Do Relationships Matter?: Understanding the impact of Student-Teacher Relationships on Academic Performance for Children with EBPs *by Sebastian Salinas*

Problem behavior in early childhood is associated with academic and social difficulties in the years following preschool (Pianta & Stuhlman, 2004). Previous studies have suggested that teacher-child relationships are predictive of higher academic success in elementary school-age children (Hamre & Pianta, 2001), but few studies have examined this association in preschoolers (Lee & Bierman, 2015). The purpose of the current study is to examine the association between teacher-child relationships and academic outcomes (i.e., reading and writing proficiency)in preschoolers with externalizing behavior problems (EBPs) prior to participation in an early intervention summer program. Teacher report of conflict, closeness, and dependency dynamics of teacher-child relationship will be assessed via thestudent-teacher relationship scale (STRS; Pianta, 1992). Child reading and writing skills will be assessed via the Woodcock Johnson-IV (WJ-IV; Schrank, McGrew, Mather, Wendling, & Woodcock, 2014). We hypothesize that teacher-reported closeness and conflict will be associated with children's reading and writing performance.