

To: What Works Clearinghouse

From: Paul Weisberg, Emeritus Professor of Psychology, University of Alabama,
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A colleague of mine recently notified me that the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) reviewed a 1988 article of mine entitled, "Direct Instruction in the Preschool" which was published in Education and Treatment of Children 11 (4), 349- 363. The review appeared in the May 21, 2007 issue of WWC under the title "Intervention: Direct Instruction." According to the review, my research "did not meet WWC evidence screens." The information provided in footnote 12 claimed that the research suffered from having, "incomparable groups: the intervention and comparison groups cannot be considered equivalent at baseline, even with the use of covariates in the analysis."

In this research the academic and other behaviors of four separate groups of children were studied, the first two of which were identified as Direct Instruction (DI) and Child Development (called CD for present purposes). The preschool facility that eventually featured DI programs was called The Early Childhood Day Care Center (ECDCC) and the facility that established CD-based programs was called the Comprehensive Child Service (CCS) program. Both preschools were located on the University of Alabama campus: the ECDCC and CCS were affiliated, respectively, with the Psychology Department and the School of Home Economics. In 1970 both the ECDCC and CCS program admitted children whose entering ages ranged from 4 to 5 years of age.

All of the children's parents or guardians were qualified to receive benefits from a federally sponsored block grant called Title XX which was in keeping with the objectives of the Social Security Act. This entitlement program sought to help parents or guardians from single-parent households seek, find, and maintain employment. As long as these employment-related activities were undertaken by these individuals, they could be assured that their preschool-aged children would receive full-time, year round day-care or preschool services. Parents who were disabled and those who were foster parents could

