

Kia Timata Pai (Best Start): The effect of teacher-child interactions on young children's oral language and self-regulation

ACTRN12621000845831

Status	RECRUITING
Sponsor	University of Otago
Enrollment	5,000 participants

Plain Language Summary

This study, called Kia Timata Pai (Best Start), is exploring how teachers can best support very young children's development at early childhood education centres. Researchers are testing two approaches: one that helps children develop language and communication skills through rich conversations and picture-book reading (called ENRICH), and another that builds self-regulation through fun, social games like Simon Says (called ENGAGE). Self-regulation — the ability to manage emotions and behaviour — is one of the strongest predictors of a child's future success at school and in life.

The trial will involve approximately 1,600 children aged between 13 and 30 months and their families at BestStart early childhood centres across New Zealand. Centres are randomly allocated to receive one or both programs, or to continue with the standard curriculum. Researchers will track how children's language, literacy, and social-emotional skills develop over time.

Families do not need to do anything special to participate — the programs are delivered by teachers within the regular childcare setting. Data will only be collected on children whose families have given consent. Children with pervasive developmental disorders or a history of brain trauma will be excluded from the data analysis.

Key Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion (2)

- There will be no gender, racial/ethnic, language, or socioeconomic restrictions to
- participation in this study. All children within the target age group (from 13 to 30 months at enrolment) will be exposed to the interventions within their early childhood education centre (ECEC). We are collaborating with a large national early childhood education (ECE) organisation called BestStart within which all 1,600 planned child participants, their parents, and 300 planned ECE teachers will be recruited, but data will not be collected on those children whose families have not granted consent.

Exclusion (2)

- Children with a pervasive developmental disorder or history of
- brain trauma will be excluded from data analyses due to our focus on neurodevelopment outcomes.

Locations (1 total)

New Zealand

<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12621000845831>

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