Findings from the UK's

Early risk factors and poor outcomes

poor literacy and educational attainment anti-social and criminal behaviour unemployment substance abuse poor mental and physical health adult mortality

3

Interventions with Disadvantaged Groups

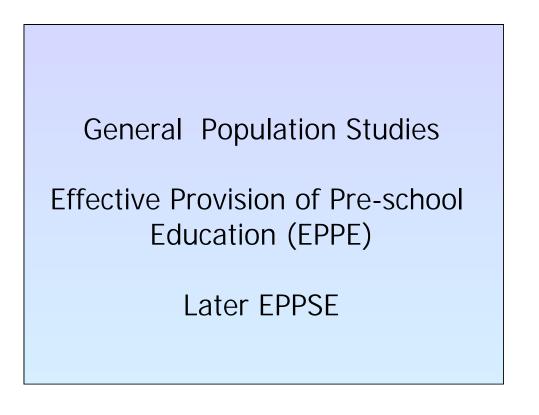
"If people keep falling off a cliff, don't worry about where you put the ambulance at the bottom. Build a fence at the top and stop them falling off in the first place."

ECEC as Intervention for Disadvantaged Children

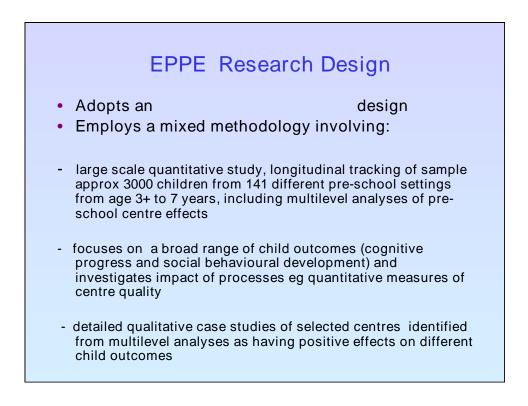
There are several studies with similar conclusions –

High Quality ECEC can improve development for children from disadvantaged backgrounds

e.g. Perry Preschool Project, Abecedarian, Chicago Child-Parent Center





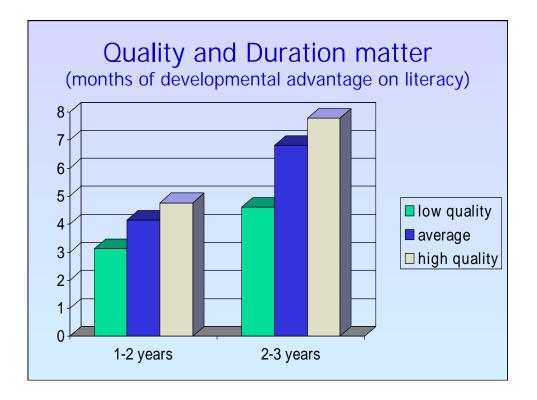


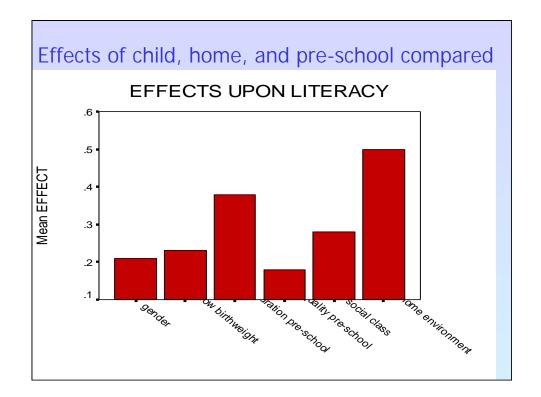
Key Features of EPPE Mixed Research Design

- Quantitative analyses enable comparisons across settings and by type of provision taking account intake differences in terms of significant child, family and home factors including prior attainments or social behaviour (estimates of pre-school centre effectiveness based on 'valueadded' for cognitive progress and social behavioural development).
- Detailed qualitative cases studies of more effective preschool settings explore organisation and processes, including pedagogy, associated with positive child outcomes and increase understanding of best practice.



Kathy Sylva – University of Oxford Pam Sammons – University of Oxford





Home Learning Environment

Parents asked about activities in the home. A home learning environment (HLE) index constructed (Melhuish et al., 2001).

Seven activities linked to development.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 not occur

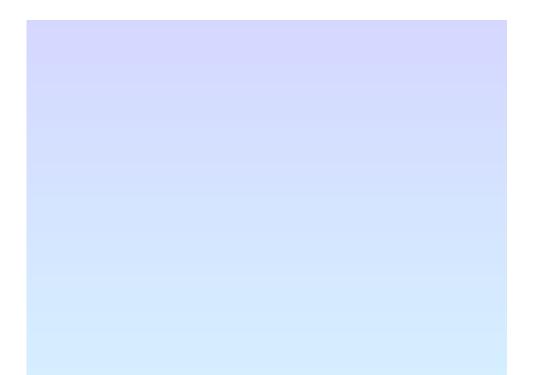
very frequent

Reading to child Library visits Painting & drawing Playing with letters Playing with numbers/shapes Songs/ poems /nursery rhymes

The Home Learning Environment in the early years has powerful long-term effects

"What parents do is more important than who parents are".

(Melhuish et al., 2001)

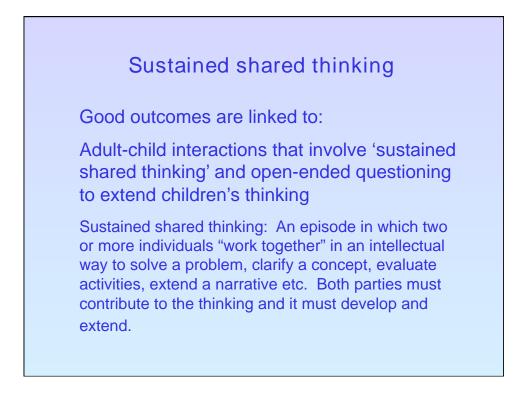


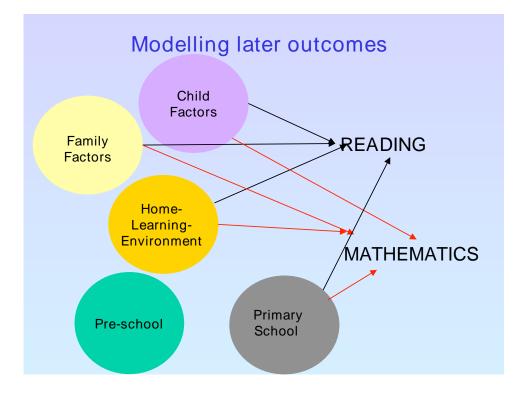
Combining quantitative and qualitative methods

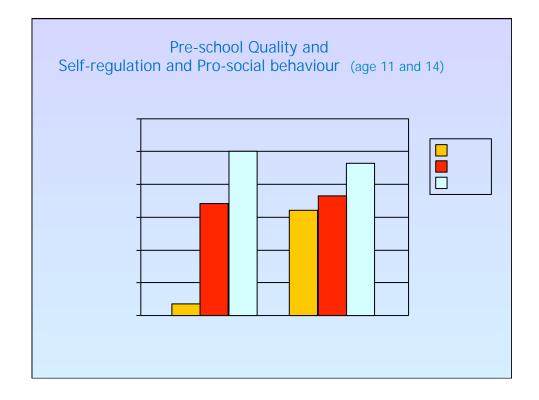
From quantitative analyses we identified ECEC centres that were particularly effective.

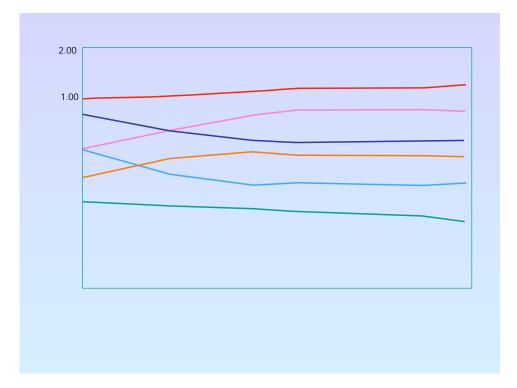
Then qualitative case studies looked at what made them effective.











Conclusions

- From age 2 all children benefit from preschool.
- The quality of preschool matters.
- Part-time has equal benefit to full-time.
- Preschool effects persist until teenage years
- High quality preschool can protect a child from effects of a low effective school.

The Impact of Research on Policy

DfES's Analytical Strategy (DfES, 2006)

(DfES, 2006, p20).

Her Majesty's Treasury. (2004), Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare. Norwich: HMSO.

(HMT, 2004, p65).

Effects on policy in UK

- Free part-time pre-school from age 3 (2004)
- Extension of parental leave (2004)
- 10-year Childcare Strategy (2004)
- Guidance for Children's Centres (2005)
- Childcare Bill (2006)
- Acceptance that money spent on pre-school produces savings later

LESSONS

1.Early years are very important
2.Preschool is part of infrastructure for a

successful society

3. High quality preschool boosts development

4.Parenting is also very important

5. Preschool lifts population curve.

Example References

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