B1: *Decline in the Supply of Family Child Care: What Does Research Tell Us? What Are the Gaps in Research? How Do We Fill Them?*
Wednesday, April 17, 2019
2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | *Penn Quarter A*

1. Descriptive Information

B1: *Decline in the Supply of Family Child Care: What Does Research Tell Us? What Are the Gaps in Research? How Do We Fill Them?*
 	
    In the past decade, the supply of family child care (FCC) has declined dramatically: a 46% drop in licensed FCC programs was observed between 2008 and 2017. Some studies suggest that a broad range of factors may contribute to the decline, including licensing, subsidy and QRIS requirements; the availability of public pre-kindergarten programs; a shift in state policy focus; parent demand for center care; and the economics of FCC. Yet we lack systematic research on these factors and their inter-relationship.
    This panel will discuss how future research can shed light on the reasons for changes in the FCC supply and how to alleviate the factors contributing to the decline. The discussion will begin with brief presentations on national and state-level trends in FCC licensing and subsidy participation and policies, followed by findings from a state-level analysis of FCC supply across rural and urban areas as well as in the broader ECE landscape. The two other presentations will focus on "front-line" perspectives: findings from the National Study of Family Child Care Network interviews with FCC staffed family child care network directors on FCC providers' systems engagement; and national conversations with FCC providers. Because the session is intended to stimulate participant engagement in consideration of a research agenda to unpack the decline in FCC, it will use a conversational format to encourage discussion among presenters and participants about key questions for research on this issue.
	Facilitator
	    Toni Porter, Early Care and Education Consulting
	
	Presenters
	    Nina Johnson, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance | *National Perspective on the Decrease of Family Child Care Providers in the United States*
	
	    Toni Porter, Early Care and Education Consulting | *Network Director Perspectives on FCC Engagement: Engaging FCC Providers: Opportunities and Challenges: Findings from the National Study of Family Child Care*
	
	    Bill Hudson, National Association for Family Child Care | *Perspectives from the Field: FCC Provider Challenges: What Providers Say*
	
	Scribe
	    Gabi Kirsch, ICF

2. Documents Available on Website

- o [Johnson_Declining Supply](#)
- o [Porter_Network Director Perspectives](#)

3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- Nina Johnson, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance | *National Perspective on the Decrease of Family Child Care Providers in the United States*
    - o The 2017 childcare licensing study shows decreases of 35% of licensed small family child care homes from 2011 to 2017. All child care providers had funding decreases of the CCDF.
    - o Providers are leaving the profession due to low income and lack of benefits, demands of the job, local regulations and zoning requirements, aging and retirement, lack of respect, and increased availability of other options. Researchers do not fully understand the impact.
    - o There are many strategies for retaining FCC providers. Examine state and local systems to better understand causes and impact of decline. Adopt responsive policies. Create and expand services and supports. Encourage meaningful participation in support programs and services.

- Toni Porter, Early Care and Education Consulting | *Network Director Perspectives on FCC Engagement: Engaging FCC Providers: Opportunities and Challenges: Findings from the National Study of Family Child Care*
    - The National Study of Family Child Care is a three-year study that includes web-based surveys of networks, interviews with directors, and surveys of staff and providers. A child care network offers a menu of ongoing supports to providers. They can be stand-alone organizations or embedded in the work of other types of agencies.
    - This presentation focuses on the network director interviews. The interviews lasted for an hour, but they often went over. They had broad interview topics that were intended to unpack the survey findings.
    - The survey findings indicated that other networks responded more broadly to provider needs.
    - The networks provide services such as systems navigation, training, visits to homes, peer support, business and admin support, and comprehensive resources for children and families.
    - Researchers didn't ask about supply directly, but directors were concerned about losing providers, so they spoke about it frequently. They were concerned about the potential impacts on children and families.
    - Those people leaving the field are called "leavers." Researchers are not sure about the definition. The themes are divided into personal characteristics and systems characteristics.
    - For personal characteristics, some are retiring. In other cases, some are getting close to retirement but don't have interest in working on the quality improvement. Researchers noticed "overwhelming" occurring frequently in the data. Changing demographics, birthrates, parental preferences, competition from Head Start, and moving from small group homes to large group homes all may be a part of this as well.
    - For system characteristics, paperwork is challenging. Licensing regulations are not always clear. Many providers are daunted by the compliance. If you are out of compliance, you lose your subsidy or licensing. A large number of the network directors reported that QRIS is being revised in the state (policy in flux). Some issues are with background checks. With increased requirements on health and safety, they have had to decrease training on other important issues. The lens for training has narrowed. Technology is also a challenge. For people who do not have English as their first language, the online trainings are mostly in English. High expectations may also be contributing to the decline as well as low reimbursements.
    - Newbies are new people coming into the field. Oftentimes, while people may have the motivation, they do not have the full understanding of running childcare. To be a part of child care, you have to know how to run a business. A person may be capable for being a quality child care provider, but many people are not entrepreneurs.

- Bill Hudson, National Association for Family Child Care | *Perspectives from the Field: FCC Provider Challenges: What Providers Say*
    - Bill presented on regulatory issues like zoning and other requirements that may pose a challenge for providers. 10-15 hours per week is required on top of direct child care for these providers.
    - Some issues that people do not think of: zoning ordinances, building codes, business licenses, fire codes, homeowners' association rules, and landlord restrictions.
    - Bill told the story of an immigrant in CA named Lana. She was caring for 12 children and had to move to a town over due to landlord changes. She had to go through a permit process because she was caring for more than 12 children. She was denied and had to pay $6,000 to go through the permitting process. Most people make around $30,000 a year as a provider.
    - Bill's team educated the city council of Chesapeake, VA when they reduced home child care regulations to only four children per home.
    - Bill told a story of a couple named Steph and Roger who had a family child care business in their home in CO. There was new building code applied to their house. They were no longer within code and they were told to stop their business. They pushed against this and were told that they had to pay $75,000 to make updates on their home. Eventually, they were told that their house was considered residential and the requirements did not apply (after nearly 18 months of arguing with the state).

o There are many laws and regulations that are unclear and confuse states and childcare providers. Bill suggested doing a survey of what states view home child care providers as businesses.

4. Brief Summary of Discussion

o An attendee commented that the presentation hit a personal chord for her. She left a job where she was earning $80,000 because she thought childcare was meaningful. In any job, there is upward mobility. Even at a five-star rated child care program, there is no way to earn more money.
o Another attendee commented that she appreciated the presenters contextualizing this issue (not just talking about policy, the demand, etc.). She also said that people can do more on what we have power over from a policy standpoint, although she doesn't think people understand the pieces of the policy. For example, people do not really understand the nuances of the subsidies.
o A state worker commented that she comes back to the idea that we're putting this on a provider to know all these different systems. She hears the licensers telling providers to contact certain organizations.
o The number of leavers are fairly constant. The number of newbies have decreased. This suggests potential regulatory burdens or other opportunities for people who would be doing childcare.
o Bill commented that we allow the field to be determined by who wanders into it. There is no pipeline to owning a child care business. An attendee commented that early child care courses claim that home child care are lower quality than center based child care, which isn't true. Another attendee commented that it may not be responsible to suggest to a young person to go into a field that does not have economic mobility.

5. Summary of Key Issues Raised

o The 2017 childcare licensing study shows decreases of 35% of licensed small family child care homes from 2011 to 2017. All child care providers had funding decreases of the CCDF.
o Newbies are new people coming into the field. Oftentimes, while people may have the motivation, they do not have the full understanding of running childcare. To be a part of child care, you have to know how to run a business. A person may be capable for being a quality child care provider, but many people are not entrepreneurs.
o People leaving the field are called "leavers." Why people leave are divided into personal characteristics and systems characteristics.
o Some regulatory challenges are: zoning ordinances, building codes, business licenses, fire codes, homeowners' association rules, and landlord restrictions.