
The last decade has witnessed the convergence of the developmental and prevention sciences in the design, implementation, and rigorous experimental evaluation of high quality early childhood and elementary school programs designed to build children’s success in both the academic and social-emotional domains (e.g., Bierman, et al., 2008; Raver, et al., 2008; Durlak et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2010, 2011). Several recent demonstrations have moved beyond relatively narrow skill-based approaches to focus on a broader set of core developmental competencies that research suggests underlie both social-emotional and academic functioning. Specifically, research has highlighted the important role of behavioral and emotional regulation and executive functioning (e.g., Liew, 2011; Urasche, Blair & Raver, 2011; Zhou et al., 2011). Evidence from interventions targeting these competencies indicates they hold great potential for building children’s readiness for Kindergarten across outcome domains (Raver et al., 2011; McClelland, et al., 2007), as well as their success in elementary school contexts (Diamond & Lee, 2011). This symposium brings together three papers each of which presents new results from evaluations of preschool and elementary school programs that address children’s behavioral and emotional regulation and executive functioning as core developmental mechanisms.