



Behavioral Insights and Parenting Lab

THE ISSUE

Disadvantaged children are particularly at risk for entering kindergarten behind their more advantaged peers, setting up an achievement gap that continues through later school and into adulthood. Finding ways to optimally support parent engagement is key to closing this gap.

OUR APPROACH

Research shows that a variety of low-cost, light-touch behavioral supports can successfully change behavior in a number of key arenas of life, including health and financial savings behavior. The BIP Lab is dedicated to experimental research to investigate whether these approaches can make a difference in parenting strategies to promote children's development in low-income families. We answer questions such as:

- How can insights from behavioral science help parents meet their goals in supporting their child's development?
- Can tools like goal setting, reminders, and feedback increase engagement in math talk, the amount of time parents spend reading to their children, or improve preschool attendance rates?
- How can "behavioral spillovers" be leveraged to improve school readiness?

CO-DIRECTORS

Ariel Kalil, Ph.D. is a professor at The University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, where she also directs the Center for Human Potential and Public Policy. She is a developmental psychologist who studies economic conditions, parenting, and child development. In addition to her work at the BIP Lab, her current research examines the historical evolution of income-based gaps in parenting behavior and children's cognitive and non-cognitive skills.

Susan E. Mayer, Ph.D. is a professor and dean emeritus at The University of Chicago Harris Public Policy. She has published numerous articles on the measurement of poverty, the effect of growing up in poor neighborhoods, and the effect of parental income on children's well-being. In addition to her work at the BIP Lab, she is engaged in a number of studies of intergenerational economic mobility.



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