

# Parental Involvement in Constructing Practical Guidelines to Enhance Pre-School Age Development Using Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual

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## Article Info

## ABSTRACT

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This research aims to enhance development in pre-school age using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) to ensure age-appropriate development. The population includes teachers, children, adolescents, and parents at the Wat Nong Phai Noi Child Development Center in Chum Het Sub-district, Mueang Buriram District, Buriram Province. The sample consists of 220 individuals selected through purposive sampling. The researchers utilized the DSPM, a standardized manual by the Ministry of Public Health, along with an Outcome-Based Child Development Portfolio to enhance the pre-school age development. The results revealed that practical guidelines to enhance development in pre-school age using the DSPM were successfully established with parental involvement. When compared, it was found that pre-school age whose parents participated in constructing these guidelines showed significantly higher development ( $p < .05$ ) than before the implementation of the DSPM-based guidelines.

## INTRODUCTION

Pre-school age, or the first few years of life, is the most crucial period for a child's development. It is a time when children experience rapid growth in brain development, language use, social skills, emotions, and motor abilities. This period lays the foundation for future growth and learning. Therefore, fostering and investing in early childhood development is a top priority for every family and nation, as it represents a unique golden opportunity in a child's life. If a child receives inadequate developmental support, they may experience delays. In Thailand, many early childhood children lack proper care and developmental stimulation. Many parents, particularly fathers, do not participate in learning activities with their young children. Moreover, access to children's books, which are vital for learning and imagination, remains limited, especially in impoverished households. Additionally, it has been found that 15% of children aged 3-5 do not attend preschool, despite its importance for their development. For those who do attend preschool, the quality of education may not be sufficient to help them reach their full potential. A specific issue identified is that 6 out of 85 early childhood children are not developing according to their age. These children face communication problems, such as speech delays, and their fine motor skills are underdeveloped. They struggle with tasks like threading beads and drawing circles, squares, and triangles, as well as buttoning shirts, which causes concern among parents and teachers. To address these problems, scholars recognize the importance of enhancing early childhood development. Therefore, scholars utilized the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) to help parents and teachers appropriately foster the development of early childhood children.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To enhance parental involvement skills in constructing practical guidelines to enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual
2. To enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual, ensuring age-appropriate development

## RELATED THEORIES

### 1. Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is significant for teachers, children, adolescents, and parents as it influences children's developmental growth. Enhancing education through collaboration between parents, teachers, and schools in fostering and supporting children's learning creatively is a crucial factor in children's growth and development. Furthermore, it helps stimulate children's learning potential, leading to their educational success. Parental involvement in educational management is particularly important for supporting children's learning success. It benefits parents, schools, and communities by facilitating efficient practices and operations to develop successful learners in the future (Office of the National Education Commission, 2001; Boonmasueb, 2015; Assalihee & Bakoh, 2020; Saardaium et al, 2021; Chuibin Kong Fakhra Yasmin, 2022; Rosa Sze Man Wong et al., 2018). These theories were applied in the research by involving teachers, children, adolescents, and parents in the process of brainstorming, analyzing, designing, and constructing guidelines to enhance early childhood development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual.

### 2. Constructing Practical Guidelines for Enhancing Early Childhood Development

Constructing practical guidelines for enhancing early childhood development can be done in various ways, such as focusing on outcome-based child development to nurture age-appropriate living conditions for young children. These guidelines are designed to enhance development in the form of an Outcome-based Child Development Portfolio, which has been developed based on the concept of Desired Results for Children and Families (California Department of Education, 2021) and the framework of child health (Gromada, Rees & Chzhen, 2020). They are aligned with proposals for monitoring and evaluating children's developmental care by WHO and UNICEF (The United Nations Children's Fund, WHO/UNICEF, 2018), as well as policies and activities enhancing children's health and development in Thailand and other countries (Department of Health, 2020; Lancet, 2016), including Singapore, which emphasizes enhancing the quality of family life, work integration, coordination, and referral (Ho, 2007). Enhancing development starts from the prenatal stage (Tangsakul, 2018), particularly by ensuring quality nutrition intake, cautious medication use, and preventing illness from infections that could potentially lead to abnormalities in infants (Chaiwat Phathihatkorn, 2020). Immediately after birth, enhancing bonding between families involves embracing, touching, talking, soothing, and comforting infants to stimulate sensory touch and brain function (Moore, Bregman, Anderson & Medley, 2016). During the toddler stage, explaining to families the importance of providing opportunities for children to engage in physical movement, and practice using large and small muscles, such as picking up objects, writing, and coloring (Maleeles et al., 2016). Additionally, in the preschool age, play is a crucial learning activity to stimulate the creativity of children. Therefore, families should be educated on playing with children, such as playing with building blocks, reading books, and telling stories. At this age, children tending to ask questions, and families should respond to these questions to stimulate children's thinking and foster their curiosity for learning (Pongsaranuntakul & Payakkaraung, 2016).

### 3. Early Childhood Development

Developmental psychologists have defined the term "development" in various ways. According to Good (1973), development refers to the structural changes, functions, and organization of different parts of the body, which lead to increases in size, differentiation, complexity, integration, capability, and efficiency. This encompasses the maturation process and includes permanent changes resulting from prolonged learning, whether this learning is intentional or occurs as a result of events.

Gardner (2000) defined development as encompassing five aspects: changes in size, changes in body proportions, changes in complexity both in structure and function, the emergence of new functional capabilities, and the decline of various parts and their functions.

Harvighurst (1963), a psychologist, stated that early childhood, from birth to age six, is characterized by specific abilities that should be developed. These include the ability to learn to walk, eat solid foods, speak, control the elimination of waste from the body, and understand gender differences. Additionally, children should achieve physical development in terms of balance. They should also develop the ability to form thoughts and accurately perceive social situations and their physical characteristics. Furthermore, children at this stage should learn to relate their feelings appropriately to their parents, siblings, and others, and distinguish between right and wrong, developing a sense of morality and logical thinking.

In conclusion, development refers to the process of change, specifically changes in quality. It involves the emergence of new characteristics and abilities. The nature of early childhood development and the developmental stages throughout life vary according to age and individual capabilities, resulting in differences in development at each life stage.

#### 4. Enhancing Early Childhood Development

Concepts for enhancing child development (Institute for Brain Potential Development and Early Childhood Learning Skills Enhancement, 2020).

Gesell (2000) believed that child development occurs systematically and sequentially. Children should develop naturally and not be rushed or forced. Learning for children arises from movement, language use, adaptation, social interaction with others, and developmental activities. Providing opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play, creative activities, fine motor skill development, and hand-eye coordination exercises, as well as engaging them in listening, speaking, chanting, singing, storytelling, individual activities, and group activities, facilitates their development.

Sigmund Freud (1905) believed that childhood experiences influence our personality as adults. If children do not receive sufficient responses, they may develop symptoms of stagnation, regression, and frustration, affecting their overall development.

Erikson (1902) believed that if children are in an environment they are satisfied with and experience success, they will view the world positively, have confidence, and trust others. However, if children are in an unfavorable environment and are dissatisfied, they may view the world negatively, lack self-confidence, and distrust others. Enhancing child development involves organizing activities that lead to children's success and satisfaction with the classroom environment, peers, and teachers, creating an atmosphere in the classroom where children have the opportunity to build positive relationships with their teachers and peers.

Piaget (2000) believed that children's cognitive development is influenced by their interactions with the environment around them, their perception of new environmental stimuli, and their ability to adapt and expand their existing experiences, ideas, and understandings. Early childhood development (0-6 years old) can be divided into two stages:

1. Sensory-Motor Stage (0-2 years old): Children learn everything through their senses and tactile sensations.

2. Preoperational Stage (3-6 years old): Children begin to learn spoken language and non-verbal communication, with themselves as the center. They cannot reason logically or categorize based on their own criteria.

Enhancing child development according to Piaget involves organizing activities that engage children's sensory experiences. These activities aim to train skills such as observation, discrimination, comparison, and decision-making. Children are encouraged to think critically, choose, and make decisions independently. Additionally, activities are designed to allow children to learn from things nearby and gradually explore more distant concepts, fostering ideal characteristics.

Dewey (1925) believed that children learn through action. Child development activities involve organizing activities that lead to children's success and satisfaction with the classroom environment, peers, and teachers, creating an atmosphere in the classroom where children have the opportunity to build positive relationships with their teachers and peers.

Skinner (1904) believed that if children receive praise and experience success in activities, they become interested in continuing those activities. Each child is unique, with no one exactly like another. Child development activities should be reinforcing, such as giving praise and encouragement when children succeed in activities, without comparing or competing with each other.

Pestalozzi (1827) emphasized the importance of love as a fundamental necessity for child development, both physically and intellectually. Each child is unique, with different interests, needs, and levels of learning ability. Children should not be compelled to learn through rote memorization. Child development activities involve preparing readiness through providing love, and time, and allowing children to learn from experience.

Froebel (1782) advocated for enhancing children's development according to their natural inclinations by stimulating creative thinking freely. Play is considered both work and learning for children. Child development activities involve organizing activities that encourage learning through free play.

Elkind (1994) warned that pushing children to learn too early is dangerous. Instead, children should have opportunities to play and choose activities. Providing an environment in the classroom where children have the chance to play and select their own activities is crucial for child development.

### **5. Guidelines for Enhancing Pre-School Age Development by Parents and Caregivers**

Parents and caregivers should encourage children to learn through listening, observing, touching, playing, imitating, and experimenting. From infancy, parents should engage with their children by talking, playing, describing activities, telling stories, reading books, pointing out various things around them, showing pictures, and involving them in arts, music, household activities, and other direct experiences. Encourage children to ask questions, observe, engage in conversations, and express their opinions. Avoid coercion, pressure, acceleration, or aggression towards the child, whether physical, mental, or verbal. Parents should also promote self-discipline in children, such as maintaining regular eating and sleeping schedules, tidying up toys, disposing of trash properly, washing hands, not taking others' belongings, and refraining from hitting or harming others. Parents must model good behavior, provide opportunities for children to act, and explain mistakes, offering encouragement when children attempt desired actions and praise when they succeed. Over time, children will learn to use reason and keep promises as their parents do. Key considerations in skill training to enhance children's development include setting clear goals to advance their development according to their age, and preparing them for real-life situations. Communication should be simple, brief, clear, and consistent. Allow 3-5 seconds for children to perform tasks; if they do not, repeat instructions (message remains the same), and provide necessary assistance until completion, reducing aid as their capability improves. Assistance can be physical (holding hands, touching elbows for stimulation), verbal (telling children to try, explaining step by step if necessary), or through gestures (pointing, nodding, shaking one's head, or blocking unwanted behaviors). For example, if asked to point to a toothbrush but they point to a cup, cover the cup with the hand to guide them to the toothbrush. Once they learn, vary instructions while maintaining the same meaning to help them recognize different things. Reinforcement should be given immediately when the child performs correctly, whether to assist them or when they accomplish tasks independently. Examples include praise, smiles, clapping, touching, or giving treats. However, it's important to consider the following:

1. Reinforcement should be age-appropriate and varied since each child likes different things.
2. Reinforcement should be given frequently when aiming to develop new skills or behaviors.
3. Gradually reduce reinforcement when the child can perform the task, observing their satisfaction and feeling of accomplishment so external reinforcement isn't necessary.
4. Providing rewards such as showing care, smiling, hugging, clapping, or giving items when the child is focused or completes tasks benefits their long-term development, unlike using bribes or coercive methods.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1. Research Instruments**

1.1 Population and Sample: The population includes teachers, children, adolescents, and parents (children and parents) at Wat Nong Phai Noi School, Chum Het Sub-district, Mueang Buriram District, Buriram Province, totaling 220 individuals. The sample group was selected from the entire population, also totaling 220 individuals.

1.2 The researchers employed the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) to facilitate the pre-school age development. This manual is a standard resource provided by the Ministry of Public Health.

The model of parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) is divided into four phases as follows:

#### **Phase 1: Building Trust through Constructing Good Relationships**

In this phase, scholars, as nurse instructors, begin by establishing trust by fostering good relationships to identify the starting point for developing models, especially for early childhood teachers, adolescents, and parents. Subsequently, the findings are presented to teachers in schools, with intermittent information exchange.

#### **Phase 2: Parental Involvement in Constructing Practical Guidelines to Enhance Pre-school Age Development Using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM)**

In this phase, teachers, adolescents, and parents collaborate realistically in caring for pre-school age. This involves organizing three group discussions where scholars enable pre-school age, adolescents, and parents to analyze problems arising among students, reflecting on their own roles. Scholars provide guidance, emphasizing implementation according to jointly created plans.

#### **Phase 3: Collaboration in Parental Involvement in Constructing Practical Guidelines to Enhance Pre-School Age Development Using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) and Continuous Implementation**

This phase emphasizes the continuous participation of teachers, adolescents, and parents in caring for early childhood children.

#### **Phase 4: Finding Solutions to Solve Problems, Improvements, and Evaluations**

In this phase, teachers, adolescents, and parents collaborate in caring for young children, expressing their opinions on the problems and obstacles encountered.

### **2. Data Analysis and Statistics Used**

Data were analyzed using statistical software, employing statistical methods to analyze questionnaire data. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, standard deviation (S.D.), and a t-test, were used to compare pre-and post-development enhancements for early childhood.

### **3. Ethical Considerations**

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Buriram Rajabhat University (certification document No. BRU-HR-011/2567). The researchers clarified the research objectives, anticipated benefits, research methodologies, and data collection methods, emphasizing confidentiality and the exclusive use of gathered data for this research. Detailed information was provided before the study, and informed consent forms were obtained from the sample group prior to data collection. The researchers respected the privacy and decision-making autonomy of the sample group, including their right to withdraw from the study. This study and its ethical principles were guided by 1) respect for persons, and 2) beneficence or non-maleficence and justice.

## **RESEARCH RESULTS**

The research findings revealed that:

**Table 1:** Percentages of teachers, children, adolescents, and parents (children and parents) surveyed at Wat Nong Phai Noi, Chum Hed Sub-district, Mueang District, Buriram Province (n=220)

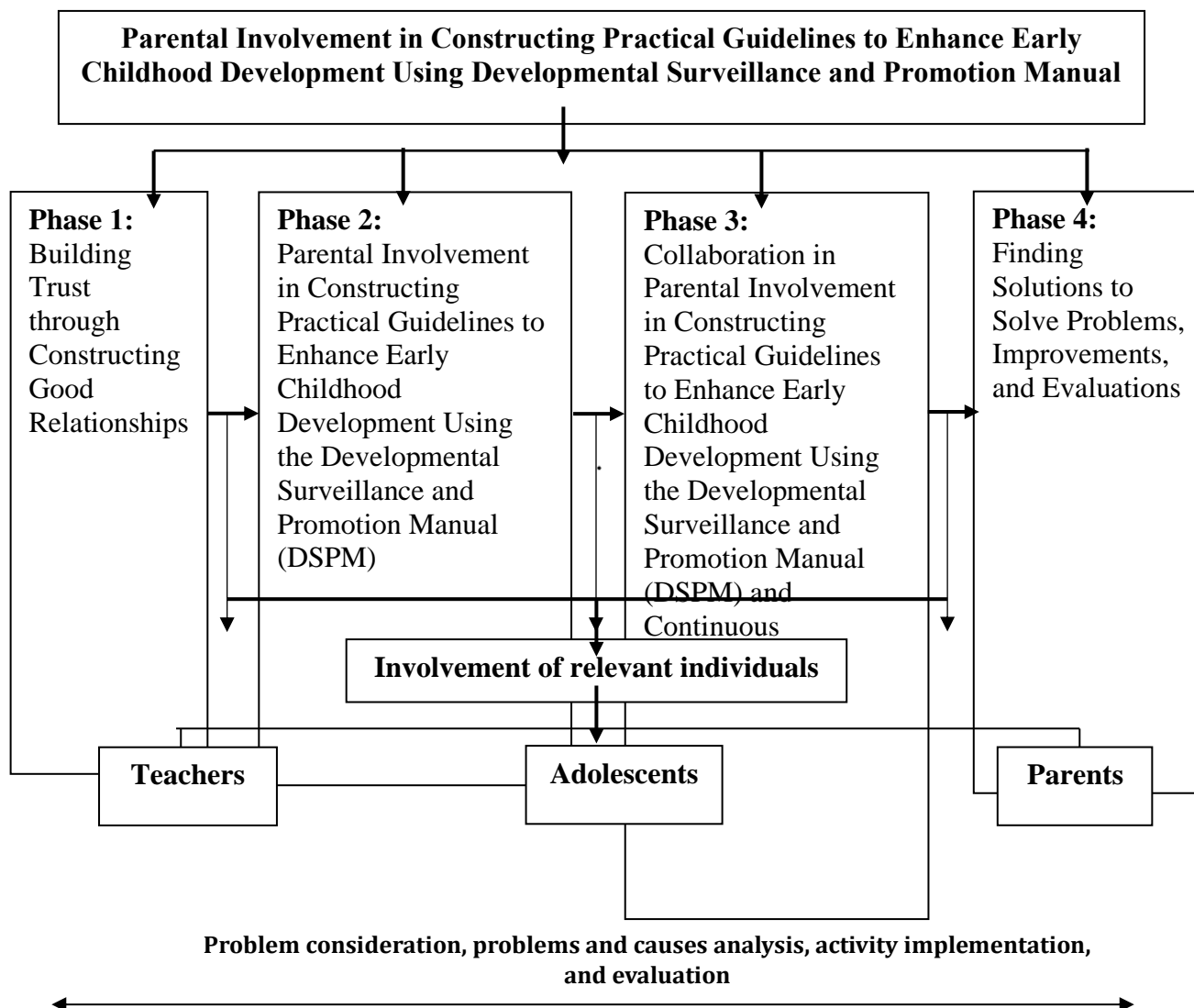
	<b>Data</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
	Male	101	45.91

Female

119

54.09

Table 1 presents the percentages of teachers, children, adolescents, and parents (children and parents) at Wat Nong Phai Noi, Chum Het Sub-district, Mueang Buriram District, Buriram Province, totaling 220 people. There are 101 males, accounting for 45.91%, and 119 females, accounting for 54.09%.



**Figure 1:** Parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (n=220)

Figure 1 reveals that parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance early childhood development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual is divided into several phases. Phase 1 focuses on building trust through the construction of good relationships. Phase 2 involves parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance early childhood development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM). Phase 3 emphasizes collaboration in parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance early childhood development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual (DSPM) and continuous implementation. Phase 4 focuses on finding solutions to solve problems, improvements, and evaluations, with involvement from relevant individuals such as teachers, adolescents, and parents, and problem consideration, problem and cause analysis, activity implementation, and evaluation

**Table 2:** Parental involvement in constructing practical guidelines to enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual, pre- and post-comparison (n=220)

Test	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	t-test
Pre-test	220	32.00	3.29	24.16
Post-test	220	38.00	0.00	

(p<.05)

Table 2 shows that pre-school age participants whose parents were involved in constructing practical guidelines to enhance pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual had significantly higher utilization rates compared to the pre-test using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual, with statistical significance (p<.05).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of research findings should be used as guidelines for enhancing pre-school age development using the Developmental Surveillance and Promotion Manual in nearby areas. This can be adapted appropriately for each specific locality.

In future research, scholars should conduct innovative studies to facilitate implementation and extend the impact to the provincial level.

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