

**Child Care Policy Research Consortium Annual Meeting
Renaissance Washington, D.C. Hotel
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SESSION 19

Focus on the Workforce/Providers: What should the next generation of research look like from the perspective of market structure, professional development, and provider outcomes?

What information about the supply of child care and characteristics of the early childhood workforce is most critically needed? What new research and routine data collection will be needed to provide the answers? What methodologies and models are now available or emerging? Where do the information needs of policymakers, providers, and parents intersect around issues of child care quality and supply? How can issues related to type of care setting, definitions and dynamics of quality, caregiver skill and professional development, quality improvement activities, and outcomes for children and families be effectively examined from multiple perspectives? How can state data and research capacity be strengthened in this area?

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Objectives

- State concerns
- Redo our list based on what States had to say
- Work into actionable proposals

First Round

- Quality in kith and kin care
- Defining professional development: Who is in these roles? Wages/turnover?
- Describing educational levels; threshold for quality and alternative paths for those who can't reach those levels
- Descriptive data about qualifications; relationships between compensation and education
- Who is the workforce (conceptually)—who's in, who's out, how many hours of day; levels of training and education for whom, what dollars to recruit and retain folks; what's the labor market; what can we learn from comparable work sectors; **how are we going to define** different avenues for provider training, e.g., networks?

- Salary incentives: How can they improve qualifications and reduce turnover? e.g., test bold strategies
- Setting of market rates in communities that are dominated by the subsidy program; poor neighborhoods end up with lower rates—does this affect access to quality?
- What types of training for FFN; what do we expect FFN to provide as outcomes for children—should not expect the same things from them as other providers
- Supports for FFN and other home-based providers; supports are more important for FFN than training; **what do you expect and how do you measure it?**
- Characteristics of providers who care for children with different characteristics, and relationship with parents' choice
- What bundles of supports improve quality: e.g., input and output?
- How do workforce characteristics affect program quality (e.g., teachers, directors)?
- Longitudinal study that follows providers through education and training levels; e.g., providers who went through CDA program or other tracks and test quality at each level
- Nomenclature: when do we start calling a provider a teacher? Wages and turnover, rural issues, and the biggest issue—systems work. When are we going to find out that we're training lots of people who leave the field?
- More theoretical work: theories of change of different provider characteristics and training; analysis of the training system to understand its comprehensiveness and depth; expand our focus into school-age settings.
- Defining training—when we look at different States we can compare offerings; supports and assets: e.g., Midwest research describes 14 assets, but what about providing access to those assets for different providers to see if the assets make a difference in an intervention kind of way?
- Declines in education, increases in turnover in the workforce; linking why levels of education have declined—market forces, quality set-asides—or other red flag issues; State samples building picture of workforce (9 States) and also tracking quality indicators; who are we looking at in workforce if we have such high turnover (who is staying and who is leaving and what does educational level mean?
- What about the churning of the workforce? What factors affect churn? And what are the implications for subsidy system?
- Let's get everyone registered, so we can track them over time; and develop a bread basket—to identify red flags.
- Need to identify subdimensions for quality (beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors).

Discussion

- Use career registry to track folks
- Hard to track providers
- In MN, are having difficulties tracking programs that have closed. Why are centers closing?

- One of our problems is a function of this field—putting everyone together as a provider; need to make some practical decisions; focus on specific providers or specific areas.
- Think about the research areas we want to focus on.
- Don't know what is good and bad turnover.
- Need to broaden turnover to other fields.
- Understanding who's staying and who's leaving will help sharpen States' decisions about where to target funding.
- Understand market forces that affect workforce.

Four or five workforce “buckets”

- Describe workforce: conceptual work: who's in the workforce, expectations and types of kids they serve
- In-depth longitudinal studies that follow providers overtime
- Theories of change—systems, economic models
- Defining characteristics of quality
- Tracking change over time, including representation and a bread basket
- Resources, wages—inputs
- Bang for the buck—need to clarify expectations for quality in each setting—is it going to be a teaching-focused quality or something broader?

Considerations for Questions

- How can we get the most “bang for our buck” in terms of quality improvement? What do we need to know?
- States will be documenting results; how about resources for helping them evaluate their interventions?
- States are coming up with pre-k standards. Who does that include? Should we figure out a system in which we figure out what we want for children?
- With CCDF reauthorization, five activities will be exempted from evaluation. In WA; concerned about spending dollars on monitoring and licensing?

Filling Buckets—Research Action:

Describing/Defining (Conceptual)

- Working group: SEED meeting led to thinking about R&Rs, NAEYC, researchers, labor; will have to stop talking and do some working
- Meta-analysis
- Should look at other fields (education)—for lessons learned
- Literature review of how other fields have done this
- Pull together research partnerships and State caps folks to review their approaches
- Include what 17 States are doing

How To Do It

- Listserv
- Need to create a work plan—types of summaries and other work—as a basis for developing the common definitions

- Need to include field and federal government
- Workgroup for work plan: Toni, Rick, Carla, Diane, Marty, Kathy, Helen, Chris
- Workgroup should identify need for additional funding and availability of resources.

Longitudinal Studies

- Multi-method and multi-market (ethnographic, quantitative)
- Partner with CCW and other researchers outside of the CCB.
- Diversity major dimension
- Look to TEACH programs as basis for research.

Theoretical Models of Change (TOC)

- Bundle TOCS for specific sectors
- Case studies of communities
- Include economists

Measures of Quality

- Focus on what happens in child care that affects children's development.
- Make distinction between program and caregiver and include them in measures.
- Need to agree how to measure child outcomes before; address issue of child care quality.
- Use cumulative measure of quality to assess quality across child care that a single child uses (follow the child).

Overtime

- Need standard data collected on a regular basis.
- Need databases with common definitions.
- Identify markers of concerns.
- Need support and TA around building databases and how to fund and staff databases; e.g., R&Rs.
- Work across systems to create database—reports to Feds, answers State questions, links to child outcomes.
- States need understanding of how to cut across systems as well.
- Need representative samples until we can create these databases.
- Maybe focus on low-income children.

Resources (Systems)

- Need qualitative neighborhood studies to understand need for resources, expectations, other factors.
- To change systems, need resources and expectations—what are expectations for workforce, e.g., parents? Other stakeholders?
- Need to look at capacity for training and professional development, e.g., higher education and R&Rs that provide these services.

- States can use some of their CCDF funds to fund children in pre-k; starting to use more and more funds for pre-k; will affect type of care that will be supported through subsidies and the choices that parents make; if can't or don't want to use pre-k because of employment schedules, location.
- Need combination of resources.

Bang for The Buck

- Examine legislation for requirements for evaluation.
- Bring States together to help them accomplish this task—evaluate.
- Convene a group to look at draft legislation.
- Encourage States to look at implementation initially and then outcomes.
- Need to do some of the work around common core to help States with required evaluations; should be a priority if legislation is enacted.
- Convene a group of State folks to provide advice about how to do evaluation.
- Provide an opportunity for State caps and research partnerships to showcase findings. Tackle region as an opportunity. State administrators get together in regions. Use as a context to communicate with administrators about what research is ongoing and how it can be informative.

