



# The George Mason Arts Research Center: A Multi-Disciplinary, Multi-Method Approach to Studying Arts Education Outcomes

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MASON



George Mason University Arts Research Center

# Who we are



## Selection into, and Academic Benefits from, Arts Courses in Middle and High School among Low-Income, Ethnically Diverse Youth in Miami

- Miami School Readiness Project
  - (n = 31,332; 61% Latino, 32% Black, 55% ELL, 81% in poverty) from pre-K through 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- 40% took some kind of arts elective course in middle school
  - Music = 23%, Dance = 7%, Drama = 9%, Visual art = 9%)
- Black students, males, students with disabilities, those previously retained, and those not English proficient had *reduced* odds of taking the arts
- Children with stronger social, behavioral, language, cognitive, and motor skills at age 4, and stronger academics in 5th grade were *more* likely to enroll in arts-related courses.
- Students with exposure to an arts elective in middle school subsequently had higher GPAs, math and reading test scores, and decreased odds of school suspension



## Selection into, and Academic Benefits from, Arts Courses in Middle and High School among Low-Income, Ethnically Diverse Youth in Miami

Now following the students through High School to see:

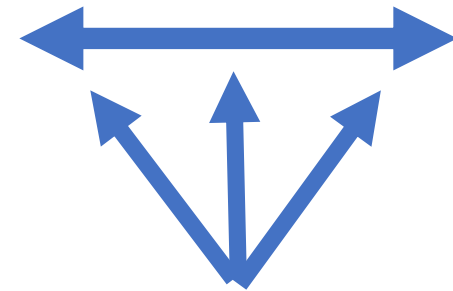
- a) how many students persist in the arts in high school
- b) what factors predict persistence in the arts
- c) whether the same selection effects and positive outcomes for the arts seen for middle school remain true for grades 9-12.



# Mechanistic Inquiry into How Theatre May Lead to Higher Social Skills



- Previous work has found connections between engaging in theatre classes and:
  - Vocabulary
  - Narrative Comprehension
  - Empathy
  - Theory of Mind
  - Emotion Regulation
  - Emotional Control
  - Self Efficacy





# Mechanistic Inquiry into How Theatre May Lead to Higher Social Skills



- Lab Based Study of Acting and Emotional Understanding
- Conditions:
  - Reading silently
  - Acting Out
  - Reading out Loud
  - Preparation for Acting
- Testing For:
  - Understanding of characters
  - Empathy for character
  - Moderating Effects of Demographics, etc



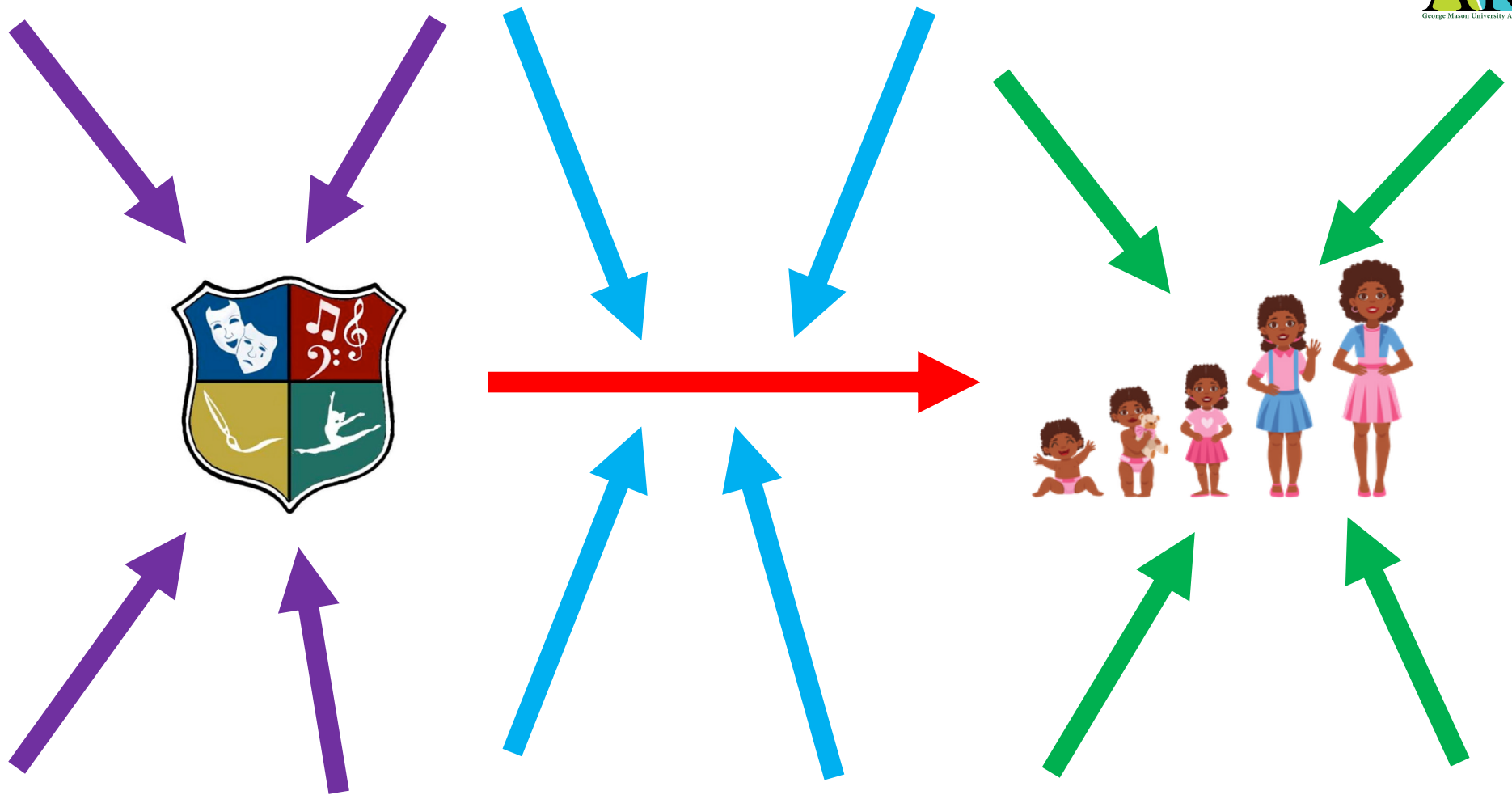
- Controlling for:
  - Acting experience
  - Emotional Granularity
  - Theory of Mind

# Identifying Autonomy Supportive Pedagogy



# Identifying Autonomy Supportive Pedagogy





Thank you



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