Authors
Juan Hernández-Agramonte
Senior Director, Embedded Labs

Olga Namen
Researcher

Emma Naslund-Hadley
Inter-American Development Bank

María Loreto Biehl
Inter-American Development Bank

Supporting Early Childhood Development Remotely: Experimental Evidence from SMS Messages*

Juan Manuel Hernandez-Agramonte (IPA)†   Olga Namen (UC Santa Barbara)‡
Emma Naslund-Hadley (IDB)§   Maria Loreto Biehl (IDB) ¶

May 2, 2022

Abstract

Using a randomized field experiment in Costa Rica, we estimate the effect of providing parents of preschool students with a text message intervention containing information and activities to engage them with their children's learning process at home. After 15 weeks of intervention, the cognitive skills of children whose parents were assigned to the program was 0.11-0.12 standard deviations higher than the control group. We find suggestive evidence that the effect was driven by an increase in parent involvement through the proposed activities from the text message campaign.

Keywords: Remote Education, Early Childhood Development, Text Messages, Parenting, COVID-19, Parental Networks, Parental School Involvement.

JEL Codes: C93, I21, J13, O15.

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