

## **Roundtable on Performance Measures of Child Care and Employment**

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Doubletree Washington Hotel  
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**Meeting Summary  
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## Day 1

Shannon Christian, Associate Director of the Child Care Bureau (CCB), welcomed the roundtable participants and gave a brief synopsis of why CCB had gathered them all and what CCB hopes to get out of the roundtable. She said that they were invited to help brainstorm and explore options for developing a long-term performance measure for CCDF and the impact of child care assistance on low-income families. She said that CCB would like something that looks at the impact of child care subsidies on employment and factors associated with employment. She indicated that all government agencies are under pressure to show that their programs make a difference, and have to come up with performance measures to help the policy makers decide what gets funded and what does not get funded in the future.

Introductions were made around the table so that everyone in attendance could hear what experience the other attendees brought to the meeting. In attendance were state and local program administrators, researchers, and federal agency representatives.

After the introductions, Suzanne Freed of the CCB and Lina Guzman of Child Trends made a brief presentation about the context of performance measurement and what research has been done so far to identify a productive performance measure. Below are some important bullets from the presentation:

- There are three major policy drivers prompting CCB to improve performance measures
  - President's Management Agenda- Requires programs to focus more closely on performance; the Budget Performance Integration is one of five focus areas that encourages the budget process to be informed by program performance; eventually funding decisions would be based on performance.
  - PART- This is a way for OMB to get a better idea of how programs are performing; CCB scored 81% on its PART evaluation, and was rated high on program design, program management, and short-term measures; OMB recommended that there be further development of a long-term performance indicator, and that independent research show the relationship between receipt of subsidies and low-income families' employment patterns.
  - TANF reauthorization- The Caseload Reduction Credit baseline was moved from 1995 to 2005, so now states will not get any credit for families that moved off of TANF prior to 2005. States will have to move more families into work activities as a result of the baseline change for the credit.
- The long-term performance goal of CCDF is to improve family self-sufficiency and child well-being. Associated with that, there are two intermediate goals:
  - Improve access to child care as a support for employment. By access, we mean increasing equal access to a range of care settings; enhance

- eligibility policies supporting low-income working families; increase the supply of providers; and increase providers serving special populations.
  - Improve child care quality by increasing programs with demonstrated results in improving quality.
- The first long-term performance goal is to improve access to child care as a support for employment. This long-term measure is currently under development and is what the roundtable meeting was convened to discuss. Two short-term measures of child care as a support for employment have been developed thus far:
  - The proportion of children served through CCDF, TANF, and SSBG out of the total number of children in families with income below 150% of the federal poverty level.
  - The proportion of regulated centers and homes serving families that are receiving child care subsidies.
- The second long-term performance goal is to track improvements in the quality of child care for low-income working families. The long-term measure of this is the percentage of children from families below 150% of poverty who receive regular non-parental care who show 3 or more school readiness skills. The two short-term measures that have been developed to track this goal are:
  - Number of states that have implemented early learning guidelines in literacy, language, pre-reading and numeracy for children 3 to 5 that align with state K-12 standards and are linked to the education and training of caregivers, preschool teachers, and administrators.
  - Proportion of regulated child care centers and homes that are accredited by a recognized national early childhood development professional organization.
- The initial long-term performance measure created by CCB to track child care as work support was defined as the percentage of TANF families exempt from work requirements because child care is unavailable. However, the data on exempted families available through TANF records appear to be problematic, and do not capture the extent of child care availability problems:
  - In most states, between zero to one percent of families were recorded as exempted from work requirements because of child care problems. These data were questionable, given current research that shows child care is a problem for low-income families.
  - At the national level, the rate of families exempted from work requirements because of child care problems was 2.1 percent, which left little room for demonstration of improvement over time.
- CCB asked Child Trends to examine national survey datasets to determine an alternate long-term performance measure. Two datasets appeared to be the most promising, the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) and the National Household Education Survey (NHES).
  - Using data from the NSCH, an indicator was constructed that measured the percentage of children living in families below 150% of poverty whose family member had to change, quit, or not take a job because of problems with child care.

- The NSCH has sufficient sample size to support the development of a measure for low-income families, by parental employment status, the use of non-parental care, and the receipt of cash assistance. However there are cell size problems if the sample has to be further broken down.
    - It was found that eleven percent of families with children under age 6 reported having experienced job problems due to child care.
    - It was also found that families living in poverty and those receiving cash assistance were more likely to experience job problems due to child care.
  - Using data from the NHES Early Childhood Program Participation component, an indicator was constructed measuring the percentage of children whose main child care arrangement does not cover all the hours their parent is at work, school or training.
    - The NHES has a sufficient sample size to support this measure for families living below 150% of poverty by subsidy receipt among those receiving non-parental care. However, there are cell size problems when looking at this measure by parental employment status.
    - It was found that approximately one-quarter of children age 0-6 in non-parental care had mothers who reported that their main child care arrangement did not cover all of the hours needed.
- Both of the datasets examined include the needed features to develop a performance measure for CCDF: both are nationally representative; both are repeated cross-sectional surveys; both include questions that can be used to measure child care as a work support; and both include data on background variables including income, parental employment, and type and number of child care arrangements.
- However, both datasets also have disadvantages for their use in a performance measure: both are on a 4-year data collection cycle; there are cell size problems when breaking down data further on low-income families; in the NSCH, the child care questions are asked only of children 0-5, while CCDF serves children through age 13, and the question about employment asks whether families have maintained a very high employment threshold of 50 out of the past 52 weeks, which may be unrealistic for the universe of families participating in CCDF programs; in the NHES, the question wording has varied across survey administrations, and the child care question may not appear in the next administration.

Lee Kreader, of the National Center for Children in Poverty, facilitated the first part of the discussion, where the attendees talked about how performance measures should be defined, what universe should be measured, what outcomes should be measured, for what point in time performance should be tracked, and what the unit of analysis should be. The discussion that followed mainly focused on the debate on what universe should be measured. The following are some of the key comments made about the universe:

- Since a main goal of performance measurement is to measure the performance of the program, the universe should be focused on those served by child care subsidies—i.e., those impacted by the program.
- The ideal, however, would be to create a similar measure for the entire low-income population, and then compare the group that is being served by subsidies with those who are not.
- The target population should include those with zero earnings, since those are the people who are trying to get into the program and use the subsidy to become employed.
  - This comment was countered by another attendee who said that there is an entire universe of people who could receive the subsidy but for some reason do not apply and are not receiving it. So it would not make sense to target those with zero earnings, for example, because the program only impacts those who receive it.
- The population could be low-income families overall, and those who are receiving TANF and those not receiving TANF. However, since there are time limits on TANF receipt, the reason why a person is not on TANF anymore could be due to cycling out of the program rather than earning a higher income.
  - It was countered that this universe would be problematic since eligibility for TANF varies across states, so that a person could receive TANF in one state but not be eligible in another state.
- In considering the universe to be people touched by CCDF, it was asked whether people on a waiting list to receive subsidies should be included in the universe. The overwhelming response from the group was that if the performance measure is to be accountable for a program's outcomes, then you can't possibly be accountable for a person's outcome when they never received the subsidy. The waiting list issue is an issue of policy and program administration, but since those people never received the subsidy, then they should not be included in the universe.

The discussion then moved on to what the desired outcome should be that is measured in the performance measure. The following are some of the key comments on which outcomes should be measured:

- While it may be helpful to know what percentage of families are served by CCDF, that type of simple measure does not show the impact CCDF has on employment.
- Suggestions were made to measure continuous employment, such as how many people have been employed 6 months or more.
- However, there was concern that some states have programs that cycle people in and out of the program quickly (i.e. time limits), and so those states would not be able to assess how employment for a certain amount of time impacts a family.
- Outcomes related to work, such as stability and job quality factors, would be important to measure. However, this would not be possible to do in cross-sectional surveys since you would need to follow people over a period of time.

- Another employment measure could be to look back from a point in time among families now receiving child care subsidies and see how long the parents have been employed. That would show that the program has achieved a level of duration of employment for the people who are being served. Their income could also be measured, as well as how long they have been receiving subsidies. These are point-in-time measures rather than longitudinal, but they are easy to obtain and are comparable across states.
  - Another attendee suggested refining this slightly by identifying people on the program at a certain point in time, and then measuring their outcomes one year later.
  - This suggestion was countered by an attendee that said that states that let people stay in the program longer will look better than a state that has time limits to their program.
- It was also suggested that in addition to duration of employment, outcomes such as wage growth and number of jobs would also be important to measure. An example was given that someone could be employed for 12 months, but have had 15 different jobs in that time period.
- One attendee stated that while employment is probably the right outcome to measure, you also have to be aware that other things outside of subsidy receipt affect employment as well. Labor market effects themselves will affect employment year to year, so employment cannot be linked solely to subsidy receipt.

At this point, the discussion turned to what measures of state policy would be good to have. The following are some of the key comments about state policies:

- One key state policy to consider is what proportion of the all child care do subsidies provides access to for families
- Another good policy-related measure would be what percentage of providers are willing to accept subsidized children in their program.<sup>1</sup>
- Administrative performance would also be good to measure, i.e. providers getting late payments; or the turnaround time from time of application to time child is able to be put into child care.
  - It was commented that looking at the time between becoming eligible for subsidy and receiving services would get into the issue of waiting lists. A successful program should not have waiting lists, because if people need child care in order to work, making them wait becomes a problem.
  - A representative from a state that has no waiting lists commented that while the state does not have a waiting list, the state only pays 24% of the market value of child care, and that family copays are 20% of the household income. Just because they are serving everyone does not mean that everyone is being served well.
- One attendee suggested looking back at the high performance bonus measures that were created to reward states on their successful policies. Those could

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<sup>1</sup> This is already a performance measure being tracked by the Child Care Bureau.

- include states that have eligibility levels of 150% of poverty, who pay closest to the market rate in that state, and who have employment and earnings progressions among people in the program.
- One attendee gave an example from the world of emergency health care, that if in an emergency, someone gets health care within the first hour of needing care, their chances for survival are greatly increased. The related example from child care could be research linking uninterrupted child care to employment outcomes. You could look at how long it takes to get a job, and then how long a parent stays at that job.
    - Another attendee countered that length of time in a job should not be measured alone, because a person could stay in a very low wage job and never stop needing the subsidy except for when the child became too old to receive it. Wage growth would be important to measure as well as length of time in a job, so that you can measure whether people earn enough money to start sustaining themselves.

## **Day 2**

The second day began with a brief recap by Suzanne Freed of some of the topics that were discussed from the previous day. Attendees were reminded that they were here to brainstorm ideas for a measure of child care subsidy as a support for employment. They were also told that the CCB also wants to hear about what performance measures states are using.

- In the previous day's discussion, three universes were suggested: CCDF recipients; parents that apply to CCDF, including those who did not get it or who had to go on a waiting list; and all low-income families.
- Ultimately, the universe that seemed to receive the most support was CCDF recipients. There were three categories of CCDF recipients that were suggested: those employed at the outset; those not employed but in work-related activities, such as training, at the outset, and the earning levels of parents at the outset.
- The following measures were suggested for each of those populations after one year's time on subsidies: the number of months parents were employed; the number of jobs held in that time; the growth or increase of wage and earnings levels; whether the parent cycled on and off the program; and whether the parent returned to welfare.

Different types of performance measures were suggested:

- measures that focus on policy levers, such as the attractiveness of a benefit to a family;
- measures that focus on program performance (the outputs of a program), such as, the "golden hour," or the time it takes between application and receipt of a subsidy or uninterrupted stays on subsidies;
- measures that focus on program impact (what happens to families in the program); such as, length of employment among families receiving subsidies or

- uninterrupted stays on subsidies and effects on continued employment or increase in earnings; and
- a composite measure that would be all-encompassing of all the nuances and factors that play into how well a program is running.

Since the previous day's discussion never focused on state performance measures, each of the state policymakers in attendance were asked to discuss what their state is doing in terms of performance measures.

- In Minnesota, they are starting to look for more information on early childhood programs and school readiness, and are trying to be more strategic about early childhood investments. They want to include outcomes for children in measuring performance of the child care subsidy program, such as school readiness. They are also moving in the direction of measuring quality of employment for parents. They want to be able to not only know whether they can get parents into a job, but also whether they can work with employers to get parents good jobs and use the child care assistance program in a way to support some continuing education so that parents can improve their jobs. They want their long-term goal to be something that is in the public good, and that is not set too low. The current performance measure for the child care assistance program in Minnesota is how access to child care is related to the market rate, and the measure is used in budget sessions.
- In Nebraska, performance measures like those being discussed at the roundtable do not exist. They keep data related to the category of number of families served, and how much money is spent. Fifty-five percent of their budget is spent on low-income families, and twenty-five percent is spent on TANF families, so the vast majority of spending is on low-income families. They have found that most people who exit after the two-year time limit are still at 150% of poverty and have not increased their wages. They do not look at employment outcomes.
- In Rhode Island, a performance measure that is tracked is the ratio of TANF recipients compared to the number of income-eligible people in the state. They also measure regulated versus non-regulated care. They have an administrative database that tracks a number of indicators, and are able to match people on the child care program and who are participating in the food stamp and medical assistance programs. They also do matching with other agencies such as labor or unemployment insurance.
- In Wisconsin, they do not track performance measures but they do track indicators. Their goals are about participation levels, and they are concentrating on paying a high maximum rate, and they are looking at whether they are getting quality for the amount of dollars that are being put into the child care assistance program. They want to develop a provider quality rating system with tiered reimbursement. Another focus on the child care subsidy program is seeing what types of errors are made in the program and improper payments. They have found that there are a lot of errors, and are working on changing policies in order to be more accurate.
- In New York City, the focus has been on quality of care. They have been working on a strategic plan to look at common performance measures across



- Head Start, pre-K, and child care systems so that parents can assess the quality of child care across those systems. They are also developing indicators for internal management, such as application turnarounds. They have a goal to get applications processed and children in care within 10 days. They are also looking at things such as errors and improper payments.
- In California, there are three stages of the child care program. The first stage is TANF managed through the counties, the second is transitional child care for two years after a family leaves TANF, and the third is for those still eligible after the two years due to income or age of children. So far, everyone has received child care as long as they have wanted it. They are examining measures of program integrity and accuracy of payments. Background checks and fingerprinting for caregivers is also a big issue, because it can take as long as six months to a year for a license-exempt provider to get approval. In terms of matching data, it is difficult because California has 28 counties with four different types of computer systems, all of which are incompatible with each other.

Laura Lippman of Child Trends facilitated the next part of the discussion on how performance should be measured, and made a short presentation on the benefits and limitations of administrative and survey data. The following are some of the key points from the presentation:

- Administrative Data
  - Benefits:
    - Regularly collected (quarterly or annually) so that short-term changes are captured
    - Available at the state and national levels
    - Population receiving subsidies can be captured
    - Linkages are possible with other programs, such as TANF or Unemployment Insurance (UI)
    - Measures can be developed at child, family, state, or national levels
    - Cost effective: the infrastructure already exists
  - Limitations:
    - Only includes families served, not full target population
    - Variability across states in definitions
    - Variability in how and when families are tracked
    - Accuracy and completeness varies across states
    - Process and dynamics of child care as a work support are not captured
    - Outcomes and contextual variables are not included
- Survey Data
  - Benefits:
    - Representative samples include broader populations such as those eligible to receive services, low-income, or non-working

- Repeated cross-sectional surveys allow tracking measures consistently over time
- Comparable across states, when available
- Using existing survey items is cost-effective
- Questions can be revised to refine measurement
- Limitations:
  - Difficulty in measuring subsidy and TANF receipt, causing underreporting
  - Depth and range on any topic is limited by space
  - Nationally representative populations have small sample sizes for key groups
  - Lack of comparability in state surveys
  - Longitudinal surveys lose sample representativeness over time

After the presentation on the benefits and limitations of survey and administrative data, the state representatives were again asked to talk about what their states have done in linking administrative data sources. The following are key comments from that discussion:

- In Texas, they have 15 years of experience in linking TANF, UI, child care, and a variety of other programs such as Medicaid and child support, and have been involved in a variety of research studies that have focused on outcomes such as measures of employment (changing jobs, duration of jobs, wage growth), returns to TANF, and factors associated with them.
- In Wisconsin, all of the applications for the food stamp, child care, and TANF programs are done in one system, and the system also alerts them when an individual also begins to receive UI benefits. They recently used a data capacity grant to add interfaces with the database that the licensing department uses to track providers who are licensed. They admitted that it was an active workload and very intensive to keep up on the data, and ultimately realized that interfacing could not be done. They now share information on a daily report to see what has changed in the provider file, and then send changes on to the resource agency which needs to manually update their system. They can maintain the interfaces that they were able to build, but cannot build any additional ones.
  - One attendee commented that this experience is shared among many states because states are cash strapped to do this type of work. For example, Massachusetts had a longitudinal database of administrative data, but they no longer have the money to maintain it. All of the states seem focused on budgeting, which seems to be a year-long process, so all of the data that are there and being collected is not being analyzed.
- In Oregon, they have five years of data on subsidy receipt and food stamps, but have only matched data on people who received a subsidy at some point in time. They have also linked with UI, wage data, medical assistance, and pretty much all of the assistance programs. It is possible in that state because the different departments work well together, and so it is easy to get approval to allow the data to go across agencies. They routinely match datasets against one another at a

point in time, and such matching is automated. For example, criminal record checks are automatically done on a monthly basis, and TANF is checked against UI data monthly. They said that if CCB is looking at using administrative data for one point in time rather than creating a longitudinal database, one simple measure would be looking at everyone at a certain point in time, and then compare that with the UI data that is available one year later. That would not be expensive or time consuming, and it would be limited, but it could be determined how many people were employed and receiving a subsidy at one point but not at another point.

- The representative from Rhode Island said that their state can do such data matching and that it already is done monthly.
- In Nebraska, there are uniform applications for the IRS, Social Security, new hires, wage and labor, and vital stats programs so those systems are together. The data are there and would not be difficult to get out.
- Wisconsin is set up similarly to Nebraska, but is set up around eligibility, with food stamps, Medicaid, and UI data linked. The system assigns a person a case number when a Social Security number is not present, but since it is a combined application for the different assistance programs, they more often than not have Social Security numbers for everyone.
- In California, data linking does not seem possible at this point in time because there are four major computer systems in use in the state, with even more that are used occasionally.
  - Another attendee commented that a lot of states were interested in issues surrounding eligibility, so even if states do not have the ability to link their administrative data now, it could be a reality for them 10 years down the road.
- One of the representatives from the Department of Labor stated that the Department of Labor and the Census Bureau have been working closely together to develop measures to examine how labor markets are changing and where the jobs are located.
- A Census Bureau representative stated that the Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics data project (LEHD) that has been developed can link to Census data or American Community Survey data (ACS). They can connect characteristics such as household structure, job characteristics, wage data, TANF data, and child care subsidy data, and to-date have done so in three states and have done cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses of these data.
  - Another attendee said that 801 data (CCDF administrative data), which is collected for all the states, could be added and linked to the LEHD data. It was also mentioned that on 90% of cases where 801 data are available, there is a Social Security number that could allow matching with other data sources.
  - It was cautioned, however, that the difficulty with using 801 data is that definitions can be different across states. Even though the ACF-800 and ACF-801 forms have the same labels, are OMB approved, and all states must fill them out when submitting data, the form fields can be interpreted differently by the states.

- One attendee said that since a national system is already in place (LEHD), then it makes sense to improve on that to be able to get the data that are needed by CCB. While the attendee has worked on linking administrative and survey data for three states, doing it for all 50 states would be a huge effort and time consuming to try to negotiate data sharing agreements with all of them. Since the national ACS survey has large samples for each state and each city, and there is access to UI and 801 data, it seems to be pretty close to what CCB needs and would only take some work to integrate the data and analyze it.
- It was also said that the 801 data should be standardized as much as possible, and a common set of definitions should be developed, along with a standard file exchange process to enhance the ability to link it with Social Security data and a number of other data sources.

The discussion then turned to the different survey resources that are available, and the possibility of adding items on some surveys. The following are some of the key comments from that discussion:

- The content of the ACS appears locked down, with no possibility of additional questions added to it. While new questions will not be added, there are other surveys such as CPS and the new SIPP where questions could be added more easily, or even follow-up surveys created using the ACS or CPS as a survey frame.
  - Another attendee spoke from experience in trying to get questions added to the ACS, saying that he had been trying to get questions about health insurance added since 1996. Up until recently, a legislative mandate was required to add a question, and while that has changed, the content of the ACS remains pretty locked. Right now, there are three content areas that have potential to be added: health insurance, marriage/divorce, and education. If any were added, it would be in 2008, and then the plan is that no more questions would be added until 2013. So, the chances of getting a child care question on the ACS are very small. But with regard to the CPS, there are already questions about child care at the household and person level that ask whether the household used paid child care, and also whether they received a subsidy to pay for child care.
  - It was cautioned that survey data at the household level can be biased because the person answering the question may not be the person who applied for benefits. It was suggested that if program performance is to be analyzed, the administrative data would be the best option, and could also be linked to demographic data available from survey data.
- Another possibility that was raised would be for CCB to pay for questions added to CPS supplements. Currently, the Department of Labor pays the Census Bureau to add about 5 questions on unemployment insurance. Since they are only adding questions to an existing questionnaire, the cost is not that great.
- The representative from SIPP said that SIPP is being redesigned and will change a lot. It will be a more user-friendly survey and not a panel survey anymore. They are currently in the process of identifying which questions should remain. They

are asking people to go to the SIPP website and identify which questions they have been using in their data analysis and which are important. Child care is not always included, but since the focus of the survey is on economic well-being, there may be questions about the cost of child care but not about usage. Right now, they are cleaning the 2004 wave and the 2006 wave is being collected, so there will be two more waves of data available before the redesign.

- The representative from NCES said that for the NHES, they are planning to retain the CPS questions on employment, and are also planning to keep the question on whether child care availability has influenced a parents' job decision as well as the questions about the child's caregiver asked in 2005. They are also looking at adding questions about shift work, because low-income families would be the ones more likely to take those types of jobs.

With all of the data sources now on the table, the participants were asked to consider performance measures, which could relate to policies as well as program performance. The group discussed whether it is possible to develop performance measures for policies. The following are some of the key comments made:

- One attendee suggested that CCB review the three policy measures that were developed for the high performance bonus awards. Those measures were: 1) child care accessibility, as measured by the percent of children, eligible under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) requirements, who are receiving services, including eligible children served with additional funds; 2) child care affordability, based on a comparison of reported family co-payment to reported family income; and 3) Child care quality, as indicated by a comparison of the actual amounts paid for children receiving CCDF subsidies to local market rates in the state.
- It was commented that there is a difference between what determines policy, and what should be put into the performance measure turned in to Congress and OMB. The performance measure has to show a relationship between child care subsidies and employment.
- One suggestion was to look at how quickly a family gets a subsidy after applying, because the quicker they receive it the more likely that it will affect their employment.
- It was also stated that research has shown that a lack of affordable child care is a barrier to employment, but it is not the only one. Just because a subsidy is provided does not necessarily mean that someone is going to go back to work. You can be reasonably sure that a child care subsidy contributes toward a person's employment, but it is only removing one barrier.
- One attendee participated in research looking at outcomes of subsidy receipt at different points in time compared to employment stability. It was found that people whose subsidy spells were longer had longer spells of employment duration and higher incomes.
  - It was stated that the current rules that state a person loses their subsidy if they lose their job could actually hurt the child and the continuity of employment, so perhaps CCB could look at expanding the duration of

- subsidy receipt even for people who lose their job because it could help them find another job.
- It was countered that a person loses their subsidy only when they lose their job and they tell someone that they lost their job. While parents are expected to inform the state when they lose their job, many do not and thus continue receiving the child care subsidy up until the time they have to be recertified. So some parents may already be using the subsidy to help them look for another job.
  - The representative from Wisconsin said that in that state, they allow for two weeks of job search, and if a job isn't found in those two weeks then authorization for the child care subsidy ends. If a person needs additional time, then they need to go onto the TANF program so that the job search can be verified.
  - Another attendee suggested using the 801 data to construct a longitudinal data file rather than just using it for cross-sectional purposes. There are items in the 801 that could be used longitudinally, such as reasons for receiving care, and when a family starts receiving care. Continuity of care and reasons for why care might have changed could be examined.
  - Since the goal of the measure is to examine program outputs, a good measure would be uninterrupted child care. While child care is not the only thing that affects job entry, retention, and earnings gains, the hope is that receiving child care assistance helps the parent get and stay employed for a long period of time. It is difficult to attribute child care to job problems in a survey, so administrative data would be the better option.
    - Another attendee agreed, saying that survey data on child care barriers to employment are weak and difficult to interpret, and would instead suggest focusing more on providers and licensing data to get better information so that you can see whether child care supply is a barrier to employment.
  - One attendee said that a research study in Philadelphia found that mothers who received a subsidy were twenty percent less likely to report problems at work. There was something about the subsidy that served as a mechanism to allow mothers to get child care that decreased work problems.
  - It was said that perhaps job growth would not be the right measure at this time, but perhaps job entry, retention, and wage growth could be used in the performance measure. The problem is how much to attribute to the child care system.

Each attendee was asked to write down their recommendation for a performance measure, including what type of data should be used to develop the measure. The following are the suggestions of the roundtable, summarized by Suzanne Freed and Lina Guzman:

- Defining Performance
  - Employment Outcomes:
    - Job entry, retention, wage growth, quarters employed one year after receiving subsidy

- Number of families exempt from work activities because of lack of child care
  - Number of families moving from TANF to work with child care
  - Number of eligible working families who stop using the subsidy
  - Of those who apply for subsidies, those who are employed for 6 months or more (or 6 continuous months) out of subsequent year
  - Return to cash assistance after subsidy use
  - Percentage of CCDF families with access to regulated care
  - Percent of recipients who have an uninterrupted spell of subsidy receipt for 9 months (or other period)
  - Percent with stable care among families below 150% federal poverty line or state median income
  - Percent with stable employment among families below 150% of federal poverty line or state median income
  - Percent of families with income growing above 150% federal poverty line
  - Of those using subsidies for job search, percent obtaining employment, percent still employed one year after, and time it takes to become employed
- Program Performance Outcomes:
  - Percentage of cases closed or denied due to processing issues
  - How long it takes to get subsidy payment/certified
  - Proportion denied for administrative reasons versus eligibility reasons
- Measuring Performance
  - Matching 801 data (CCDF administrative data) with Longitudinal Employment Household Dynamics (LEHD)
  - Revision of High Performance Bonus methodology
  - Add questions to NSCH on subsidy receipt to track among subset that get assistance
  - Focus on administrative over survey data
  - Establish impact of child care on employment using periodic evaluations or experiments
  - Focus on process measures to get at what program can actually influence/impact
  - Combine data from administrative data (numerator) and survey data (denominator)

The attendees had an opportunity to discuss the list that was generated, and voice any concerns they had about anything on the list.

- It was pointed out that some of the suggestions on the list occurred repeatedly, in particular, the first bullet about job entry, retention, and wage growth.
  - Another attendee suggested that for the first bullet, a particular quarter could be examined and the percent of those who had participated in a subsidy program in the past quarter that were employed or had gone back

to TANF. That would be an outcome at a particular point in time, which lends itself to performance measurement.

- It was commented that while the suggestions look like a lot of different ideas, there are many that are trying to get at the same thing. So there could be more consensus among the group than it looks like.
- One attendee has tried to work on the codes given for why people are denied a subsidy, and have found that the data have many flaws and so would caution against using that type of measure.

The discussion then turned to focus on whether the panel had any additional recommendations in terms of data linking, and whether there were any other possible datasets, data collection, future modification of existing surveys, or inclusion of specific questions or items in existing surveys to talk about.

- One attendee said that they are now cautious about any question asked about child care subsidies in surveys. If something is included in a survey, time needs to be spent thinking about the measure, testing it, and deciding if it gets at what a parent thinks about when asked about child care subsidies. The current measures in surveys do not seem to be capturing what we think they may be capturing.
- More cognitive testing is needed to look at questions that examine whether child care is a barrier to work, or whether a parent received a child care subsidy. While those questions were probably not written by child care experts, Census has the ability to conduct cognitive testing to figure out if parts of the question do not work or if there is variation that works better.
- In terms of linking data, 801 data and TANF data are important, but it would also be important to get the government to open up the National Directory of New Hires, which would give states the ability to look at more things such as cross-state employment, federal employment, and the location of corporate headquarters for national chains. Access to those data would provide information about a larger percentage of those employed in a state.
  - The new hire database has information on every single employed person in the United States. There is quarterly wage data, in addition to new hire data.
  - However, the new hire database is very difficult to get access to, and those who do get access are not supposed to discuss it.
- One attendee suggested that CCB should start fighting now to have child care questions included in the ACS, even if it will be years from now. It would be very important to have child care data in the same dataset as all the characteristics of the family. A series of questions would be best, and they have to fight for a place for child care.
  - Another attendee agreed, saying it would be important for CCB to encourage questions or buy a section of a survey so that what they need can be collected. You could also identify people from ACS who say they receive a subsidy, and then send a supplemental mailout survey to those people.



- Another suggested that maybe it is time to field a full survey about child care, which could be an anchor for future research and future questions.
- Earlier in the discussion, there was a focus on quality of child care, so perhaps CCB should look at how quality of child care affects employment outcomes.
  - Another agreed, saying that looking at a performance measure that dealt with employment and quality in the same measure would put both aspects of CCDF into one measure.

At the end of the meeting, the group was asked whether they had any next steps to suggest for research, or whether there were any unanswered questions or concerns that they would like to discuss.

- One attendee said that there was concern about the performance measure that there seems to be the most consensus about- employment stability. In terms of consequences to the states, who they serve will have a big impact on how well a state would do on that performance measure. As the creation of a measure moves forward, CCB should be sensitive to the consequences at the state level for the performance measure.
- One attendee has been doing research on how well state processes seem to be working in relation to child care subsidies. It was found that some of the states that seemed to have the best policies actually were the worst on-site because telephones were not being answered, etc. Such research could be built upon to identify many state-level variables that could be measured to see how policies and services are affected by processes.
- One state representative said that cuts in funds available at the county level are causing difficulties. Caseloads are increasing because they can't afford to fund administrative expenses, so they can expect to see longer waits for child care due to administrative reasons.
- Qualitative work would be a great supplement to administrative or survey data because it would allow a family's point of view to be heard so that they can talk about the reality of what is being measured. It would not be able to be generalized, but it would be helpful to find out things like why a parent left the subsidy program, why they didn't take the subsidy if it was needed, and what happened to their child care after they left the program.
- Other topics for research include:
  - Research to develop state performance measures
  - What is the threshold of subsidy to get/keep people working?
  - What are the short-term barriers to work? What are the long-term barriers to work?
  - What length of subsidy is tied to getting/maintaining employment? (tipping point)
  - How do administrative processes impact employment (error rate, time lapse, reason for case closure, etc.) -- quality assurance
  - How do policy decisions impact employment (e.g., recertification process may be barrier to continued receipt; do they approve subsidies for job search, etc.)

- Efficacy of providing subsidies to different sub-groups

Adjournment of Roundtable- The roundtable adjourned with Shannon Christian, Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, and Suzanne Freed of the CCB thanking the participants for their attendance and the quality of the discussion that had occurred.