Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Latino Parents' Experiences With Literacy Promotion in Primary Care: Facilitators and Barriers

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Literacy promotion is a pediatric standard of care in which clinicians provide guidance on shared reading. Latino parents are more likely to hear advice to read with children but are less likely to do so. We sought to understand literacy promotion from the perspective of Latino parents and to identify facilitators and barriers. We purposively sampled Latino parents who participated in Reach Out and Read (ROR) for a qualitative, semistructured interview study. We identified themes using immersion/crystallization and achieved thematic saturation after 21 interviews. Two thirds of participants had less than high school education; half of whom had not completed eighth grade. The mean child age was 16.4 months. Primary facilitators of engagement were advice from a pediatrician during a clinical encounter and receipt of the ROR book. Barriers identified included: 1) parents' perceptions that their children were not developmentally ready and that their children's behavior (eg, activity) indicated they were not interested in shared reading; 2) self-perceived limited literacy and/or English proficiency; 3) parenting demands occurring in the context of poverty; and 4) continued child media use despite advice from pediatricians to choose alternate activities such as shared reading instead. Parent-clinician relationships are central to ROR's impact but clinicians need to pay more attention to factors in a child's broader environment to strengthen literacy promotion. Specifically clinicians should emphasize skill building during the clinical encounter (eg, sharing knowledge about child development and modeling) and work collaboratively with other stakeholders to address poverty-related stressors.

Journal:

Academic Pediatrics
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