



Mission: To provide the information, support and encouragement Texas parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life.

Purpose/Vision: All Texas children will learn, grow and develop to realize their full potential.

Brief History: Parents as Teachers began in Missouri in the early 80's and is now being offered in all 50 states and countries such as Australia, Great Britain, Canada, China, and Germany. Parent handouts are available in several languages including English, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and German. The model has received numerous honors and recognition, and has recently been chosen for one of the Department of Education "Investing in Innovation" grants that will serve Native American families.

In 1986 the Mental Health America of Texas (formerly Mental Health Association in Texas) decided that the way to approach child abuse prevention and address mental health needs was to focus on supporting the parents of our youngest children. A comprehensive review of early childhood parenting programs available at the time was conducted to determine which one would best fit their criteria of being based on solid research, well evaluated, focused on birth to three, and easily replicable.

Parents as Teachers is an international evidence-based prevention and early intervention program that provides parent education and family support services to families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten. Studies show that Parents as Teachers program participation:

- **Increases school readiness**
- **Reduces child abuse**
- **Helps identify early delays in development**
- **Links families with community resources**
- **Increases immunization rates in pre-schoolers**

The program is based on the core value that parents are their children's first and most important teachers. Parents receive services from **trained and certified Parent Educators** using award-winning, research-based curriculum that focuses on cognitive, language, social/emotional and motor development.

The Parents as Teachers model includes four components:

- **Home visits (monthly, weekly or bi-weekly)**
- **Vision, Hearing, Health and Developmental Screenings**
- **Parent group meetings**
- **Referral to community resources**

Texas Communities Served: Parents as Teachers programs are typically located within school systems, family resource centers, childcare centers, community action organizations, and government agencies. Sixty-five percent of the programs are blended with other early childhood or parent support programs such as Early Head Start and Head Start, Even Start, Healthy Families and other Pre-K initiatives. The Texas Parents as Teachers program currently has 331 certified professional Parent Educators in 108 local program locations in 32 Texas counties serving 11,000 children annually. Current family ethnicity of program participants is 11% African American, 14% Anglo, 66% Hispanic/Latino and 9% Asian and Other. 92% of all families have at least one risk factor, such as low income (77%), English as a Second Language, low educational attainment, or single parent household. 31% of families served are teen parents. 93% of two-year-olds had up-to-date immunizations and 84% of families were linked to at least one community resource during the program year. Over 48% of the Texas Parents as Teacher program certified Parent Educators are bi-lingual.

Key Accomplishments: Parents as Teachers is effective and economical—the cost per family served is \$1,500 per year. It has also proven to provide a great return on investment. A 2008 study by Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that the benefit of Parents as Teachers is estimated at \$5,350 per child from higher test scores alone. Evaluation studies are available on the National PAT website under Resources at www.parentsasteachers.org

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TECEC is proud to promote the work of the Texas Home Visitation Coalition. For more information, please contact Kara Johnson, President and CEO of the Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition, at 512.476.7939 or kjohnson@tecec.org.