

ABSTRACT

RANDLE, KAREN FRAZIER. Examining the Impact of Family Life Coaching on Student Academic Success (Under the direction of Dr. Kimberly Allen).

Purpose. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of family life coaching on student academic success.

Design/methodology/approach. This study was conducted in a middle school (grades 6-8) in an urban area in a southeast state. The researcher conducted 4 coaching sessions with 8 middle school families. The efficacy of family life coaching was analyzed through pre- and post- qualitative data collection.

Findings. The findings of this study suggests that students benefit from family life coaching in the academic setting. This study highlighted positive growth in student academic behaviors and family communication patterns as a result of family life coaching regarding academics.

Research limitations/implications. Sample size and lack of diversity were clear constraints. Future longitudinal studies can focus on student academic and socio-economic diversity, as well as a larger more diverse sample size to include multiple school districts.

Originality/value. There lacks empirical research conducted to study the benefits of family life coaching on student academic success, especially within the academic setting. This study will help educators understand the benefits of family life coaching in academics.

Keywords. Parental Involvement, Family Life Coaching, Parent Coaching, Educational Coach

Paper type. Research paper

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Examining the Impact of Family, Life Coaching on Student Academic Success

by
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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
North Carolina State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Masters of Science

Family Life and Youth Development

Raleigh, North Carolina

2016

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BIOGRAPHY

Karen Randle has a Bachelors of Science degree from North Carolina State University in Middle School Mathematics Education. Throughout her 23 years in education, she has developed an interest in strategies to assist low performing students. Karen has brought her experience in education to her studies in the Youth, Family and Community Sciences Master's degree program at North Carolina State University. She will graduate in May, 2016 with her Master's as well as her certification as a family life educator. Through her thesis research, Karen has found a passion for coaching in the educational setting hopes to become a Board Certified Coach so she may continue her pursuit of coaching in the educational field.

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The Impact of Family Life Coaching on Academic Success

Parental involvement in children's academic lives is a common indicator for children's success in school (Taylor, Clayton and Rowley, 2004). Studies have focused on how achievement expectations set by parents influence academic outcomes for children (Richman and Rescorla, 1995; Wentzel, 1998) and how these early expectations affect outcomes throughout children's educational experience (Hess, Holloway, Dickson, and Price, 1984). Consequently, parental perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about schools and achievement impact children's academic outcomes (Taylor et al., 2004). These perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs are largely based on parental feelings and emotions, which are strong influences on parenting practices that may determine effective or ineffective parenting strategies (Thompson, 1993). Parents have a strong impact on their children's motivation and success in education.

Increasing parent involvement in education is one of the six goals in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2016). Additionally, support for parental involvement in schools is found in several national organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association and the National Coalition for Parental Involvement. Pomerantz, Moorman, and Litwacket (2007) explain that recent research on parental involvement in children's education has focused on the extent to which parents are involved for the improvement of the student. Epstein and VanVoor (2001) argued that the amount of time spent on homework should be more than quantitative. They argue that the more

involvement on the parents may not be better for children. The varying degree and intensity of parental involvement has an equally varying impact as all adolescents have different responses. Pomerantz et al. point out there has been little research conducted on parent's academic support at home. With this gap in research the effects of parent's involvement at home in school-related assignments is unclear. They explain that although home-based non-academic intellectual enrichment is beneficial, similar involvement in academics does not always appear to have such benefits. As adolescents seek independence and resist parental involvement in their social lives, there is still a need for parents to guide them through the complexities of the academic system. This ambiguity of home involvement and support raises concern as it is the most frequent form of educational involvement by parents (Ritblatt et al., 2002).

Although research suggests that parental involvement most often has a positive effect on student academic success, there is a second aspect important to the full benefits of parents' involvement (Pomerantz, Moorman, and Litwack, 2007). It is important to analyze *how* parents are involved in their child's education to assess their effectiveness of their involvement (Darling and Steinberg, 1993; Gronlneck, 2003; and Pomerantz et al., 2007). Darling and Steinberg's 1993 proposal suggests that the style of practices used by the parents will determine the effect on their child. Pomerantz and Wang (2006) explain that in terms of skill development, parental affect will influence their children's experience concerning school. The experience of positive emotions assists in creating openness to different ideas and actions (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001). Parental support of academic struggles, validating frustrations and stressing the positive outcomes instills a positive intrinsic orientation.

However, irritable and critical parents may reinforce that schoolwork is an unpleasant and undesirable task. For example, parents who believe in their child's potential may recognize difficulties their child is experiencing academically while at the same time valuing their strengths. However, parents who lack confidence in their child will only focus on the deficits and difficulties.

A common struggle observed by educators is a parents ability to separate their academic goals for their child from what is realistic. Parental involvement may be driven by feelings of obligation to repair their child's poor performance or that their child's performance dictates their own worth as a parent (Levin, et al., 1997; Pomerantz and Eaton, 2001; Pomerantz and Wang, 2006). Therefore, parents may feel pressured, frustrated and over-involved with their child's academics at home and as a result cause a controlling and negative affect.

Although there is current research examining coaching support programs for educators (Thornton, 2012), there has been little recent research on the effectiveness of coaching families (parents and students) within the educational environment. This study allows families to experience family life coaching within the educational setting, fostering realistic goal development and growth. Consideration is given to the degree and method of parental involvement as it is critical to understanding how those dynamics impact academic achievement. The first part of this paper examines the importance of parental involvement, its impact on adolescent academic success, and how parenting styles impact adolescent learning. A qualitative design is used to measure the impact of family life coaching on adolescent academic success.

Literature Review

As the intuitive definition of parental involvement has evolved over time (e.g., the participation of parents in school activities; Fishel and Ramirez, 2005), the operational definition of parental involvement has not been consistently clear (Fan and Chen, 1999). For the purposes of this study *parental involvement* can be defined as the parental expectations regarding school performance (Bloom, 1980), regular communication with their child regarding academics (Christenson, Rounds, and Gorney, 1992), and rules parents impose at home regarding academics (Keith, Keith, Troutman, Bickley, Trivette, and Singh, 1993). However, it is important to note that parental involvement cannot be limited to this one definition as it involves a wide range of behavioral patterns and parenting practices (Fan and Chen, 1999). Furthermore, there is evidence that certain dimensions of parental involvement have more of an impact on academic achievement than others (Singh, Bickley, Trivette, Keith, Keith, and Anderson, 1995). The study focuses on parental involvement, communication and at-home rules as the operational definition for parental expectations to measure the impact of family life coaching on student academic success.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement with their child's educational goals at home and school is essential in promoting academic success for their child (Taylor et al., 2004). Steinberg (1996) asserts that a child's life outside school may be more influential to academic success than the formal instruction that occurs during the day. This suggests that the time students spend on academics at home is equal to or more important than the time spent in school

during the day. When parents are involved, students not only have better academic success, but higher attendance records, lower drop out rates, higher academic goals, and are more positive about school (Bogenschneider, 1997). Children whose families are involved in home and school partnerships earn higher test scores, have higher rates of graduation, and have greater college attendance (Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2006). Conversely, minimal or lack of parental monitoring is correlated with at-risk behaviors such as delinquency, substance use, teenage pregnancy (Cottrell et al., 2007; Fletcher, Steinberg, and Sellers, 1999), and lower grades (Crouter, Helms-Erikson, Updegraff, and McHale 1999).

Research suggest that effectively planned and well implemented parent involvement activities (e.g., help with homework, volunteering in school) regarding their child's education result in substantial benefits to children, parents, educators, and schools (e.g., higher grades, more school resources, deeper student personal investment) (Olsen and Fuller, 2007). Additionally, when family and school collaboration exists, students' attitude and self-esteem improve. Henderson and Berla (1994) explain such collaboration also results in less disciplinary problems, lower rates of high-risk behaviors, and improved communication with families and teachers. They go on to explain that parents involved in partnerships with their child's school experience more confidence in their decision-making skills and more confidence helping children with schoolwork at home. Schools report better performance, more support and are held in higher esteem in the community when families are involved (Henderson and Berla).

Parental Involvement with Adolescents

Dwyer and Hecht (1992) propose that parental response to the complexities of

adolescent development (e.g., physical and emotional changes) may be a possible cause for lack of parental involvement in their adolescent's education. Stevenson and Baker (1987) report that as children age, parental support declines at home and in school. Some parents believe as children enter middle and high school, their involvement is not as important because adolescents want more independence (Eccles and Harold, 1996). Albert Holliday (1986) states that the structure of middle and high school does not lend itself to continuous parent-teacher contact. Additionally, parents assume that adolescents are becoming increasingly more independent and may resist attempts from parents to become involved. As the curricula content and intensity of school have changed since they were young, parents lose confidence in their adolescent's subject matter and often feel it is harder to build a relationship with their child's school once they leave the elementary grades (Dwyer and Hecht, 1992).

Most of the research on parental involvement focuses on elementary age children (Toren, 2013). There is a false assumption among parents that their involvement should decrease as their children move to middle and high school because they believe they can no longer assist their child with more challenging subjects and they may doubt the effectiveness of being involved during their adolescent years (Hill and Chao, 2009). There is a barrier to parental involvement due to the middle and high school structure, which does not support parents' involvement as much as in elementary school (Toren, 2013). The size and complex structure of middle and high schools makes it difficult for parents to know whom to contact to obtain information about their adolescents' progress (Sanders and Epstein, 2000). Parents often discover that teachers interact less frequently with individual students due to the large

number of students they teach (Eccles and Harold, 1996). However, research shows parents continue to be a major source of support for adolescents (Collins and Laursen, 2004) such as emotional, financial moral guidance. This involvement has an impact adolescent's academic motivation and school achievement (Seginer, 2006).

As children transition to adolescents, many simultaneous changes occur such as school transition, puberty, and changing relationships with parents (Toren, 2013). This transitional period is commonly associated as a period of stress, anxiety, and turmoil for adolescents, (Grill-Taquechel, Norton, and Ollendick, 2010). These changes have an impact on students' motivation and achievement (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, and Davis-Kean, 2006), indicated by decline in interest in school and grades (Dotterer, McHale, and Crouter, 2009). According to family system theory, family relationships change the most when the circumstances of an individual family member or of the whole family change; adolescence is one period in which family relationships usually change significantly. During this period, families move from parents having a pattern of decision making towards establishing equilibrium and less stratified relationships (Steinberg, 2008). During adolescence, home academic support (e.g., checking homework) and school-based involvement (e.g., volunteering), might be less needed or wanted and thus are less effective (Seginer, 2008). Adolescents naturally seek independence and the academic arena is a common area to fight parental involvement. Therefore as adolescents gain independence and may become less eager to have their parents visit school, Stevenson and Baker (1987) point out that parents' educational involvement remains an important predictor of school outcomes throughout adolescence. Overall, parental involvement during middle and high school is positively

related to academic achievement (Toren, 2013).

Styles and Extremes of Parenting

Diana Baurmind is a clinical and developmental psychologist who focused a great deal of her studies on parenting styles. Baurmind's 1965 study outlines three distinct parenting styles: (1) authoritarian, (2) permissive, and (3) authoritative. The *authoritarian* style is characterized by strict discipline and one-way communications, with only the parent making decisions. *Permissive* parenting is described as a parent with a hands-off attitude. In this style, parents offer little guidance, little goal setting, and no limits on the child's behavior. In the third style, the *authoritative* parent sets and enforces limits on the child's behavior, defines expectations for success in school, and is open to feedback from the child. This style of parenting allows for a two-way dialogue between parent and child, provided mutual respect and boundary setting.

Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987) found that parenting styles impact adolescent's school performance. Authoritative parenting styles have been related to high academic achievement, but authoritarian and permissive styles have been connected to lower grades. Dewar (2013) described authoritative parents to be responsive and nurturing. These parents encourage their children to ask questions. They explain the rationale behind the rules and are less likely to control children through the induction of shame, guilt, or the withdrawal of love. Dewar goes on to suggest that while children from authoritarian families may be relatively well-behaved, they tend to be less resourceful, have poorer social skills, and lower self esteem. Additionally when compared with children from

authoritative households, children exposed to authoritarian discipline may also achieve less at school (Dewar, 2013). A study found that the authoritarian parenting style was linked with lower school grades for all ethnic groups and that parents who achieved higher levels of education themselves were more likely to have had an authoritative parenting style (Dornbusch et al.).

While authoritative parenting has been demonstrated throughout literature to be highly effective, there is an increase in the extreme form of parent involvement called “helicopter parenting” (Darling and Steinberg, 1993). Hunt (2008) explains that helicopter parents completely control every aspect of their child's life, from play dates to which college to attend. Additionally, Hunt goes on to explain that some helicopter parents can cross ethical lines teaching their children to plagiarize, be dishonest about academics, and even bully to get what they want for their children. As a result, when children of helicopter parents leave home, they have difficulty analyzing important decisions and dealing with transitions between high school and college (Hunt). These young adults tend to make bad decisions in sexual relationships and substances (i.e. alcohol and drugs), are unable to resolve conflicts with friends or roommates, and are more likely to practice academic dishonesty (Dickerson, 2007). The impact of helicopter parenting results in students' inability to make decisions or cope, because they have no experience with self-advocacy, self-reliance and time management (Hunt, 2008).

Parenting styles are an important component to take into consideration as a family life coach. Parents expectations and communication styles regarding those expectations are an important dynamic in working with families regarding academic performance. Observing

these dynamics of parenting is an important factor in working with families willing to make change.

Family Life Coaching

With changes in student development and support at home, children, parents and schools could benefit from in-school coaching support. Allen and Huff (2014) explain that family life coaching is a strengths-based approach to helping families achieve success through the use of family-set goals. The role of a family life coach is to collaboratively work with families to offer resources, models, and support in order to assist families in reaching their goals. Family life coaches use techniques such as powerful questioning, feedback, assessment, goals and actions, and nonjudgmental (i.e, undemanding, forgiving) accountability provisions (Rush and Sheldon, 2006). Family life coaches guide families through reflective questioning, astute assignments, and sessions confirming follow through (Allen and Huff, 2014). Coaches are not seen as experts, but rather as partners helping families achieve their goals with the belief that the family has the ability, power and motivation to change (Allen and Huff, 2014).

Coaching is a strength-based approach to aide in helping individuals with self-identified goals (Allen and Huff, 2014). A strengths-based approach uses natural capacities that allows authentic expressions (Govindji and Linley, 2007). People that use their strengths each day show an increase in happiness and a decrease in depression (Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson, 2005). It has been found that people who change their goals over time are more likely to change them in directions of their strengths (Sheldon, Arndt and Houser-Marko, 2003). Further, research has shown how coaching interventions may impact the

perceptions of one's strengths, which assists with goal setting and achievement (Burke and Linley, 2007).

Family life coaching is the theoretical foundation for this study. Using this strengths based approach, this theory supports positive collaboration and support for families setting goals for change. This theory is especially applicable for working with students and parents. As students grow, both they and their parents continually adjust to growth and change. Family life coaching would provide a tool to help families during these transitions.

Coaching Youth

Sleeper-Triplet (2008) outlines three ways that family life coaching within the academic setting benefits youth. First, coaching helps a child/teen learn techniques for maintaining focus, time-on-task, and managing time and organizational skills. Developing these skills assists with smoother family function and academic performance, which are part of the building blocks for future success. Second, by beginning the coaching process with youth, coaches are able to help students stay motivated, avoid frustration, and build the confidence and awareness that develop during formative years. Third, coaches can help create structures and routines to help with attention and organizational issues that make it difficult to keep up with schoolwork, allowing students to perform at their best of their ability.

Family life coaches work with families to cultivate growth through setting goals, assessments, compelling questioning and accountability. There is a gap in the literature around coaching in the educational setting. This study will examine the use of parent

coaching and measure its impact on their children's academic success. Participants will meet for a minimum of 4 sessions in person with a parent coach. These meetings will focus on assisting parents with setting goals to improve parenting skills, communication and overall relationship quality with their child as pertaining to their academic success. Through these coaching experiences, the impact of family life coaching regarding student academic success may be measured.

Methodology

Family life coaching is currently absent within the school system in which this study took place. Students are unable to receive support services on a regular basis due to the high student-counselor ratios and multiple responsibilities assigned to support personnel. Through coaching, supporting struggling students and their families on a continual basis may provide additional support counselors are unable to provide. Offering coaching as long term and in-depth support program may be the beginning of a new family option for families in regards to academics.

Because family life coaching is an emergent field in which there is little existing research (Allen and Huff, 2014), research is needed to empirically evaluate ways in which family life coaching can positively impact families. Research clearly demonstrates the impact of parents on a child's academic success, yet there have been no empirical studies to date that examine family life coaching as an approach to helping youth be more successful in school. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of family life coaching on adolescents' academic success. Parents and their children were offered a minimum of four family life coaching sessions to improve their parenting strategies and their adolescent's

academic achievement. The role of the coach was to offer support and resources to assist parents in meeting the goals they set for their family. Families were expected to be open to change and willing to try new strategies between sessions. Parent coaching was used to assist parents in best balancing their involvement with their child's academics without under or over parenting (e.g., being under or over involved). Additionally, coaching sessions with the parents and students were key in assessing the effectiveness of implemented strategies. Working with both student and family provided a platform that allowed common language and time to address all concerns and goals.

Students and parents met in a private office within the main office area of the school. A circular seating arrangement was provided to encourage a collaborative feel for families. The coach would record in writing all feedback parents and students shared. The terminology “plus/delta” (i.e. positive versus negatives) was used in each session to encourage a positive growth model. Instead of families focusing on “successes” and “failures”, they were asked to focus on what was working within their family structure and what was not. This non-judgmental approach gave families the opportunity to set reasonable and realistic academic goals for their child.

This study used a qualitative approach to measure the impact of family life coaching on student academic success. This pragmatic approach assessed the effects of beliefs and actions on the coaching process (Patton, 2015). In order to qualify for participation in this study, however families must have a student in the selected middle school. No academic achievement level prerequisite were required. Families, self-selected into the study, wanted to partner with the coach to set academic goals for change.

Recruitment and In-take

Parents and their students were recruited through parent education events at the beginning of the school year (e.g., 8th grade parent night, PTA welcome events). It was during those events that the coaching program was explained and voluntary participation of interested families was obtained. Parents who chose to participate were provided information by phone regarding the process prior to the first session. Once consent was obtained (Appendix A), families participating in coaching sessions set academic goals and began working towards those goals. Participants met in a private office provided by the school with a coach (and primary investigator) for a range of 4 to 6 sessions. This coach also held a current license as an educator in the state of North Carolina. A total of 8 families (n=8) participated in this study in a minimum of 4 and maximum of 6 coaching sessions taking place. The mean session participation was 4.6 with a standard deviation of 0.69. All participants completed an intake (Appendices B and C) and exit questionnaire (Appendices D and E), which assessed status and progress. To ensure fair data comparison, all families filled out an exit questionnaire at 4 week. Half of the participants ended their coaching after session 4, whereas the remaining opted to meet for one or two additional sessions. Parents filled out separate questionnaires from their child. These intake and exit questionnaires assessed family dynamics, attitudes and thoughts regarding student performance and behaviors around school. The exit questionnaire asked parents and students to reflect how their family dynamics, attitudes and behaviors regarding school changed since beginning the coaching process. In between sessions, a follow up form was offered (Appendix F) for the family to

assess what had been effective, what had not, and new goals they would like to focus on. All information gathered assessed current status and focused on strengths-based goal setting. Although both quantitative and qualitative data was gathered, the focus of this paper is on the qualitative outcomes of the study.

Session Format

The coach met with parents and students separately during the intake session, providing the opportunity for participants to offer unguarded feedback regarding any academic struggles the student may be facing. During this session, history was obtained, strengths were listed (i.e., organization, time management, use of planner), and small achievable goals were created. Depending on the goal focus, educational support materials were provided and/or organizational models developed. In meeting with the parents, the coach asked meaningful questions (e.g., can you describe what was it like a time when you and your parents enjoyed working on a project together?) to help families reflect on the goals they would like to set and provided any resources to help begin meeting those goals. The family coach provided support to parents in the following areas: (1) improved communication with their child, (2) strategies for approaching their children's academic goals, (3) help with study and organizational skills, (4) appropriate discipline techniques in regards to their child's academic progress, (5) helping reduce their child's anxiety or stress around school, and (6) how to motivate children who appear/seem apathetic in regards to school. Sessions provided time for reflection on previous goals, methods explored to reach those goals, and/or creation of new goals. Parent and student feedback was used as gauge to effective communication to support academic goals.

Questionnaires were used to measure the impact of family life coaching on student academic achievement. In-take questionnaires were administered to both parents and students asking for reflection on strengths and weaknesses in regards to the academic process.

Discussion took place around academic history, thoughts, and feelings. The coach achieved parent-student collaboration to work towards common goals. Effective communication and family dynamics regarding academic objectives were scripted and used to strategize methods to reach goals. As the sessions progressed, family members were offered optional blank feedback forms to allow them time to reflect on the weekly goals and measure progress. During the last session, both parents and students were asked to complete exit questionnaires comparing academic progress since the beginning of coaching. Participants were asked to reflect on the impact of family life coaching on academic goal completion, grades, family dynamic/communication changes, and overall motivation and confidence.

Data Collection

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained and participants were self-selected during an evening parental informational meeting. All participants completed an informed consent form as well as qualitative intake and exit questionnaires. Family life coaching sessions lasted between 30-60 minutes and consisted of family-driven goal development followed by action plans. The researcher documented all sessions through detailed notes, ensuring confidentiality through pre-set coding assignments. All families were given a 4 letter identification code consisting of letters of the first and last names. All data was kept in a locked and secure location in folders only identified by the letter identification codes.

Data Analysis

Content analysis occurred simultaneously during sessions, measuring goal completion. The data was analyzed using pre- and post-qualitative comparisons. The researcher identified 5 main themes in which the results were classified. Themes were analyzed using pre- and post-qualitative data to measure the effectiveness of the coaching study. Participant feedback was obtained through written documentation and compiled based on theme to measure growth and success throughout the coaching process.

Results

This study measured the impact of family life coaching on student academic success. Through successive sessions, the efficacy of coaching was analyzed through pre- and post-qualitative data collection. Results suggested that coaching families in the educational setting showed to be of benefit to participating families. The impact of academic coaching showed overall improvement not only in educational behaviors and achievement of students, but overall family dynamics concerning educational goals.

Demographics

Eight families were self selected and qualified to participate in this study. All participants were 8th grade students and were from a middle to upper socioeconomic class. Three of the five participants were male while the remaining five were female. Table 1.1 explains further the dynamics within each family construct that were important for the coach to take into consideration when working with these families.

Table 1.1

Family	Family Structure	Race/Ethnicity	Academic Status
1	International Adoption, Single Mother, 1 older sibling	Caucasian	Regular Education
2	Divorced mother, remarried, 2 younger siblings	Caucasian	Special Programs, Individualized Educational Plan, Attention Deficit Disorder, Diagnosed Neurological Disorder.
3	Single mother, father passed away when student was 3 years of age.	Bi-Racial	Special Programs, Individualized Educational Plan, Attention Deficit Disorder, Diagnosed Autistic.
4	Divorced mother, remarried, 3 younger siblings	Caucasian	Special Programs, Individualized Educational Plan, Diagnosed Autistic
5	Married parents, 1 older sibling	Middle Eastern	Regular Education, Low Achieving
6	Married parents, 1 older sibling	Caucasian	Academically Gifted
7	Married parents, 1 younger sibling	Middle Eastern	Academically Gifted
8	Married parents, no siblings	Middle Eastern	Academically Gifted

Categories of Results

The study concentrated on how family life coaching impacts student academic behaviors and achievement. From the feedback families provided, common themes began to emerge. The results were grouped into five main categories: parent concerns, parent goals, student goals, academic changes, and relationship changes. Table 2.1 summarizes the concerns and goals of the students and their parents as stated during the intake process. Table 2.1: Parent and Student Academic Concerns and Goals

<u>Parent Concerns</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel uninformed about academic progress • Time management • Organization • Incomplete assignments • Student lack of motivation and security
<u>Parent Goals</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be happy and successful • Better communication between parent, child and school • To like school • To turn in assignments on time • Have better study habits • Have better responsibility • Improve time management • Improve motivation and confidence • Be better informed of their child's academic progress
<u>Student Goals</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise grades • Turn in homework • Better organization and time management

Table 2.2 displays the summary of changes reported by parents and students regarding their academic behaviors and the changes of dynamics within their family relationships. Table 2.2

2.2: Family Reported Academic and Relational Changes

<u>Academic Changes</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved organization • Improved time management • Assignments turned in on time • Increased confidence and motivation • Improved grades and study habits • Asks more questions and seeks help
<u>Relationship Changes</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication regarding school, more positive and supportive • Better boundaries and expectations • Reduced conflict over school • Less pressure from parents • Parent student work more as a team

Parent Concerns

During the intake process, the coach met with parents separately from students in order to encourage private and honest conversations. Parents were more open to discuss their child's academic struggles without concern over their child's presence. The first question parents were asked was about their concerns and areas they would like to work on for their student. Most parents expressed interest in addressing their child's lack of confidence, organization, time management and communication. Comments include:

“He does not enjoy school. Lacks confidence. He feels insecure about school. Does not enjoy any subject at school.”

“...she is not organized and forgets to submit her work to teacher even though she has completed work with her”

“Time management is a big concern, she needs to stick to the schedule, plan on getting over distractions”

“Communication with me and with her teachers....I am in the dark about EVERYTHING that goes on at school once she is dropped off...”

Most parents began their lists of concerns with their child's lack of organization and time management. Many disheveled notebooks were presented as evidence along with black planners. Parents felt this lack of organization led to incomplete or lost assignments. Parents expressed frustration over lack of information about academic progress until multiple missing assignments were accumulated and posted on grade reporting software. Parents suggested these incomplete assignments, disorganization, and lack of communication translated into lower assessment scores, which can negatively impact students' confidence and motivation.

Parent Goals

Although there were many goals set by parents, the four most prevalent were surrounding enjoyment of school, better communication, organization, time management and timely completion of assignments. The following written comments were provided by parents:

“Happiness! In whatever form that means. I want her to have the skills to be a happy, successful student.”

“Better communication between he and I. Improved organization and record-keeping. Better interaction with teachers asking more questions to obtain information.”

“Take responsibility for knowing what is due and when by writing it in her agenda...share the agenda with me.....turn assignments in on time, and let teachers know when there may be a late assignment turned in...communicate with teachers...communicate with me...let me help with homework”

Overall, parents wanted their children to be happy, confident, successful, and motivated in school. An increase in responsibility was listed as a goal as a way to improve study habits and time management. These improvements were viewed as key to timely assignment completion. The most prevalent long-term goal was centered around improvement in communication between parent and child regarding academic behaviors and performance. Parents are very sensitive to the developmental changes of their child and their ever growing desire for independence. However, parents expressed a longing for more effective communication with their child regarding their academic progress.

Student Goals

The intake process for the students was identical to the parent intake. The coach met with students separately from their parents. This provided the opportunity for students to be honest about their feelings about school and parent involvement. The student intake and goal list were much shorter and succinct than their parents. Students were mainly concerned with improving their grades, turning in assignments on time, being better organized and improving time management. The following are comments from student responses:

“I want to improve my time management. I would also like to work towards earning all A’s on my report card.”

“Raise grades...turn in study guides [on time]...[improve] study habits...don’t procrastinate, study every other night.”

Students were bring in listing their goals for academics. The most common goal was to raise their grades. This blanket statement was followed by a request to elaborate in which more specific academic behaviors were revealed. As a part of raising grades, turning in homework

on time and better time management were listed by students. It was clear that the student goals were chosen most or in part due to their perception of their parents goals. Unlike their parents, students did not vocalize an observed change in communication or a desire to change the current communication style.

Academic Changes

During the exit session, both students and parents were asked to reflect on the academic changes that have taken place since the beginning of the coaching sessions. The common theme with both parents and student centered around, improved organization, improved time management, and timely assignment completion. The following comments were made by parents and students regarding their observation of academic changes:

“My child has become more organized and seems to be making progress on staying on top of her homework and assignments.”

“[She] is no longer behind in homework and her grades have improved.”

“He has been studying and managing his time wisely and has started to improve grades as he is studying at home also. He is more focused as he knows what he needs to study as he is writing his time table.”

“I have begun to ask more questions in class, use my agenda which has helped me to reflect back on school work and what I was doing in class, and talk to parents about how school is going in my opinion.”

Students and parents reported improvements in organization and time management. Planners were consistently presented filled out with assignments and students proudly displayed notebooks without little papers out of place. As a result, the frequency of missing assignments decreased. Additionally, parents report of an increase of communication at home

regarding school and their child's willingness to ask questions and seek help. Overall, an increase in confidence and motivation were observed by parents and as a result, study habits and grades improved.

Relationship Changes

Through the process of coaching, the relationship between parent and student reportedly changed. The overwhelming common theme reported by both parents and students was an improvement in communication and understanding concerning school. The following comments were made by parents and students regarding their observation of changes in their relationship:

“We realized the little things you don’t think matter, matter...it’s better to address things rather than to hide “

“We are certainly talking about it more. I think she is beginning to see that I want to help vs. wanting to discipline.”

“Mom didn’t understand my mind-set. Now I feel like she does.”

“After coaching, I feel like my parents/family are talking more about school for example, grades and how I feel about school in general.”

“I am more organized therefore my mom stopped checking everything.”

It became clear through the process of family life coaching that academic goal attainment would necessitate a change in the parent-child communication dynamic at home.

Communication about school improved between parent and child with students experiencing more positive interactions and support from their parents. Parents were able to communicate

expectations while students expressed boundaries to parental involvement. As a result, there was a reduction of conflict at home regarding school.

Overall Coaching Experience

During the exit session, the coach obtained feedback regarding the impact of the coaching experience. All participants found value in participating in the family life coaching experience. The following comments were made by a parent and student regarding their overall experiences with a family life coach in an academic setting:

“Coaching has given us a common language and goals.”

“[Coaching has] helped me understand the importance of asking questions, using agenda and talking to parents about school in general.

A father verbally expressed during his exit session that he was impressed with the coaching process, acknowledging a need for it in schools. He complimented the coach and was grateful for the chance to participate.

School staff also showed appreciation for the involvement of a family life coach. Special program teachers, mainstream teachers and well as counselors would frequently contact the coach in order to touch base about student progress or to discuss effective strategies. The coach became a point of contact the staff valued as a resource to best support their students’ learning.

Discussion

This research demonstrates the positive impact of family life coaching on student academic success. Through collaboration and reflective questioning, participants were able

to assess their strengths and weaknesses prior to goal development. These qualitative results not only show improvement in academic behaviors, but also improvement in overall family dynamics. Through this process, positive changes in academic approaches and family dynamics were observed.

Academic Impact

This study examines Darling and Steinberg's (2007) proposal that the methods used by parents will impact their child's academic performance. Despite student resistance to parental involvement, common academic goals were expressed by parents and students. Barriers toward these goals were identified and agreed upon resulting in action steps to remove those obstacles. The result showed improvement in student organization, study habits and homework completion. Through coaching, parents were able to distinguish realistic academic goals from their own personal feelings. Research suggests that parental involvement in children's academics can be driven by a need to feel worthy as a parent (Levin, Levy-Shiff, Appelbaum-Peled, Katz, Komar, and Meiran, 1997; Pomerantz and Eaton, 2001; Pomerantz, Ng, and Wang, 2005). The coaching process used in this study allowed parents to separate their own feelings of obligation and guilt that held them stuck in negative and controlling behaviors. As parents were able to identify and validate academic struggles and frustrations their child was experiencing, a positive action plan was able to be developed. As Fredrickson (1998, 2001) points out, this positive approach assists in creating openness to different ideas and actions. This strengths-based approach was critical for academic goal creation and development for the participants in this study.

Relationship Impact

Parents openly discussed frustrations surrounding a desire to be involved in their child's education while at the same time feeling lack of communication and input regarding their child's academic success. Conversely, students expressed irritation with parental involvement despite being aware of academic struggles. As Sanders and Epstein (2000) stress, the size and complex structure of middle and high schools makes it difficult for parents to know whom to contact to obtain information about their adolescents' progress. Parents in this study expressed frustration as teachers interacted less frequently due to class sizes. Aside from these conflicting desires of parental involvement, research shows that the degree of parental involvement has an impact on adolescent's academic motivation and school achievement (Seginer, 2006). Throughout the coaching process, parents and students were able to communicate openly about the structure and process of the school day as well as the degree and volume of support at home. As a result, communication and listening skills improved along with development of common language, goals and dialogue around school.

Lessons Learned

The coaching experience offered lessons learned for both participant and researcher. The integral component to effective coaching is the participants' willingness to experience change. In order for effective goal setting to take place, all participants needed to be honest with their boundaries for change and prepared to be held accountable for those changes. These sessions offered family members a common platform to express concerns, brainstorm solutions, and communicate honestly. Having a third party specifically trained as a family life

coach, was crucial to keep the goals of the sessions clear and focused. Ideally, if the coach has experience in the educational system or degree in education, they could bring a greater understanding of perspective and effective goal setting to families.

For this study, the coach was a certified middle school teacher. This training helped utilize pre-existing knowledge of the emotional and psychological development of adolescents in the middle school years. In turn, this allowed this researcher to seek out consent and buy-in from the students prior to the research study. Initially meeting separately with parents and students helped build rapport and support for the coaching process. As the coaching processes evolved, it became clearer that families being coached in the educational environment could greatly benefit involvement from school personnel. However, due to the confidentiality agreement in this study, individual identities were prohibited from being divulged. Partnered with support personnel such as the student's teachers, coaches would be able to initiate or complement existing support resources.

Future Research

Family life coaching is another support option educational professionals, such as guidance counselors and teachers, can use to help students be successful. Students who are provided an entire support circle of parents, teachers, and counselors have a higher probability for academic success of the long term. The counselor for the participants in this study expressed frustration over the lack of time provided to assist families in need over the long term. As this study progressed, and collaboration took place between the coach and counselor, student progress was observed. Family life coaching offers the ability for long-term evaluation of academic goals and exploration of methods for attaining those goals.

Another implication is that coaching can be helpful in out of school settings as well. After school providers such as coaches or after school program teachers could be trained as coaches to help support students and parents. Families who have experienced coaching can apply those skills and techniques in the future. For example, one of the participating families who ended coaching was just beginning to explore special program support for their child in mathematics. Upon visiting the school 3 months later, the counselor reports the student having just earned his first “A” on the most recent math exam. This supports the claim that strengths-based coaching can be learned and applied beyond the coaching sessions themselves.

Parental involvement requires a delicate balance during the adolescent years. Even though seeking independence is developmentally appropriate, most students still need some form of parental guidance. This complex balance requires parental involvement while at the same time supporting their youth's independence. Almost all parent participants struggle trying to achieve this balance. For example, during an exit session a mother explained how the coaching process helped her understand “this” motioning to her son as if he was an alien being. Coaching provides an avenue in which parents may explore this shift in family dynamic and balance needed to support their child their child developmentally and academically.

Research Implications

This study is unique in that it measures the impact of coaching in the field of education. Future research is needed to fully identify the full impact coaching can have in the educational field. Specific research needs to be conducted to measure how coaching can

benefit certain areas and populations in education. Specific coaching strategies can be provided to target certain student populations such as learning disabilities (attention deficient disorder, processing disorders), autism, english as a second language, and academically gifted. Resources such as special educational teacher and specialized educational plans are important to be included in the process to measure effectiveness of coaching. In addition to researching a bigger variety of student needs, sample sizes need to be taken in consideration. As this study measures qualitative data, a smaller sample size was appropriate. However, for any future quantitative studies, a bigger sample size would be needed. Additionally, studies targeting the impact of coaching on specific factors that impact learning (i.e., age groups, learning disabilities, socio-economic diversity) need future exploration. In adolescence, students are developmentally diverse. This diversity must be analyzed yet respected as coaches work with families in academics. Additionally, as parenting style a key component to family life coaching in education and, perhaps a future goal would be to study how authoritarian and permission parents may be able to move towards authoritative parenting with the help of a coach. Future research needs to explore how coaching can benefit these areas and meet these various needs.

Research Limitations

This study's participant pool was limited to 1 school, one socioeconomic class, and participants who were self selected. There is a need to study the comparison between the benefits of coaching on families in this study and one in which the participant pool is not self selected. This study limited the amount of sessions which families experienced coaching. While for some families this was an adequate amount of time to set and pursue goals, others

needed more time to process goals and achieve progress. A future similar study would need to include diversity, randomized control trial with a more flexible time frame.

Conclusion

This study provided evidence of the effectiveness of family life coaching regarding academics. This research suggests a positive connection between family life coaching sessions and improved academic behaviors in students. Family life coaching provides a positive impact within families for the long term. Partnership between school and home, supporting school and teacher educational goals, and improved communication within the family system are proven benefits coaching provided families. Along with the valuable work the school counselors provide, coaching can provide add the additional support for educators, students and parents can use to assist in meeting the long term goals toward academic success.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Consent

North Carolina State University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM for

This consent information is valid September 24, 2015 through September 24, 2016

Title of Study: Parent Coaching and Student Academic Success Assessment

Principal Investigator: Karen Randle, NC State University Graduate Student, Dr. Kimberley Allen, Ph.D

We are asking you to participate in about Parent Coaching and Student Academic Success. Parent Coaching is a study designed to provide us with a better understanding of whether or not the parent coaching sessions in which you are participating makes a difference in your child's academic success.

INFORMATION

You have been invited to participate in parent coaching sessions designed to help set and achieve goals regarding your child's academic success, and assessment activities to learn about the effectiveness of the coaching. Your participation in the parent coaching sessions and the assessment process are considered separate activities. You may choose to participate in the parent coaching sessions and not participate in the assessment process. The parent coaching sessions last for 12 weeks. Parent coaching session participants will meet either in person or by telephone once every one to two weeks for a minimum of 4 meetings with a parenting coach. During the parent coaching sessions, the parent coach will work with you to set goals that you want to achieve and will help you identify steps you can take to achieve those goals with regard to your child's academic success. The assessment process for the parent coaching sessions will begin during the first meeting and will end during the final meeting. As a part of the assessment, you and your child will be asked to answer questions about how you feel as a parent, family interactions and activities, how you feel life in general is going, and the status of your child's success in school. Each assessment will take about 30 minutes of your time for a total of 30 minutes at the beginning of the program and 30 minutes at the end of the parent coaching experience. These assessments will be comparing children's academic success prior to their parents participating in coaching sessions to after. Also, the assessment activities will include accessing information from your child's academic record.

RISKS

All efforts to minimize student's missing academic instructional classes, however this may be required to meet the goals of the session. Sensitive topics regarding family dynamics will be assessed. The coaching sessions and assessments will ask questions about your family dynamics and practices. While the er is not yet a certified coach, she is being overseen by a board certified coach and has completed all coursework. If at any time additional therapeutic assistance is needed to address concerns in this area, students and families will receive services from the school's guidance department.

BENEFITS

The data provided during the assessments will help support future program development supporting parents in regards to their child's academic endeavors.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information collected will remain confidential with the exception of suspected abuse or in cases which harm to self or others is of concern. Data collected for the assessment will not include identifying information that will directly link your name to your responses. All data will be kept securely in a locked file or in a password protected data file accessible only by the lead investigator and the faculty sponsor. While your responses may be reported through quotation, no reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link you to any information you provide.

What if you have questions about this study?

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the er, Karen Randle, at North Carolina State University, Box 7606, Raleigh, NC 27695, or (919) 621-2276, or kfrandle@ncsu.edu, or Kimberly Allen at North Carolina State University, Box 7606, Raleigh, NC 27695, or (919) 515-9139, or kimberly_allen@ncsu.edu.

What if you have questions about your rights as a participant?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/515-4514).

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed at your request.

CONSENT

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate, as well as my child, with the understanding that withdrawal may happen at any time and I may choose to participate in the parent coaching program without completing the evaluation. I agree to involve my child in this process and grant the primary investigator access to my child's academic records, such as grades, attendance, End-of-Grade scores and classroom assessments. I understand that participation is voluntary, and that my child and I are free to stop participating with no penalty.”

Top of Form

Printed Name

Signed Name

Date

Do you agree to participate in the assessment of the parent coaching sessions?

Top of Form

☐ **Yes, Agree to participate**

☐ **No, I do not agree to participate**

Appendix B: Parent In-take Questionnaire

Intake Questionnaire - Parents

Family Assessment Device

Nathan B. Epstein MD; Lawrence M. Baldwin, PhD; Duane S. Bishop MD

Instructions

This assessment contains a number of statements about families. Read each statement carefully, and decide how well it describes your own family. You should answer according to how you see your family.

For each statement are four (4) possible responses:

Strongly agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly disagree (SD)

Check SA if you feel that the statement describes your family very accurately.

Check A if you feel that the statement describes your family for the most part.

Check D if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family for the most part.

Check SD if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family at all.

These four responses will appear below each statement like this:

39. We are not satisfied with anything short of perfection.

The answer spaces for statement 39 would look like this: ____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

For each statement, there is an answer space below. Do not pay attention to the blanks at the far right-hand side of each space. They are for office use only.

Try not to spend too much time thinking about each statement, but respond as quickly and as honestly as you can. If you have difficulty, answer with your first reaction. Please be sure to answer *every* statement and mark all your answers in the space provided *below* each statement.

Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We resolve most everyday problems around the house.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

When someone is upset the others know why.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

When you ask someone to do something, you have to check that they did it.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If someone is in trouble, the others become too involved.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are reluctant to show our affection for each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We make sure members meet their family responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Family tasks don't get spread around enough.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Individuals are accepted for what they are.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

You can easily get away with breaking the rules.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

People come right out and say things instead of hinting at them.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

It is difficult to talk to each other about tender feelings

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

After our family tries to solve a problem, we usually discuss whether it worked or not.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We can express feelings to each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We talk to people directly rather than through go-betweens.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Each of us has particular duties and responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

There are lots of bad feelings in the family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We get involved with each other only when something interests us.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

There is little time to explore personal interests.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We often don't say what we mean.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We resolve most emotional upsets that come up.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We discuss who are responsible for household jobs.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Making decisions is a problem for our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are frank(direct, straightforward) with each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We don't hold to any rules or standards.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If people are asked to do something, they need reminding.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If the rules are broken, we don't know what to expect.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Anything goes in our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We express tenderness.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We confront problems involving feelings.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We don't get along well together.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

We don't talk to each other when we are angry.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

Even though we mean well, we intrude too much into each other's lives.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

We confide in each other.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

When we don't like what someone has done, we tell them.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

We try to think of different ways to solve problems.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

We are not satisfied with anything short of perfection.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

We have a open and strong parent-child relationship.

___ SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD

Parents: Please answer the following questions regarding your child's academic status. If your child is living in a two parent home, please answer these questions together.

My child's grades are acceptable.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

My child feels their grades are acceptable.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

My child puts in enough time on their school work at home.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

My child spends too much time on their school work at home.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

My child is stressed over their grades.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

School is a frequent topic of conversation in our home.

SA ___ A ___ D ___ SD ___

School is the topic of most arguments with my child.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My relationship with my child is strained.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child resists my help with homework or studying.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child likes his/her teachers.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child enjoys school.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Many times I find myself at a loss on how to help my child academically.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child and I share the same goals for their future.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Open-ended questions will have space provided for feedback:

1. Describe your child.
2. List concerns you have regarding your child:
3. List goals you have for your child:
4. Explain past and current struggles your child has experienced academically:
5. List your child's grades, either current or from last school year. If you have progress reports and/or report cards you are willing to share, please do.

Appendix C: Student Consent and In-take Questionnaire

Intake Questionnaire - Student

Family Assessment Device

Nathan B. Epstein MD; Lawrence M. Baldwin, PhD; Duane S. Bishop MD

Student Consent:

The purpose of this study is to see how coaching your parents impacts your grades and your attitudes towards school. Coaching means meeting with you and your parents every week or two to set goals about how to best help you in school. To tell if coaching makes a difference, we will ask you some questions before and after the coaching program, and look at your grades. It's ok if you don't want to answer the questions. If at any time you want to stop participating, you may do so without punishment. If you agree to participate in this, please sign below:

Student Name (print)

Student Signature

Instructions

This assessment contains a number of statements about families. Read each statement carefully, and decide how well it describes your own family. You should answer according to how you see your family.

For each statement are four (4) possible responses:

Strongly agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly disagree (SD)

Check SA if you feel that the statement describes your family very accurately.

Check A if you feel that the statement describes your family for the most part.

Check D if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family for the most part.

Check SD if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family at all.

These four responses will appear below each statement like this:

10. I like my teachers

The answer spaces for statement 10 would look like this: ____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

For each statement, there is an answer space below. Do not pay attention to the blanks at the far right-hand side of each space. They are for office use only.

Try not to spend too much time thinking about each statement, but respond as quickly and as honestly as you can. If you have difficulty, answer with your first reaction. Please be sure to answer *every* statement and mark all your answers in the space provided *below* each statement.

Student: Please answer the following questions regarding your academic status. Your parents are **not** to help you answer these questions.

1. My grades are acceptable.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
2. I feel my grades are acceptable.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
3. I put in enough time on my school work at home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
4. I spend too much time on my school work at home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
5. I am stressed over my grades.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
6. School is a frequent topic of conversation in our home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
7. I have arguments with my parents about my grades.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
8. My relationship with my parents is strained.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
9. I resist help with homework or studying.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
10. I like my teachers.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
11. I enjoy school.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
12. I am unsure on how to ask for help with school assignments.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
13. I share the same goals for my future as my parents.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Open-ended questions will have space provided for feedback:

1. Describe your relationship with your parents.
2. Explain your feelings about school (grades, homework, projects, studying etc.):
3. List any goals you have set for yourself.
4. Explain past and current struggles you have experienced with school (grades, homework, projects, studying etc.).
5. Describe how motivated you are to make changes to meet your goals above.

Appendix D: Parent Exit Questionnaire

Exit Questionnaire - Parents

Family Assessment Device

Nathan B. Epstein MD; Lawrence M. Baldwin, PhD; Duane S. Bishop MD

Instructions

This assessment contains a number of statements about families. Read each statement carefully, and decide how well it describes your own family. You should answer according to how you see your family.

For each statement are four (4) possible responses:

Strongly agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly disagree (SD)

Check SA if you feel that the statement describes your family very accurately.

Check A if you feel that the statement describes your family for the most part.

Check D if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family for the most part.

Check SD if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family at all.

These four responses will appear below each statement like this:

39. *We are not satisfied with anything short of perfection.*

The answer spaces for statement 39 would look like this: ____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

For each statement, there is an answer space below. Do not pay attention to the blanks at the far right-hand side of each space. They are for office use only.

Try not to spend too much time thinking about each statement, but respond as quickly and as honestly as you can. If you have difficulty, answer with your first reaction. Please be sure to answer *every* statement and mark all your answers in the space provided *below* each statement.

Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We resolve most everyday problems around the house.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

When someone is upset the others know why.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

When you ask someone to do something, you have to check that they did it.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If someone is in trouble, the others become too involved.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are reluctant to show our affection for each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We make sure members meet their family responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Family tasks don't get spread around enough.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Individuals are accepted for what they are.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

You can easily get away with breaking the rules.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

People come right out and say things instead of hinting at them.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

It is difficult to talk to each other about tender feelings

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

After our family tries to solve a problem, we usually discuss whether it worked or not.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We can express feelings to each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We talk to people directly rather than through go-betweens.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Each of us has particular duties and responsibilities.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

There are lots of bad feelings in the family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We get involved with each other only when something interests us.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

There is little time to explore personal interests.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We often don't say what we mean.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We resolve most emotional upsets that come up.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We discuss who are responsible for household jobs.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Making decisions is a problem for our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are frank(direct, straightforward) with each other.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We don't hold to any rules or standards.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If people are asked to do something, they need reminding.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

If the rules are broken, we don't know what to expect.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

Anything goes in our family.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We express tenderness.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We confront problems involving feelings.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We don't get along well together.

___SA ___A ___D ___SD

We don't talk to each other when we are angry.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

Even though we mean well, we intrude too much into each other's lives.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We confide in each other.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

When we don't like what someone has done, we tell them.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We try to think of different ways to solve problems.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We are not satisfied with anything short of perfection.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

We have a open and strong parent-child relationship.

____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

Parents: Please answer the following questions regarding your child's academic status. If your child is living in a two parent home, please answer these questions together.

My child's grades are acceptable.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child feels their grades are acceptable.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child puts in enough time on their school work at home.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child spends too much time on their school work at home.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child is stressed over their grades.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

School is a frequent topic of conversation in our home.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

School is the topic of most arguments with my child.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My relationship with my child is strained.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child resists my help with homework or studying.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child likes his/her teachers.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child enjoys school.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Many times I find myself at a loss on how to help my child academically.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

My child and I share the same goals for their future.

SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Open-ended questions will have space provided for feedback:

1. Describe changes in your child since beginning coaching.
2. Reflecting back to the goals and concerns listed prior to parent coaching sessions. Describe to what degree those goals have been met and any concerns that remain.
3. Describe how the parent coaching sessions as impacted your child's academic success. Please provide progress reports and/or report cards
4. Describe your relationship with you child now compared to before participating in the coaching sessions.

Appendix E: Student Exit Questionnaire

Exit Questionnaire - Student

Family Assessment Device

Nathan B. Epstein MD; Lawrence M. Baldwin, PhD; Duane S. Bishop MD

Instructions

This assessment contains a number of statements about families. Read each statement carefully, and decide how well it describes your own family. You should answer according to how you see your family.

For each statement are four (4) possible responses:

Strongly agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly disagree (SD)

Check SA if you feel that the statement describes your family very accurately.

Check A if you feel that the statement describes your family for the most part.

Check D if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family for the most part.

Check SD if you feel that the statement **does not** describe your family at all.

These four responses will appear below each statement like this:

10. I like my teachers

The answer spaces for statement 10 would look like this: ____ SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD

For each statement, there is an answer space below. Do not pay attention to the blanks at the far right-hand side of each space. They are for office use only.

Try not to spend too much time thinking about each statement, but respond as quickly and as honestly as you can. If you have difficulty, answer with your first reaction. Please be sure to answer *every* statement and mark all your answers in the space provided *below* each statement.

Student: Please answer the following questions regarding your academic status. Your parents are **not** to help you answer these questions.

1. My grades are acceptable.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
2. I feel my grades are acceptable.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

3. I put in enough time on my school work at home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
4. I spend too much time on my school work at home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
5. I am stressed over my grades.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
6. School is a frequent topic of conversation in our home.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
7. I have arguments with my parent about my grades.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
8. My relationship with my parents is strained.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
9. I resist help with homework or studying.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
10. I like my teachers.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
11. I enjoy school.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
12. I am unsure on how to ask for help with school assignments.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____
13. I share the same goals for my future as my parents.
SA ____ A ____ D ____ SD ____

Open-ended questions will have space provided for feedback:

1. Describe how your relationship with your parents has changed since coaching began.
2. How has your view of school changed since coaching began (grades, homework, projects, studying etc.).
3. Reflecting back to the goals set before coaching, describe which of those goals have been met and those that remain.

4. Compared to your past academic struggles, how have those changed since coaching began.
5. Describe how coaching has impacted your academic success.

Appendix F: Follow Up Form**Follow-Up Form**

Before the next meeting, spend some time thinking about your goals and how to prepare for them and the coaching session. This helps you determine what you want out of the coaching session and helps guide your coach. After filling out this sheet, please give a copy to your coach before the session.

Describe what has gone well since the last meeting.

What have your challenges been?

Think about your plans for action...what have you accomplished that you planned to in this time frame?

What haven't you accomplished? Why, and what can you do differently?

What do you want to get out of the meeting with your coach today?

What goals do you want to reach before the next meeting?

Appendix G: Bias Statement

Bias Statement

The primary investigator and author was also the coach for this investigation. She holds a current teaching license in the state of North Carolina with over 23 years experience in the educational setting. The research was conducted at a middle school in which the primary investigator had taught for over ten years. The primary investigator took extra measures to ensure the validity of the research and reduction of bias.

All participant selection was overseen from the supervising guidance counselor. Participant feedback was obtained through intake and exit questionnaires, and session notes recorded by the primary investigator. All qualitative data was recorded by the primary investigator directly from the questionnaires and verbatim from dialog in sessions.

All data was compiled into a spreadsheet with direct quotes from students and parents to use for qualitative data analysis comparison.