LINKING STATE CHILDCARE AND CHILD WELFARE POLICIES AND OUTCOMES

Shannon T. Lipscomb, Oregon State University
Shannon.lipscomb@osucascades.edu

Mary Elizabeth Meloy, Society for Research in Child Development
Jenna Finch, Georgetown University

BACKGROUND

- **Area of study:** Early Care and Education (ECE) for children involved in Child Welfare/foster care.
  - Role of subsidies
- **Our prior research:**
  - Effects of child care subsidy receipt/stability on child welfare/foster care placements & vice versa.
  - CCDF admin data, linked with child welfare/foster care data: Oregon and Illinois
  - Differences in CCDF policies across states.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the ways in which CCDF policies treat children/families involved in child welfare?
  - Are these policies associated with characteristics of child welfare populations within states?
  - What are the potential implications of varying policies for children and families involved in child welfare?

- At CCPRC last year, we heard about the CCDF State Policy Database!

- Approach: Link CCDF policy data with state-level data on child-welfare.

DATA

- **2009 CCDF Policies Database**
  - Variables: policies for families under CPS investigation AND foster families:
    - Work hour requirements
    - Activity requirements
    - Copayment policies
    - Priority policies

- **Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System(AFCARS) for 2009**
  - State-level data:
    - Demographics of the children in child welfare system
    - Child welfare placements:
      - Types (i.e. relatives versus non, group homes/ institutions)
      - Numbers of placements (e.g. transitions)

ANALYSIS

- Utilize latent class analysis to identify patterns of CCDF policies across states for families involved in child welfare.
    - Work hour requirements
    - Activity requirements
    - Copayment policies
    - Priority policies

- Sets up (at least) 2 opportunities:

1) Examine links between these patterns of CCDF policies and the characteristics of child welfare populations within states.

2) Set foundation for future research in which we request admin. CCDF data from state(s) within each "class"/category of policies. Examine effects of child care subsidy receipt/stability on child welfare placements/stability & vice versa.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING THE CCDF DATABASE

- Benefits:
  - Comprehensive source for state policy data that would take a huge amount time to collect otherwise.
  - Systematic data across states – can set-up subsequent analysis of state CCDF data.

- Challenges:
  - Data are not continuously updated as policies shift.
  - Missing Data.
    - Small N because analysis is at the state-level; missing even 10% of data has big implications.