

THE LAB | ISSUE NO. 23

Publications and Journal Articles

[Assessing the Impact of Grade Retention: A Cautionary Tale of Exclusion Restriction Violations](#)

Brian Jacob, in conjunction with colleagues from UM's [Education Policy Initiative](#), studied Michigan's third-grade retention policy. Key Finding: While the policy led to few students being retained, there were positive impacts on those that were flagged including increased support from the schools and more family engagement.

[Recruitment, Training, & Support: Impacts of A District-Partnership Tutoring Model to Support Elementary Literacy Skills](#)

YPL developed an infographic detailing our evaluation of a high-impact tutoring initiative for early elementary students in North Carolina. Key Finding: The tutoring program showed positive impacts on students' literacy skills. Check out the [full paper](#) on our website.

[Exploring the Impact of Race/Ethnicity Match on Relationship Quality: Incorporating Parent and Home Visitor Perspectives](#)

YPL examined whether a race/ethnicity match between parents and home visitors (HVs) in Michigan's Maternal Infant Health Program is associated with how they view the quality of their relationship. Key Finding: Both parents and HVs rated the relationship quality positively, but their ratings were only moderately correlated. This suggests that parents and HVs use different criteria to determine relationship quality.

[Loopholes and the Incidence of Public Services: Evidence From Funding Career and Technical Education](#)

Brian Jacob and colleagues examined the impact of policy loopholes in the context of funding high school career and technical education (CTE) in Michigan. Key Finding: Under a change in the funding formula, behavioral responses by school administrators led to higher completion rates in wealthier and less urban districts.

New Research

[National Heritage Academies Attendance Project](#)

YPL is evaluating interventions targeted at improving chronic absenteeism in National Heritage Academies charter schools. One approach involves sending personalized text messages to parents, while another involves school staff providing individualized case

management support to families to address barriers. YPL is using randomized controlled trials to test the efficacy of both approaches.

In the Media

[Why Boys are Behind in Reading at Every Age](#) New York Times

The NYT referenced YPL's [research study](#) about the positive impact of small-group literacy tutoring, particularly for boys. This is an important consideration when determining how to address the reading gap between boys and girls.

[Will School Cellphone Bans Morph Into Wider Screen Time Regulations for Kids?](#) EdSurge

Brian Jacob offers a perspective on the push to rein in screen time for children while also encouraging the adoption of AI in education. Related research projects at YPL focus on both [nationwide](#) and [Michigan](#) school cell phone policies.

[Ford School faculty among the nation's top education scholars](#)

Once again, Brian Jacob was listed as one of the nation's top university-based scholars in education practice and policy in the RHSU Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings. Learn more about his research (<https://youthpolicylab.umich.edu/brian-jacob>) .

Fellowship Highlight

[Dipita Das](#)

In December, YPL said goodbye to one of our [Policy Fellows](#). For her two-year term, Dipita Das was embedded in the Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP) with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. During her term, Dipita engaged in several critical activities to strengthen agency capacity, address service gaps, and promote community-centered care. YPL extends its warmest wishes to Dipita as she embarks on the next chapter of her career!

ASPIRE

[ASPIRE](#) is accepting applications for Summer 2026! Now in its fourth year, ASPIRE is an 8-week summer internship program for rising college juniors and seniors from Spelman and Morehouse Colleges who are interested in applied social policy research. ASPIRE would not be possible without the backing of the UM Ford School of Public Policy, Institute for Social Research, and Survey Research Center and a generous contribution from Ronda Stryker, a member of the board of trustees of Spelman College. Her philanthropic interests have included a focus on the empowerment of women and support of non-traditional student enhancement programs at colleges and universities.

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