

2009 CCPRC Annual Meeting
Opening Plenary, Session 1
Thursday, October 29, 2009, 8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Dialogue about Research Priorities with ACF Leadership

Description

Leadership from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) discussed priorities in child care and early education, including ACF's interagency work with the U.S. Department of Education and other Federal partners.

Moderator:

Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE)

Presenters:

Naomi Goldstein, Director, OPRE
Shannon Rudisill, Associate Director, Child Care Bureau
Mary Bruce Webb, Director, Division of Child and Family Development, OPRE

Scribe:

Julia Wessel, Child Trends

Summary of Presentation #1: Shannon Rudisill

- **What are the critical questions from the Obama Administration?**
 - High level of concern and commitment to early care and education.
 - Questions formulated in the early days of the consortium are still pertinent, and there is a great amount of continuity and consistency over time in the questions and issues that are relevant.
- **Priority #1:**
 - Early learning systems and infrastructure for quality. With the Early Learning Challenge Fund (ELCF) there is a bold vision about an early learning system and potentially \$1 billion a year to support this infrastructure.
 - Pathways grants—States that are far along with their conceptualization.
 - Development grants—States with some components in place but not fully developed.
 - Quality Rating Systems (QRS)/Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and professional development systems—Linking data and integrative State data are key components.
- **New Directions:**
 - Joan Lombardi brings direction around an exciting, more comprehensive view of early learning and services for young children. “Happy, healthy, and successful children. Ready for school and ready for life.”
 - What outcomes are we looking for, and what programs are we evaluating?
 - Desire to reinvigorate health into child care and child care research as well as other domains of development.

- Interdepartmental work—Work is ongoing with the Department of Education with six study groups working on differing topics. Looking at where the research is headed and which States can serve as models for States that are not as far along.
- Continuity of care—Keeping children in a stable, high-quality arrangement, especially with infants. What factors affect continuity of care?
- Program performance standards: What is the process for reconsidering performance evaluations?
- Quality measure around accreditation.
- Do QRS/QRIS's change the meaning of accreditation? Need a comparable measure of quality across States.

Summary of Presentation #2: Mary Bruce Webb

- **This is a time when we are thinking about systems and community-level research.**
 - How do community-level programs work with high-quality child care?
 - Need to keep a broad agenda in mind while also focusing on the details.
- **Key projects:**
 - Dual language learners (DLLs):
 - Research center for DLLs.
 - Head Start (HS) is also focusing on DLLs.
 - Focus on this in the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES).
 - Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs—Immigration, mobility, language, and poverty.
 - NICHD—Coordinating centers on DLLs.
 - Piloting of social-emotional approaches in the classroom (in migrant HS programs).
 - Finishing up a group of university partnerships of DLLs.
 - Special populations: Homeless children, children with disabilities, and Tribal HS programs.
 - Implementation research: Has been neglected.
 - Infants and toddlers, particularly in infant and toddler programs:
 - Baby FACES.
 - The original Early Head Start program began in 1994 and is now completing a 5th-grade followup.
 - Will be a challenge for child care and with the proposed Early Learning Challenge Grants.
 - Assessment and curriculum:
 - How assessments are used, and how they affect teaching.
 - “Learning from assessments”—Figure out how to use assessments.
 - Compendium of assessments and screeners—Find information on psychometric assessments. (Use highest quality assessments.)
 - Using Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) in Head Start monitoring system.
 - Professional development:
 - Head Start/university partnership.

- Study of supply and demand will provide a good picture of capacities in the country.
- Family involvement: Turn to this in a more focused way in the research.

Summary of Presentation #3: Naomi Goldstein

- *Collaborations:*
 - Collaboration across ACF programs that serve the same children for differing purposes, HHS, and other Federal agencies including Education, and with and among State and local agencies.
 - Collaboration between research and programs (focusing on child care).
- *Home-visiting initiative:*
 - Serving families from pregnancy through age 5.
 - Range of outcomes: Child health, school readiness, parenting, child well-being.
 - U.S. House and U.S. Senate health reform bills include some form of home-visiting and needs assessments for child health and coordination with other early childhood programs using evidence-based models (more funding for evidence-based programs).
 - Mathematica is doing a review of the literature on the effectiveness of home-visiting programs.
- *Teen pregnancy prevention:*
 - Currently in both House and Senate bills.
 - Replace abstinence education program with teen pregnancy prevention program.
 - Similar parameters as the home-visiting program initiative.
 - More funding for evidence-based programs with well-documented results.
 - Mathematica is doing a review of this literature as well.
- *Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS):* Effort to consult with the field to understand the approaches to develop tests on helping welfare recipients and other impoverished families, and starting the services soon.
- *Synthesize research on TANF and child care to see improvements:* Urban Institute has this contract.