

2012 CCPRC Annual Meeting
Workshop Session B-3
October 24, 2012, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Methodological Lessons from Implementation of the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)

Description

The researchers participating in the NSECE discussed three key provider-related components of the NSECE: 1) capturing the full spectrum of home-based providers, 2) representing all center-based providers of early care and education, and 3) constructing a nationally-representative sample of the ECE workforce. For each component, team members discussed motivations for including the component, operational lessons learned in conducting data collection, and implications for data analyses. Questions and feedback were encouraged.

Facilitator/Presenter

Robert (Bob) Goerge, University of Chicago

Presenters

Rick Brandon, RNB Consulting
Ann Witte, NBER and Wellesley College
Marietta Bowman, NORC at the University of Chicago
Jill Connelly, NORC at the University of Chicago
Lekha Venkataraman, NORC at the University of Chicago

Scribe

Amy Blasberg, Child Trends

1. Documents in Session Folder

- “Home-Based Providers in the NSECE” by Jill Connelly and Ann Witte
- “The National Survey of Early Care and Education Center-Based Provider Screening” by Robert Goerge and Marietta Bowman
- “Counting and Characterizing the ECE Workforce: Center-Based” by Richard Brandon and Lekha Venkataraman

2. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Summary of Presentation #1:** Ann Witte and Jill Connelly
 - One of the goals of NSECE was to collect information on a nationally representative sample of all home-based providers which is challenging because licensing regulations vary so dramatically by county and State.
 - A dual-frame approach was used to identify providers; the first approach was to use State-level administrative lists of licensed and registered home-based providers; the second used the household questionnaire in which individuals could identify themselves as providing care for children who are not their own.

- The household questionnaire needed to function for both formal home-based providers and unregulated providers; it used general language in order to be accessible to both groups. Many of the identified households were no longer eligible at the time of data collection given rapid turnover among home-based providers. Surveys were administered in person, by phone and online.
- Providers who cared for children who were not their own for at least five hours per week and earning market-level pay were considered to be “arm’s length” home-based providers whereas providers not meeting these criteria were considered to be providing family, friend, neighbor, or nanny care. This distinction needs more attention as the two groups may not be mutually exclusive or collectively exhaustive.
 - Care is needed in how these groups are defined; if necessary, distinctions can be made later on so that the groups align with current understanding of who providers are.
- Questions:
 - *Is data available for non-respondent analyses?* There are call records that show interesting information in certain cases.
 - *What was the response rate for the survey? Did parents identify providers that were part of the underground economy?* The field interviewers were motivated and worked very hard to identify and interview family, friend, and neighbor care providers given the challenges typically associated with their participation in research.
- **Summary of Presentation #2: Bob Goerge and Marietta Bowman**
 - Bob and Marietta addressed center-based provider screening in NSECE. There are a wide variety of child care options available to families, but we don’t know how these options map onto what parents are seeking.
 - In constructing their sample frame, a comprehensive list of all providers serving children under age 13 in all 50 States and Washington DC was developed. National lists were supplemented by other lists, e.g., Department of Defense child care, NAEYC accredited programs, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc. The sample includes roughly equal representation among community-based, home-based, Head Start/preK and school-aged only providers.
 - Once the list was finalized, a screening tool was used to confirm the status of programs in the sampling frame, identify new programs, and determine the eligibility of all programs.
 - The screening tool was also used to ensure that the same program wasn’t included twice and also to identify new programs that weren’t included in the original sampling frame.
 - The approach of asking providers to identify additional programs was a valid one; a large number of additional programs were identified using this process.
 - This operational work done by NSECE shows the dynamic nature of ECE programs and also the careful work that is necessary to achieve an accurate picture of ECE to inform policy.
- **Summary of Presentation #3: Rick Brandon and Lekha Venkataraman**

- The primary objectives for the NSECE workforce data include providing the first complete nationally representative sample of the entire ECE workforce and caregiving population, examining caregivers in the context of their workplace and community, and including items that are predictive of observed quality (qualifications, attitudes/orientations, leadership/morale, PD/training and activities).
 - The sampling structure of the data set along with collecting organizational data from program directors allows researchers to examine caregivers in context of their work places.
- The center-based workforce sample was drawn from completed questionnaires at the program level; only one staff member per program was eligible for completing the workforce survey component.
 - There were some issues in creating the sample of workforce survey participants including reticence on the part of directors to provide information on individual staff members, inadequate information provided via online surveys, and staff mobility.
 - Traditionally, it has been impossible to get accurate estimates of the ECE workforce because of limitations of Federal Labor Statistics; this study will allow us to estimate this number for the first time by age of child and type of setting. It will also allow us to distinguish between paid and unpaid home-based providers.

3. Summary of Key issues raised

- An issue that was discussed heavily was determining how to parse home-based providers into two groups: “formal” home-based providers and “informal” home-based providers. More work will need to be done in this area.
- The richness of the NSECE data set was heavily emphasized throughout the session. Once these data are available to the field, there will be significant interest in analyzing them by looking at different subgroups within the sample.