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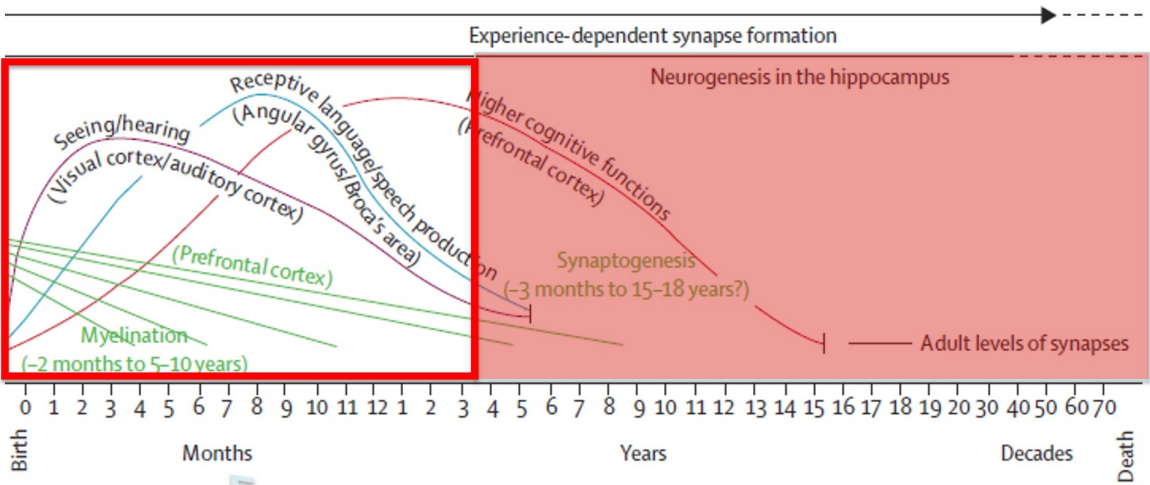
**Using Text Messages to Improve Parenting Knowledge and Early Childhood Development in Rural
China**

Yujuan Gao, University of Florida, yujuan.gao@ufl.edu

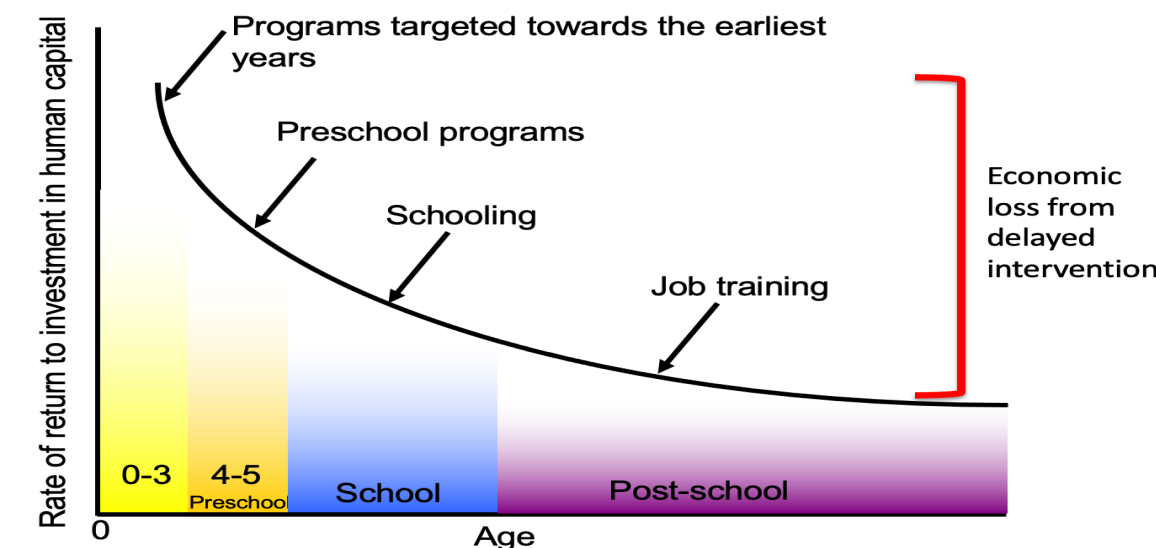
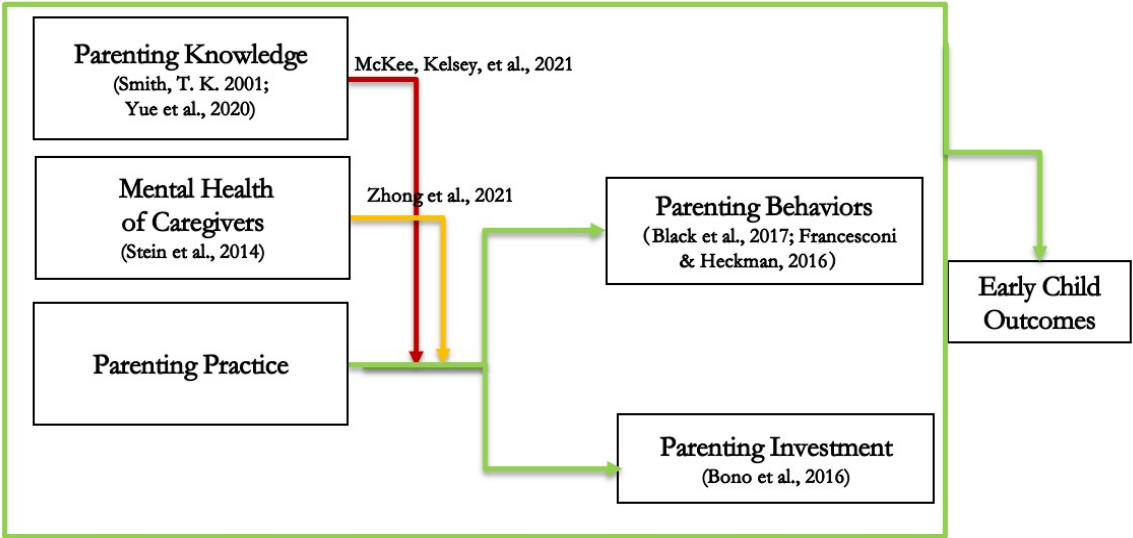
***Selected Poster prepared for presentation at the 2022 Agricultural & Applied Economics Association
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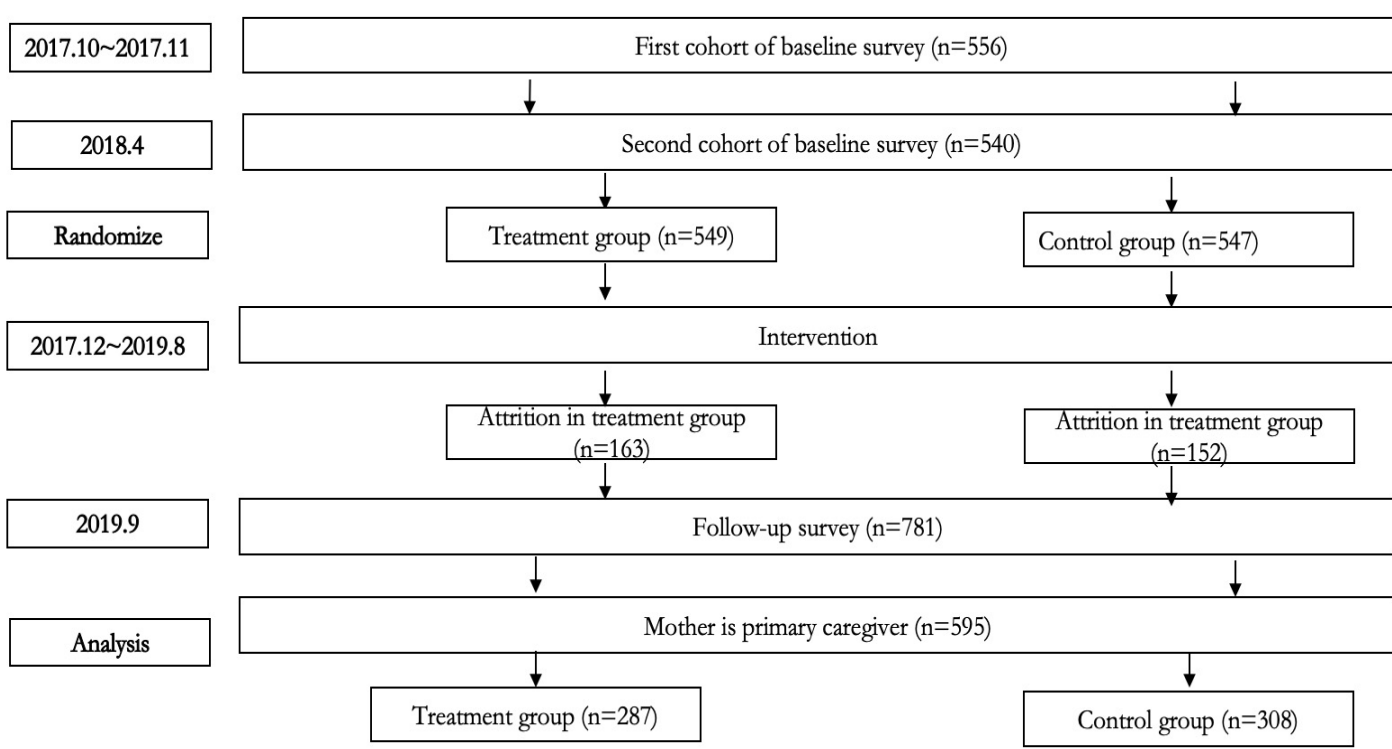
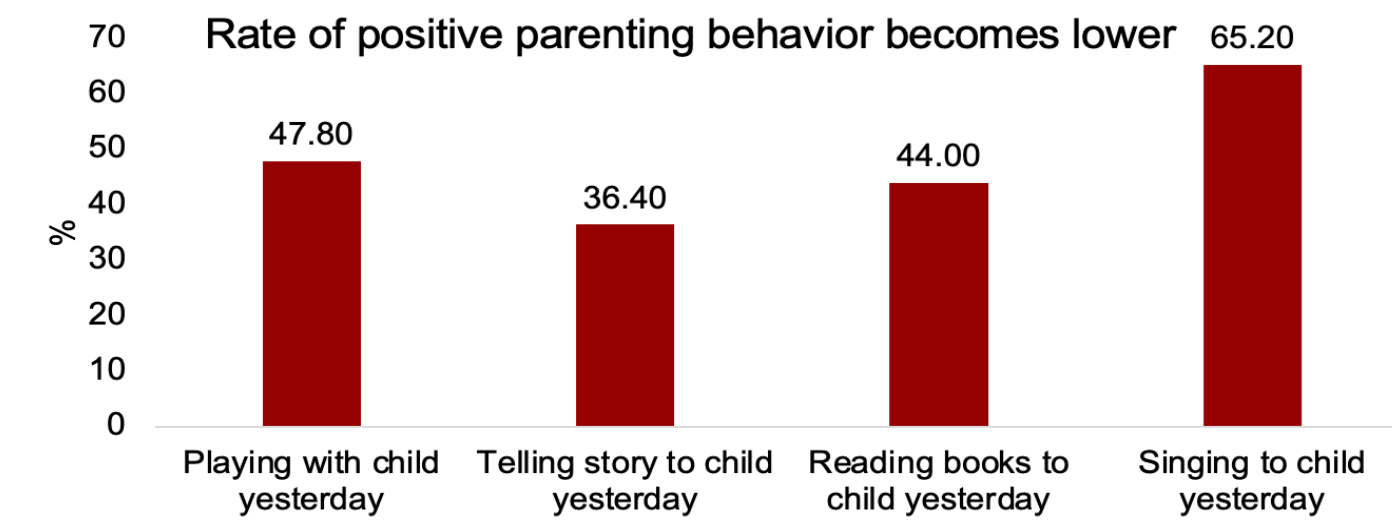
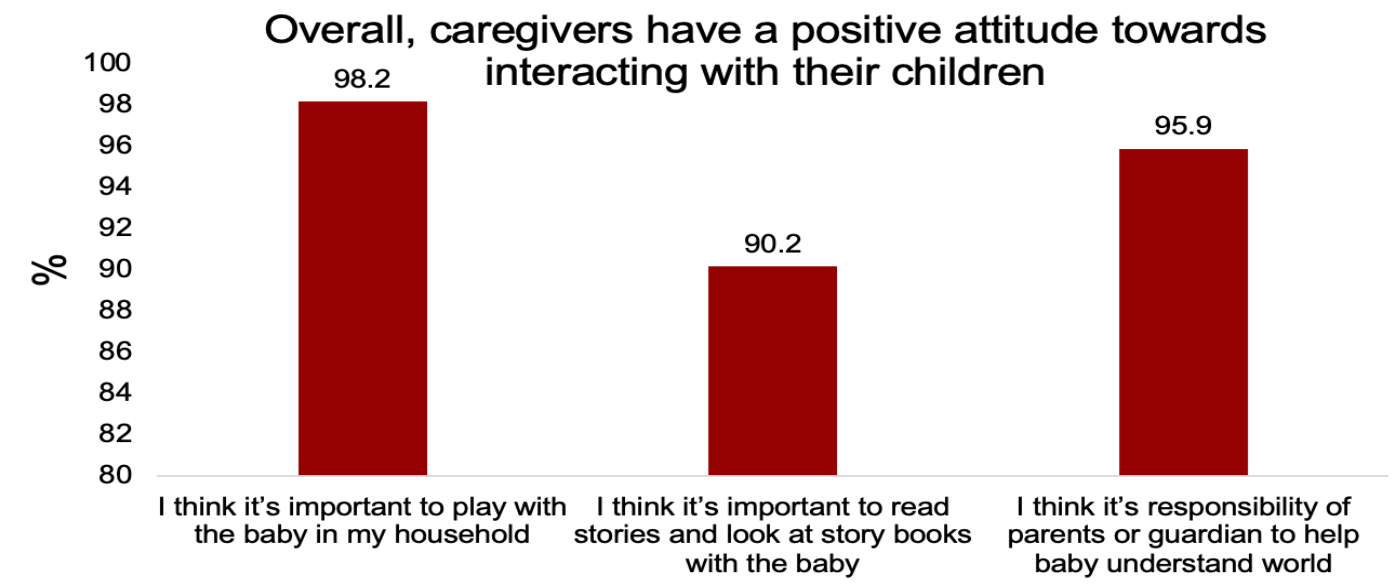
First three years of life are critical



Most brain development happens before age 3, making this a crucial window for child development.



Source: WDR 2018 team, based on Carneiro, Cunha, and Heckman (2003); Martin (2012).



Text Message Intervention

Using the WeChat platform, we developed a series of parenting-focused texts that caregivers received and could access to learn more about parenting their young children.

Tips by Text

- [FACT] Babies sleep a lot during the first few weeks of life. That's ok! New babies need lots of sleep. Try to rest or sleep when your baby is sleeping.
- [TIP] It's normal for babies to sleep a lot in the first few. Get to know your baby by holding, cuddling & rocking him/her. Your baby will feel loved and secure!
- [GROWTH] When your baby sleeps or eats, keep him/her in your arms and rock gently. This move is good for you all! In addition, remember that new mothers must also eat and sleep well, and take care of themselves!

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 T_i + \beta_1 X_i + \Phi_c + \varepsilon_i$$

- 0.22-0.37 SD** maternal knowledge scores
- 0.18-0.27 SD** time investment of reading books to children
- 0.09-0.14 SD** time investment of naming things, counting, or drawing with children
- 0 Negative Effect** maternal mental health