation to learn, intrinsic life goals, and emotional health (Froiland, 2011a, 2015, 2018; Joussemet et al., 2014; Moè et al., 2018). In addition, such interventions have led to parents improving in their autonomy and relatedness supportive communication skills as well as internal locus of control (Allen et al., 2019; Froiland, 2015). Unfortunately, only six autonomy supportive parenting intervention studies have been published and none have looked at achievement as an outcome (Froiland, 2020), even though parental autonomy support is a significant predictor of achievement (Froiland & Worrell, 2017; Vasquez et al., 2016). It makes sense that psychological health has been the focus of autonomy support intervention studies so far because the average correlation between parent autonomy support and psychological health is over three times higher ($r = .38$ vs. 11) than the relationship with achievement in longitudinal and cross-sectional studies (Vasquez et al., 2016).

Researchers are encouraged to continue to develop and study parent autonomy interventions because they are quite promising and parents who enroll in such interventions find them meaningful, enjoyable, and rarely drop out of the programs. For instance, none of the parents in the treatment group dropped out of Froiland's (2011a, 2015) intervention in the U.S. over eight weeks, none dropped out of Moe et al.'s (2018) intervention in Italy over four weeks, and hardly any parents dropped out of the Allen et al.'s (2019) intervention study in the U.S. In Montreal, Joussemet et al.'s (2014) parent autonomy support intervention had a 10% dropout rate, whereas a review by Assemany & McIntosh (2002) found a 28% attrition among behavioral parent training studies, suggesting that parent involvement programs that teach autonomy support are more acceptable to parents than programs that emphasize extrinsic rewards and consequences (Froiland, 2020). In fact, parent involvement programs that teach home literacy often have high dropout rates (Mendez, 2010), such that future studies may find lower dropout rates for home literacy programs when they are combined with autonomy support training.

Parents are more controlling when they are worried and when their own psychological needs are thwarted. Likewise, they are more autonomy and relatedness supportive when their own psychological needs for autonomy and relatedness are satisfied as a study in Belgium found (Mabbe et al., 2018). Satisfying interactions with teachers and administrators is one opportunity for schools to help meet parents' need for relatedness. Interestingly, the number of times a child is rewarded with prizes at school is negatively related to parent-school relationships, but parents' perceptions of teacher autonomy supportive communication is a stronger predictor of positive parent-school relationships (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020), which suggests that parents' own need for relatedness might be met when they hear of teacher autonomy support at school.

Some have challenged the universality of autonomy supportive parenting and suggested that it would not work in countries such as China, where society is more

cooperative in nature and independence is less of a focus. However, research in China indicates that Chinese adolescents have higher levels of intrinsic life goals and greater psychological well-being when their parents are autonomy supportive (Lekes et al., 2010). Extrinsic life goals include a desire for fame, wealth and impressive looks, whereas intrinsic life goals entail a desire to learn, help others in the community and have meaningful relationships with others. This study found that in Canada, China and the United States, students who reported more parental autonomy support exhibited more intrinsic goals and greater well-being. However, Chinese students rated their parents, on average, as significantly less autonomy supportive than their counterparts in the U.S. and Canada. Concomitantly, Chinese students also had fewer intrinsic life goals and lower levels of psychological well-being. This suggests that autonomy supportive principles promote students wellbeing in China and may be needed even more than in the U.S.

Likewise, in Ghana, which is another more collectivist society than the U.S., children were found to be more psychologically healthy when their parents were autonomy supportive, as opposed to controlling (Marbell & Grolnick, 2013). However, this study also found that parental provision of structure predicted students' perceived competence, less depression and more school engagement. It is important to recognize that structure (clear and consistent guidelines and clear expectations) predicts positive outcomes for children and that autonomy supportive parents and teachers are often higher in structure than controlling parents and teachers (Reeve, 2009). In a study of families in the Caribbean, Griffith and Grolnick (2014) found that controlling parenting predicted lower levels of autonomous self-regulation and engagement among middle school students, while also predicting higher levels of depression. This study also found that the aspects of autonomy support having to do with acknowledging feelings and sharing perspectives better predicted positive outcomes than allowing for choice and shared decision-making. This study suggests that parents' provision of structure and empathy is crucial to the psychological and educational development of Caribbean children. Further evidence of the universality of the autonomy supportive style comes from a study of Native Hawaiian students in which primarily European and Japanese American teachers were able to promote long-term autonomous motivation, engagement with mathematics, school belonging and higher math achievement when they used an autonomy supportive style of communication (Froiland et al., 2016). Furthermore, the autonomy supportive style of parenting has predicted intrinsic life goals (e.g., aiming to use acquired knowledge and skills to help others), higher student expectations, and improved grade point average (GPA) among diverse high school students in the U.S. (Froiland & Worrell, 2017).

R-Parent-school relationships

A good parent-school relationship makes it more likely that teachers and parents will communicate. This is important because teacher invitations for parent

involvement increase the likelihood that parents will increase their home-based involvement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Trust is integral to the family-school relationship and middle and high school parents trust teachers less than elementary school parents (Adams and Christenson, 2000). In a nationally representative study of middle and high school students in the U.S., Froiland and Davison (2014) found that parent-school relationships predicted positive behavior and GPA. Parent-school relationships was measured as a latent variable comprised of parents feeling welcomed at school, trusting school staff, and having satisfying interactions with teachers. Unfortunately, parents were at risk for weaker parent-school relationships if they were Latinx, African American, or of low SES. Fortunately, interventions that promote parent-school relationships usually have a positive effect on student achievement (Jeynes, 2012); however, like parent expectations and other psychological aspects of parent involvement, schools may overlook parent-school relationships (Jeynes, 2010). In Germany and Spain, the vast majority of principals felt that their schools were highly welcoming to parents, whereas parents in both countries were far less likely to see it that way (Reparaz & Sotés-Elizalde, 2019). This suggests that many schools may not put enough effort to building positive relationships with parents, because they overestimate the existing quality of those relationships.

Parent-school relationships can be promoted through positive communication between the teacher and parent, including sharing positive expectations for student behavioral engagement and achievement. For instance, in a double blind randomized control trial, Houri et al. (2019) found that teacher notes to parents that emphasized a positive characteristic of their child and high hopes about their child's future achievement led to increased parent engagement and stronger parent-school relationships. This intervention also led to stronger teacher ratings of safe and respectful behavior among students in the treatment group relative to the control group. This intervention also provides an example of how promoting positive parent expectations may spillover into promoting parent-school relationships, as parent expectations and parent-school relationships are positively related (Froiland & Davison, 2014). Future iterations of the Houri et al. intervention study may wish to directly examine if parent expectations are increased via the intervention.

A meta-analysis indicated that interventions that emphasize family-school partnerships have positive effects on achievement, behavior, and mental health (Smith et al., 2019). Importantly, interventions that promote bi-directional parent-school communication often work even better for middle and high school students (vs. early childhood and elementary; Smith et al., 2019). This is important because teachers often reach out to parents less in secondary school and receive less training on promoting positive parent involvement.

Although parent-school relationships are often formed via home notes, parent-teacher interaction and other forms of teacher-parent communication, a mixed methods study indicated that parents often have strained relationships with teachers when the teacher relies heavily on a behavioral chart system to motivate students and otherwise does not use an autonomy supportive style of teaching. Parents mentioned that they were thinking of leaving the school, that their children

developed anxiety due to the reward system, and that their children were now telling them about who received rewards and who didn't, rather than discussing what they learned at school (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020). On the other hand, parents who perceived the teacher as being autonomy and relatedness supportive with students were much more likely to have a positive parent-school relationship ($r = .74$, $p < .001$). Importantly, this study found that the number of times a child was rewarded by the teacher only had a significant negative effect on parent-school relationships before teacher autonomy and relatedness support was entered into the model (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020). This suggests that future research on interventions to promote teacher autonomy support could find that parent-school relationships are enhanced, including in classrooms that utilize behavioral chart systems.

Vision for the BEAR model in the schools

If school psychologists learn the BEAR model within a broader parent involvement or parent consultation class (or intensive workshop), they are more likely to incorporate the key psychological aspects of promoting parent involvement into their practice. They would also need to learn about supporting the most fruitful home-based involvement behaviors, such as parent-child shared reading, providing plenty of books at home and taking children to rich places of learning outside of schools. Likewise, they could help schools to overcome the unintended negative effects of parents helping with homework and checking on grades in a controlling way (Froiland et al., 2013a). Whereas some parent involvement behaviors are more fruitful for young children (e.g., parent-child shared reading), all of the facets of BEAR can be applied from preschool to 12th grade. Namely, positive beliefs about learning, strong expectations for graduating high school or college, autonomy and relatedness support, and positive teacher-student relationships predict psychological wellbeing and achievement across the school years. Suggestions for implementing each aspect of BEAR will be provided below.

Beliefs

Teacher invitations for involvement implicitly suggest to parents that their involvement is important (Puccioni et al., 2020). However, teachers could be taught to pair such invitations with very clear explanations of how certain parent involvement activities will promote learning or social skills. As growth mindset interventions have been quite promising, school psychologists could provide a workshop for parents that explains how intelligence and achievement can be developed through rigorous mental exercise (Andersen & Nielsen, 2016). Basic explanations and graphs of neuronal development through learning could be shared, along with powerful metaphors, such as, "the mind is a muscle that gets stronger through rigorous exercise" (Yeager et al., 2016). This could be a stand-alone workshop or provided in concert with other experts at the school, such as the literacy team in

elementary school or the math team in secondary school. Research on the effectiveness of parent involvement in improving various areas of achievement could also be shared in a user-friendly way. Likewise, research on the importance of the psychological sides of parent involvement promoting achievement and psychological health could be shared, such that parents see that both home-based involvement behaviors and parental psychological support can help their students to improve and thrive.

Expectations

Although parent expectations are a robust predictor of various positive outcomes at school, very little intervention research has been done in this area. For this reason, school and educational psychology researchers are encouraged to consider future intervention studies that not only intervene with parent expectations or aspirations, but also measure progress in parent expectations. However, Houri et al. (2019) found that teacher notes to parents that emphasized a positive characteristic of their child and high hopes about their child's future achievement led to increased parent engagement and stronger parent-school relationships. Although this study did not measure the effects of the intervention on parent expectations or hope, they provide a very practical way of integrating an intervention that promotes two aspects of BEAR (expectations and relationships). Positive school-to-home notes are in the intervention repertoire of most school psychologists, as this has been an effective intervention for increasing positive behaviors for a long time (Cox, 2005). The BEAR model and the work of Houri et al. (2019) help the school psychologist see that the positive school-to-home notes can be enhanced by emphasizing a positive expectation about their child's long-term academic success and featuring a positive characteristic of the child that will help them succeed. Unlike many positive school-to-home notes, the A-Autonomy aspect of the BEAR model suggests that it is not best to combine home-based or school-based rewards with the positive notes, as this could suggest to the child that the main reason for engaging in the learning is to pursue the extrinsic reward, rather than grow through the process of learning (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

In general, one of the best predictors of student expectations or aspirations, is parent expectations (Bandura et al., 2001; Froiland & Davison, 2016b; Froiland et al., 2013a). Parent expectations are often influenced by prior student achievement, so one way of increasing parent expectations is by helping parents to recognize significant student progress and predict further progress, when warranted (Froiland et al., 2013a). This could be done by collaboratively interpreting progress data with parents and providing high quality academic and motivational interventions. Such meetings could include teacher statements about their expectation that the student will thrive in years to come.

Autonomy support

As mentioned earlier, there are multiple intervention studies in three different countries that indicate that autonomy supportive parenting interventions lead to enhanced intrinsic motivation to learn, academic engagement, and psychological health (Allen et al., 2019; Froiland, 2011a, 2015, 2018; Joussemet et al., 2014; Moè et al., 2018). Whereas the components of the controlling style were previously discussed, it is important for school psychologists to know the 21 components of the autonomy and relatedness supportive style. See Froiland (2020) for a full table explaining how each component of the autonomy supportive style meets one of the core psychological needs. Also, see Froiland (2014) for numerous case studies that explain how parents applied various aspects of the autonomy supportive style with their children.

Essentially, the autonomy supportive style entails showing empathy for children's negative feelings and perceived challenges, rather than ignoring them; highlighting the interesting features in a homework assignment or academic subject; providing suggestions and consultation when the child needs help, rather than providing unsolicited help; avoiding the use of controlling language (e.g., "You better start your homework now, or else"); using similes and metaphors that help children see the value of academic effort or treating others well (e.g., "studying is like making a wise investment, eventually you will get a positive return on your investment, in terms of greater knowledge and skill"); patiently awaiting answers to questions and pausing between questions, rather than expecting a split second response; and sharing with children why you love reading, writing, or a specific academic subject.

One exciting possibility for teaching many parents how to become less controlling and autonomy supportive is to provide brief videos or live modeling and role-playing, such that parents learn to recognize the controlling style and master each component of the autonomy supportive style. Generally, two or three components of the autonomy supportive style are taught each week, so as to not overwhelm the parents with new techniques (Froiland, 2011a). Then, parents practice the autonomy supportive style during an educational game, both in front of the school psychologist or researcher, and later during the week. Parents then journal about instances in which they applied the autonomy supportive style each week and how their children responded. The journals are used as opportunities to provide constructive feedback to the parents each week so that parents can further refine their implementation of the autonomy supportive techniques (Froiland, 2015). Future research may wish to investigate whether the whole training can be provided online via videos created by researchers and monitoring parents journals (or video uploads) online.

Parents can also be autonomy supportive by teaching children to set intrinsic life goals. The main definition of an intrinsic life goal is as follows: "An intrinsic learning goal means you try to understand something more, become better at doing something so that you can help others someday, or discover something

interesting (Froiland, 2014, p. 139).” As mentioned earlier, children enjoy learning more and have less negative emotions surrounding homework when they focus on learning something interesting, using what they learn to help others, or growing as a person via learning (Froiland, 2011a, 2018). Froiland (2018) provides quotes of intrinsic life goals provided by many students applied to math, science, reading, writing, tutoring others, social studies, and relationships. The process of setting intrinsic life goals could be taught by the school psychologist directly during interventions or counseling, or the school psychologist could teach teachers how to train whole classrooms to properly complete intrinsic life goal sheets each week. The broad array of goals in Froiland (2018) could be used as exemplar goals for elementary school and early middle school students. Teaching intrinsic life goals along with practicing other aspects of autonomy supportive communication can have synergistic positive effects on learning and psychological wellbeing (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004). As intrinsic life goals can be written or typed, they could be integrated with journaling in classes teaching literacy.

In order to see how autonomy supportive parenting is time effective and often only involves minor changes to communication styles, here is a case study of a single parent who learned the autonomy supportive style from a school psychologist.

> Ronny’s mother worked as a nurse in an emergency room and felt stressed out due to the challenges of raising Ronny alone and working long shifts. She wanted so much to help Ronny excel in school, yet many of her efforts seem to backfire. One night she came home and found Ronny watching television. She said, “Did you do your homework? You know I told you that you better do your homework before watching TV.” Ronny said, “I didn’t feel like it” to which she replied, “I don’t care if you feel like it or not, you should start your homework right when you get home from school”. Ronny stormed up to his room and screamed, “Who cares?”
>
> Ronny’s mother was exhausted from work and walked into the kitchen exasperated. Power struggles about homework like this occurred four or five times a week and often ended with Ronny’s mom giving up and Ronny feeling like his tantrums helped him to successfully evade homework. At other times, Ronny gave into his mom’s controlling statements, pressure and occasional yelling and this reinforced her for using the controlling style. In other words, both Ronny and his mother were being intermittently reinforced for maladaptive communication, creating a vicious cycle in which each party hoped to overpower the other.
>
> When I asked Ronny’s mother whether she ever read with Ronny, she said, “Oh yes, all of the time, but it doesn’t help much.” I then asked, “What does it look like when you read together?” She explained, “Well, I read the newspaper, while Ronny reads aloud to me”. I realized that this was a sign of passivity and that Ronny’s mother displayed the classic vacillation between controlling and passivity that predicts the development of oppositional defiant disorder (ODD). I explained, “Just quietly listen

while he reads without reading the newspaper or looking at anything else, listen to each word he is saying and, even if he makes mistakes, just convey warmth and unconditional love. If he asks you for help with a word or concept, explain it to him, but otherwise, you are simply being with him in the present moment, conveying warmth and giving him the attention he desires without any judgment." This made sense to his mother and they ended up having more peaceful reading sessions three times a week and she found that he often voluntarily read for 30 minutes when she did this, whereas he previously only wanted to read for about 10 minutes. As I suggested, these sessions not only helped Ronny with his reading, but they provided Ronny with positive attention, which helped enhance the parent-child relationship. In fact, over the subsequent 10 weeks, Ronny's outbursts and homework refusals at home decreased from 4 or 5 a week to less than twice a month. Ronny's reading teacher also noticed significant improvements in reading fluency and comprehension.

Relationships

As mentioned under Expectations, positive school-to-home notes are one way of promoting positive relationships with parents. This helps the parent to realize that the teacher cares about their child and does not only contact them when something is going wrong. However, the BEAR model has the potential to make school-to-home notes even more effective by strengthening positive expectations, encouraging a growth mindset in the parents, and modeling autonomy and relatedness supportive language.

Another opportunity for building relationships is during parent-teacher conferences, at school sporting events or musicals, at a school community garden, or any time that the parent contacts the teacher or administrator. Unfortunately, many low SES parents feel unwelcomed or nervous at parent-teacher conferences and many teachers feel uncomfortable at these conferences (Minke & Anderson, 2003). Furthermore, some parents who cannot fit them within their schedule are misjudged as not caring, which damages the parent-teacher relationship (Lareau, 1987). With modern technology, schools can get more flexible with how they deliver parent-teacher conferences, whether at the school, via a video chat, or via email, if need be. In all of these cases, it is possible for educators to realize that one of the greatest benefits of parent-teacher conference is the opportunity of strengthening trust, a sense of feeling welcomed by the school, and experiencing positive interactions. The fact is that parent-teacher conferences generally have very little effect, if any, on achievement (Powell et al., 2012; Puccioni et al., 2020), so the focus should probably be on strengthening the relationship between parents and schools, which would ultimately have a positive effect on student motivation and achievement (Kowalski & Froiland, 2020). Minke and Anderson (2003) have developed a method of collaboration during family-school conferences that is solution-focused and involves the student and parent in a positive conversation with the teacher.

This method also promotes trust between the parent and the teacher as they both positively interact with the child at the same time (Minke & Anderson, 2003).

A school psychologist was once told by the principal, teacher, and school counselor that they had tried to contact a parent 20 times collectively and the parent never came in for a meeting, so it is "not even worth trying". They also explained that they thought the parents were taking illegal substances, such that they believed that the parents were incapable of being involved. However, there was no evidence of drug use. The school psychologist thanked them for their perspective but proceeded to email the parents, who then showed up for a meeting with the school psychologist the next day, much to the surprise of colleagues. Importantly, the school psychologist maintained a belief (**B**) that the parents could get involved and held a strong expectation (**E**) that their involvement could make a difference and that their child could make great academic progress. The school psychologist modeled an autonomy and relatedness supportive style of communication by explaining (**A**) that his primary focus was to use assessment and interventions to help their son improve motivationally and academically. He also wanted to see if they had any ideas and he wanted to share with them a few strategies that would likely (**B**) help them encourage homework completion. Prior to this, the parents felt like the school was "out to get" their son, to rush to place him in special education, or punish him for being a non-conformist. Through collaborative problem-solving, which promoted a stronger parent-school relationship (**R**) and individual counseling over the course of 3 months, the student went from an average of 55% homework completion to 95% and 6 out of 7 teachers shared that his grades were much improved and that he was now zealous about learning. This abridged story illustrates that how we communicate with parents makes a difference. The autonomy and relatedness supportive style of communication works to meet the needs for autonomy and relatedness for both children and adults (Reeve, 2009). One of the powerful components of autonomy support that the school psychologist implemented in communicating with the parents was providing a clear rationale for the meeting and putting himself in the parents' shoes (i.e., empathic perspective taking) before contacting the parents. By way of studying psychology for 6-10 years, including taking at least one class in psychological consultation, most school psychologists are equipped with effective communication techniques that build relationships. However, most teachers have relatively little training, if any, on communicating with parents and usually only take one or two classes in Educational Psychology (Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Therefore, it is important for school and educational psychologists to realize that educators often need training or consultation in communicating in a way that promotes positive relationships. Parents often do as well.

Conclusion

The psychological aspects of parent involvement are often ignored in schools, yet they play an important role in student outcomes. From preschool to high school,

schools need help in promoting positive parent involvement. The BEAR model of the psychological side of parent involvement provides a mnemonic for remembering the four key psychological components of parent involvement. Coupled with an understanding of home-based parent involvement behaviors and the bioecological model of human development, school psychologists can be trained to effectively support schools in the development of comprehensive and engaging parent involvement programs. Researchers may wish to examine the extent to which children improve on academic and psychological outcomes when interventions address all four aspects of BEAR vs. one, two, or three aspects. Likewise, parent home-based involvement may also increase more when BEAR is included as part of the parent involvement intervention. Although individual components of BEAR have been studied, it is recommended that the BEAR model be used experimentally in future parent involvement programs in schools across the world.

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