

# Oregon Contracted Slots Pilot Program Evaluation: Assessing an Investment in Continuity and Quality

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Child Care Policy Research Consortium  
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# Policy Context

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Major changes at the federal and state levels:

- Creation of Early Learning Council and Early Learning Division (ELD) with clear and limited goals:
  - Children ready for success in kindergarten,
  - Stable and attached families, and
  - Aligned and integrated services.
- Increased focus on young children's development by federal partners:
  - Race to the Top
  - Major changes to CCDF with reauthorization
  - Creation of Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership

# Program Goals & Design

September 2012-August 2015

- **Goals:**
  - **Children** have access to **continuous quality** care and education;
  - **Families** have continuity of quality child care and education to **support their employment**; and,
  - **Providers** have **stable funding** in serving low-income children in programs of documented quality.
- **Pilot Program Design**
  - Co-managed by ELD and the Department of Human Services (DHS)
  - DHS contracted only with programs of documented quality
    - Oregon Head Start PreKindergarten or Early Head Start
    - Oregon Programs of Quality (precursor to QRIS)
  - Children had 12-month protected eligibility
  - Families had reduced copay
  - Providers paid for 60 days after child exit

# Evaluation Study Data Sources

- Administrative Data (includes UI wage) for two groups of parents and children:
  - Participants
  - Matched control group of voucher recipients
- Surveys of Directors
  - At beginning and end of Pilot year one
- In-depth Interviews with Stakeholders

# Key Evaluation Study Research Questions: Process and Impact Evaluation

1. Who participated in the Contracted Slots Pilot program?
  1. Programs
  2. Children
2. To what extent did the Contracted Slots Pilot Program achieve its goals?
  1. Impact on children
  2. Impact on families
  3. Impact on programs
3. What challenges emerged as the Pilot program was implemented?

# Findings: How Many Children and Programs Participated?

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<b>Children</b>	<b>Children in OHSPK Programs</b>	<b>Children in OPQ Programs</b>	<b>Total Participating Children</b>
<b>2012-2013</b>	230	89	319
<b>2013-2014</b>	229	83	312
<b>2014-2015 (as of May 2015)</b>	208	50	258
			<b>889</b>

<b>Programs</b>	<b>OHSPK Programs</b>	<b>Participated in CS Pilot</b>	<b>OPQ Programs</b>	<b>Participated in CS Pilot</b>	<b>Total Potential Programs</b>	<b>Total Participating Programs</b>
<b>2012-2013</b>	29	7	22	17	51	24
<b>2013-2014</b>	29	7	19	16	48	23
<b>2014-2015</b>	29	8	17	14	46	22

*Note:* Only 2 OPQ program never signed a contract during the 3 year pilot study.

# Finding: Children Included in Analysis

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## CS Non-participants

9,594 children with admin. data who were on ERDC and who were 0-5 years old

## CS Participants

	Number of Children With Data		
	<i>OPQ</i>	<i>OHSPK</i>	<i>Total</i>
Year 1 only	34	115	149
Year 2 only	28	110	138
Both Year 1 + Year 2	59	52	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>398</b>

**Total number of Children Served Year 1 + Year 2 = 631**

**% of total children with data Year 1 + Year 2 = 63%**

% for OPQ – 70%

% for OHSPK – 60%

# Findings – Families Included in Analysis

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	<b># of Families</b>
<b>CS Non-Participants</b>	7,577
<b>CS Participants</b>	
OPQ	92
OHSPK	186



# Impact on Children – How Long Did Children Participate?

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## A. Total # of months with same primary provider over the 2 years

	Median
<b>CS Non-Participants</b>	
ERDC only [N=11,445]	<b>6</b>
<b>CS Participants</b>	
OPQ [N=121]	<b>11</b>
OHSPK [N=277]	<b>12</b>

What percent remained for 12 or more months?

**OPQ** = 50% stayed for 12 months or more

**OHSPK** = 51% stayed for 12 months or more

# Impact on Children – How Much Time Did Children Spend in Program?

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## **CS Non-participants**

Average = **189.87** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all months with primary provider)

## **CS Participants**

### **OPQ**

Average = **167.7** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all contract months with OPQ program)

### **OHSPK**

Average = **139.30** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all contract months with HS program)

# Impact on Children – Reasons for Exit

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Overall, **232** children out of 398 children with data (58%) exited a contracted slot between 2012-2014.

- Majority (84%) exited at end of contract period they entered
- Directors reported three primary reasons for exits:
  - Family move,
  - Loss of employment or reduction in hours,
  - Child's entry into kindergarten.
- Operationalization of protected eligibility more complicated than expected.

# Impact on Families – Description of Families

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	Participants		Non-Participants
	OPQ Families N=92	OHSPK Families N=186	ERDC Families with Children 0-5 N=7,577
Variable	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency
Number in household	3.21	3.43	3.43
Number of children on ERDC	2.92	3.22	3.02
Age of youngest child (months)	33.08	NA	24.6
Age of oldest child (months)	49.97	NA	51.0
Single parent households	85.9%	94.6%	91.0%
Monthly household income	\$1,118	NA	\$1,176
Eligibility group: Job readiness or assessment	6.5%	0%	0%
Eligibility group: Employment-related care	93.5%	100%	100%
SNAP participation	90.2%	90.6%	91.3%
Nonmetro	5.4%	NA	23.6%

# Impact on Families – Description of Families (continued)

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	Participants		Non-Participants
	OPQ Families N=92	OHSPK Families N=186	ERDC Families with Children 0-5 N=7,577
Variable	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency
<b>Parent's education level</b>			
No formal schooling	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%
1-11 Grade completed	3.7%	18.3%	22.4%
12 or GED	61.1%	61.7%	65.3%
13-16 years of college	29.6%	17.5%	10.5%
Credits toward post graduate deg	3.7%	1%	<1%
<b>Race/Ethnicity of family</b>			
Black	16.3%	NA	8.5%
White	65.2%		65.5%
Hispanic	1.1%		3.5%
Other	3.3%		3.6%
Unknown	14.1%		19.1%

# Impact on Families – Stability of Employment

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	Participants				Non-Participants	
	OPQ Families with UI Wage Data N=92		OHSPK Families with UI Wage Data N=186		ERDC Families with Children 0-5 with UI Wage Data N=7,577	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
# of employed quarters (9 potential quarters)	7.03	<b>8</b>	7.39	<b>9</b>	5.4	<b>5</b>
Quarterly hours worked	356	<b>388</b>	372	<b>432</b>	337	<b>366</b>
# of job changes	<b>1.55</b>	1	1.32	1	<b>1.07</b>	1

# Impact on Providers – Financial Stability

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Impact on Budget	OPQ Programs	OHSPK Programs
Positive	9	6
No impact	4	1
Negative	2*	0

Note: Based on director reports at end of Pilot's first year.

\*One reported not having parent pay fee differential. The other reported payment was less than she thought she was owed.

# Findings: Challenges Encountered

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- Merging two agencies' policies, practices, and priorities
- Operationalizing protected eligibility
- Operationalizing parent choice
- Targeting families, programs, and communities
- Monitoring compliance—licensing and quality standards
- Contracting and procurement processes
- Identifying data needs and data collection processes



# Key Thoughts & Recommendations

- Think broadly—subsidy and quality initiatives serve same goals and can do so most effectively if thought of as related.
- Reach consensus on operationalized definition of “12-month protected eligibility”.
- Articulate shared understanding of parent choice and agree on its implications for marketing and referral processes.
- Reach consensus on targeting and use it to shape eligibility and other policies related to:
  - Families,
  - Programs (having a high quality rating is not enough),
  - Communities.
- Clarify monitoring policies and practices—licensing and QRIS standards are both relevant.

# Full Reports of Contracted Slots Evaluation Reports Available at:

Oregon Child Care Research Partnership  
website at:

<http://health.oregonstate.edu/sbhs/family-policy-program/occrp-childcare-subsidy-publications>