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# SITE VISIT: Child-to-Child Program in Jamaica

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Reprinted from Coordinators' Notebook No. 6, "Children Caring for Children—A Review of Programs," 1989. The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development.

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In rural Jamaica, Knight and Grantham-McGregor (1985), report results of a pilot Child-to-Child intervention program for fourth- and fifth-grade children. The purpose of this review was to assess the effects on childrearing practices of teaching primary school children basic health care and developmental concepts with the aim of improving the children's knowledge and practices, as well as those of their parents or guardians. In an initial pilot phase, a total of 100 children received 30 one-hour lessons over the course of a year. The immunization material focussed on preventable diseases, the purpose of immunization, and appropriate immunization schedules. Information on dental care included care of teeth and appropriate food selection, while the child development lessons included major developmental milestones and appropriate child-management techniques. In addition, children were taught how to make toys from locally available materials. This information was translated into action-oriented activities such as role-playing and participating in group discussions. Toy-making, drama, and poster competitions provided a mechanism to reinforce these ideas.

To assess the effectiveness of this program, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire. Children's knowledge and practices were evaluated before and after the program. No observable change occurred in the health or nutritional status of the preschool children. However, results indicated that older children, the direct beneficiaries of the program, improved their knowledge of health, nutrition, and early development. Parental reports also indicated that some of the health practices of these older children had changed as well. Guardians improved their knowledge and encouraged older children to play with younger children, but no changes were found in adult caretaking behavior. One unanticipated but positive effect of the project was on the teachers, who improved their own knowledge of health and development. Thus, an important outcome of this pilot initiative was its overall impact on educational practices.

Based on the success of this initial pilot project, the program was expanded to cover fourteen schools reaching approximately 1,000 students. In addition, the primary school curriculum has been revised to include Child-to-Child activities by incorporating the information and related activities into the existing curriculum.

***Reference:***

Knight, J. and Grantham-McGregor, S. "Using Primary School Children to Improve Childrearing Practices in Rural Jamaica." *Child: Care, Health, and Development*, 1985, pp 11, 81-90.

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*Early Childhood Counts: Programming Resources for Early Childhood Care and Development.*  
CD-ROM. The Consultative Group on ECCD. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1999.