

# Collaborations in Early Care and Education

## Establishing a Framework for a Research Agenda

Kathleen Dwyer

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# Collaboration: Challenges for Researchers & Evaluators

- Difficult to answer such seemingly simple questions as, where do children spend their time, and how effective are the programs that serve them?
- Difficult to measure the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes related to a single program
- If the effectiveness of collaborating programs reflects more than the sum of the effectiveness of the individual programs, then must measure the "value added"

# Workgroup Meeting Planning Committee Members

Carmen Bovell	Office of Head Start/ACF/HHS
Jennifer Brooks	Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation/ACF/HHS
Jeff Capizzano	Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development
Kathleen Dwyer	Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation/ACF/HHS
Caroline Ebanks	National Center for Education Research/IES/ED
Richard Gonzales	Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development
Christy Kavulic	Office of Special Education Programs/OSERS/ED
Amy Madigan	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
Dawn Ramsburg	Office of Child Care/ACF/HHS
Ann Reale	National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center
Alana Strong	Office of Head Start/ACF/HHS
T'Pring Westbrook	Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation/ACF/HHS
Maria Woolverton	Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation/ACF/HHS
Meryl Yoches	University of Maryland

# Workgroup Meeting, May 2010

- Overall goal
  - To construct a framework for research and evaluation regarding collaborations in early care and education
- Parameters of discussion
  - State-level collaboration
  - Early education programs – child care, Head Start, pre-k, early intervention, and early childhood special education
  - Process of collaborating (vs. collaborative institution/body)

# Broad Questions Addressed at the Workgroup Meeting

- What is known, what needs to be known, and what are the appropriate approaches to take to further research and evaluation in the field?
- What are the important measurement and design issues?
- How can research help identify effective collaboration? What about these collaborations is effective? For whom are these collaborations effective?

# Setting the Context: Kagan's "What We Must Know"

1. What is the collaboration that we are investigating? ("The monster needs some boundaries")
2. Is it worth knowing? ("What is the magic?")
3. Is it technically knowable? ("Let's get real.")
4. What do we honestly expect from it? ("What is the real and appropriate endgame?")
5. Is it still the right construct in 2010? ("Are we on the mark?")

# Defining and Measuring State-Level Collaborations

- Collaborative processes can be examined from individual relationship, team, and/or organizational levels of analyses
- Collaborative processes can be activities or outcomes, depending on the goal of the collaboration
- Many candidate “process” variables (and these can be measured)
- Methods for studying collaboration processes
  - Interviews and surveys
  - Network analyses

# Linking to Program and Child/Family Outcomes

- Techniques for demonstrating effects
  - Demonstrate piece by piece (or use extant literature for some pieces)
  - Analyze population-level data for an entire community
- Researchers, evaluators, technical assistance providers, and policy makers would benefit from consensus on
  - A logic model for state-level collaborations in early childhood (with measures, research findings mapped)
  - Definitions



# A Few Additional Issues

- Examples of factors that can affect collaboration effectiveness
  - Leadership change
  - Policy change
  - Resources
- Additional considerations when researching collaboration
  - Lifecycle of the collaboration (different outcomes may be of interest at different points)
  - Relationship between collaboration at the state level and what happens at the local level

# Next Steps

- Coming very soon...
  - Logic model
  - Annotated bibliography
- Coming soon...
  - Breakout sessions & poster symposium
- Coming a bit later...
  - Compendium of measures
  - White paper

# For More Information

- Child Care and Early Education Research Connections ([www.researchconnections.org](http://www.researchconnections.org))
  - Collaborative Projects
    - Collaborations in Early Child Care and Education Meeting
      - Meeting Summary
      - Presentations
- Kathleen Dwyer
  - [kathleen.dwyer@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:kathleen.dwyer@acf.hhs.gov)
  - 202-401-5600