

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A SHORT-TERM ACADEMY TO IMPROVE SELF-REGULATION SKILLS

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This study reviews the impact of a short-term academy on disadvantaged children prior to kindergarten entrance. The focus was on improving the participants' social-emotional skills to determine whether upon completing the program children would show statistically significant growth in self-regulation skills. The assumption, borne out in the professional literature, is that children entering kindergarten with more developed social-emotional skills do better academically throughout their school career. The assessment data collected showed that the short amount of time focused on social and emotional skills did in fact strengthen those skills in a statistically significant way. The implication is that a relatively modest investment in this type of academy could enable many more children to persist and succeed in their K-12 schooling.