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Predictors of Foster Parents' Home-based Academic Involvement with their Foster Youth

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Predictors of Foster Parents' Home-based Academic Involvement with their Foster Youth

Jonelle Alicia Reynolds, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut, 2020

Parental involvement in children's education has been associated with children's academic success; however, little is known about the academic involvement of foster parents with their foster youth or their understanding of their roles and responsibilities related to education. The primary purpose of this study was to explore associations between and among factors that have been relevant in the general literature around academic success and foster parents' academic involvement. This study explored the relationship between these factors of parental self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, time and energy, and the foster child's invitation, and home-based academic involvement practices of foster parents. A secondary goal was to examine foster parents' understanding of their educational roles and responsibilities related to education, as well as the areas of confusion regarding those roles. A self-reported, online questionnaire was provided to 140 current or past foster parents of middle and high school aged foster youth. Ordinal regression analyses were conducted to examine the associations between the foster parents' self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, time and energy, the foster child's invitation, and the foster parents' home-based academic involvement practices. In addition, descriptive and bivariate analyses tested for associations between the motivators of home-based involvement and the foster parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Results demonstrated that foster parents' self-efficacy, perception of their knowledge and skills, and the receipt of invitations from their foster child for assistance, were predictive of their level of home-based academic involvement. However, time and energy were not associated with involvement. Results also showed that foster parents generally lacked clarity on who had the authority to initially

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access services or to execute those services. Even for common services such as time management and study skills, approximately half of the foster parents thought it was their responsibility and the other half thought it was the professional staff (case managers and educational specialists). Findings are discussed in the context of study limitations and implications for practice and research.

Keywords: foster children, parenting, home environment, parental educational involvement

Predictors of Foster Parents' Home-based Academic Involvement with their Foster Youth

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B.A., Baruch College, 2009

M.S., Oklahoma State University, 2014

A Dissertation

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APPROVAL PAGE

Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation

Predictors of Foster Parents' Home-based Academic Involvement with their Foster Youth

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2020

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Introduction

Foster care provides temporary out-of-home placement for children who have been removed from their biological parents or guardians for reasons such as maltreatment, child behavior problems, inadequate housing, parental incarceration, parental substance abuse and their caretaker's inability to cope (Harden, 2004; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], 2016). These children may live in different placements over the course of their stay in foster care (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2017)—an average of 2.8 placements during their first time receiving foster care services (National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, 2014). Such placements include foster family homes, foster homes of relatives (or kinship care), group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions and pre-adoptive homes (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2017). The length of stay in the same placement and in foster care generally will vary based on the specific circumstances of the child and decisions made by the federal, state and local agencies about the best interests of the child. Foster parents can have four to eight children (i.e., foster and biological children) in their home at any given time; this number varies by state (National Resource Center for Family-centered Practice and Permanency Planning, 2007). Of the estimated 442,995 children and youth in foster care in 2017, nearly half of them (45%) were in nonrelative foster family homes and about one-third of them (32%) were in relative/kinship homes (Child Welfare Gateway, 2019).

Family-based care is provided by licensed or certified foster parents who receive 10 to 30 hours of training depending on their state's requirements (National Foster Parent Association, 2017). The agency and foster parents together decide on foster children who would be suitable for their families (Connecticut Department of Children and Families, 2016; National Foster Parent Association, 2017). Foster parents can be same-sex, single or from nuclear family

households (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2014; National Foster Parent Association, 2017). Unfortunately, national data on foster parent demographics is not available at this time. However, kinship caregivers can be related by blood, marriage, adoption or be close family friends (i.e., fictive kin) (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016). Although there are different types of kinship care, only in formal kinship care does the state take legal custody of the foster child while in voluntary kinship care, a child welfare caseworker may be minimally involved and offer needed help (e.g., safety checks, therapeutic referrals) (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016). Formal kinship caregivers have similar rights and responsibilities as nonrelative foster parents and have a more organized relationship with the child welfare agency than voluntary kinship caregivers (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016). Kinship caregivers are more likely to be low-socioeconomic status, poorly educated, lack the resources to facilitate the academic achievement of these children (Font, 2014; Guo & Harris, 2000; Harden, Clyman, Kriebel, & Lyons, 2004), and to be unmarried, widowed, or be the sole caregiver for the child (Harden et al., 2010).

The Federal government and states have taken steps to improve the educational outcomes and stability of foster youth, in part, by emphasizing the need for collaboration and joint decision-making between child welfare and educational agencies (U.S. Department of Education [ED] & HHS, 2016). At the Federal level, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Fostering Connections Act) was signed into law in 2008 to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008). It requires child welfare agencies to coordinate with educational agencies to make school placement decisions that are in the best interests of the foster child, which includes assessing the appropriateness of the child's current school placement and location, and if an alternative

placement is better, facilitating the child's prompt enrollment with the appropriate documentation in the new school (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008).

These changes in policies would benefit foster youths who routinely underperform academically when compared to their peers (Berger, Cancian, Han, Noyes, & Rios-Salas, 2015). Foster youths are more likely to be suspended and expelled from school (Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, 2014), attend nontraditional schools (Barrat & Berliner, 2013; Wiegmann, Putnam-Hornstein, Barrat, Magruder, & Needell, 2014) and/or low performing schools (Smithgall, Gladden, Howard, George, & Courtney, 2004), and have disabilities and/or are receiving special education services (National Working Group on Foster Care and Education, 2014; Wiegmann et al., 2014; Wulczyn, Smithgall, & Chen, 2009). Consequently, foster youth are at-risk academically, with repercussions for their educational attainment and later career and labor market success.

One specific mechanism through which the educational outcomes of foster youth may be facilitated is through parental involvement in their education. Parental involvement in education is described as the parents' engagement with their child and their child's school to encourage educational success (Hill et al., 2004). Three types of involvement include home-based involvement (e.g., parent-child discussions about school, homework help and creating a learning environment at home with books and educational toys), school-based involvement (e.g., parent-teacher communication, participation on school activities like PTA meetings), and academic socialization (e.g., communicating parental expectations for the child's academics and its value, connecting schoolwork to current issues, nurturing educational and occupational aspirations, talking about learning approaches and preparing/planning for the future) (Hill & Tyson, 2009). At the elementary level, school-based involvement provides parents with curricular knowledge,

tools for effective academic help at home and an opportunity to build a positive relationship with the teacher (Comer, 1995; Epstein, 2001). At the middle school and high school levels, school-based involvement shifts to attendance of school activities, less relationship building with teachers (i.e., more teachers per student and student numbers per classroom increase) and parents have reduced knowledge about the curriculum (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Thus, the type and amount of effective at-home involvement may decrease during the adolescent school years (Seginer, 2006), especially when the adolescent developmental changes (e.g., greater autonomy from parents) are also taken into consideration. In the general population, parental influence of their adolescents become more indirect as the parent-adolescent relationship is renegotiated. However, with foster youth who have experienced multiple traumas and are typically at-risk academically, the type of involvement that is most effective with younger children in the home may also be effective with this population.

Although foster parent involvement (i.e., at home and at school) does predict foster children's academic success, being involved in the school activities may not be a significant predictor (Cheung et al., 2012). It was suggested that perhaps home-based involvement was a strong predictor because these foster parents had a positive relationship with their foster children and helped meet their individual needs (Cheung et al., 2012). However, there is a lack of research examining the association between foster parent home-based involvement and foster youth's academic outcomes. Both foster parents and nonfoster parents [i.e., not involved in the child welfare system] generally feel ill equipped to help their youths with homework and provide them with knowledge to increase their school performance (Dauber & Epstein, 1993). In the past, foster parents have complained about feeling excluded from the child's academic affairs, being unclear about any aspects of the child's education they could lead (Smithgall et al., 2004),

role ambiguity (Le Prohn, 1994) and lack of clarity about the roles of agencies, social workers and how to navigate the foster care system (Cooley & Petren, 2011).

The introduction and implementation of educational policies at the federal and state levels will likely cause more confusion about foster parents' new role expectations and responsibilities. Because foster parents have autonomy over their home-based involvement with their foster youth and home-based involvement in education has been found to be promotive of youth's academic skills among nonfoster parents (James, Rudy, & Dotterer, 2019), an understanding of what motivates foster parents to be involved with their foster child's education is key. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005) model of parental involvement proposes several contextual factors (i.e., parents' self-efficacy, time and energy, knowledge and skills, and child invitations for help) that influence the parents' decision to become involved in their child's education. Although this model has been used exclusively with nonfoster parents [i.e., not involved in the child welfare system], it provides a starting point from which to examine the factors that influence the home-based academic involvement practices foster parents utilize with their foster youth.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's Model

The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (Walker et al., 2005) revised model of the parental involvement process (Figure 1) is structured in sequential tiers to address three questions: Why do parents become involved? What forms does their involvement take? And, how does parental involvement make a positive difference in student outcomes? Parents' decision to become involved in their child's education can be hindered or encouraged by three types of factors: child-level variables which include age and academic self-concept (Gonzalez-Pienda et al.,

2002), school-level variables like school size and school climate (Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997), and parent-level variables such as self-efficacy, education and socioeconomic status (Edwards & Alldred, 2000; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Keyes, 2002). The interactions of these variables help us to understand the process of parental involvement.

Level 1 focuses on the factors that influence parents' motivation for involvement in their child's schooling—personal motivators, parents' perception of invitations to be involved and family life context variables. The interaction of these factors influences the frequency and quality of the four forms of involvement (i.e., personal and family values, goals, expectations and aspirations; home-based activities; school-based activities; and family-school communication) that are found in level 1.5. During these involvement activities, level 2 assumes that parents use learning mechanisms (i.e., encouragement, modeling, reinforcement and instruction) to promote their children's academic achievement. In level 3, the model theorizes that students' perceptions of their parents' actions mediate the association between parental involvement and academic outcomes. The last two levels focus on the student outcomes as influenced by their parents' involvement. Level 4 argues that parental involvement primarily impacts the development of children's own attributes that are conducive to student achievement while level 5 argues that parental involvement has a direct impact on student achievement. This study examined the impact of the parental self-efficacy, invitations from the foster child, parental knowledge and skills, and parental time and energy from level 1 of the model on the home-based academic involvement practices used by foster parents (see Figure 2).

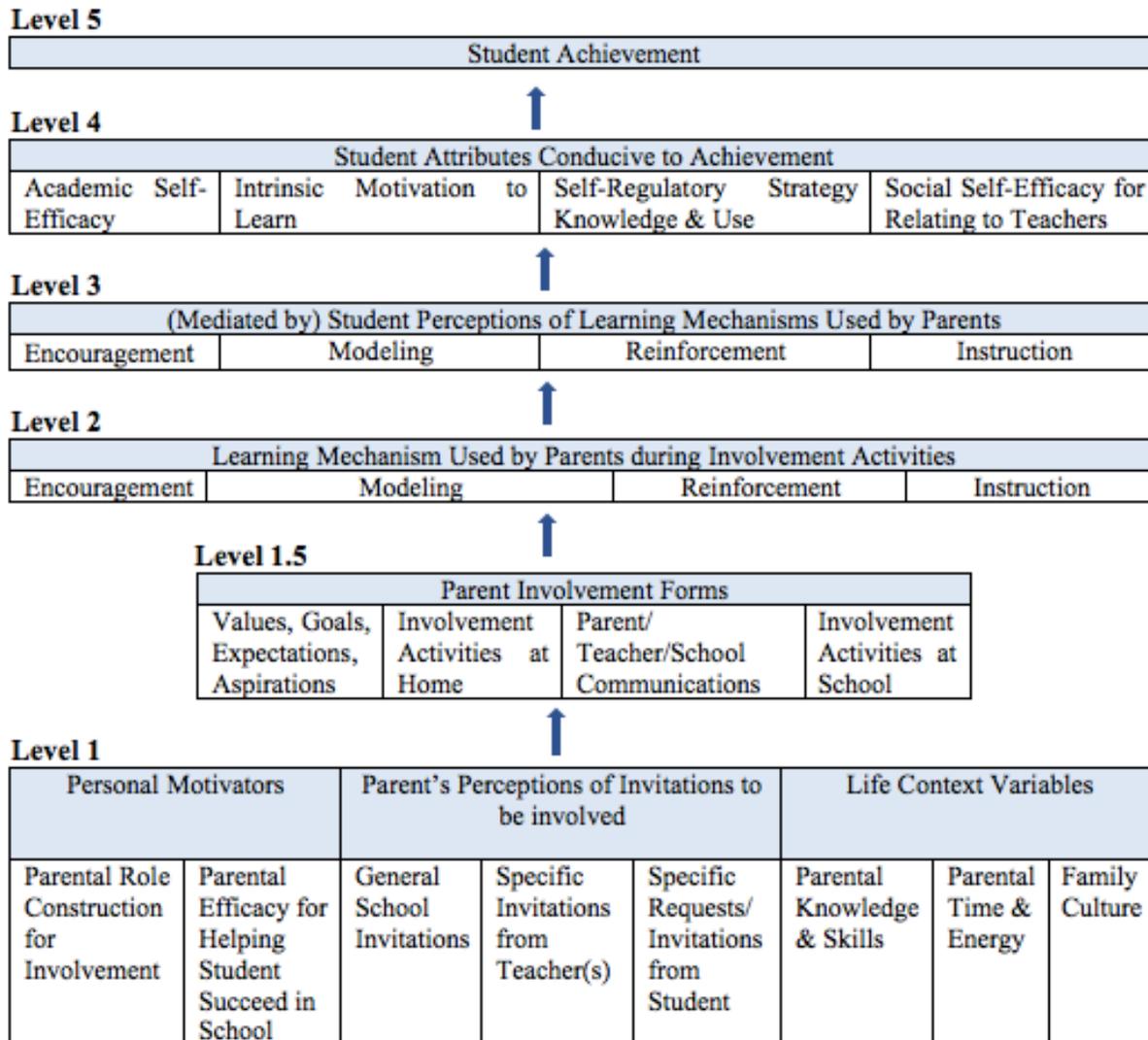


Figure 1. Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler’s model of the parental involvement process (Hoover-Dempsey, Whitaker, & Ice, 2010; Walker et al. 2005). Reprinted with permission (see Appendix C). Copyright 2005 by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler.

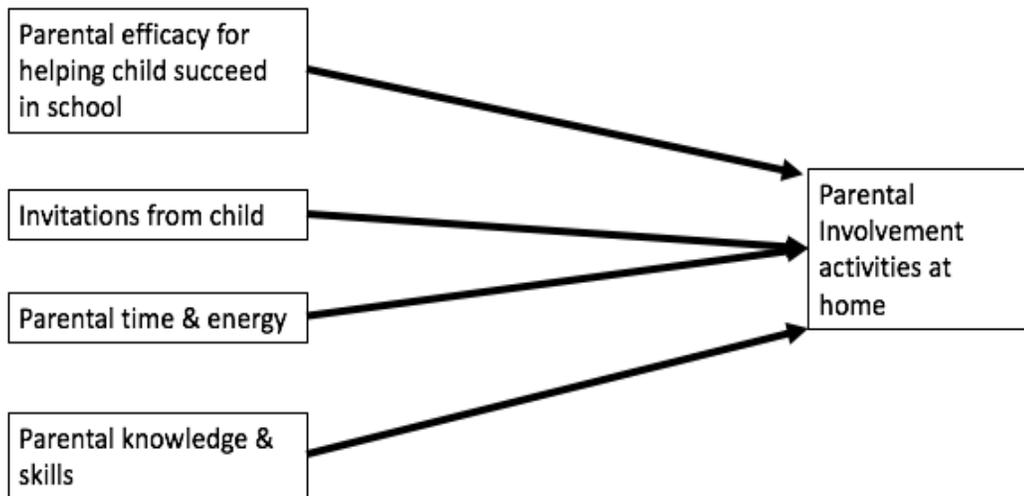


Figure 2. Conceptual model of the predictors of foster parent home-based involvement

Personal Motivation of Parental Involvement

This model suggests that personal motivators like self-efficacy (i.e., beliefs about whether their involvement efforts will help their child academically succeed) motivate parents to actively engage in their child's educational outcomes (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). It purports that this motivation is a function of the social systems in which parents belong (The Parent Institute, 2012). Hence, parental motivators can be influenced by their: (1) own childhood family and academic experiences, (2) current family systems, and (3) recent experiences with their child's school (The Parent Institute, 2012).

Parents' sense of self efficacy. This personal motivator is rooted in self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997), which proposes that parent's involvement behaviors are influenced by their beliefs about their own capabilities and whether the effectiveness of their involvement will lead to positive academic outcomes for their children. It is also socially constructed and largely influenced by vicarious mastery experiences (e.g., learning from others' success), personal

mastery experiences (e.g., prior successful involvement outcomes) and verbal persuasion from trusted others (e.g., family members and teachers) (Bandura, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010).

Parents with positive self-efficacy typically set high expectations for themselves and are willing to persist in spite of any challenges that may arise to help their children succeed, whereas, those with more negative self-efficacy are more likely to doubt their abilities and give up when faced with difficulties (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy also has a weaker than hypothesized, but positive association with parental involvement activities, specifically, in the home (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010). The role of the foster parents' sense of self-efficacy in helping their foster children succeed academically should be explored further.

Contextual Invitations of Parental Involvement

This model suggests that contextual invitations play a vital role in a parent's decision to get involved in his or her child's education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). These contextual invitations highlight aspects of the parents' environment that contribute to their beliefs about what is expected of them, what they should do and how their involvement would ultimately benefit their child's academic achievement (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010). Specific invitations from the child (i.e., does my child want or need my involvement?) may hold more of an emotional influence over parents' decisions resulting from the closeness of the relationship (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010).

Specific invitations from the child. These invitations may play a significant role in motivating parents to become involved in their educational outcomes, as parents typically desire to meet their child's developmental needs (e.g., Baumrind, 1991) and because they desire for

them to perform well in school (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Burow, 1995). These invitations may be implicit when parents observe that the child is struggling with homework or school projects and need more structure or other forms of support (e.g., The Parent Institute, 2012; Pomerantz & Eaton, 2001) or they may be explicit (often with younger children) in asking the parents for help with their work (e.g., Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995). Some studies have shown that these invitations can be significant motivators for parents to participate in home-based activities (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995). Very little is known about foster parents' involvement choices especially when their foster child's invitation is implicit.

Family Life Context Variables

Family life context variables are those that have no direct influence from the child's school but play a vital role in parents' decisions about involvement in their child's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2010). These variables include parents' understanding of their own skills and knowledge, parents' perceptions of their available time and energy, and their family culture (Parent Institute, 2012).

Parents' knowledge and skills. Parents' perception of their own knowledge and skills determines what types of involvement activities they select; when the activities do not match their perceived skill levels, they will send their children to other sources for help such as to another family member or to the child's teacher (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995). As children go up in grade level, their schoolwork becomes more complicated and requires more advanced knowledge. It is during this time, that a decline in parental involvement is observed. Such declines may also be due to parents' giving their youths more independence or

parents' receiving less invitations for involvement (Eccles et al., 1993; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995).

Parents' time and energy. This model proposes that parents' perceptions of the demands on their time and energy due to restrictive work hours and few supports to help with family commitments influence their decisions to become involved in their child's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995, 2005). Parents who have multiple jobs, experience job instability or work long hours are less likely to be involved at school than parents who have more flexibility with their schedules and a wider support network (e.g., Garcia Coll et al., 2002; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 1995, 2010). Foster parents have reported feeling burnt out and feeling undervalued (Heller, Smyke, & Boris, 2002). Further research is needed to understand how foster parents' perceptions of their time and energy play into how involved they choose to be.

Although research is ongoing to fully understand the predictors of parental involvement in the home, most of it is focused on nonfoster parents. Some research does exist on the foster parent's perceived time and energy overall (Heller, Smyke, & Boris, 2002) but little to none has explored research in the area of at-home parental academic involvement concerning foster parents.

Foster Parent Roles and Responsibilities

Foster parents' involvement could be facilitated or hindered by their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the other stakeholders (e.g., case managers, education specialists). Shifts in foster care policy and law can create confusion and delays in implementation of those changes. Consequently, foster parents will either continue to operate under old expectations of meeting their foster child's basic needs or attempt to become educational advocates for their foster child at home and at school. Those who choose to pursue

the latter path may experience success in helping their foster child academically or receive rebuke for overstepping their responsibilities by the case manager.

When children enter the foster care system, they are in the legal custody of the state and the judge is the final decision maker (i.e., the legal parent). The case manager is vested with some legal authority by the judge and is representing the legal authority of the state. How this authority is manifested will vary by state and by judge. The case manager is also representing the best interests of the family including the child, hence, the foster child is assigned a court-appointed advocate for his/her best interest. Additionally, the case manager often works with the input of a team (e.g., therapist, education specialist, teacher) when making decisions about the foster child. Agency education specialists or liaisons can play an integral role in decision-making concerning the foster youth's educational outcomes. Generally, they work alongside school districts, child welfare services and foster parents, rectify academic barriers, and provide direct support to foster youth in order to facilitate their academic success (Weinberg, Oshiro, & Shea, 2014; Zetlin, Weinberg, & Shea, 2006). They attend special education individualized education program [IEP] meetings and most often have had the longest relationship with the foster youth at these meetings (Weinberg et al., 2014). The role of the foster parent in the decision-making process is not as straightforward or consistent.

The introduction of the 2014 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act [HR-4980] (Child Welfare League of America [CWLA], 2014) should increase the foster parents' autonomy in decision-making related to educational activities. More specifically, it imposes a 'reasonable prudent parent standard':

a standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while at the same time encouraging the

emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities (CWLA, 2014, p. 4).

However, it could add to foster parent's confusion about their roles since this bill wants the foster child to have the normal experiences that children outside of the foster care system would experience, such a shift in expectation would require foster parents to reconceptualize what it means to be a foster parent. Those who see themselves as temporary caregivers or as providers of basic needs may resist changes that expect them to connect and invest as though they are biological parents. Nonetheless, this bill when implemented well at the state and local levels should complement the other educational policies and facilitate foster parent's involvement in their foster youth's education. Foster parents will need clear guidance on their rights and what is expected of them.

Foster Parent Rights

An understanding of their rights within the child welfare system could help foster parents to successfully navigate issues around their role in their foster child's education. However, without these rights and clear language in the statutes about what is expected of them, many foster parents may shy away from any academic involvement. Seventeen states have legislated the Foster Parent Bill of Rights including California, Louisiana and Maryland (National Conference of State Legislatures [NCSL], 2016). In Connecticut, there is a proposed bill of rights for foster and kinship parents that has yet to be approved (Connecticut Alliance of Foster and Adoptive Families, 2015). When education is mentioned in these statutes, it is in the context of foster parents communicating with professionals (e.g., teachers, therapists) who are part of a

team of decision-makers on behalf of foster youth or about their right to be involved in their foster child's educational plan (NCSL, 2016). Perhaps with more legal clarity on their rights in relation to roles and responsibilities in educational outcomes, foster youth may experience more consistency in parental academic involvement by their foster parents.

Foster Care Guidelines

Foster care guidelines would provide foster parents with clear expectations about their roles and responsibilities and should be updated regularly to reflect the any changes in policy. However, it is important that foster parents are aware that guidelines and the implementation of them can vary at the state and local level. In Connecticut's foster care manual, for example, foster parents must defer to their foster child's social worker from the Department of Children and Families [DCF] when making educational decisions for the child (CT Foster Adopt, 2017). The DCF social worker can grant permission to the foster parent to sign documents for participation in school activities and report cards (CT Foster Adopt, 2017). Foster parents must indicate next to their signatures that they are the DCF licensed parent (CT Foster Adopt, 2017). They are also encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences (CT Foster Adopt, 2017). Some foster parents could be appointed as the child's educational surrogate parent to make decisions concerning their special education needs, if said foster parent makes the request and is approved by the DCF social worker (CT Foster Adopt, 2017).

In response to the change in policies, New York City is the first to create a specific guide to help foster parents navigate their foster child's education (NYC Administration for Children's Services, 2017). This guide emphasizes that foster parents are essential members of a team to support the child's education planning goals, and explains the developmental milestones of children, resources available, as well as the planning they should be doing at each grade level

(NYC Administration for Children's Services, 2017). Many foster parents may find this guide overwhelming, but it is a step in the right direction to help foster parents prioritize their foster youth's educational needs.

Foster Parent Understanding of their Roles

Although foster children spend more time with their foster parents than they do with their case managers and court-appointed advocates, foster parents must defer to their child's case manager to make decisions about the child's education and receive permission before signing documents like report cards (CT Foster Adopt, 2017). Consequently, foster parents have complained about feeling excluded from the child's academic affairs, about being unclear about any aspects of the child's education they could lead (Smithgall et al., 2004), and about the lack of clarity about the roles of agencies, social workers and how to navigate the foster care system (Cooley & Petren, 2011). When foster parent applicants were asked about their expected roles and responsibilities, they reported that they would "perform tasks to enhance children's emotional, physical, and social development; maintain school and medical records; and help children adjust to foster care...interact with teachers, counselors...on the child's behalf" (Rhodes, Orme, & McSurdy, 2003, pp. 956). Note, the absence of active parental involvement in helping the child to do well in school.

Prior to the introduction of educational policies prioritizing education, foster parent guidelines and training did not emphasize or include expectations specific the educational outcomes of foster children. Until these policies are implemented at all levels including trainings, foster parents will continue to be unclear about their true roles and responsibilities in this area. Foster parents should be able to easily identify who has authority to make educational decisions

for their foster children, who to speak with to access resources and receive support, and feel empowered to advocate for their foster child.

Purpose of Study

Scholarship on foster parents' home-based involvement with their foster youth is scarce. More recent initiatives to improve foster children educational outcomes has put new focus on what is expected of foster parents in this area as this type of involvement has been found to be promotive of academic skills for youth in nonfoster families. An understanding of what factors influence a foster parent's decision to be involved at home with their foster child(ren) and types of confusion that exists about their roles and responsibilities could lead to improved training and support. Guided by level one of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler revised model (Walker et al., 2005), the primary purpose of this study was to explore the associations among the parents' self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, time and energy, and the foster child's invitation, as well as their connection with foster parent home-based academic involvement practices. A secondary goal was to examine foster parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as the areas of confusion regarding those roles. Findings from this exploratory study might explain how contextual factors influence the home-based involvement used by foster parents with middle and high school foster youths.

Research Questions

The following questions will be addressed in this research study:

1. How do parental self-efficacy, child invitations, parents' time and energy, and parents' skills and knowledge predict foster parent home-based involvement with their foster youth?

2. What do foster parents understand to be their roles and responsibilities in relation to supporting their foster youth's education?

Method

Participants

This study included 104 foster parent (parent) participants between the ages of 18 and 65 years old who have, or had in the past, at least one foster child attending middle or high school. Sixty-four percent of the parents (66) were men and 37% (38) were women. The ethnic breakdown of the group is: White, 65% (65); Hispanic, 15% (16); African American, 9% (9); Biracial, 5% (5); Native American/Alaskan Native, 3% (3); Asian American/Pacific Islander, 2%(2); and Arab American/Chaldean Ancestry, 1% (1). Most of the parents were between the ages of 25 and 55 years: 24% (25), 25-35 years; 57% (59), 36-45 years; and 13% (13), 46-55 years. Eighty percent of the parents (84) were married, 89%(93) were employed full-time, 90% (95) owned their homes; 42% (44) had a four-year degree, 37% (39) had a graduate degree; and 46% (48) were fostering for the first time. Similarly, 61% (63) of the foster children were reported as male, 39% (40) were female and 1%(1) was transgender male; 60% (62) did not have an individualized educational plan (IEP); and 59% (61) were in high school (see Table 1 for complete list of demographics).

Procedures

The study procedures were approved by University of Connecticut's institutional review board (IRB; see Appendix A). Using Qualtrics Research Services, I conducted an online questionnaire to ask 104 parents of middle or high school aged foster youth questions regarding their demographics and the motivators of their home-based academic involvement practices. Participants were recruited via email invitation or prompted on the respective survey platform

(e.g., customer loyalty web portals, social media or permission-based networks). The email invitation included a hyperlink and the incentive offered. Interested participants were instructed to click on a hyperlink that directed them to an information page about the survey and informed consent. Participants who did not meet the eligibility criteria were not allowed to continue the survey. Instead, these participants received a message thanking them for their participation and noting that they did not meet eligibility criteria.

Participants who met the eligibility criteria were presented with a questionnaire that asked for their demographics and assessed the motivators of their home-based academic involvement practices. Participants who completed the entire questionnaire received their agreed upon compensation. Participants took about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. No protected health information or identifiable information was collected.

Measures

Parents self-reported on their demographic characteristics (e.g., sex, education, age). Parents' self-efficacy, child invitations, parents' time and energy, parents' knowledge and skills, home-based involvement, authority to access or initiate services, and execute identified services were measured using scales with Likert-type or categorical responses. See Appendix B for complete scales.

Predictors of home-based involvement. The following measures were developed by Walker et al. (2005). All measures used a 6-point Likert-type response scale that asked respondents to what extent they agreed with a series of statements. The Cronbach's alpha, a measure of internal reliability, for each scale is shown in Table 2.

Parental self-efficacy. Six items evaluated the extent to which parents' felt prepared to help their child in school and that their help made a difference (rated from 1= *disagree very*

strongly to 6= *agree very strongly*). Item 4 (*other children have more influence on my foster child's grades than I do*) which was reverse coded was not included in the analyses, as the Cronbach's alpha improved with its removal. Scale scores were computed by averaging item scores, with higher scores suggesting that foster parents perceived higher self-efficacy ($\alpha = .85$).

Parents' perceptions of specific child invitations. Six items assessed parents' perceptions of being asked by their foster child to help out at school and with their homework (rated 1= *never* to 6= *daily*). Scale scores were computed by averaging item scores, with higher scores suggesting that foster parents perceived more child invitations received ($\alpha = .86$).

Parents' perceived life context. Participants were asked to think about the most current school year for both subscales—time and energy and knowledge and skills.

Time and energy. Six items assessed whether parents had the available time and energy to communicate effectively with their foster child about their school day and teachers (rated 1= *disagree very strongly* to 6= *agree very strongly*). Scale scores were computed by averaging item scores, with higher scores suggesting that parents perceived that they had more time and energy ($\alpha = .76$).

Knowledge and skills. Nine items assessed whether parents' knew how to communicate effectively with their foster child about homework and their school day (rated 1= *disagree very strongly* to 6= *agree very strongly*). Scale scores were computed by averaging item scores, with higher scores suggesting that parents perceived that they had higher levels of knowledge and skills ($\alpha = .88$).

Home-based involvement. Six items evaluated parents' assistance with school work in the home (rated 1= *1-2 times a year* to 6= *daily*; $\alpha = .91$). Lavenda's (2011) version of this

measure was used, as she made a few adjustments to the language for parents of middle and high school students. Each item was analyzed individually in the ordinal regression analyses.

Roles and responsibilities. The questions on parents' roles and responsibilities were created for this study and were derived from personal interviews with parents of youths. Both measures used a 4-point categorical response scale that asked respondents to identify the individual who addressed the stated problem.

Authority to access or initiate services. Eleven items assessed who had the authority to make decisions concerning their foster child's education (rated 1= *foster parent*, 2= *case manager*, 3= *educational specialist* and 4= *I don't know*; $\alpha = .76$).

Execute identified services. The same eleven items were included for this measure with an additional column asking participants, "*What difficulties did you face when trying to get this done?*" ($\alpha = .85$).

Data Analytic Procedures

Internal Reliability Analysis

The Walker et al.'s (2005) measures in this study have previously been used primarily for nonfoster parents [i.e., not involved in the child welfare system] (see Table 2 for the Cronbach's alphas), here they adopted for use with this foster parent population. An internal reliability analysis was conducted in SPSS version 25 to ascertain the Cronbach's alphas with foster parents in this study (see Table 2).

Associations among Explanatory Variables

A series of non-parametric tests were conducted in order to evaluate associations between explanatory variables (see Table 3). These tests were used because of their robustness to violations of the normality assumptions underlying most parametric procedures. All tests were

administered in SPSS v. 25. Chi-square tests were used when variables had two or more categories. If cell frequencies were greater than five, Pearson chi-square statistics are reported.

For chi-square tests: when the variables have two or more categories and all expected cell frequencies are greater than five, Pearson chi-square is reported; when the variables are dichotomous, Phi (a measure of the correlation between variables) is reported. When one or more of the expected cell frequencies in a 2-by-2 table was less than five, Fisher's Exact Tests were reported. Finally, when variables with more than two levels had expected cell frequencies less than 5, Cramer's V was used as the measure of association.

Research Question 1: How do parental self-efficacy [SE], child invitations[CI], parents' time and energy [TE], and parents' skills and knowledge [KS] predict foster parent home-based involvement with their foster youth?

Ordinal Regression Analysis

In linear regression analyses, inaccurate assumptions about equidistance between categories of ordinal dependent variables can lead to inaccurate conclusions (Long & Freese, 2001). As such, ordinal regression models are generally used with ordinal dependent variables, as they respect both the ranking and categorical nature of these outcome variables. In ordinal regression models, the magnitude of the change in the outcome probability for a given change in one of the explanatory variables is dependent on the categories of all of the explanatory variables (Long & Freese, 2001). A key assumption of ordinal regression models is the proportional odds assumption, i.e., that the relationship between each pair of outcome groups is the same (Harrell, 2015). In Table 6, the dependent variable has six levels (columns): daily, a few times a week, once a week, once or twice or a month, 4-5 times a year and 1-2 times a year. According to the proportional odds assumption, there would be the same odds ratio for each category/cumulative

split. Therefore, split one—daily (blue) versus a few times a week or less (yellow section) would have the same odds ratio as split five—daily combined with a few times a week, once a week, once or twice a month and 4-5 times a year (blue section) versus 1-2 times a year (yellow).

A cumulative logit parameterization is used for this model in Stata version 16. In order to facilitate our understanding of the output, the proportional odds ratio was calculated, i.e., the exponent of the regression coefficient ($\exp(\beta)$). There are four assumptions that must be met before using ordinal logistic regression analyses: (1) dependent variables are ordinal, (2) independent variables are continuous, ordinal or categorical, (3) there is no multicollinearity, i.e., two or more independent variables are not highly correlated (VIF less than 10), and (4) there are proportional odds. Data in this study met the first 3 assumptions.

In this study, an ordinal logistic regression was conducted to test associations between the independent variables (SE, KS, CI, TE, and parent's sex) and the dependent variable (home-based involvement). An ordinal regression model, assuming proportional odds was run for each of the six items of the home-based involvement outcome (see Table 7 for a description of the six items). Each model was fitted with the four main explanatory and the other demographic variables using the OLOGIT function in Stata (version 16). Fitting models with too many predictors relative to the number of samples can lead to biased estimates of regression coefficients. Therefore, variables were removed that caused the model to have questionable standard errors and did not meet the assumption of proportional odds. The four main explanatory variables were retained until the end. The assumption of proportional odds for each model was examined using the Brant test (Brant, 1990). An additional Stata subcommand, FITSTAT, of Stata SPost (Long & Freese, 2006) was used to analyze the post-estimations for the models. The

results of fit statistics, Brant test and cumulative odds of the independent variables for each model were interpreted and discussed.

Model selection. The corrected Akaike information criterion (AICc) was used to compare the fit of models as variables were removed. The Akaike information criterion, AIC, (Akaike, 1973) was designed to select a model with a probability distribution fitted closest to the true distribution (Busemeyer & Diederich, 2014; Hurvich & Tsai, 1989; Symonds & Moussalli, 2011). The lowest AIC value is considered the best fitted model (Busemeyer & Diederich, 2014; Hurvich & Tsai, 1989; Symonds & Moussalli, 2011). However, the corrected AIC, AICc is recommended for small sample sizes (Hurvich & Tsai, 1989).

Like the AIC, the lowest AICc gives the best fitted model. Models with ΔAICc less than two are considered as good as the best fitted model, but more than ten can be considered poorer than the best fitted model (Burnham & Anderson, 2002; Richards, Whittingham, & Stephens, 2011; Symonds & Moussalli, 2011). In this study a model with a ΔAICc greater than two or the most parsimonious (i.e., the model with the fewest predictors) was selected.

Research Question 2: What do foster parents understand to be their roles and responsibilities in relation to supporting their foster youth's education?

Patterns of Predictors and their Relationships with Mean Item Scores

In order to evaluate patterns across all items associated with my responses, mean scores for each of the four main predictors were calculated. For example, mean CI was calculated as the average response to the 6 items (i.e., my foster child asked me to help explain something about his or her homework; my foster child asked me to supervise his or her homework; my foster child talked with me about the school day; my foster child asked me to attend a special event at school; my foster child asked me to help out at the school; my foster child asked me to talk with

his or her teacher) associated with it. Then rank-based, non-parametric tests (i.e., Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H) were run to test bivariate associations between the four main predictors of home-based involvement (e.g., mean CI) and the descriptive variables of the parent sample (e.g., foster child has an IEP). Mann-Whitney U tests (instead of *t*-tests) were used here to compare differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is either ordinal or continuous, but not normally distributed. Similarly, Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used (instead of an ANOVA) to compare differences between more than two independent groups where the dependent variables are either ordinal or continuous, but not normally distributed. After pairwise comparisons were performed using Dunn's (1964) procedure, a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was made. Under these circumstances, non-parametric tests have great power to detect differences. These tests were first run with categorical demographic variables as predictors (urbanicity, employment, IEP, and region). Kruskal-Wallis H and Mann-Whitney U tests were also performed to evaluate difference in responses between roles and responsibility measures (authority, and follow through).

Finally, cross-tabulations were run to create summary statistics of demographic variables and role and responsibility variables in order to clarify any trends or areas of confusion.

Results

To assess the reliability of the scales, Cronbach alpha values from the sample of foster parents was compared to the alphas from a published study of nonfoster parents [i.e., not involved in the child welfare system]. As these measures were testing the intended constructs with the parent population, primary analyses were completed. Demographic information of foster parents [parents] and their foster children are presented in Table 1. Sixty-four percent of the parents (66) were men and 37% (38) were women. The ethnic breakdown of the group is: White,

65% (65); Hispanic, 15% (16); African American, 9% (9); Biracial, 5% (5); Native American/Alaskan Native, 3% (3); Asian American/Pacific Islander, 2%(2); and Arab American/Chaldean Ancestry, 1% (1). Most of the parents were between the ages of 25 and 55 years: 24% (25), 25-35 years; 57% (59), 36-45 years; and 13% (13), 46-55 years. Eighty percent of the parents (84) were married, 89%(93) were employed full-time, 90% (95) owned their homes; 42% (44) had a four-year degree, 37% (39) had a graduate degree; and 46% (48) were fostering for the first time. Similarly, 61% (63) of the foster children were reported as male, 39% (40) were female and 1%(1) was transgender male; 60% (62) did not have an individualized educational plan (IEP); and 59% (61) were in high school.

Correlation Analysis

Bivariate correlations, means and standard deviations are presented for descriptive purposes (see Table 4 for significances). There was a statistically significant, strong positive correlation between self-efficacy [SE] and knowledge and skills [KS]($r_s = .716$) as well as between SE and time and energy [TE] ($r_s = .673$). Further, there was a statistically significant, very strong positive correlation between TE and KS ($r_s = .853$). There were also statistically significant, moderate positive correlations between child invitations [CI] and SE ($r_s = .434$), KS ($r_s = .461$), and TE ($r_s = .442$). In addition, the means and standard deviations on each scale (scores ranging from 1 to 6), indicate a more homogeneous group of parents that tended towards the positive end of each scale, that is, higher levels of SE (mean = 5.29, sd = .64), KS (mean = 5.25, sd = .61), TE (mean = 5.26, sd = .55), CI (mean = 4.34, sd = 1.10) and home-based involvement (mean = 4.77, sd = 1.13).

Chi-square tests of association were conducted between the categorical study variables (e.g., parent sex, parent education). Table 8 shows how the study variables were recoded to

create larger categories to meet the assumptions of this test. Only statistically significant associations were reported (see Table 5). As foster parent sex and education had the most statistically significant associations with the other study variables, both were used as proxies for the other variables in the ordinal regression analyses. However, only foster parent sex met the proportional odds assumption in any of the resulting ordinal regression models.

Ordinal Logistic Regressions

To understand how parental self-efficacy [SE], child invitations[CI], parents' time and energy [TE], and parents' skills and knowledge [KS] predict foster parent home-based involvement with their foster youth, an ordinal regression model was fitted. The final model was determined by comparing models that met the proportional odds assumption (overall and for each predictor), had a statistically significant log likelihood ratio Chi-square test (indicates improved fit of model compared to null model without predictors), and had the lowest $\Delta AICc$ values greater than two and was most parsimonious (see Table 9). Table 10 reports the results of proportional odds assumption and log likelihood ratio Chi-square tests for each of the final models. The Stata OLOGIT procedure was used as this program estimates ordinal logistic regression models of the ordinal outcome variable on the explanatory variables. Table 11 reports the results of each model with the best fit.

Model one: talk-schoolday. Self-efficacy (OR= 2.42, 95% CI [1.37, 4.28]) and parents' sex (OR = .39, 95% CI [0.17, 0.87]) were both significant predictors of the dependent variable. For one unit increase in the mean SE score, the odds of daily home-based involvement versus lower outcomes (see Table 5) were 2.42 times greater given the other variables were held constant in the model. However, parent sex predicted reduced odds of talk-schoolday, that is, the odds of increased talking about the school day were 61% lower (100% - 39% = 61%) for males

than for females, given that the other variables were held constant. Therefore, female parents and those who have higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to talk to their foster children about the school day than their male counterparts.

Model 2: check-homework. The parents' knowledge and skills was the only significant predictor of the dependent variable (OR= 4.75, 95% CI [1.44, 15.66]). For one unit increase in the mean of parents' perception of their KS, the odds of parents checking their foster child's homework daily versus lower levels of involvement (see Table 6) were 4.75 times greater, given the other variables were held constant in the model. This means that parents who had a stronger perception of their KS were about five times more likely to check their foster child's homework regularly than those who had lower perceptions of their KS. The parent's perception of their time and energy was marginally significant (95% CI [.787, .998]) as a predictor of check-homework.

Model 3: assist-studyexams. Child invitations was the only significant predictor of the dependent variable (OR= 1.96, 95% CI [1.38, 2.77]). For one unit increase in the mean number of CI, the odds of receiving daily CI versus lower involvement levels (see Table 5) were 1.96 times greater, given the other variables were held constant in the model. This means that parents were almost twice as likely to help their foster children to study for exams on a regular basis when they were personally invited to do so.

Model 4: assist-solveproblems. Self-efficacy (OR= 2.32, 95% CI [1.28, 4.19]) and parents' sex (OR= .30, 95% CI [.14, .66]) were both significant predictors of the dependent variable. For one unit increase in mean SE, the odds of daily home-based involvement versus lower outcomes (see Table 5) were 2.32 times greater given the other variables were held constant in the model. Parents with higher levels of perceived SE were twice as likely to be regularly involved in helping their foster child solve problems in math, writing and other subjects

as those who perceived themselves as having low levels of SE. However, foster parent sex predicted reduced odds of assist-solve problems ($OR = .30$), that is, the odds of higher home-based involvement were 70% lower ($100\% - 30\% = 70\%$) for males than for females, given that the other variables were held constant. Thus, female parents and those with high SE were more likely to help their foster children solve problems in math, writing and other subjects as compared to their counterparts.

Model 5: assist-research. Child invitations was a significant predictor of the dependent variable ($OR = 2.06$, 95% CI [1.44, 2.94]). For one unit increase in mean CI for assistance with work on the computer or internet, the odds of receiving daily CI versus lower outcomes (see Table 5) were 2.06 times greater; given the other variables were held constant in the model. Therefore, parents were almost twice as likely to help their foster children with work on the computer or internet on a regular basis when they were personally invited to do so.

Model 6: talk-school experiences. Knowledge and skills was the only significant predictor of the dependent variable ($OR = 4.34$, 95% CI [1.76, 10.71]). For one unit increase in the mean of parents' perception of their KS, the odds of daily discussions about the foster child's school experiences versus lower outcomes (see Table 5) were 4.34 times greater given the other variables were held constant in the model. This means that parents who had a stronger perception of their KS were about four times more likely to talk to their foster child about his or her school experiences regularly than those who had weaker perceptions of their KS.

Cross-tabulations Between *Role and Responsibility* Variables and Descriptive Variables

Cross-tabulations were run for associations between the descriptive variables and role and responsibility variables (i.e., authority to access or initiate services and execute identified services [follow through]). Tables 12a-12k show the frequency of role and responsibilities by

foster parent race, education, use of an IEP and foster child grade level. Overall, the majority of parents have selected themselves or professional staff (case managers or educational specialists) as having either the authority to access services or execute those services. There was no consistent pattern in the parents who selected “foster parent” or “professional staff” in either of the roles and responsibilities variables. However, there was a general increase in the number of “I don’t know” in the follow through sections as compared to authority to access services, especially for the middle school category.

The nonWhite parents whose foster children had an IEP had varying responses about who followed through on getting academic help for their children (Table 12a). Parents whose children had behavioral issues that kept them outside of the classroom in detention or suspension were more likely to select the professional staff as following through on finding additional services for their children (Table 12b). White parents, whose high school children had emotional or behavioral issues that prevent focusing on homework, were more likely to select themselves as following through on finding services for their children (Table 12c). White parents of high school children and white parents of middle school children with an IEP were more likely to select the professional staff as following through on services for their children’s lack of engagement (Table 12d). NonWhite parents were more likely to select themselves as following through on services for their children’s lack of engagement (Table 12d). White parents with graduate degrees of children with an IEP were more likely to identify the professional staff as having authority to get the child an IEP but selected themselves as actually following through on those IEP services (Table 12e). White parents whose children had no IEP were more likely to select themselves as having the authority but the professional staff as following through on helping their children with time management and study skills (Table 12h). White parents with a

degree whose high school children had no IEP were more likely to select themselves as following through with enrollment and registration of their children in school (Table 12i). White parents with a college degree whose high school children had no IEP were more likely to select themselves as having the authority and following through on preparing their children for transitions from middle to high school (Table 12j).

Nonparametric Tests

In order to test the bivariate links between the four main predictors of home-based involvement (i.e., SE, KS, TE and CI) and the descriptive variables of the foster parent sample (e.g., foster child has an IEP), both Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used. A Mann-Whitney U test was run for the dichotomous predictors (i.e., parents' urbanicity, employment, and IEP) and a Kruskal-Wallis H test was run for the predictors with three or more categories (i.e., parent region). Finally, a Kruskal-Wallis H was used to test the bivariate associations between predictors of the home-based involvement (i.e., SE, KS, TE and CI) and parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities (e.g., authority to address tutoring or academic help).

Urbanicity. Parents who lived in the city had higher self-efficacy scores and received more child invitations than those who lived outside of the city. More specifically, SE scores for parents who lived in the city ($n= 54$, mean rank= 59.06) were statistically significantly higher than for those who did not ($n= 50$, mean rank = 45.41), $U = 995.5$, $z = -2.325$, $p = .020$. Similarly, CI scores for parents who lived in the city (mean rank = 59.67) were statistically significantly higher than for those who did not (mean rank= 44.76), $U = 963$, $z = -2.522$, $p = .012$.

Employment. Parents who were employed fulltime received more child invitations than those who were not. CI scores for parents who worked fulltime ($n= 93$, mean rank = 54.75) were

statistically significantly higher than for those who did not ($n = 11$, mean rank = 33.45), $U = 302$, $z = -2.218$, $p = .027$.

Individualized educational plan. Parents with children who had an IEP received more child invitations and reported higher scores in *knowledge and skills* and *time and energy*. CI scores for foster children with an IEP ($n = 42$, mean rank = 66.39) were statistically significantly higher than for those without an IEP ($n = 62$, mean rank = 43.09), $U = 1885.5$, $z = 3.872$, $p = .000$. Likewise, perceived KS scores for foster children with an IEP (mean rank = 60.18) were statistically significantly higher than for those without an IEP (mean rank = 47.30), $U = 1624.5$, $z = 2.145$, $p = .032$. Additionally, perceived TE scores for foster children with an IEP (mean rank = 60.55) were statistically significantly higher than for those without an IEP (mean rank = 47.05), $U = 1640$, $z = 2.260$, $p = .024$.

Region. Parents who lived in the northeast region received more child invitations than those who lived in the southeast. The mean ranks of CI scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(2) = 11.443$, $p = .003$. The post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in CI scores between southeast ($n = 29$, mean rank = 39.91) and northeast ($n = 32$, mean rank = 65.84) ($p = .002$) groups but not between the other areas ($n = 43$, mean rank = 51.06) or any other group combination.

Authority- tutoring/academic help. Parents with higher scores in *self-efficacy*, *knowledge and skills*, and *time and energy* were more likely to select themselves as responsible for getting their foster child academic help than those with lower scores. The mean ranks of SE scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(3) = 12.970$, $p = .005$. The post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in SE scores between those who selected case manager ($n = 6$, mean rank = 17.17) and foster parent ($n = 68$, mean rank = 58.20)

($p = .008$) groups but not between the educational specialist group ($n = 25$, mean rank = 44.22), I don't know group ($n = 5$, mean rank = 58.80) or any other group combination.

Similarly, the mean ranks of KS scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(3) = 9.445$, $p = .024$. The Bonferroni post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in KS scores between case manager (mean rank = 19.75) and foster parent (mean rank = 57.22) ($p = .020$) groups but not between the educational specialist group (mean rank = 47.72), I don't know group (mean rank = 51.50) or any other group combination.

Likewise, the mean ranks of TE scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(3) = 10.739$, $p = .013$. This post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in TE scores between case manager (mean rank = 20.58) and foster parent (mean rank = 58.04) ($p = .020$) groups but not between the educational specialist group (mean rank = 45.02), I don't know group (mean rank = 52.90) or any other group combination.

Follow through- tutoring/academic help. Parents receipt of child invitations did not influence who they selected to follow through on getting academic help for their foster child. The median CI scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(3) = 8.440$, $p = .038$. However, the post hoc analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in CI scores between groups: case manager ($n = 8$, Mdn = 4.42) and foster parent ($n = 67$, Mdn = 4.67), educational specialist ($n = 22$, Mdn = 3.83), and "I don't know" ($n = 7$, Mdn = 3.83).

Follow through- time management/study skills. Parents who scored higher on knowledge and skills were more likely to select themselves as following through with getting their foster child help with time management and study skills. The mean ranks of KS scores were statistically significantly different between groups, $\chi^2(3) = 10.064$, $p = .018$. The post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in KS scores between case manager ($n = 30$,

mean rank = 41.73) and foster parent ($n = 50$, mean rank = 60.30) ($p = .045$) groups but not between the educational specialist group ($n = 19$, mean rank = 54.82), I don't know group ($n = 5$, mean rank = 30.30) or any other group combination.

Summary

The ordinal regression results showed that female parents with higher *self-efficacy* were more likely to talk about the school day and assist with solving problems in math, writing or other subjects with their foster children than those who were male and had lower levels of *self-efficacy*. Parents who were personally invited by their foster children were more likely to assist with studying for exams and doing work on the computer or internet. Whereas, parents who had higher *knowledge and skills* were more likely to check homework and talk about school experiences with their foster child.

Given the option of "I don't know," many parents selected themselves or professional staff as having either the authority to access services or execute those services. There was no consistent pattern in the parents who selected "foster parent" or "professional staff" in either of the roles and responsibilities variables. However, there was a general increase in the number of "I don't knows" in the follow through sections as compared to authority to access services, especially for the middle school category.

Parents who lived in the city had higher *self-efficacy* scores and received more *child invitations* than those who lived outside of the city. Parents who were employed fulltime received more *child invitations* than those who were not. Parents with children who had an IEP received more child invitations and reported higher scores in *knowledge and skills* and *time and energy*. Parents who lived in the northeast region received more *child invitations* than those who lived in the southeast. Parents with higher scores in *self-efficacy*, *knowledge and skills*, and *time*

and energy were more likely to select themselves as responsible for getting their foster child academic help than those with lower scores instead of a case manager. Parents who scored higher on *knowledge and skills* were more likely to select themselves as following through with getting their foster child help with time management and study skills instead of case manager.

Discussion

Guided by level one of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler revised model (Walker et al., 2005), the primary purpose of this study was to explore the associations among the foster parents' *self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, time and energy*, and the foster *child's invitation*, as well as their connection with foster parent home-based academic involvement practices. It was expected that all four factors would predict the home-based involvement behaviors in foster parents as it did with nonfoster parents. Findings showed that *self-efficacy, knowledge and skills*, and *child invitations* predicted home-based academic involvement practices but *time and energy* did not. The ordinal regression results showed that female parents with higher *self-efficacy* were more likely to talk about the school day and assist with solving problems in math, writing or other subjects with their foster children than those who were male and had lower levels of *self-efficacy*. Parents who were personally invited by their foster children were more likely to assist with studying for exams and doing work on the computer or internet. Whereas, parents who had higher *knowledge and skills* were more likely to check homework and talk about school experiences with their foster child than those with lower knowledge and skills.

Ninety-three percent of the foster parents identified as being employed full-time and 84% identified as being in a relationship. No data were collected on the other adults in the home. Perhaps these parents shared the responsibilities at home and so did not feel that their time and energy played a role in their academic involvement at home. Future research should consider

responses from both partners to better understand the sharing of responsibility when it comes to academic involvement. As 64% of the participants identified as male, perhaps their partners did more at home while they took on other responsibilities like dealing with case managers, the child welfare system and the schools. Seventy-nine percent of the participants had a college degree or higher. This education level could have influenced their *self-efficacy* (i.e., their beliefs about their own capabilities and whether the effectiveness of their involvement would lead to positive academic outcomes for their children) and their perceptions of their own *knowledge and skills* to help their foster children.

An interesting finding was that foster parents with children who had an IEP received more *child invitations* and reported higher scores in *knowledge and skills* and *time and energy*. Perhaps many of these foster parents self-selected into the child welfare system knowing that they had the knowledge and time to care for a child with an IEP. It is unclear why parents living in the city of the northeast region of the country and working fulltime received more child invitations than those who lived outside of the city in the southeast region and were not employed fulltime. Future studies should explore urbanicity and employment status in conjunction with foster care policies by state to better understand these results. A better understanding of social and cultural norms about education in these regions and states may help to contextualize these results. Research has found that parents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds show particular patterns of involvement behaviors depending on which type of parental involvement is being evaluated (Lopez, 2001; Peña, 2000). By adding the *family culture* predictor to the model, this information could help with contextualizing some of those cultural differences observed. Unfortunately, no study to date has explored *family culture* as a predictor of home-based involvement.

A secondary goal was to examine foster parents' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as the areas of confusion regarding those roles. Generally, the majority of parents had selected themselves or professional staff as having either the authority to access services or execute those services. There was no consistent pattern in the parents who selected "foster parent" or "professional staff" in either of the roles and responsibilities variables. However, when examining specific roles and responsibilities, nonWhite parents whose children had an IEP seemed confused about who followed through on getting tutoring help for their children. NonWhite parents selected themselves on following through on services to improve their child's engagement whereas White parents of high schoolers and those of middle schoolers with an IEP were more likely to select the professional staff as following through on engagement. Foster parents whose children had behavioral issues that kept them outside of the classroom in detention or suspension were more likely to select the professional staff as following through on finding additional services for their children. These findings seem to suggest that some foster parents may rely on the professional staff to follow through in areas that were outside of their control and such authority would be needed to move the process along. Unfortunately, because many of these parents selected themselves as having the authority to access services around IEPs when services are lacking or not being provided as required, this invites the question of why they believe this is true. A follow up question could have asked if they were actively part of the IEP team for their foster child and whether they were able to make decisions on their own for their foster child. Having more specific state and agency policies could have provided more context here. Perhaps foster parents in certain areas do in fact have such authority to access and execute services for their foster children because there are not enough professional staff to fulfill the needs of all their cases and/or experienced foster parents

may already have an established relationship with the school system to have such input. More research is needed to tease out these questions.

Some interesting findings were found when associations between the four main predictors and the roles and responsibilities were investigated. Foster parents with higher *knowledge and skills* were more likely to select themselves as following through with getting their foster child help with time management and study skills. Similarly, foster parents with higher scores in *self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, and time and energy* were more likely to select themselves as having the authority to get their foster child academic help than those with lower scores. It is not surprising that some foster parents would feel equipped to help their foster children with these responsibilities rather than relying on the professional staff especially with higher levels of education and possibly the financial independence to hire a tutor with or without the assistance of the professional staff.

Overall, these findings do confirm that foster parents generally lack clarity on their roles and those of the professional staff assigned to their foster children. The differences in ethnicity, presence of an IEP and the grade level of the foster children should be explored further to improve understanding of how these relate to role and responsibility clarity.

Limitations of the Study

This study only used foster parents' self-reports. It is essential to study the home-based academic involvement behaviors of everyone living in the home including the foster child. This information would enhance our understanding of the role each person plays and what factors hinder and promote these behaviors. Longitudinal and experimental designs would allow researchers to infer direction of effect and causality (Duncan, Magnuson, & Ludwig, 2004). Objective measures of academic involvement, at-home observations, and in-person interviews

would provide more contextual and representative information of what involvement behaviors were occurring and their predictors. These measures would also add validity to this construct particularly with foster parents. Additionally, objective foster youth academic performance assessments would provide information on which academic involvement practices were effective in promoting academic success.

Another limitation of this study was the fact that participants were spread across the U.S., and state child welfare systems can vary greatly. It was difficult to connect the data with foster care policies operating in each state. Future studies should consider the state and local foster care policies when considering this type of involvement. Information from case managers, educational specialists and representatives from the agencies would give further context to why some foster parents are more involved than others. Were the participants clustered in particular states, it would have been easier to connect foster care policies by state and identify any patterns specific to that location. Some states or regions of that state maybe better at disseminating information and implementing changes in policies than others. As such, future studies could focus this type of research on different regions of one state so that they could better identify and connect areas of confusion with training, miscommunication/lack of communication, etc.

Another limitation was the small sample size. The sample became even smaller when subgroup were used for the cross-tabulations. Larger sample sizes would be needed before these results could be generalized to foster parents' experiences. However, as this is an exploratory study, it will give other researchers a starting point from which to progress foster parent research in terms of parental involvement. As participants either used a smart phone or computer to answer this questionnaire, foster parent experiences of those without such access to technology would not be represented here. Also, this sample represented a fairly advantaged group that was

was predominantly White, male, college educated, married, and employed fulltime. Foster parents who do not fit these demographics are likely to report different experiences with their parental involvement and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. For example, kinship caregivers across the U.S. are more likely than this sample to be low-socioeconomic status, poorly educated, and lack the resources to facilitate the academic achievement of these children (Font, 2014; Guo & Harris, 2000; Harden et al., 2004); they are also more likely to be unmarried, widowed, and be the sole caregiver for the child (Harden et al., 2004) than this sample. Replication of this study with a more representative sample of U.S. foster parents is warranted.

One way researchers could achieve this is by stratifying the data from a large sample size to ensure equal numbers of foster parents according to sex, socioeconomic status, education, race/ethnicity and even foster parent type. Such information would enable researchers to test for differences across these descriptive variables to ascertain which variables are confounding and whether these variables play a mediating or moderating role in the prediction of home-based involvement. This study was unable to ascertain this information due to the sample size becoming smaller with each subgroup created. Some studies have found race/ethnicity and income to be associated with home-based involvement (e.g., Gilles, 2008; Lareau, 2003; Lopez, 2001; Park & Holloway, 2018) however, there is lack of consistency in these results (e.g., Entwisle & Alexander, 1996; Desimone, 2000). It is important to acknowledge that differences in race/ethnicity could be partially the result of confounding differences in socioeconomic status (Park & Holloway, 2018). Future studies will need to be intentional about testing for these relationships.

Implications for Practice and Research

The findings from this study can inform practice and research, as it is first necessary to clarify foster parents understanding of their roles and responsibilities in their foster child's education. This first step should help foster parents make more informed decisions about their readiness for these responsibilities given the limited authority they might have. Then work needs to be done to ensure support and resources are available to assist these parents with strategies to use at home to improve study skills, time management, engagement and homework help. Furthermore, training should be done specifically around the IEP process, delineating the foster parent role and what steps they can take to support the work of the IEP team. Issues around their foster child needing an IEP, services not being provided or not working are areas where they may need the most support as the consequences would affect their involvement behaviors at home.

It is important for foster parents who are succeeding in this area to be part of the trainings so that they could authentically speak about their successes and challenges; how to navigate the school system, how to work with the case manager and teachers as a team and provide realistic expectations about the rate of change in the child's school performance. Teachers should be encouraged to also engage with the foster parents on the child's academics rather than solely on behavioral issues. Several studies conducted with parents outside the child welfare system have found that informative home-school communication promoted parents home-based involvement at the elementary, middle and high school levels (e.g., Anderson & Minke, 2007; Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Park & Holloway, 2018) and affected parents' beliefs and attitudes about their role (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001).

Consequently, more research needs to be done to explore the associations between clarity on roles and responsibilities and the academic involvement behaviors practiced at home and at school. The perspective of all stakeholders involved could be useful as well. Are teachers and other school staff still unclear about the role of foster parents and if so, in what areas? Therefore, teachers should also receive training (e.g., via preservice and in-service programs) to ensure that they have a basic understanding of how foster care works, the different roles of each decision-maker in the child's life, strategies for effectively engaging with these individuals (e.g., foster parent, case manager) for educational success of the foster child in their classes. A better understanding of this system and its stakeholders should improve their perceptions of foster children and the stakeholders involved. There should also be better accountability measures in place in the schools to ensure that teachers are providing required services to foster youth (e.g., according to the IEP), communicating with foster parents early on about expectations and strategies for the youth's academic success rather than solely about behavioral issues.

Further, more clarity is also needed on academic involvement practices of foster parents by sex. In this study, we had mostly men participating which give us their unique perspectives. Parenting studies have shown that fathers play a pivotal role in the healthy development of children (Rosenberg & Wilcox, 2006). As such, it is important for researchers to investigate the role that foster fathers play in the academic outcomes of their foster children including academic involvement behaviors at home and at school.

Conclusion

All in all, this exploratory study has added to the literature on foster parent academic involvement behaviors at home with middle and high school aged foster youth. These findings also showed support for the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler model when applied to foster youths

and their parents. A foster parents' self-efficacy, perception of their knowledge and skills and the receipt of invitations from their foster child for assistance were predictive of their level of home-based involvement. Finally, these findings showed that foster parents generally lacked clarity on who had the authority to access services and follow through on those services.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics (N=104)

Variables	n (%)	Variables	n (%)
Parent Sex		Parent Primary Residence	
Female	38 (37)	Own	95 (90)
Male	66 (64)	Rent	9 (9)
Parent Age		Parent Region	
18-24 years	1 (1)	Northeast	32 (31)
25-35 years	25 (24)	Southeast	29 (28)
36-45 years	59 (57)	Midwest	18 (17)
46-55 years	13 (13)	Southwest	9 (9)
56-64 years	4 (4)	West	16 (15)
65 years or older	2 (2)	Foster Child Grade	
Parent Marital Status		6th	11 (11)
Widowed	1 (1)	7th	12 (12)
Unmarried cohabitating Partners	3 (3)	8th	20 (19)
Single, never married	10 (10)	9th	19 (18)
Separated	1 (1)	10th	23 (22)
Married	84 (80)	11th	8 (8)
Divorced	4 (4)	12th	11 (11)
Civil Union	1 (1)	Foster Child has IEP	
Parent Primary Language		No	62 (60)
English	103 (99)	Yes	42 (40)
Spanish	1 (1)	Foster Child Sex	
Parent Employment		Female	40 (39)
Employed full-time (30 or more hours)	93 (89)	Male	63 (61)
Employed part-time (less than 30 hours)	6 (6)	Transgender Male	1 (1)
Non-employed, not currently looking for work	4 (4)	Foster Child Order	
Unemployed, currently looking for work	1 (1)	First foster child	48 (46)
Parent Education		2nd-5th foster child	40 (39)
High School or less	7 (7)	6th or higher foster child	16 (15)
Two-year college degree	6 (6)	Parent Community	
Some College	8 (8)	City	54 (52)
Four-year college degree	44 (42)	Rural Area	6 (6)
Graduate Degree	39 (37)	Suburb	44 (42)
Parent Race		Parent Housing Type	
White	68 (65)	Apartment	12(12)
Native American/Alaskan Native	3 (3)	Condo	2 (2)
Hispanic	16 (15)	House	90(87)
Biracial	5 (5)		
Asian American/Pacific Islander	2 (2)		
Arab American/Chaldean Ancestry	1 (1)		
African American/Black	9 (9)		

Table 2

Reliability Analysis of Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's Parental Involvement Scales for Current Study with Foster Parents vs. Prior Studies with Nonfoster Parents

Variables	Foster Parent (α)	Nonfoster Parent (α)
Parental Self-Efficacy (6 items)	0.85	0.78
Child Invitations (6 items)	0.86	0.71
Time & Energy (6 items)	0.76	0.84
Knowledge & Skills (9 items)	0.88	0.83
Home-based Involvement (6 items)	0.91	0.75

Note: Item 4 which was reverse coded was not included in the analyses in parental Self-efficacy for foster parents, as the Cronbach's alpha improved with its removal.

Therefore only 5 items were included in the analyses.

Table 3*Associations Among Explanatory Variables*

Variable Types	Method
Both Continuous	Spearman Correlations
Categorical with ≤ 2 levels, expected cell frequency > 5	Chi-square
Categorical with 2 levels, expected cell frequency < 5	Fisher's Exact Test
Categorical with 2 dichotomous levels	Chi-square (Phi)
Categorical with > 2 levels, expected cell frequency > 5	Chi-square (Cramer's V)

Table 4*Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (SD) for Study Variables*

Variables	M(SD)	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-efficacy	5.29 (.64)	1.00				
2. Child invitations	4.34 (1.10)	.434**	1.00			
3. Knowledge and skills	5.25 (.61)	.716**	.461**	1.00		
4. Time and energy	5.26 (.55)	.673**	.442**	.853**	1.00	
5. Home involvement	4.77 (1.13)	.337**	.346**	.341**	.228*	1.00

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5
Chi-Square tests of Association between Study Variables

	Chi-Square	df	p-value	Phi (ϕ)	Cramer's V	Fisher's Exact Test (p-value)
FPsex*grade	6.762	1	.009	-0.225		
urbanicity*maritalstatus	4.767	1	.029	0.214		
urbanicity*employment	5.610	1	.018	0.232		
employment*FPsex				-0.323		0.002
education*maritalstatus	9.720	2	.008		0.306	
education*employment	24.411	2	.000		0.484	
education*IEP	6.710	2	.035		0.254	

Notes: Only significant results are reported. Pearson Chi-Square was used for categorical variables with two or more categories. Fisher's Exact test is used when one or more of the expected cell frequencies is less than five. The Phi measure is only appropriate when you have two dichotomous variables, otherwise Cramer's V is used. FPsex is foster parent sex and IEP is individualized educational plan

Table 6

Dichotomous Variables Based on Cumulative Splits of the Categories of the Ordinal Dependent Variable, Home-based Involvement

Cumulative Splits	Daily	A few times a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	4-5 times a year	1-2 times a year
1 ^a	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
2	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
3	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
4	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Yellow
5	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Yellow

Note: Each split is a comparison between blue and yellow.

^aFor example, this split shows daily versus a combination of a few times a week, once a week, once or twice a month, 4-5 times a year, and 1-2 times a year.

Table 7*Description of Response Variables for Ordinal Regression Model*

Model	Name	Home-based Involvement Item
1	Talk-school day	I talk with my foster child about his or her school day.
2	Check-homework	I check my foster child's homework to make sure that it is completed.
3	Assist-study exams	I assist my foster child with studying for exams.
4	Assist-solve problems	I assist my foster child with solving problems in Math, writing or other subjects that he or she is studying.
5	Assist-research	I assist my foster child with his or her work on the computer or internet (e.g., doing research).
6	Talk-school experiences	I talk to my foster child about his or her school experiences

Table 8
Recoded Variables for Chi-Square Tests of Association

Study Variables	
Parent Sex	Parent Housing Type
Female	House
Male	Apt/Condo
Parent Age	Parent Primary Residence
18-35 years	Own
36-45 years	Rent
46 years or older	Parent Primary Language
Parent Marital Status	English
Married/Civil Union	Spanish
Unmarried	Foster Child Sex
Parent Employment	Female
Employed full-time (30 or more hours)	Male
Employed part-time or not at all	Foster Child Grade
Parent Education	High school
Graduate Degree	Middle school
Four-year college degree	Foster Child has IEP
No degree	No
Parent Race	Yes
White	Foster Child Order
Nonwhite	First foster child
Parent Region	2nd or higher foster child
Northeast	Parent Community
Southeast	City
West/Southwest/Midwest	Suburb/Rural

Note: Transgender male child was incorporated into the male category based on his presentation for the sake of these analyses. High school includes grades 9-12 and middle school includes grades 6-8.

Table 9
Corrected Akaike Information Criterion [AICc] Results for Model Selection

Model	# of predictors	Predictors	AICc	ΔAICc
1. Talk-schoolday	5	SE+ KS+ TE+ CI+ Psex	288.591	0
	4	SE+ TE+ CI+ Psex	288.182	0.409
	4	SE+ KS+ CI+ Psex	287.445	1.146
	3	SE+ KS+ CI	289.564	-0.973
	3	SE+ CI+ Psex	285.872	2.719
	2	CI+ Psex	289.106	-0.515
	2	SE+ Psex	284.380	4.211
	2	SE	305.814	-0.423
2. Check-homework	4	SE+ KS+ TE+ CI	305.391	0
	3	SE+ KS+ CI	307.041	-1.650
	3	SE+ TE+ CI	309.684	-4.293
	2	SE+ CI	307.443	-2.052
	1	SE	305.814	-0.423
3. Assist-studyexams	5	SE+ KS+ TE+ CI+ Psex	340.274	0
	4	SE+ KS+ TE+ CI	339.054	1.220
	4	SE+ KS+ CI+ Psex	339.609	0.665
	4	SE+ TE+ CI+ Psex	338.033	2.241
	3	SE+CI+ Psex	337.543	2.731
	2	SE+ CI	336.270	4.004
	1	SE	342.271	-1.997
	1	CI	336.198	4.076
4. Asist-solveproblems	2	SE+ Psex	300.586	0
	1	SE	307.598	-7.012
5. Assist-research	4	SE+ CI+ TE+ Psex	302.584	0
	3	SE+ CI+ Psex	300.277	2.307
	2	SE+ CI	299.039	3.545
	1	SE	307.446	-4.862
	1	CI	298.417	4.167
6. Talk-schoolexperiences	3	SE+ KS+ CI	272.029	0
	2	SE+ TE	278.518	-6.489
	1	CI	280.632	-8.603

Notes: Models included only combinations of predictors that met the proportional odds assumptions overall and for each predictor. The best fitting model (bolded) was selected based on the lowest AICc value and ΔAICc ≥ 2. In models #3 and #5 (SE+CI vs. CI), where ΔAICc < 1, the more parsimonious one was chosen. SE for self-efficacy, CI for child invitations, KS for knowledge and skills, TE for time and energy and Psex for foster parent sex.

Table 10

Summary of Results of Proportional Odds Assumption Test and Log Likelihood Ratio χ^2 Test

Model	Parallel Regression Assumption			Log Likelihood Ratio χ^2 Test		
	χ^2	df	<i>p</i> -value	χ^2	df	<i>p</i> -value
1. Talk-schoolday	9.08	8	.336	12.77	2	.002
2. Check-homework	19.04	16	.266	12.70	4	.013
3. Assist-studyexams	5.24	4	.263	15.21	1	.000
4. Assist-solveproblems	9.32	8	.316	15.40	2	.000
5. Assist-research	1.46	4	.834	16.67	1	.000
6. Talk-schoolexperiences	17.90	12	.119	17.99	3	.000

Notes: Each model met the Brant test of parallel regression assumption for each predictor and the full model ($p > .05$). The log likelihood ratio Chi-square test indicated that the statistically significant final model provided a better fit than the null model with no independent variables in predicting cumulative probability for each dependent variable.

Table 11

Summary of Results of Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Home-based Involvement (N=104). Significant predictors are highlighted in bold

Model		β	S.E	Odds Ratio	p-value	95% CI	
1. Talk-schoolday	Self-efficacy	0.883	0.292	2.418	0.002	1.365	4.283
	Male	-0.950	0.414	0.387	0.038	0.172	0.870
2. Check-homework	Self-efficacy	0.278	0.426	1.320	0.515	0.573	3.044
	Child invitations	0.101	0.196	1.106	0.608	0.753	1.624
	Knowledge & skills	1.558	0.609	4.745	0.011	1.437	15.664
	Time & energy	-1.272	0.648	0.280	0.050	0.787	0.998
3. Assist-studyexams	Child invitations	0.670	0.178	1.955	0.000	1.380	2.769
4. Assist-solveproblems	Self-efficacy	0.840	0.302	2.320	0.005	1.283	4.185
	Male	-1.196	0.400	0.300	0.003	0.138	0.664
5. Assist-research	Child invitations	0.721	0.183	2.057	0.000	1.438	2.942
6. Talk-schoolexperiences	Self-efficacy	-0.317	0.420	0.728	0.451	0.319	1.660
	Child invitations	0.074	0.206	1.077	0.720	0.719	1.612
	Knowledge & skills	1.467	0.461	4.335	0.001	1.755	10.706

Table 12a

Cross-tabulations of Academic Help by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade Level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	4	5		2	1		6	3		2	1	
	College degree	8	1	1	5	3	1	8	2		3	4	2
	No degree	2	1		2	1		2	1		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	9	3	1	5			9	2	2	3	2	
	College degree	3	3		2	4		4	2		2	4	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		1	1		3			1	1	
	College degree	8	1	1	5	1		7	3		4	1	1
	No degree	1		1		2		1		1	1		1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		1			3		3	1		1
	College degree	1			1				1		2		
	No degree		1		2	1		1			1	2	

Notes: My foster child needs tutoring or academic help. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12b

Cross-tabulations of Being Outside of the Classroom in Suspension/Detention by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade Level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	3	6		1	2		2	6	1	2	1	
	College degree	5	5		5	3	1	6	4		2	4	3
	No degree	3			1	2		1	2		1	2	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	9	3	1	3	2		4	8	1		5	
	College degree	2	4		3	3		2	4		1	5	
	No degree					1					1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		1	1		2	1			2	
	College degree	6	3	1	4	2		5	4	1		5	1
	No degree	1		1		1	1	2			1		1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree		3			1		3				1	
	College degree	1			1	1			1	1	1	1	
	No degree		1		2	1		1			1	2	

Notes: My foster child needs additional services because he/she has behavioral issues that keep him/her outside of the classroom in detention or suspension. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12c

Cross-tabulations of Lack of Focus by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	4	4	1	1	2		4	4	1	2	1	
	College degree	5	4	1	3	5	1	8	2		2	4	3
	No degree	1	2		2	1		1	2		1	2	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	4	8	1	1	4		7	5	1	1	4	
	College degree	2	4		1	5		4	2		2	4	
	No degree					1						1	
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1			2		2	1		1	1	
	College degree	4	6		4	2		5	5		2	3	1
	No degree	1		1		1	1	1		1		1	1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		1			1	2			1	
	College degree		1		1	1			1		2		
	No degree		1			3			1			3	

Notes: My foster child has emotional or behavioral issues that prevent focusing on homework. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12d

Cross-tabulations of Engagement by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	6	2	1	1	2		2	7		3		
	College degree	8	2		3	4	2	5	4	1	3	5	1
	No degree	2	1		1	2		1	2		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	7	4	2	2	3		5	7	1		5	
	College degree	3	3		2	4		3	3		1	5	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1			2		2	1			2	
	College degree	5	5		1	4	1	5	4	1	2	4	
	No degree	1		1		1	1	2			1	1	
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2			1		1	2				
	College degree			1	1	1		1			1	1	
	No degree		1			3			1		2	1	

Notes: My foster child doesn't seem engaged in school or understand why achieving is important for his or her future. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12e

Cross-tabulations of Need for an IEP by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	3	6		2	1		4	4	1	1	2	
	College degree	6	4		5	3	1	7	3		3	3	3
	No degree	2	1		2	1		1	2		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	4	8	1	1	4		9	3	1	2	3	
	College degree	2	4		3	3		1	5		1	5	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		2			1	2		1	1	
	College degree	7	3		3	2	1	6	4		4	2	
	No degree	1	1			1	1	1		1	1		1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		1				3			1	
	College degree	1			1	1		1			2		
	No degree		1			3		1				3	

Notes: My foster child needs an IEP but does not have one. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12f

Cross-tabulations of Required Services Not Provided by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	5	4		2	1		4	4	1	1	2	
	College degree	5	5		4	3	2	8	2		2	4	3
	No degree	2	1		1	2		1	2		3		
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	6	7		3	2		7	5	1	2	2	1
	College degree	2	4		1	5		3	3		1	5	
	No degree					1					1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		1	1		2	1			2	
	College degree	5	4	1	3	3		7	3		1	4	1
	No degree	1		1		1	1	1		1	1		1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2			1		1	2		1		
	College degree	1			2				1		1	1	
	No degree			1	1	2				1		3	

Notes: My foster child has an IEP but one or more of the teachers is not providing the required services. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12g

Cross-tabulations of Services Not Helping by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	5	2		3		5	3	1	1	2	
	College degree	2	7	1	4	4	1	5	5		2	4	3
	No degree	1	2		2	1		1	2		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	9	4			5		6	6	1	1	4	
	College degree	2	4		1	5		1	5		1	5	
	No degree					1						1	
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		1	1		2	1		1	1	
	College degree	3	6	1	4	2		5	5		1	4	1
	No degree		1	1	1	1		1		1		1	1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree		3			1		2	1			1	
	College degree		1		2			1			2		
	No degree			1		3			1			3	

Notes: My foster child has an IEP but the special education services or accommodations do not seem to be helping him or her to succeed. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12h

Cross-tabulations of Time Management and Study Skills by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	6	3		2	1		2	6	1	1	2	
	College degree	6	4		4	4	1	4	6		5	2	
	No degree	2	1		1	2		1	2		1	2	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	7	5	1	1	4		9	4		3	2	
	College degree	4	2		3	3		2	4		2	3	
	No degree				1							1	
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		2			2	1			2	
	College degree	3	6	1	2	4		3	7		1	5	
	No degree	1		1		1	1	1		1		2	
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2			1		2	1		1		
	College degree	1			1	1			1		2		
	No degree			1		3				1	1	2	

Notes: My foster child needs help with time management and study skills. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12i

Cross-tabulations of School Registration and Enrollment by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	7		1	2		6	3			3	
	College degree	7	3		4	5		10			3	4	2
	No degree	2	1		2	1		2	1		1	2	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	6	7		2	3		7	4	2	2	3	
	College degree	2	4		3	3		4	2		4	2	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	3			2			2	1		2		
	College degree	5	5		3	2	1	7	3		3	3	
	No degree	1	1			1	1	1	1			1	1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		1			1	2				1
	College degree	1				2		1			2		
	No degree				1	1	2		1		1	2	

Notes: Enroll and register my foster child in school. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12j

Cross-tabulations of Transitions by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	5	4		2	1		5	4		1	2	
	College degree	9	1			4	1	10			3	4	2
	No degree	1	2		1	2		1	2		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	8	4	1	4	1		7	3	3	3	2	
	College degree	2	4		4	2		5	1		4	2	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	3			2			3			2		
	College degree	7	3		3	2	1	6	4		1	4	1
	No degree	1		1	1	1		1		1		1	1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	1	2		1			1	2			1	
	College degree	1			2			1			1	1	
	No degree			1	1	2			1		1	2	

Notes: Prepare and help my foster child with school transitions from middle school to high school or after high school. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Table 12k

Cross-tabulations of Enrollment in Activities by Foster Parent Race, Education, Use of IEP and Foster Child Grade level

		Authority						Follow Through					
		High School			Middle School			High School			Middle School		
		FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN	FP	P	DN
White, No IEP	Graduate degree	5	4		2	1		6	3		3		
	College degree	10			5	3	1	8	2		4	4	1
	No degree	2	1		2	1		2	1		2	1	
White, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	7	6		2	3		7	4	2	3	2	
	College degree	4	2		4	2		4	2		4	2	
	No degree				1						1		
Nonwhite, No IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		2			2	1		2		
	College degree	8	2		3	3		8	2		1	4	1
	No degree	2			1	1		2			1		1
Nonwhite, Yes IEP	Graduate degree	2	1		1			3				1	
	College degree	1			1	1		1			1	1	
	No degree			1	1	2			1		3		

Notes: Enroll my foster child in activities. FP for foster parent, P for professional staff (case manager and educational specialist) and DN for I don't know

Appendix A



DATE: March 13, 2019 **CORRECTED**

TO: Preston Britner, Ph.D.
Jonelle Reynolds, Student Investigator
HDFS

FROM: Pamela I. Erickson, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
FWA# 00007125

RE: Exemption #X19-026 "Predictors of Foster Parents' At-home Academic Involvement with their Foster Youth"
Please refer to the Exemption# in all future correspondence with the IRB.
Funding Source: Investigator Out-of-Pocket
*Approved on: **March 13, 2019***

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the "Request for Exemption" for the research study referenced above. According to the information provided, the IRB determined that this research is exempt from continuing IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104(d) (2): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording). (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Enclosed please find the validated information form. An IRB approved information form (with electronic validation stamp) must be used to consent each subject.

All investigators at the University of Connecticut are responsible for complying with the attached IRB "Responsibilities of Research Investigators".

Any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of the research study must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to their implementation.

Attachments:

1. Validated IRB-5 Application and Protocol
2. Validated Information Form
3. Validated Appendix A
4. "Responsibilities of Research Investigators"

Appendix B

Parental Self-Efficacy

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about the current/most recent school year as you consider each statement.

	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little bit	Agree just a little bit	Agree	Agree very strongly
1. I believe that I get through to my foster child	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I know how to help my foster child get good grades in school	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I feel successful in my effort to help my foster child learn	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Other children have more influence on my foster child's grades than I do (reversed)	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I know how to help my foster child learn	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I make a significant difference in my foster child's school performance	1	2	3	4	5	6

Note: #4 was removed as it improved the Cronbach's alpha.

Parents' Perception of Specific Child Invitations

Please indicate HOW OFTEN the following have happened SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS SCHOOL YEAR.

	Never	1 or 2 times	4 or 5 times	Once a week	A few times a week	Daily
1. My foster child asked me to help explain something about his or her homework	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. My foster child asked me to supervise his or her homework	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. My foster child talked with me about the school day	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. My foster child asked me to attend a special event at school	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. My foster child asked me to help out at the school	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. My foster child asked me to talk with his or her teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6

Parents' Perceived Life Context

Please indicate how much you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements. Please think about the current/most recent school year as you consider each statement.

Time and Energy

I have enough time and energy to...

	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little bit	Agree just a little bit	Agree	Agree very strongly
1. communicate effectively with my foster child about the school day	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. help out at my foster child's school	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. communicate effectively with my foster child's teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. attend special events at school	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. help my foster child with homework	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. supervise my foster child's homework	1	2	3	4	5	6

Knowledge and Skills

	Disagree very strongly	Disagree	Disagree just a little bit	Agree just a little bit	Agree	Agree very strongly
1. I know about volunteering opportunities at my foster child's school	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I know about special events at my foster child's school	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I know effective ways to contact my foster child's teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I know how to communicate effectively with my foster child about the school day	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I know how to explain things to my foster child about his or her homework	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I know enough about the subjects of my foster child's homework to help him or her	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I know how to communicate effectively with my foster child's teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I know how to supervise my foster child's homework	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I have the skills to help out at my foster child's school	1	2	3	4	5	6

Home-based Involvement

Foster parents do many different things when they are involved in their foster child's education. We would like to know how true the following things are for your family. Please indicate HOW OFTEN the following have happened SINCE THE BEGINNING of the current/most recent school year.

	1-2 times a year	4-5 times a year	once or twice a month	once a week	a few times a week	daily
1. I talk with my foster child about his or her day	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I check my foster child's homework to make sure that is completed	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I assist my foster child with studying for exams	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I assist my foster child with solving problems in Math. Writing or other subjects that he or she is studying	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I assist my foster child with his or her work on the computer or internet (e.g., doing research)	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I talk to my foster child about his or her school experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6

Authority to Access or Initiate Services

For each problem, identify who has the authority to access or initiate services to address this problem

	Foster Parent	Case Manager	Educational Specialist	I don't know
1. My foster child needs tutoring or academic help (e.g., struggles to understand concepts being taught)	1	2	3	4
2. My foster child needs additional help or services because he/she has behavioral issues that result in him/her spending too much time outside of the classroom and in detention or suspension	1	2	3	4
3. My foster child has emotional or behavioral issues that prevent him or her from being able to focus on homework	1	2	3	4
4. My foster child doesn't seem engaged in school or understand why achieving is important for his or her future	1	2	3	4
5. My foster child needs an IEP but does not have one	1	2	3	4
6. My foster child has an IEP but one or more of the teachers is not providing the required services	1	2	3	4
7. My foster child has an IEP but the special education services or accommodations do not seem to be helping him or her to succeed	1	2	3	4
8. My foster child needs help with time management and study skills (e.g., doesn't know when tests are or when assignments are due, leaves too many tasks to the last minute)	1	2	3	4
9. Enroll and register my foster child in school (either new school, or confirming registration at the end of summer)	1	2	3	4
10. Prepare and help my foster child with school transitions from middle school to high school or after high school	1	2	3	4
11. Enroll my foster child in activities	1	2	3	4

Execute Identified Services

For each problem, identify who follows through (for example: schedules appointments, attends meetings, searches for appropriate service providers, or other similar tasks) to make sure that the service is received or the problem is addressed.

	Foster Parent	Case Manager	Educational Specialist	I don't know	What difficulties did you face when trying to get this done? Please write NA if you haven't dealt with a particular issue
1. My foster child needs tutoring or academic help (e.g., struggles to understand concepts being taught)	1	2	3	4	
2. My foster child needs additional help or services because he/she has behavioral issues that result in him/her spending too much time outside of the classroom and in detention or suspension	1	2	3	4	
3. My foster child has emotional or behavioral issues that prevent him or her from being able to focus on homework	1	2	3	4	
4. My foster child doesn't seem engaged in school or understand why achieving is important for his or her future	1	2	3	4	
5. My foster child needs an IEP but does not have one	1	2	3	4	
6. My foster child has an IEP but one or more of the teachers is not providing the required services	1	2	3	4	
7. My foster child has an IEP but the special education services or	1	2	3	4	

accommodations do not seem to be helping him or her to succeed				
8. My foster child needs help with time management and study skills (e.g., doesn't know when tests are or when assignments are due, leaves too many tasks to the last minute)	1	2	3	4
9. Enroll and register my foster child in school (either new school, or confirming registration at the end of summer)	1	2	3	4
10. Prepare and help my foster child with school transitions from middle school to high school or after high school	1	2	3	4
11. Enroll my foster child in activities	1	2	3	4

Appendix C

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The Family-School Partnership Lab

Statement of Use

We thank you for your interest in our research. On behalf of Kathy Hoover-Dempsey and Howard Sandler, you have permission to use and/or modify any of these scales. We ask that you cite the following:

Hoover-Dempsey, K.V., & Sandler, H.M. (2005). *Final Performance Report for OERI Grant # R305T010673: The Social Context of Parental Involvement: A Path to Enhanced Achievement*. Presented to Project Monitor, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, March 22, 2005. ([click here to view](#)).

If you use any of the scales at Level 1 in the model-based graphic (including [Parental Role Construction](#) , [Parental Efficacy](#) , [General School Invitations](#) , [Specific School Invitations](#) , [Specific Child Invitations](#) , [Time and Energy](#) , [Knowledge and Skills](#)), please cite also:

Walker, J. M., Wilkins, A. S., Dallaire, J., Sandler, H. M., & Hoover-Dempsey, K. V. (2005). Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *Elementary School Journal*, 106(2); 85-104.
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