

# Pre-K program helps low-income kids succeed in school

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(HealthDay)—A pre-kindergarten program designed to help low-income

minority children develop social and other skills appears to boost school performance, a new study shows.

Researchers conducted a three-year follow-up on ParentCorps—a family-focused, school-based program—at New York City public schools with pre-kindergarten programs.

The program helps teachers and parents create safe, nurturing environments for kids to develop social skills. It's also designed to help youngsters improve skills around "self-regulation," which involves helping kids to monitor and control their behaviors to reach healthy goals.

The study included nearly 800 children, with about half of them at five schools with ParentCorps in pre-kindergarten and the other half at schools without the program.

By the second grade, children who had been in ParentCorps in pre-kindergarten had lower rates of [mental health problems](#) and did better at school than those who weren't in the program.

"Children in schools with ParentCorps had more positive trajectories for mental health and academic performance," said study author Laurie Miller Brotman, who's with NYU Langone Medical Center in New York City.

The study was published online Oct. 3 in the journal *JAMA Pediatrics*.

The "findings suggest that family-centered intervention during pre-K has the potential to mitigate the effect of poverty-related stressors on healthy development and thereby reduce racial and [socioeconomic disparities](#)," Brotman said in a journal news release.

**More information:** The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on ways to help your child in [school](#).

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