



Using home visits to reinforce learning in the Head Start REDI program

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To succeed in school, children need:

- Rudimentary knowledge of letters and numbers
- Capacity to pay attention
- Ability to get along with teacher and peers (Blair, 2002)

However, living in poverty undermines all of those skills

Our goal was to enhance the level of support children receive in preschool and at home to fortify resilience



Preschools are under increasing pressure to do it all:
teach both academic and social-emotional skills



Head Start REDI (Research-based Developmentally Informed) sought to ease that burden and improve child learning

Integrated language / literacy and social-emotional curricula

- Sound games and alphabet center
- Dialogic reading about social-emotional skills
- Preschool PATHS lessons
- Teacher coaching



RCT of 24 Head Start centers and 356 children

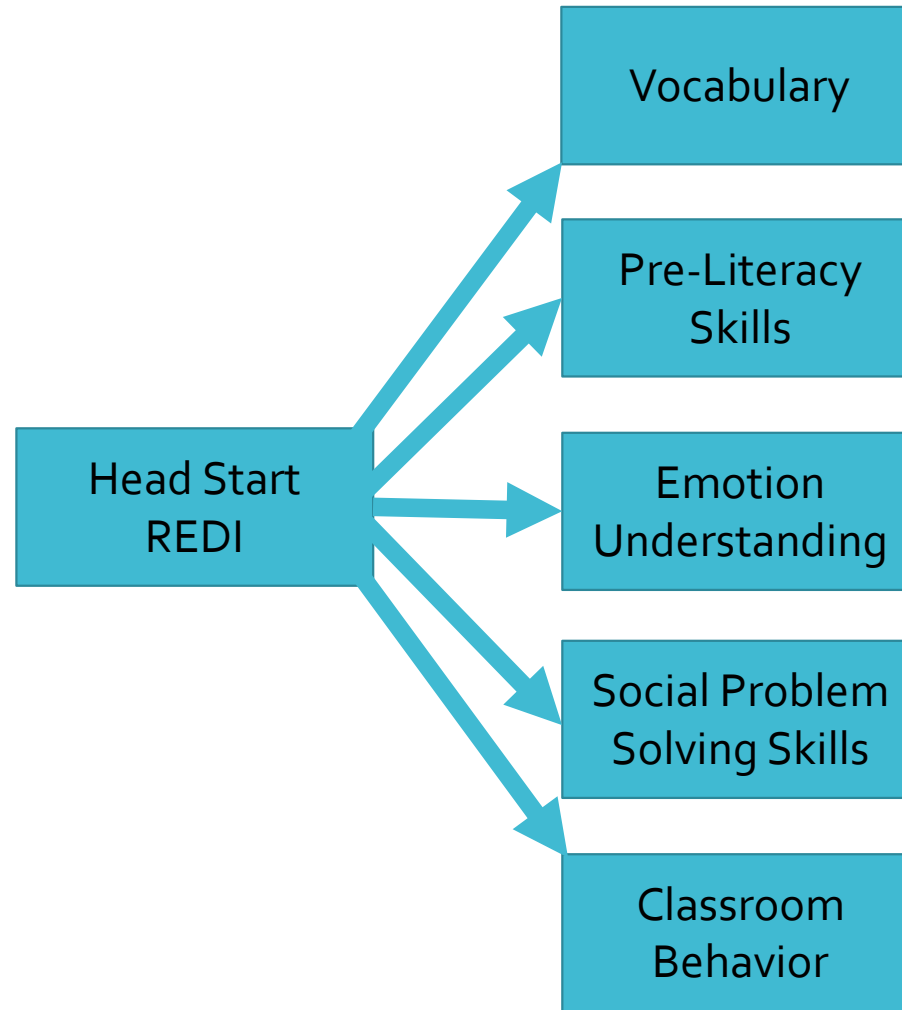
- Head Start REDI v. Head Start as usual

Aim 1: Can we improve functioning in both domains?

Aim 2: How do improvements in each domain affect school readiness?

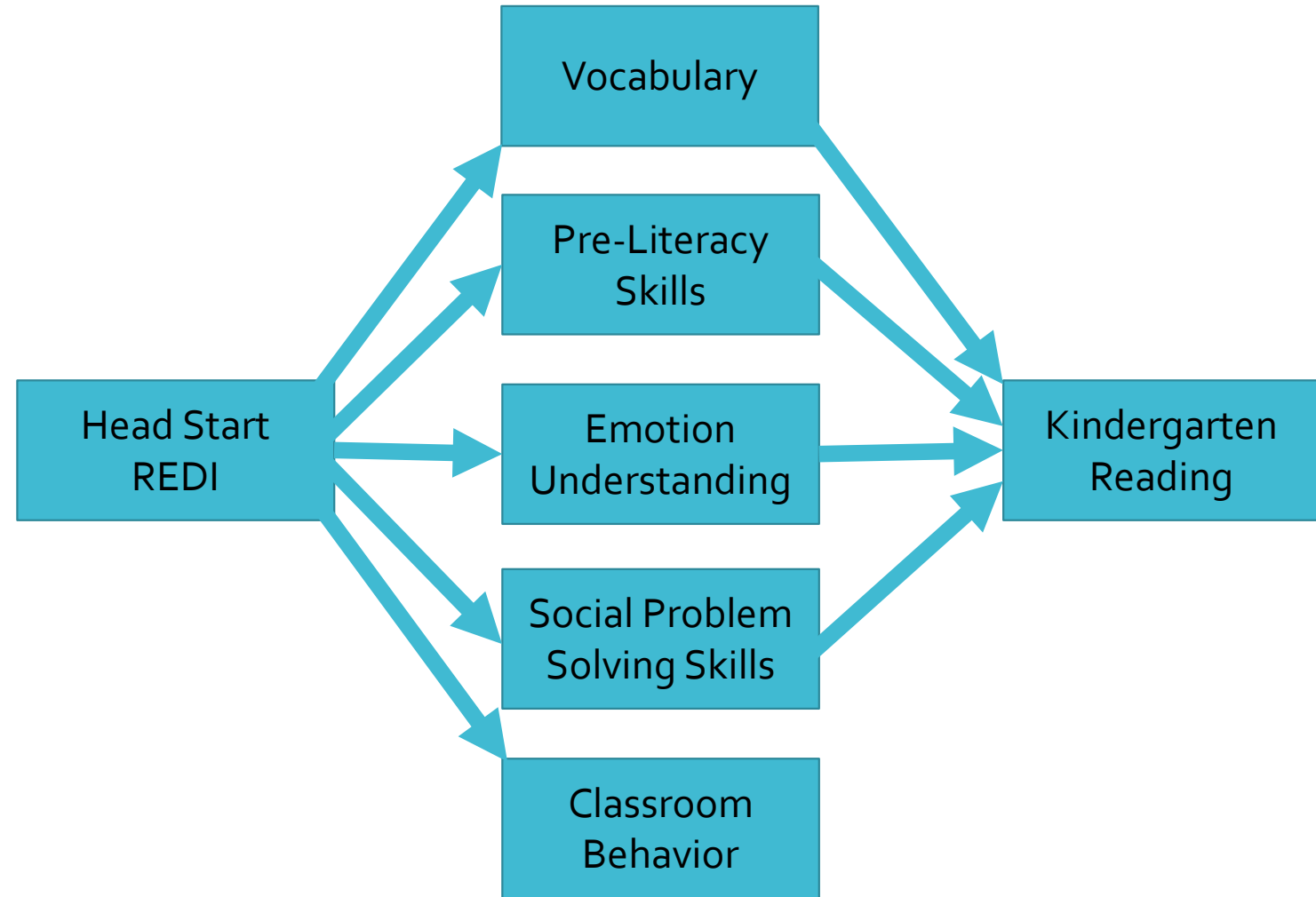
By end of preschool ...

(Bierman et al., 2008)

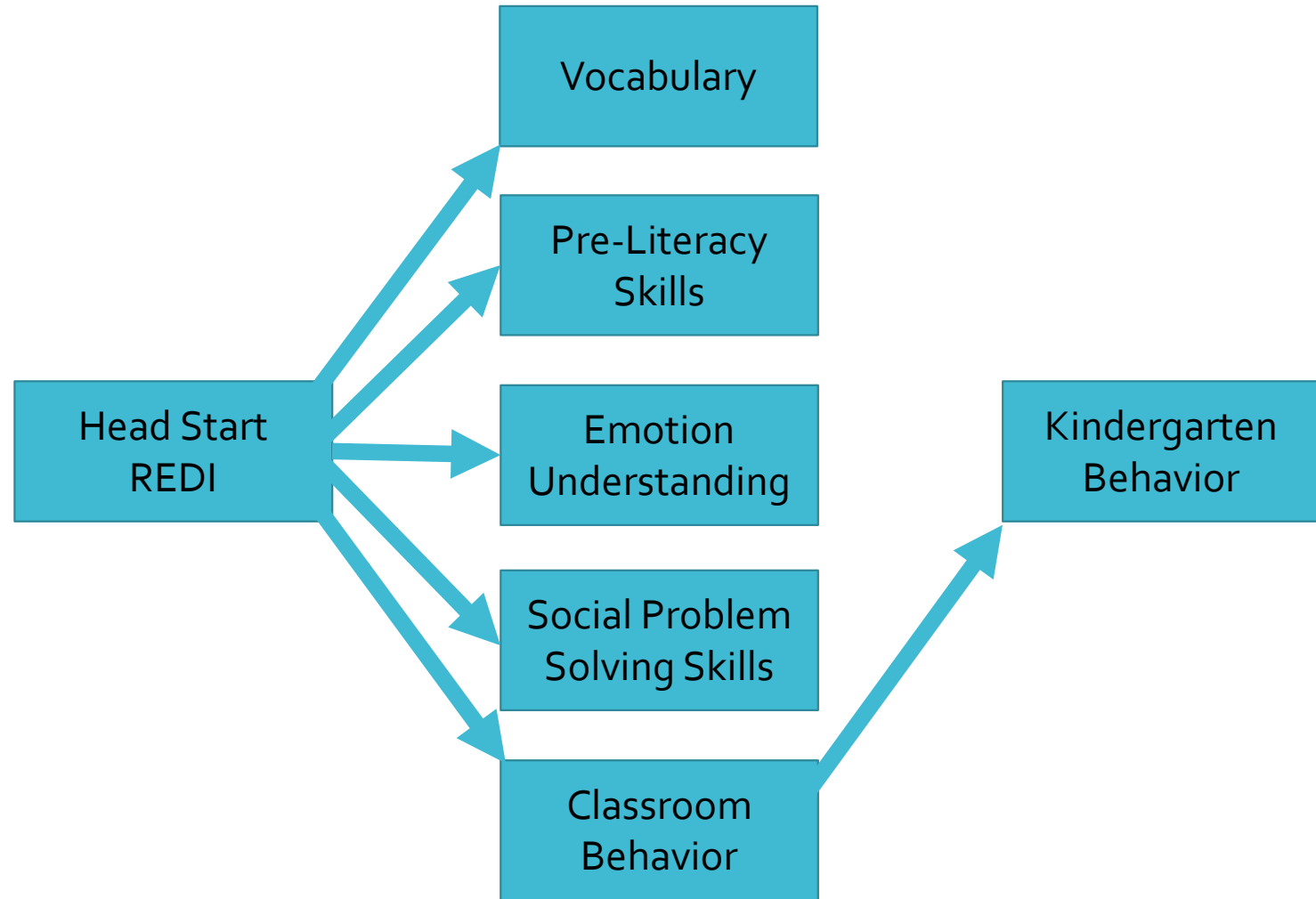


Study of mechanisms

(Nix et al., 2013)



Study of mechanisms





By end of 2nd grade, sustained effects for:

- Classroom participation
- Learning behaviors
- Social competence
- Student-teacher relationships
- Peer problems

Effects on academic achievement had disappeared

(Bierman et al., 2017)



REDI-Parent Program

- 10 home visits in Head Start; 6 home visits in kindergarten
- Reinforce REDI classroom curriculum at home
 - Reading and math learning games
 - PATHS activities for home
 - Special books on school challenges



Tested in RCT of 200 families

- Head Start REDI and REDI-Parent program v. Head Start REDI alone

Aim 1: Does the REDI-Parent program enhance the long-term benefits of the REDI classroom program?

Aim 2: If so, how are those benefits sustained?



By the end of kindergarten, REDI-Parent program improved:

- Emergent literacy skills
- Academic performance
- Self-directed learning
- Social competence

(Bierman et al., 2015)



By the end of 2nd grade, REDI-Parent program improved:

- Sight word proficiency
- Reading skills
- Math skills
- Self-perceived social competence
- Self-perceived peer problems

(Bierman et al., 2017)



Study of Parent Engagement

Parents' use of program materials predicted at end of kindergarten:

- Literacy skills
- Attention / concentration
- Social adjustment at home
- Social adjustment at school

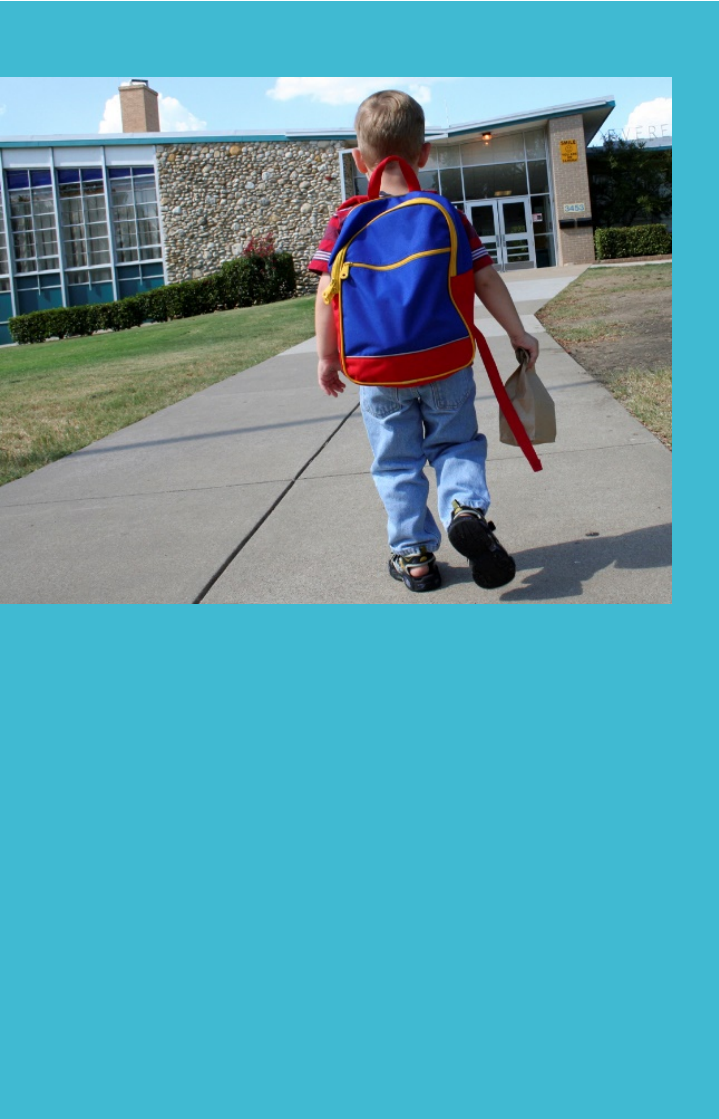
(Nix et al., 2018)



Use of program materials no longer uniquely related to outcomes by end of 2nd grade

Parent-home visitor working alliance predicted:

- Literacy skills
- Attention / concentration
- Social adjustment at home
- Social adjustment at school



Lessons from Head Start REDI and the REDI-Parent Program

- Focus on academic and social-emotional skills with integrated curriculum
- Social-emotional skills appear to boost reading achievement
- Reinforce lessons at school with coordinated home practice
 - Preserves academic gains and fortifies social-emotional gains
- Parent use of materials predicts initial benefits
- Working alliance between parents and home visitors predicts sustained benefits



Thank you!