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Outcome for Children Receiving the Early Start Denver Model Before and After 48 Months

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Abstract: The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) is an intervention program recommended for pre-schoolers with autism ages 12–48 months. The rationale for this recommendation is the potential for intervention to affect developmental trajectories during early sensitive periods. We investigated outcomes of 32 children aged 18–48 months and 28 children aged 48–62 months receiving the ESDM for one year (approximately 20 h per week). Younger children achieved superior verbal DQ gains compared to their older counterparts. There were no group differences with respect to non-verbal DQ and adaptive behavior (with both age-groups undergoing significant change), or ASD severity (with neither age-group showing improvements on the ADOS). The association between verbal DQ gains and age at intake was moderated by baseline verbal level.