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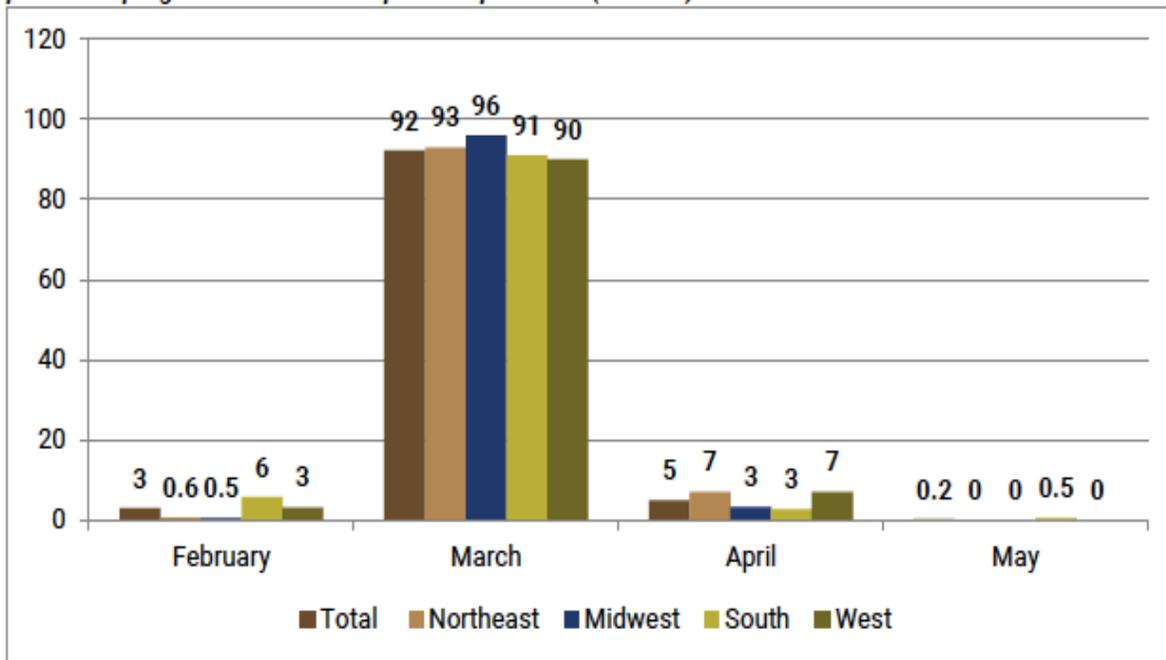
**Date: September, 2020**

BrainGain@PEC provides brief summaries of research or publications on family homelessness and related issues. Previous issues of BrainGain@PEC can be found at <http://bit.ly/2iaczvQ>.

## YOUNG CHILDREN’S HOME LEARNING AND PRESCHOOL PARTICIPATION EXPERENCES DURING THE PANDEMIC

This report summarizes “**Young Children’s Home Learning and Preschool Participation Experiences During the Pandemic**,” a study by Dr. Steven Barnett, Dr. Kwanghee Jung and Dr. Milagros Nores from the **National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)** at the Rutgers Graduate School of Education. This report can be read at <https://bit.ly/32dqiq0>.

*Figure 4. Percentage program closures by month for children ages 3-5 and not yet in kindergarten whose preschool programs closed for in-person operations (N = 427)*



With preschool closures and changes in daily routines, there may be consequences for children's development and learning that could vary with child and family characteristics. To offer opportunities for more in-depth analyses, this report contains the survey results from 1,001 parents living in the United States with children ages 3-5 between May 22 and June 5, 2020.

This summary was developed to provide an **overview** of the **effects of preschool closures** and recommendations for staff who work with young children and their parents.

### Key Points:

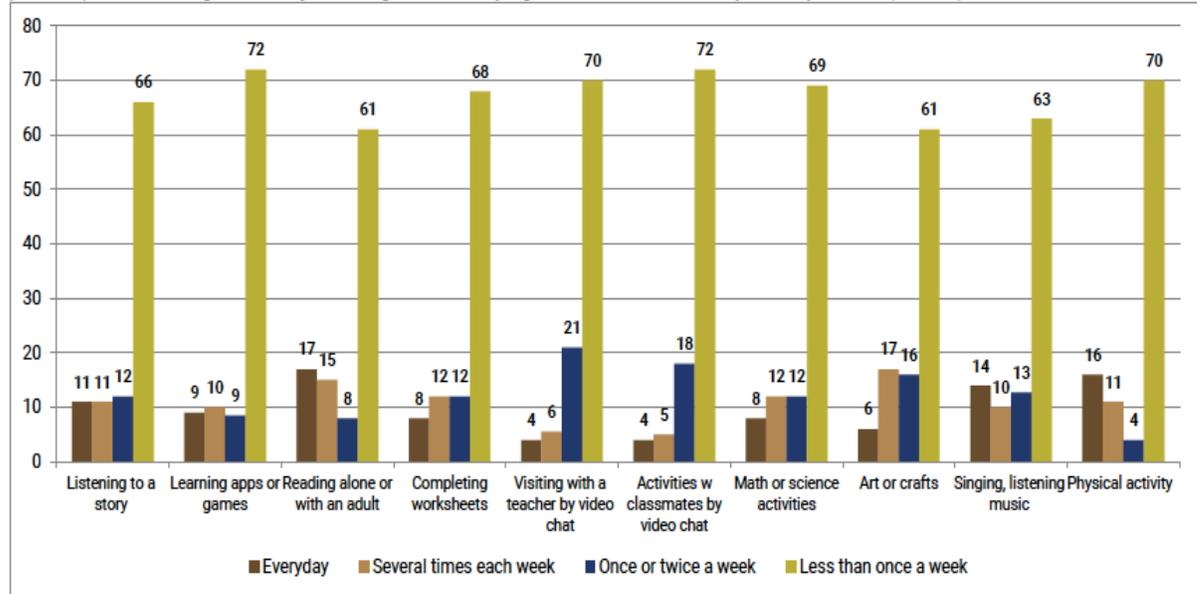
- The data was separated into various categories such as race, region, and household income to examine differences in at-home learning behaviors.
- Despite high rates of preschool closures, children and parents were found to participate **less often** in at-home learning activities, such as reading and arts, than before the pandemic struck.
- There is **very little remote support** from preschools.
- More public preschools were closed than private preschools.

### Findings:

- After the pandemic, parents read to their child, sang songs, taught basic literacy and math skills, and worked on arts and crafts **less often** than in 2019 (pre-pandemic).
- Parents reported children watched TV **three times as often** as they read or listened to to/played music.
- **90% of public programs** closed compared to two-thirds of private programs.
- 86% of children who had been attending preschool programs were no longer served in classrooms after the pandemic struck.
- **Just 10% of children** continued to attend the same program on the same schedule.
- 48% of families reported receiving some sort of support from preschools after closure.
- Of the 48% of families receiving support, **just 23% received meals**.
- 28% of children whose preschools closed had received mandatory assignments with an average of **one hour spent per day**.

- **Parent education levels** were positively associated with reading print books and indoor play and negatively associated with watching TV or playing video games.

Figure 7. Percentage reporting each frequency of remote learning activities (everyday, several times per week, 1-2 times per week, less than once per week) for children ages 3-5 not yet kindergarten whose programs had closed their in-person operations (N = 427)



### Suggestions for how to use this information when working with families:

- **Advocate for Remote Support:** Since only 46% of families were receiving any type of support, it is important that we are ensuring families receive educational and social supports during school closures.
- **Parent-Engagement:** The study suggested that family characteristics can be related to frequency of parental engagement activities and frequency of home-learning activities. It is important that we work with families to emphasize the importance of activities focused on learning and development while schools are closed.
- **Focus on Learning & Development Activities:** Since this study found a high frequency of watching TV and playing indoors, and low frequency of reading and playing music, it is important to focus on activities that benefit learning and development. With the absence of mandatory assignments and the interaction with preschools, it is essential we work to provide assignments and feedback if possible.
- **Enrollment in Programs:** Despite a demonstrated lack of remote support, it is possible that children will receive some learning support, so it is important to continue monitoring enrollment.