

2015 CCPRC Annual Meeting

1. Descriptive Information

<p>Workshop D-2 (<i>Independence B & C</i>)</p> <p><i>Using Findings from Child Care Research Partnerships to Inform Policies to Improve the Quality and Stability of Child Care and Early Education for Low-Income Families</i></p> <p>Description</p> <p>This workshop will discuss findings that focus on the factors that impede or encourage families' access to quality care arrangements, including families' use of subsidies; subsidy administration and delivery practices; and the presence of Head Start/Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships. These findings are derived from research partnerships in Illinois-New York, Maryland-Minnesota, and Oregon.</p>	<p>Facilitator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dawn Ramsburg, OCC <p>Presenters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elizabeth Davis, University of Minnesota• Julia Henly, University of Chicago• Heather Sandstrom, Urban Institute• Gary Resnick, EDC• Sarah Kim, EDC <p>Scribe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ashley Hirilall, Child Trends
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2. Documents in Session Folder

- CCPRC 2015 Session D-2 Resnick-Kim-Broadstone Collaboration Study
- CCPRC 2015_Session D-2 HenlySandstromFinal-2
- Davis D-2 Child Care Subsidies and Stability and Quality

3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Summary of Presentation #1: Child Care Subsidies and the Stability and Quality of Child Care Arrangements by Elizabeth Davis**
 - Elizabeth Davis started the session with highlights from research done in the Maryland-Minnesota Research Partnership: Early Care and Education Choices, Quality and Continuity for Low-Income Families
 - Objective: increase knowledge of parent child care decision-making and the quality and stability of care arrangements, particularly for low-income families
 - How subsidy receipt relates to...
 - stability of child care arrangements
 - number of providers used concurrently
 - quality of care
 - Data and Sample
 - Longitudinal survey of parents in Minnesota
 - Matched program administrative data on subsidy receipt
 - 323 families in Wave 1
 - Method:
 - Longitudinal data
 - Child fixed effects model (controls for observed and unobserved characteristics of families that don't change over time, reduces selection bias, and also includes controls for family and child characteristics that change overtime)
 - Outcome measures: stability of care, number of providers, parents' perceptions of quality of care
 - Findings:
 - Many children changed primary providers between waves
 - However, in the Fixed Effects OLS model, subsidy receipt was not statistically significant
 - Many children have more than one provider concurrently
 - Quality Factor Analysis: Survey questions about the child's primary care setting
 - Results:

- The distribution of parent responses tends to be skewed towards “always” responses, particularly for characteristics like whether the child likes the provider and whether there’s a warm environment. However, there was a substantial degree of variation across respondents for the different questions.
 - The primary factor identified in the analysis, with an eigenvalue of 3.94, clearly identified elements of quality, with all variables entering positively with the exception of watching more than an hour of television.
 - There are varying weights placed on the different indicators of quality, with creative activities, activities that fit the child’s needs, learning new skills, a curriculum, books, tracking of development, staff education, and diversity having higher weights.
 - Summary
 - Stability of arrangement was not different when receiving subsidy or not
 - Child had multiple providers, regardless of subsidy receipt
 - When receiving subsidies, they experience higher level of quality care (based on the characteristics of care reported by parents)
 - Conclusion
 - Studying the relationship between subsidy receipt and outcomes such as quality and stability of care is challenging because of selection issues.
 - There is a high level of instability and use of multiple providers regardless of subsidy receipt.
 - This study confirms other work that finds that subsidies allow parents to access more formal care, particularly centers, and higher quality care.
 - Whether the new CCDBG policies can increase stability or the quality of care will depend on complex interaction of parent preferences and constraints, provider availability and responses, and market forces.
- **Summary of Presentation #2: Illinois-New York Child Care Research Partnership: Phase 2, Policy Stakeholder Interviews by Heather Sandstrom & Julie Henly**
 - Phase 1: explored subsidy instability from the perspective of subsidy program participants
 - Phase 2: gain perspective of subsidy program administrators and case workers and child care providers
 - Components:
 - key stakeholder interviews, including subsidy administrators and staff, CCR&Rs staff, and quality improvement program leaders
 - Local supply and demand analysis; mapping changes in quality, supply, and characteristics of subsidized care
 - Link phase 1 survey data to phase 2 provider data
 - Qualitative study of subsidized providers of different care types
 - Four study sites, some similarities across states (IL & NY) but some differences (level of administration, eligibility period, etc)
 - Research Questions: what factors facilitate or impede low-income families’ access to subsidized high-quality, and stable child care? What are the key challenges to improving the quality of subsidized child care?
 - Key Themes from stakeholder interviews
 - Keep in mind that these are descriptive findings from small sample sizes
 - Barriers to subsidy access and stability from stakeholder perspective fell into:
 - System resource constraints (office hours, etc)
 - Program eligibility and application requirements (long complicated forms, income thresholds out of sync)
 - Subsidy staff-related issues (variable knowledge of rules, staff burden)
 - Family-related issues (lack of knowledge, ineligibility)
 - Provider-related issues (lack of knowledge, background checks, payment delays)
 - Cross-system challenges (no seamless link between TANF and child care)
 - Strategies to improve subsidy access and stability

- Family friendly program characteristics and eligibility policies, especially around access to program and income and employment
 - Open communication (multiple ways to apply and recertify)
 - Reminder notices
 - Grace periods
 - Provide support in application/recertification process
 - Improved coordination between CCR&Rs, providers, and subsidy offices
 - Prioritization of workload, given constraints
 - Barriers to Quality subsidized care
 - System resource constraints (no stable funding source to expand and sustain efforts statewide, not sufficient number of trainings offered, focus too heavily on centers)
 - Institutional barriers to integration across systems
 - Family-related challenges (child care supply insufficient, lack of parent knowledge about quality, etc)
 - Barriers to provider participation
 - Provider resource constraints-low reimbursement rates and limited bonuses for participation
 - Provider staff issues: investments in professional development
 - Lack of knowledge about quality efforts and misinformation
 - Insufficient trainings
 - Strategies to improve access to quality
 - System level
 - Building better relationships between child care resource and referral services and subsidy office staff
 - Increased resources; stability of resources; more reliable payments, etc.
 - Improved opportunities for collaboration , e.g., Head Start- Child Care Partnerships; community connections
 - Parents
 - Consumer education
 - Increase supply in underserved areas and for families with nonstandard hours
 - Parent-to-parent networking (parent ambassadors)
 - Providers
 - Professional learning communities
 - Consultations; Trainings
 - Increased reimbursement rates and bonuses
 - Improvements in subsidy system to facilitate engagement in quality efforts
 - Challenges and opportunities:
 - These efforts do reflect opportunities for states to develop policies that better fit the needs of families and providers.
 - Success of state efforts to improve quality and stability of care will reflect opportunities, resources, and constraints of their particular context (not just the policies)
 - Improvements may require additional resources, especially during a time of fiscal challenges
- **Summary of Presentation #3: Results from a National Survey of State CCDF Administrators: Subsidy policies and practices related to governance and collaboration by Gary Resnick and Sarah Kim**
 - Background: to understand and describe collaborations between: state-level child care agencies and community level child care providers (linkages between state and community levels)
 - To examine relationships between collaboration and enhanced child care quality, access, satisfaction
 - Phase 1: Examine trends/patterns in collaboration across the country
 - Via online national survey to all CCDF, HS collaboration Directors and State Pre-K Administrators
 - Phase 2: Examine state, regional, and local collaborations in Vermont and Maryland
 - Methods: contacted all state administrators: CCDF administrator (48/52), HS collaboration director (48/52)
 - Key survey items: CCDF Administrators
 - Policies regarding child care subsidy eligibility for families eligible for HS/ EHS or CCDF Funding

- 71% established subsidized payment rates and parent fees
- 56.8% had one child care subsidy eligibility policy
- 87.5% Lead agency is involved in a QRIS
- Nearly 75% CCDF administrators reported that they established subsidized payment rates and parent fees
- Most states report no other policies to support child care subsidies
- Co-occurrence of policies on establishing payment rates and parent fees with other practices
 - Other Practices:
 - QRIS Participation
 - Spending on QI, and
 - Paid Absence Policy
 - Establishing subsidized payment rates and parent fees co-occurred with:
 - State agency being involved in a QRIS (93.8%)
 - States spending more than 4% on Quality Improvement (QI) activities (81.3%)
 - Aligning Paid Absence Policy: Establishing subsidized payment rates and parent fees co-occurred in only 25.8% of states that also aligned paid absence policy states.
- Relationship with Governance: States with NO child care subsidy policies were more likely to have NO shared oversight of state child care agencies
 - 25% of states reported no subsidy policy (11/44)
 - 100% of these states had no oversight
 - Chi-square significant at $p < .05$
- Summary of results
 - Generally, few states had more than one child care subsidy eligibility policy
 - Most states have a policy that establishes subsidized payment rates and parent fees
 - Intended to allow families equal access to all types of care
 - Subsidy policies tend to co-occur with other practices related to early education and care: States that have established subsidized payment rates also have a QRIS and spend more than 4% on quality improvement
 - States with no policies tended to have no shared oversight of child care agencies in their states
 - Next Step: Look at relationships between state policies and degree of collaboration between state administrators

4. Brief Summary of Discussion

The discussion began with a few questions for the last presentation. Julia Isaac was confused about their data and asked how it correlates with CCDF policies database. Gary Resnick said he was not sure how the data correlated to the other CCDF data set but he and Sarah Kim clarified that their data came right from CCDF administrators, who are describing their perceptions of policy, which may account for any differences in CCDF data. Another audience member was confused about policy versus regulation and mentioned that her state has rules within regulation. She wondered if that counted as a policy. Resnick states that their study was intentionally designed to be open-ended and as inclusive as possible.

A questioner was then directed to Elizabeth Davis about the subsidy eligibility period in Minnesota. Davis answered that it is currently six months but it can vary. A follow-up question was asked, "Do you think that when it goes to 12 months anything may change and change your findings?" Davis said that her findings were consistent with other studies. The conversation continued with more questions about what it means to have a 12 month eligibility period. They agreed that this is much more complicated than perceived. Bobbie Weber discussed a pilot study done in Oregon and stated that we cannot assume that parents will understand new requirements. Julie Henly added that there may be key times to alert parents about certain relevant details about their subsidy. For example, parents can keep their subsidy if they lose their jobs, however if the parents have jobs once signing up, they are less likely to pay attention to this fact. She said that it would help to make rules and communication of rules more intentional. The discussion left off with how we should/can communicate changes or alerts effectively to parents.

5. Summary of Key issues raised (facilitators are encouraged to spend the last 3-5 minutes of workshops summarizing the key issues raised during the session; bullets below are prompts for capturing the kinds of issues we're looking for)

- *Follow-up activities suggested to address questions and gaps (e.g., secondary analyses of data, consensus meetings of experts, research synthesis or brief, webinar, etc.)?*
 - More research about communicating changes in subsidy with parents with consideration of timing and effectiveness.