

# Quality Improvement Strategies and Innovations: What Do We Know from Research and Where are the Gaps?

Kim Boller, Mathematica Policy Research

Diana Schaack, San Francisco State University

Kate Tarrant, Research & Policy Consultant

*with*

Rosemarie Allen, Colorado Department of Human Services

Gail Kelso, Louisiana Department of Social Services

Barbara McCaffery, Delaware Division of Social Services

# Agenda

- I. Context
- II. Conceptual Framework for Quality Improvement
- III. State of the Evidence
- IV. Small Groups: Making Quality Improvement Decisions
- V. What research do STAMs need?

# Shared Goal: Different Approaches

- Generate knowledge and invest in interventions to improve the quality of ECE settings
- How we make decisions:
  - Researchers
  - Policy-makers
  - Practitioners

# Investing in Quality Improvement

## Tensions

- Innovation vs. evidence-based interventions
- Latest fad vs. experienced interventions
- Create new structures vs. build on existing structures
- Deep vs. broad reach
- Immediate vs. planned interventions

# Today's Goals

- A broad framework for thinking about QI strategies
- What research shows and where the gaps are
- How states make decisions about investments
- Questions states have about QI strategies
- Build bridges between research, policy, and practice

# Conceptual Framework

## Ecological Framework: Different Levels of ECE “Actors”

- Interventions aimed at different levels to improve ECE and child outcomes
- Anticipated behavior change and pathways to ECE quality improvement

# Family Interventions

- Conditional cash transfers
- Consumer education
- Family engagement
- Tuition credits
- Tax credits

# Workforce Interventions

- Coaching/consultation
- Community of practice
- Compensation
- Credentials
- Curriculum implementation
- Family child care home visiting
- Family child care networks
- Mental health consultation
- Mentoring
- Peer assistance and coaching
- Provision of information
- Scholarships and formal education
- Training

# Global Quality

# Teaching Practice and Teacher's Knowledge

# Child Outcomes




# Setting Interventions

- Classroom grants
- Improved administrative practices
- Low child-adult ratios and group size
- Shared services
- Support to achieve licensing
- Support to achieve accreditation
- Tiered reimbursement
- Zero-interest loans

# System Interventions

- Credentialing and registries
- Data systems and use of data
- Higher education content
- Streamlined financing
- Strengthened licensing
- Unified governance

### Key

- Strong evidence 
- Moderate evidence 
- Little evidence 

# State of the Evidence

- Focus on literature reviews and meta-analyses
- Identify most rigorous research on each intervention
- Three considerations
  1. Amount of research
  2. Rigor of research
  3. Findings of research
- Factors
  - Interventions
  - Behavior change
  - State of the evidence
  - Key features
  - Research needed
- **CAVEATS**



# Workforce Interventions: Evidence of Quality Improvement

| Type                              | Rigor | Findings     | Comments                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------|--|
| <b>Coaching/Consultation</b>      | Y     | +            | <b>Theory-based, manualized</b>            |
| Compensation                      | N     | Mixed        | Linked to formal education                 |
| Communities of Practice           |       |              |  |
| Credentials                       | N     |              | Linked to formal education                 |
| <b>Curriculum Implementation</b>  | Y     | +            | <b>Fidelity, coaching, resources</b>       |
| <b>FCC Home Visiting</b>          | Y     | +            | <b>Defined model</b>                       |
| FCC Support Networks              | N     | +            | Education of specialist                    |
| <b>Mental Health Consultation</b> | Y     | <b>Mixed</b> | <b>Dosage</b>                              |
| <b>Mentoring</b>                  | Y     | +            | <b>Combined with formal education</b>      |
| Peer Coaching                     | N     | +            | Focused                                    |
| Provision of Information          |       |              |  |
| Scholarships and Formal Ed.       | N     | +            | Cohort, convenience, support               |
| <b>Training</b>                   | Y     | <b>Mixed</b> | <b>Intensity match content, manualized</b> |

# Setting Interventions: Evidence of Quality Improvement

| Type                             | Rigor | Findings |
|----------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Classroom grants                 | N     | +        |
| Improved administrative policies |       |          |
| Lower ratios and group size      | N     | +        |
| Shared services                  |       |          |
| Support to achieve accreditation | N     | +        |
| Support to achieve licensing     |       |          |
| Tiered reimbursement             |       |          |
| Zero-interest loans              |       |          |

# Family Interventions: Evidence of quality improvement

| Type                       | Rigor | Findings |
|----------------------------|-------|----------|
| Conditional cash transfers |       |          |
| Family engagement          |       |          |
| Provision of information   | N     | +        |
| Tax credits                |       |          |
| Tuition reimbursement      |       |          |

# System Interventions: Evidence of Quality Improvement

| Type                         | Rigor | Findings |
|------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Credentialing/ registries    |       |          |
| Data systems and use of data |       |          |
| Higher education content     |       |          |
| Streamlined financing        |       |          |
| Strengthening licensing      | N     | +        |
| Unified governance           |       |          |

# Small Groups

- The role of research in the policymaking process
- Two discussions
  - Policy-oriented questions
  - Research-oriented questions
- 30 minutes
  - 20 min group discussion
  - 10 min report back

# Research Priorities

- What are your most pressing research questions related to QI interventions?
- What else do you need from researchers to help you with your work?

# Thank you!

Questions about this session can be directed to:

Kim Boller, [kboller@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:kboller@mathematica-mpr.com)

Kate Tarrant, [kathleen\\_tarrant@yahoo.com](mailto:kathleen_tarrant@yahoo.com)

Diana Schaack, [dschaack@sfsu.edu](mailto:dschaack@sfsu.edu)