Home-Based Early Intervention and the Influence of Family Resources on Cognitive Development | Articles

Carla M. Bann

Carla M. Bann, Jan L. Wallander, Barbara Do, Vanessa Thorsten, Omrana Pasha, Fred J. Biasini, Roopa Bellad, Shivaprasad Goudar, Elwyn Chomba, Elizabeth McClure, Waldemar A. Carlo

Abstract

**OBJECTIVE:** To investigate whether early developmental intervention (EDI) can positively affect the trajectories of cognitive development among children from low-resource families.

**METHODS:** Longitudinal analyses were conducted of data from 293 children in the Brain Research to Ameliorate Impaired Neurodevelopment Home-based Intervention Trial, a randomized controlled trial of a home-based EDI program, to examine trajectories of Bayley Scales of Infant Development—Second Edition Mental Development Index (MDI) scores from 12 to 36 months of age among young children from high- and low-resource families in 3 low- to middle-resource countries.

**RESULTS:** A 3-way interaction among family resources, intervention group, and age was statistically significant after controlling for maternal, child, and birth characteristics (Wald $\chi^2(1) = 9.41, P = .002$). Among children of families with high resources, both the intervention and control groups had significant increases in MDI scores over time ($P < .001$ and $P = .002$, respectively), and 36-month MDI scores for these 2 groups did not differ significantly ($P = .602$). However, in families with low resources, the EDI group displayed greater improvement, resulting in significantly higher 36-month MDI scores than the control group ($P < .001$). In addition, the 36-month MDI scores for children in families with low resources receiving EDI did not differ significantly from children from high-resource families in either the EDI ($P = .509$) or control ($P = .882$) groups.

**CONCLUSIONS:** A home-based EDI during the first 3 years of life can substantially decrease the developmental gap between children from families with lower versus higher resources, even among children in low- to middle-resource countries.

- Accepted December 14, 2015.
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