

Poster # 1

Supporting Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregivers: Findings From a Survey of State Policies

Toni Porter

This poster presents findings from a national survey of state policies for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers who are legally exempt from child care regulations. The study focused on several issues: (1) how states define home-based care that is exempt from regulations for family child care; (2) the kinds of requirements that states impose on license-exempt, home-based caregivers who provide care for subsidized children; and (3) the types of special initiatives, if any, that states fund to improve the quality of care that these caregivers offer to children.

Based on results of telephone interviews with child care administrators and program operators in 48 states, the study reveals that there is wide variation across the states in distinctions between care that is subject to regulation and care that is exempt from it. It shows that there is little uniformity and consistency in state requirements such as background checks, self-certifications, mandated participation in orientations or trainings, and home inspections for caregivers who provide child care to subsidized children. Among the 20 states that fund specific initiatives for these caregivers, training is the most common strategy for improving child care quality; health and safety are the most common topics.

The research, which was produced in collaboration with the National Association of State Child Care Administrators, an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association, and Child Trends, points to questions about the anticipated long-term outcomes of these policies as well as the need for evaluation of their effectiveness.

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Poster # 2

Ways of Caring: How Providers Across Settings Describe Their Care of Children and Parents

Juliet Bromer

This poster draws on findings from the dissertation study, *Informal Social Support Roles of African American Child Care Providers in Low Income Communities*.¹ This poster examines the ways family, friend, and neighbor providers think about their child care work with children and parents. The study uses a qualitative methodology consisting of 20 semi-structured interviews with parents and their primary child care providers, which include family, friend, and neighbor caregivers (FFN), family child care providers (FCC), and center-based teachers.

The poster focuses on a subset of 10 African-American FFN providers and 10 low-income, working parents of children in their care. Findings suggest that providers were both child- and adult-focused in their descriptions of caregiving and in their motivations for doing child care. Such findings may challenge the view that FFN providers are motivated by adult-focused concerns (help mothers) and may not offer “intentional” caregiving to children

- Providers’ motivations to help mothers indicated a strong moral sense of obligation to their families.
- Providers referred to deep attachments with individual children and feelings of responsibility for “second mothering” to children as reasons for doing child care.
- Providers reported attending to children’s needs through daily rituals, family routines, and emotional care of children which involved teaching children about the importance of relationships.
- With parents, providers acted as childrearing coaches, giving out daily advice and instrumental help on raising children and managing work and family.
- Despite supports to children and parents, some providers reported burdens of caring including second jobs, economic hardship, relationship conflict, and physical exhaustion. In some cases, these challenges posed barriers to responsive care to children and parents.

In sum, FFN providers’ informal support of parents and individualized care of children may help ease the burden of managing work and family especially for low-income, single mothers and may represent a hidden dimension of child care quality.

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¹ This dissertation study is part of the broader *Study of Work-Child Care Fit* conducted by Julia R. Henly at the University of Chicago, that examines how the employment context of low-income parents shapes child care needs and the manner in which care is negotiated between employers, families, and providers.

Poster # 3

Employment and TANF Outcomes for Low-Income Families Receiving Child Care Subsidies in Illinois, Maryland, and Texas

Mairead Reidy and Jane Staveley

Although billions of dollars are spent each year on child care subsidies to help low-income, working families, we are only beginning to understand whether and how child care subsidies influence employment. Through a unique collaboration between the U.S. Census Bureau; Chapin Hall Center for Children (the project manager); the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University; the Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore; and the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas at Austin, this project is using blended individual-level census and administrative data records to examine who is eligible for the child care subsidy, who uses it, and how the subsidy aids different groups of low-income families in their quest for economic independence.

We distinguish between those who are currently receiving TANF, those who have recently left the TANF program, and those who have had no recent contact with the TANF program (frequently referred to as the working poor). Our primary questions are how employment and welfare outcomes differ between those who use child care subsidies and those who do not, and how these outcomes differ for different groups of low-income families. We plan to share the model and benchmarks with interested states at a roundtable discussion hosted by Child Care and Early Education *Research Connections*.

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Poster # 4

Having Your Cake and Eating It Too! How State Agencies Can Improve Service Delivery While Supporting Policy Research *A Toolkit for State Agencies on Integrating and Sharing Data*

Susan Wilson

State agencies can play a pivotal role in increasing the pool of quality data and ensuring that it is put to good use answering program and policy questions for the agency and the field. It takes leadership from the agency to put the resources into reshaping administrative data for research purposes. In an earlier report, Connecticut's Early Childhood DataCONNECTIONS made general recommendations for optimizing the utility of state agency data. This toolkit is part of the next phase of this effort.

State data, although primarily used for administrative functions like case management and reporting, also have the potential to answer a vast array of policy questions—particularly when different databases are linked together. But, before this potential can be realized, numerous obstacles must be overcome, including incompatible database structures, lack of data quality, limited data sharing, and state agencies' low prioritization of expanding data usage for research purposes. The toolkit strives to bridge the goals, orientations and expertise of policymakers, agency leaders and managers, data specialists and external researchers. Getting leadership on board is the first step.

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Poster # 5

**Creating Information-Rich Environments
Learnings from State Data Capacity Grant Projects**

Susan Wilson

Six State Data and Research Capacity Grantees (CT, MA, ME, OR, RI, and WI) have operated for 2 to 3 years improving databases, linking data, developing data warehouses, doing new research, and building an appetite for research and data analysis. Though the projects are “works in progress,” our lessons learned are as far-reaching as our projects and should be of interest to state agency staff as well as researchers. This poster is a synthesis of these learnings articulated during Tuesday’s pre-meeting. Eavesdrop on our conversation and add your perspective.

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Poster # 6

State Policy Variation: Common Approaches to Early Care and Education (ECE) Policy

**Elizabeth Rigby, Kate Tarrant,
Sharon Lynn Kagan, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn**

Across the country, state governments are increasingly turning to early care and education in order to promote education, welfare, and health goals. Yet, states' policy choices vary greatly with regard to funding, rules, and regulations. This poster focuses on four common, but distinct, policy tools used by states to increase the availability, affordability and/or quality of early care and education services: preschool investment, child care subsidy generosity, child care regulation stringency, and child care tax provision generosity.

Averaging state policy choices across four time points (1990, 1994, 1998, 2002) and using cluster analysis, we identify four common patterns of state early care and education policymaking: (1) a limited approach for states with average or low scores on all four policy tools; (2) a subsidy-regulation focused approach for states with higher child care subsidy generosity and/or child care regulation stringency; (3) a tax focused approach for states that offer generous child care tax provisions to their citizens but have average or lower scores on other policy tools; and (4) a preschool focused approach for states that invest more than other states in preschool, but have quite limited subsidy and tax policies. The identification of these distinct "mixes" of policy tools contradicts common perceptions that some states are generally "leaders" and others are "laggards" in early care and education policy. Instead, we find different "mixes" of state early care and education policy that, using multinomial logistic regression, we find to be associated with states' political ideology, economic resources, and tax effort.

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Poster # 7

Economic Development Strategies To Promote Quality Child Care

Mildred Warner

Economic development policy includes a focus on exports, productivity, and sustainability. In this poster I will demonstrate how quality child care can be supported through economic development strategies. Both the theory and practice of economic development will be discussed with examples of applications in child care.

The early childhood care and education field is at an exciting moment. Across the United States, there is increasing recognition of the economic importance of child care. Early care and education is being recognized as an important economic sector in its own right, and as a critical piece of social infrastructure that supports children's development and facilitates parents' employment. The Linking Economic Development and Child Care Research Project aims to better identify the economic linkages of child care from a regional economy perspective.

- Child care has higher linkages in the regional economy than many other economic sectors that are typical candidates for economic development policy.
- Child care's regional economic linkage is similar to other social infrastructures such as K-12 education, hospitals, job training.
- Child care's regional economic linkage is similar to other physical infrastructures such as water and sewer and transportation.

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Poster # 8

Asymmetric Information and the Child Care Market

Youngok Lim

I examine which types of child care providers are participated in a voluntary quality rating system, “Child Care Programs of Excellence.” Under voluntary disclosure, providers can choose among three options: (1) not evaluated, (2) evaluated and announce the outcome, and (3) evaluated and not announce the outcome. As child care providers’ beliefs about their quality and the accuracy of the test are factored into the model, even the providers with the lowest quality may prefer to get evaluated, while the highest quality may decide not to participate in the system. This is because even the lowest quality providers face a positive probability of achieving a better outcome than their true quality. Similarly, the highest quality providers face a positive probability of receiving a poorer outcome than what they anticipated. In addition, when providers believe consumers are not so skeptical or not well aware of the quality rating program or when consumers do not believe the information is credible, providers may choose not to be evaluated, even though there is no financial cost involved.

2. It is controversial what is responsible for this ‘mediocre’ quality—is it due to the lemon’s market problem (i.e. under asymmetric information only low quality providers remain in the market) or due to the lack of demand for quality child care on the part of parents? I estimate the demand for teacher-to-child ratios using the hedonic price of this attribute. Second, I examine the quality measured by parent would make parents switch from the current child care arrangement to another. Third, I examine what constitutes quality child care from parents’ perspectives. The empirical results suggests that parents differ from child care experts in what constitutes quality child care, not necessarily implies the lack of the demand for quality from parents.

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Poster # 9

**Child Care Quality Study: Does Partnering With
Head Start Make a Difference?**

**Diane Schilder, Benjamin Chauncey, Ashley Smith,
Candy Miller, and Sheila Skiffington**

Child care providers are increasingly partnering with Head Start with the goal of providing full-day, full-year care with comprehensive services. The poster presents information about a new study that is examining the relationship between partnering with Head Start and a child care provider's likelihood of offering higher quality care and services that improve children's school readiness. The new study builds on the findings from a previous 3-year study that found that partnership is related to improvements in services offered to children and families and increased benefits to staff. Furthermore, this study found that partnerships in which the goals are well-defined and communication is strong are the most likely to offer improved benefits.

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Poster # 10

Investigating the Impact of a State-Wide Unified Professional Development Framework on Quality Environments and Child Outcomes

Anita Barbee, University of Louisville
Jennifer Grisham-Brown, University of Kentucky

Research indicates that the most critical indicators of the quality of an early care and education program and subsequent positive child outcomes are the education, compensation, and the consistency of early care and education professionals working in the program (AFT, 2002; Kagan & Newman, 1996; Learning to Care, 1998; North Carolina Partnership, 1998; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips, 1989).

In 2000, the Kentucky General Assembly passed historic early childhood legislation (KIDS NOW) of which a component included the development of a seamless professional development system. The professional development system includes core content, articulation, credentials, scholarships and a training framework. This comprehensive professional development system, along with other initiative components in assuring maternal and child health, supporting families, enhancing early care and education, and establishing a support structure, have moved the field of early childhood forward in the state and improved child outcomes.

The University of Kentucky Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute and Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling and the University of Louisville, in collaboration with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, the Division of Child Care, and the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development, are building on the current statewide evaluation of the state KIDS NOW Initiative by conducting research investigating the degree to which a statewide unified professional development system impacts the educational level of early care and education providers and subsequent classroom quality. Moreover, the influence of these indicators will be examined to determine their impact on child outcomes.

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Poster # 11

**Kentucky Invests in Developing Success:
The KIDS NOW Evaluation**

**Jennifer Grisham-Brown and
Anita Barbee**

Kentucky's early childhood initiative represents one of the broadest state funded initiatives in the country. Kentucky's KIDS (Kentucky Invests in Developing Success) NOW Initiative (HB 706) was passed by state legislation and signed into law by Governor Patton in April of 2000 with implementation beginning in July 2000. This comprehensive Initiative was designed to establish and/or coordinate supports and services needed within the Commonwealth. The rationale for the implementation of the Initiative was the lack of an overall comprehensive plan to support quality early childhood environments in which young children spend time.

Concurrent with the implementation of the components described above, the University of Kentucky (UK) and the University of Louisville (U of L) launched an evaluation of KIDS NOW in 2000–2001. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to determine how programs and communities change as a result of the KIDS NOW Initiative, and how those changes affect children and families within their communities.

Included in the evaluation are data that inform state lawmakers on the quality of early care and education, participation in the KIDS NOW Initiative and overall familiarity with the Initiative. Data were collected from 110 stratified, randomly selected early childhood classrooms across the state of Kentucky. Findings include positive correlations between participation in the Initiative and perceived benefits of the Initiative, positive correlations between quality scores and director education and teacher education, higher quality in rural centers and in those that have staff that are more familiar with the KIDS NOW Initiative.

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Poster # 12

Early Care Settings and School Readiness of Low-Income Children: Cross-Cutting Lessons From Two Complementary Studies

**Lisa Gennetian (MDRC), Aletha Huston (UT Austin)
and Chantelle Dowsett (UT Austin)**

We will examine the relationship between center-based and home-based care settings and the development of low-income children aged Kindergarten to third grade. This study will utilize two unusually rich and unique datasets—a pooled data set of seven experimental studies of welfare and employment programs and the NICHD Early Child Care and Youth Development Data—with information about types and features of early care settings, children’s development and family economic resources.

This study has been designed to provide both substantive and methodological contributions that will inform the Federal Child Care Bureau’s 2004 research priorities in the area of school readiness of young children. These include the consideration of cognitive and social development as key indicators of school readiness, a focus on children of primarily working low-income families, the implementation of advanced empirical techniques to sort out the role of care settings from potential confounds related to selection of care, and the ability to draw cross-cutting lessons from two datasets with complementary strengths and weaknesses. Preliminary findings are expected in summer 2005.

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Poster # 13A

Massachusetts Early Care and Education Data Warehouse

Rod Southwick

Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services along with other state agencies is in development of a Statewide Data Warehouse for the Early Care and Education field. Massachusetts has a wealth of data that is collected annually.

This project looks to link databases and make administrative data accessible for research and program evaluation. The Data Warehouse will be accessible through the Internet to representatives of these agencies and other interested parties. At present, we are in the process of building a School Readiness website to display school readiness data. The Data Warehouse will house the school readiness data and will feed updated data into the School Readiness Web site.

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Poster # 13B

Massachusetts Assessment Tool Project

Erin Oldham

The Massachusetts Assessment Tool project is a joint project with Office of Child Care Services, the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, and several other agencies involved in the Massachusetts School Readiness Indicators Project. Glenwood Research is evaluating school readiness assessment tools that could be used in early care and education settings funded through public school systems and private- and ACF-funded settings (both home-based and center-based) serving children from birth to age 5 years.

Instruments will enable early education teachers to screen and assess children with regard to their age-appropriate progress in the five domains of early development and learning. Instruments will be tested in a number of child care settings to determine their usability and effectiveness based on criteria set by the joint agencies and Glenwood Research.

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Poster # 14

Promoting School Readiness: What Is the Contribution of Child Care Programs?

Thomas T. Kochanek

The Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services has launched a study examining the effects of a preschool child's experience in center-based child care settings on the developmental competency in the early grades in school. Two hundred thirty-two children were enrolled in this study as preschoolers in Boston and Lowell, MA. Information gathered in child care settings included descriptive characteristics of the study children and their families, characteristics of the classrooms (e.g. ECERS, CIS, curriculum philosophy, organization, and design), and characteristics of teaching staff (e.g. years of experience, training, and certification). Information gathered on study children in kindergarten included social/emotional (SSRS) and language (TOLD) competency.

In child care classrooms, higher ECERS scores were significantly associated with increased positive social behaviors and decreased problem behaviors. ECERS sub-tests that were most predictive of a child's social skills were Interaction, Language/Reasoning, Program Structure, and Space/Furnishings.

In kindergarten, social skills (SSRS) were reported by teachers to be in the average range on the SSRS (median=50th percentile). For academic competency (reading, math) and language competency (oral vocabulary and understanding/use of grammatical rules), children were slightly below average (median percentile values ranged from 25 to 37). Clear, statistically significant relationships between ECERS and CIS scores in child care classrooms and performance in kindergarten by study children were not evident. Additionally, no significant associations were found between other child care program and teacher characteristics and these outcome scores in kindergarten. Important factors that affected and explained study findings thus far are discussed.

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Poster # 15

**Quality Rating Systems:
A Study of Differing Models and Methodologies**

Midwest Child Care Research Consortium

The Midwest Child Care Research Consortium (MCCRC), a four-state partnership of university researchers and state agency staff, began a study of early childhood program quality rating systems in the fall of 2004. MCCRC represents HHS Region VII (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska). To support this effort, researchers from Mississippi State University and the National Center on Rural Early Learning Initiatives joined MCCRC. The current MCCRC study builds on the consortiums previous work of examining early childhood program quality and workforce characteristics.

The Quality Rating System study involves each state developing a quality rating system model with common end-points of “one-star” indicating a licensed program and “five-start” indicating an accredited program. In this pre-post-test design, qualitative and quantitative data will be collected. Center-based programs and family child care homes will be observed and staff members will complete surveys documenting demographic data as well as in-depth program data. Across the states, the quality enhancement experiences of providers will be documented by surveys and focus groups. Staff members and parents will participate in focus groups to learn more about their perceptions of Quality Rating Systems.

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Poster # 16

The Impact of Cash Incentives on Early Childhood Workforce Development and Program Quality

Sara Gable and Yiting Chang
University of Missouri – Columbia

Our poster provides a basic overview of the secondary data analysis study to be conducted. A description of the cash incentive program is included, along with a list of the research questions and a timeline for the 2-year effort.

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Sara Gable and Yiting Chang

Poster # 17

QUINCE: Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education

**Donna Bryant, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
Sharon Ramey, and Craig Ramey – Georgetown University**

QUINCE—Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education—is a multi-state study of two assessment based, individualized on-site consultation models: (1) The Partnerships for Inclusion (PFI) consultation model, being implemented in California, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North Carolina, and (2) the Rameys’ Immersion Training for Excellence (RITE) coaching model, being implemented in Mississippi. The studies involve both family child care providers and center-based child care teachers, with a special emphasis on providers with the least education and experience. The goal of this research is to determine the conditions under which very specific assessment based, on-site consultation models of child care provider training will enhance the quality of early learning environments and will also result in positive child change.

The project has been underway for over a year and the first cohort of consultants, providers and children have been recruited. Preliminary data describe the sample to date and give more information about the attitudes and perceived skills of the consultants prior to their training on the consultation model. Future results will show the change in consultant attitudes and skills and their relation to change in quality in the care setting.

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Poster # 18

QUINCE: Quality Interventions for Early Care and Education

Donna Bryant, Sharon Ramey, and Craig Ramey

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Poster # 19

Continuity and Stability of Child Care Subsidy Usage in Oregon

Deana Grobe, Elizabeth Davis, and Roberta Weber

This poster presents descriptive results of a study that more deeply investigates the dynamics of child care subsidy use in Oregon and examines the relationships among patterns of child care subsidy use, employment, TANF receipt and other assistance. In particular, we are interested in understanding why people leave the subsidy system by studying families' transitions from the subsidy program. For example, do families leave the subsidy program because of increases in earnings, or do they leave because they lost a job? Linking the subsidy data with data on employment and earnings from the Unemployment Insurance system allows us to observe the families' employment situations after they leave the subsidy program and to explore the relationships between child care subsidies and employment. Similarly, we analyze what other assistance families are using prior to entry and at the time of exit from the subsidy program.

The analysis is based on data from four years (1997–2001) of linked administrative records, including Unemployment Insurance wage data, child care subsidy data, TANF data, and data from other programs such as medical assistance or Food Stamps. Using first observed spells of subsidy receipt, we analyze the circumstances of the families at the time of exit from the subsidy program. Outcome measures include employment, TANF receipt, other program participation (medical assistance, Food Stamps), combinations, or disappearance from all assistance at exit. Preliminary analyses typically show multiple job changes and spells of non-employment following exits from the subsidy program.

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Poster # 20

**Measuring Child Care Stability:
A Study of the Relationship of Child Care Stability Measures
Using Oregon Child Care Subsidy Data**

Roberta Weber

This poster presents findings from a study focused on the time dimension of a child’s experience of nonparental care. Four methods of measuring child care stability have emerged over 30 years of child care research. The majority of stability studies use a single measure. This study uses all four measures on the same data set, 4 years of subsidized child care arrangements in Oregon. Research questions include:

- Are the four child care stability measures related to one another?
- Is there a single construct—child care stability—that is described by the four stability measures? To what extent do the four measures describe the same phenomenon?
- Does an individual measure, or some mix of measures, most effectively describe child care stability?
- Why does there appear to be such a high level of variance in child care stability findings? What data characteristics affect stability findings?
- How stable are the child care arrangements of low-income children under age 5 years that are supported by the Oregon child care subsidy program?

The study used 4 years of administrative data from the Oregon Department of Human Services. Subsidy data was merged with descriptive parent data from the client maintenance system. Analyses showed a high level of correlations among the child-level measures. Results demonstrated that different insights into the child’s experience were provided by some of the measures.

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Poster # 21

**Making the Most of Connections:
Illinois License-Exempt Child Care Providers’
Use of Information About Early Care and Education**

Diana Hiatt-Michael and Douglas Clark

Previous studies of license-exempt child care providers indicate they have received little or no child care training, although some practitioners have expressed their interest in having training available to them. Questions remain as to the most effective means of connecting providers with credible information resources.

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, it will describe the communication channels that Illinois license-exempt child care providers do and would prefer to use for seeking resources to inform their caregiving practices. We will also strive to identify communication technologies that hold promise as a means of connecting providers with information to enhance their practice.

Making the Most of Connections is a descriptive study using both qualitative and quantitative data. It involves dissertation research on the potential uses of technology as a means of promoting effective practices among license-exempt child care providers, especially those aimed at helping the children in their care to meet state school readiness goals.

In Phase One, interviews will be conducted with a sample of Illinois license-exempt providers regarding the sources they use to acquire information about their work. Emergent themes will inform the design of another survey instrument for a subsequent phase. In Phase Two, a semi-structured survey will be administered to a similar sample of providers about their access to and current use of a range of communication technologies.

A fresh perspective is anticipated on expanded uses for technology as a means of promoting the State Early Learning Guidelines to license-exempt child care providers in Illinois.

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Poster # 22

Associations Between Child Care Quality and Developmental Outcomes of Children in Low-Income Working Families in Four Communities

James Elicker

Previous studies have shown that, in general, children from low-income families receive lower quality care, compared to families with more economic sources (Kontos, Howes, Shinn, & Galinsky, 1997; NICHD Early Care Research Network, 1997). Child care providers serving predominantly low-income families infrequently meet standards of “good” quality, using established global measures such as ECERS (Phillips, Voran, Kisker, Howes, & Whitebook, 1994). They also tend to provide relatively low process quality, including observable positive caregiver-child interactions. Research evidence suggests that child care quality predicts children’s cognitive and socio-emotional development, both in the short and long term (e.g., NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2000), especially for children from low-income families (Cost, Quality, & Outcomes Study, 1999). This poster will present results from a new 3-year study of low income working families’ child care in four communities in Indiana. Little is known about the types and quality level of child care used by low-income working families in this state during the post-welfare reform period, situated in a policy context of limited available subsidies and state licensing standards that exempt many providers.

The purposes of the study are (a) to investigate type and quality of child care used by low-income working families in four urban Indiana communities; (b) to examine links between child care quality and children’s cognitive and social-emotional developmental outcomes; (c) to determine if quality-outcome associations are maintained when important family demographic variables are controlled (e.g., parent education, family income, child gender, child age, etc.); and (d) to explore how and why child care quality varies across these communities.

The 307 low-income working families who participated (75+ in each community) had a child 6-60 months enrolled in out-of-home child care (family annual income <\$35,000, not on TANF; parents in school or employed 20+ hrs/wk). Both structural and process quality were assessed by observation and by parent and provider surveys. (see Table 1 for descriptives.) Each child was assessed by observers, providers, and parents to establish his/her level of cognitive and social-emotional development. (See Table 2 for descriptives.) Analyses suggest that measures of global quality (ECERS/FDCRS), structural quality, and process quality were significantly correlated with children’s cognitive and social-emotional outcomes, for both younger and older children. Additional results will be presented about specific community child care contexts, and cross-community comparisons of types of child care used and child care quality.

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**How Organizations Can Help Child Care Work:
Reducing Incidences and Consequences of Child Care Disruptions**

Eden B. King

The primary purpose of non-parental child care is to enable parents of young children to achieve the financial and psychological benefits of employment (Scarr, 1998). However, it is challenging for most working parents to find quality, affordable child care. One result of low quality child care may be disruptions at work, including logistical problems or breakdowns in child care and the psychological interruptions caused by worrying about children's welfare while in care. Because child care disruptions are linked to negative psychological and work outcomes (Foster, 2003), the reduction of childcare disruptions is in the best interest of both parents and their employing organizations. However, the factors that may limit the frequency and severity of child care disruptions and negative outcomes have only begun to be investigated. Given the potential negative effects of these disruptions on parents' well-being and productivity, it is critical for researchers and practitioners to examine elements of the workplace that may enable parents to cope with child care disruptions.

This research will explore the effectiveness of various organizational efforts to support working parents. In particular, it is expected that the extent to which organizations offer formal child-focused programs will be related to the accessibility of quality child care and the associated child care disruptions. It is further expected that the informal workplace climate for families, as manifested by the supportiveness of supervisors and co-workers, will limit the negative effects of disruptions on attitudes and behaviors. This research may provide empirically based guidance to parents, organizations, and policy-makers regarding the effective utilization of child care.

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Poster # 24

**Child Care and Children With Special Needs:
Challenges for Low-Income Families**

Helen Ward, Lisa Morris, Julie Atkins, and Angela Herrick

Low-income families with children with special needs face unique challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. Faced with the difficult task of finding suitable child care for their child with special needs, many parents are nevertheless forced by economic necessity to join the workforce. Complicating matters is the task of accessing the special therapeutic services their children need; services which are often not coordinated with the child care system and not organized in a way that supports employment.

We have conducted a mixed method study in Maine involving qualitative research with low-income families with at least one child age 0 to 6 (focus groups and in-depth interviews) to learn about their experiences with accessing child care, accessing early intervention/preschool special education services and balancing work with meeting the special needs of their child.

Based on that exploratory phase of our study, we conducted a field study in three communities in Maine involving interviews with TANF case managers, case managers from multi-barrier agencies, child care providers, child care R&R staff, and specialists providing early intervention/preschool special education services under Part C and Part B of IDEA. Data collected from this qualitative research informed the design of our quantitative research which consisted of a statewide mail-in survey of child care providers and a phone survey of parents as well as analysis of data on families with children with special needs drawn from the NLSY and the NSAF. The poster will present findings from this research.

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Poster # 25

**Children at Risk in the Child Welfare System:
Collaborations To Promote School Readiness**

Helen Ward, Sun Young Yoon, and Erin Oldham

The purpose of “Children at Risk in the Child Welfare System: Collaborations To Promote School Readiness” is to determine the degree to which the state child welfare agencies are promoting the school readiness of children in the child welfare system age 0 to 5 years by developing effective collaborations with early intervention/preschool special education services under IDEA and quality early care and education programs. This mixed-method, exploratory project is in its first year and the poster will present the study design for Years 1–3, including methods, sample, and data collection and analysis procedures.

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**The Rates, Effects, and Mechanisms of Stability in
Non-Maternal Child Care Arrangements From 3 to 6 Years of Age**

Henry Tran and Marsha Weinraub

Previous research has found negative links between unstable child care and a number of preschool child outcomes, including teacher attachment security, aggression, withdrawal behavior, school adjustment, and social competence with peers. Thus, research suggests that preschool children's stability of child care has important implications for their developmental outcomes. However, unresolved are issues related to whether any discernable consistent patterns exist between the various measures of stability and different child outcomes (e.g., are problems associated with aggression and withdrawal behaviors linked to primary teacher changes or are these problem behaviors linked to other measures of stability as well?), and specific mechanisms (i.e., mediating processes) linking stability to children's outcomes.

The purpose of the current study is (1) to explore the relations between several stability measures—including length of time in the same arrangement, frequency of arrangement and caregiver changes, use of multiple concurrent arrangements over time, and staff turnover—and children's school readiness (academic achievement, language and cognitive development) and adjustment behavior (internalizing and externalizing, socio-emotional development), and (2) examine the potential mediating influence of children's attachment relationships on links between child care stability and children's outcomes.

Using data from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, the study focuses on preschool children ages 3 to 6 years of age from poor (i.e., income-to-needs ratio < 1 of federal poverty income guidelines) and non-poor families. Multivariate regression techniques are used to examine the effects of stability on school readiness and adjustment behavior outcomes. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test the quality of child-caregiver attachment relationships as a potential mediating pathway from stability to child outcomes.

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Poster # 27

Working Mothers, Child Care Usage, and the Community Context

Lynda L. Laughlin

The communities in which many of us live serve as unique spaces. While a community or neighborhood primarily serves as a physical location, individuals also derive their knowledge and make choices based on the relationships they develop and the services available to them. For women with children, regardless of their social status, one's community plays a significant role in the construction of economic and social choices. Women must construct a path to school, work, and child care. However, the choices available to women, especially mothers, in urban areas have largely been limited. Using a sociological framework, I argue that we can better understand the types of child care mothers use while they work by examining how families are embedded within a local community of paid caregivers, neighbors, friends, and kin.

This project uses data from The Philadelphia Survey of Child Care and Work and licensed child care data from the city of Philadelphia to answer the following questions: (1) How does is the supply of licensed child care center slots distributed across the city of Philadelphia? (2) How does a mother's proximity to child care center slots influence her use of formal child care or kith & kin care? And (3) What social and economic factors contribute to our understanding of the types of child care mothers use while they work?

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Poster # 28

The Devolution of Subsidized Child Care in Texas and Its Relation to Provider Turnover: How long does a typical provider survive in the child care business?

Deanna Schexnayder

Most child development experts agree that excessive turnover among primary child care arrangements can impede children from building lasting bonds with their caregivers, and that this instability can have negative implications for their healthy development. While some of the turnover in child care arrangements is the result of family decisions or other external factors, some of it is caused by providers quitting the business of child care. Of the many factors that can influence how long providers stay in business, the policies of the child care subsidy system may have a significant role, particularly the policy regarding maximum reimbursement rates for care. The recent devolution of Texas child care subsidy policy-making to 28 local workforce boards has created a natural experiment with 28 different environments in which this question can be addressed.

In this poster, we estimate the typical “lifetimes” (the average length of time in business) of various types of regulated child care providers and perform regression analyses to see which factors are associated with provider turnover. The analysis is carried out at the provider level using event history analysis, and individual observations are provider spells. The independent variables include a combination of local child care policy, local child care market rate data, economic environment measures, local child care board governance, composition, and dynamics, and provider-level measures (e.g., size, years in business, age ranges cared for, etc.). Some of the policy variables are interacted with a measure of the share of the market that subsidies account for (local market penetration) in order to accurately represent the ability of subsidy policy to influence local child care businesses.

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An Interdisciplinary Approach to Research on Subsidized Child Care: Econometric Models That Draw on Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

Deanna Schexnayder

In the late 1990s state of Texas devolved the management of its child care subsidy system and responsibility for child care policies to 28 workforce boards. This project studies how the differences in policy decisions, local resources, and size of the populations served, among other variables, are related to variations in child, family, and market outcomes. An interdisciplinary team draws on methods from sociology, economics, and anthropology to explore the relationships among policy variations, social and economic contexts, and outcomes. This poster outlines the methods for data collection and analysis that support the ongoing econometric modeling, including:

- Policy analysis that tracks policy development at the state level and among the 28 Boards
- State agency data on child care budgeting and performance for each of the 28 Boards
- Administrative data on child care participation patterns and family outcomes in each of the Board areas
- Interview data from staff at each of the 28 Boards delineating their perceptions of the policy process

The poster discusses the value, as well as the difficulties of incorporating each type of data into the regression equations used for this analysis, and provides examples of issues that have arisen as we have addressed their incorporation.

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Poster # 30

Child Care Providers and the Subsidy System

Gina Adams and Monica Rohacek

This poster highlights ongoing research by the Urban Institute that examines relationships between child care providers and the subsidy system in five counties/four states. Our primary research questions are: (1) what are the characteristics of child care providers, and do they differ by subsidy status; (2) what are the characteristics of the subsidy program, policies, and implementation, and how do the characteristics affect providers; and (3) what is the interplay between subsidy policies and practices, how they affect providers, and who participates in the subsidy system?

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data collection consisted of a telephone survey of over 900 centers and regulated family child care providers, covering a broad range of topics (including organizational characteristics, staffing characteristics, measures thought to be associated with quality, and subsidy experiences and perceptions). Qualitative data focused on subsidy system policies, practices, and experiences, and consisted of interviews with state/local subsidy administrators and key experts, focus groups with child care providers (both subsidized and non-subsidized) and caseworkers, and reviews of relevant policy documents.

Our analyses include the following:

- survey data to describe provider characteristics and care environments (overall and by subsidy status);
- qualitative and quantitative data on subsidy policies and practices that can affect providers;
- blended qualitative and quantitative analyses exploring the relationship between subsidy policies and provider participation in the subsidy system
- analyses of areas of special interest, including faith-based providers, unregulated providers, and information on the development of prekindergarten initiatives.

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Poster # 31

**Understanding Quality in Context: Child Care Providers,
Markets, Communities and Policy**

Gina Adams and Monica Rohacek

This poster highlights newly funded research that examines the role of contextual factors in shaping the quality of individual child care providers. This project explores how various factors—including program/provider characteristics, local child care market/community factors, and child care/early education policies—shape provider decisions on accessing and using resources. This study will also examine whether these factors play out differently for providers serving children in the subsidy system. This information will help policymakers more effectively design and target policies to help providers support children’s well-being and will inform future research. This study will occur in two phases. Phase I builds upon data from UI’s study on child care providers and the subsidy system in five sites, which involves a survey of over 900 providers and qualitative data (including focus groups and key informant interviews) on subsidy system policies and implementation practices. We will combine these data with additional qualitative and quantitative data on contextual factors to answer two research questions:

- (1) What provider, market, community, and policy factors are related to child care quality? What is their relative importance?
- (2) Do factors shaping quality and their importance differ for providers receiving subsidies?

Phase II builds upon Phase I to address a third research question:

- (3) How do providers make decisions on the acquisition/use of resources that can affect quality? What is the role of provider, market, community, and policy factors in this process?

During Phase II, researchers will conduct interviews and quality observations with centers and homes in each site.

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Poster # 32

Re(Entry) to Paid Employment: The Role of Child Care Subsidies

Lucy P. Jordan

Women's employment following childbirth depends, in part, on the cost and quality of available child care arrangements. High cost and lower perceived quality depress employment, particularly for lower-skilled women, who typically spend a larger proportion of their earnings on child care than do women with higher skills and education. One policy tool, child care subsidies, may shorten the time between the birth of a child and the entry to employment among lower-skilled mothers by (1) reducing the costs of employment relative to earnings and (2) facilitating stable child care arrangements.

Using a nationally representative data set, The Fragile Families and Well-Being Study, and a unique data set of local policy indicators, this research tests the hypothesis that child care subsidies cause new mothers to enter the labor force more expeditiously. It is predicted that the receipt of subsidies and the timing of entry to paid employment will vary with child care policies, after controlling for individual and family characteristics that influence the benefits and costs of subsidy use and of paid employment relative to home production (i.e., caregiving) work.

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Poster # 33

New England Cost and Quality Studies

**Nancy L. Marshall, Wendy Wagner Robeson,
Joanne Roberts, Cindy Creps & Nancy R. Burstein
with
Frederic B. Glantz, Betsy Squibb, Julie Dennehy, Sue Y. Wang, Nancy Keefe & Steve Barnett**

**Wellesley Centers for Women, Abt Associates Inc.,
Muskie Institute of the University of Southern Maine, and University of Maine, Farmington**

The New England Cost and Quality Studies are a series of studies in two New England states, Massachusetts and Maine. The Studies each addressed research questions about the quality of ECE and the costs of providing quality ECE. Cost and Quality Studies were conducted of full-day, year-round center-based programs serving preschoolers (Massachusetts and Maine), centers serving infants and toddlers (Massachusetts), family child care providers (Massachusetts and Maine), and public school-based preschool programs (Massachusetts). The Studies provide information on the quality of ECE provided in each setting, the relationship between regulatable features (ratios, group size, teacher/provider qualifications) and the quality of observed interactions between teachers/providers and children, the mix of revenue sources, major expense categories, and the relationship between quality and costs.

Across the Studies, teacher/provider education is a consistent predictor of the quality of ECE provided in each setting. The proportion of programs that provided ECE that meet accepted standards in the field varied by sector, consistent with variations in teacher/provider qualifications and in ratios and group sizes in each sector. In most settings, low-income children were less likely to receive the quality of ECE necessary to ensure that they are ready for formal schooling.

Higher quality ECE cost more than lower quality ECE in all settings. Labor was the single largest cost in all settings. The findings on the relations among labor, quality and costs support the importance of efforts to raise the education levels of teachers and providers, while improving working conditions and maintaining ratios and group sizes.

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Poster # 34

**Massachusetts Early Care and Education
and School Readiness Study**

Wendy Wagner Robeson and Joanne Roberts

This study is exploring the relation between the characteristics of early care and education (in both infant and preschool classrooms) and children's school readiness, and the impact of the hours of center-based care on the school readiness skills of children. Two samples of children are included. One sample of 236 children followed since infancy (ACF grant #90YE0048 Family Income, Infant Child Care and Child Development) and second sample of 160 low-income children recruited during the preschool year before kindergarten. A developmental-ecological conceptual framework is being employed which considers the influence of ecological contexts on children's developmental trajectories.

Five domains of school readiness will be assessed: health and physical development, social and emotional development; approaches to learning; language development and communication; and cognition and general knowledge.

Findings will be useful to decision makers in crafting effective child care policies and strategies. The study will also yield findings about the varying impact of the hours of early care and education on children's school readiness, and the specific factors in both infant and preschool classrooms that promote children's school readiness.

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Family Income, Infant Child Care and Child Development—Year 4

Wendy Wagner Robeson and Joanne Roberts

This study is in its fourth year. It has been following 236 infants and their families since they were enrolled in center-based care in Massachusetts as infants. Links that have been explored include poverty; key family characteristics including parental employment and parenting; quality and cost of child care; family outcomes; and infant development, including language and social development at 12, 24, and 36 months of age.

This study is part of a larger program addressing important issues of quality and cost in early care and education. The study addresses the relationship over time among the quality of center-based infant child care, family income, family outcomes, and child development. Data on the process and structural quality of the center-based care the infants were collected in the first year. In that first year and each year after, parents were sent a survey that included questions about their household, employment and education, depression, work-family strains, parenting, use and cost of child care, income and the age-appropriate ASQ-SE, CDI or other questions about language and literacy. Originally there were 240 families in the study and presently there are 236. The families are now being recruited for the Massachusetts Early Care and Education and School Readiness Study.

The results of the study will provide information that can inform policy and program choices at the state and local levels including identifying aspects of structural and process quality that are linked to healthy developmental outcomes for young children and elaborating the role of child care cost and quality in family functioning.

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Poster # 36

**Research-Based Indicators for a Quality Rating System:
The Numbers Have It**

**Alan Sweet & Kath McGurk—Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development
Diane Adams, Jason Bierbrauer, Dave Edie, David Riley, and Mary Roach—Wisconsin Child Care
Research Partnership**

This poster illustrates the numerous administrative studies, research papers, and reports developed as part of the Wisconsin Child Care Data Sharing and Capacity grant, within the context of the state’s new child care Quality Rating System (QRS). These studies were made possible only after accomplishing this project’s first goal: Merging child care provider data from the subsidy system (8,000 providers and 52,000 children), with data from state licensing (10,500 programs and providers), a file of accredited providers, and Child and Adult Care Food Program data.

Collaboration between university-based research and the state’s practical application has led to implementation of key components of a statewide QRS that uses “research-based” indicators of quality, informed by state policy. These components include: regulatory compliance (an examination of state licensing enforcement actions over a 1-year period and analyses of licenser citations); national accreditation data over a 3-year period, showing fluctuations in accreditation; child care rates (using a new technique to compare regional and county rates with the current system of the annual rate survey); and workforce studies over a 20-year period, which provide a foundation for measuring the qualifications of the child care workforce in the QRS. These successes were made possible through the research and data capacity grants awarded by the Child Care Bureau.

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