CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

CCEEPRC Research Collaboratives
2022-2023 | Cohort 1

Since 1995, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation has supported the Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC). The goal of CCEEPRC is to foster connection among current and former research partners funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to explore questions related to child care and early education policy research. CCEEPRC has historically held an annual in-person meeting in Washington, DC to bring together research teams, state and local partners, and federal policymakers to maximize what we learn from ACF-sponsored research and to strengthen bridges between research and child care and early education policies.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, CCEEPRC's activities have shifted in format and frequency—and newly developed Research Collaboratives were launched in 2022. The Research Collaboratives were designed to create opportunities for our vast and diverse CCEEPRC membership to connect within the virtual landscape of our world in 2022-2023. As such, smaller, topically focused, intimate working groups were developed to support monthly connections across project teams and propel our work forward.

Structure of 2022-2023 Research Collaboratives:

- CCEEPRC members were invited to join 1 of 6 topically focused Research Collaboratives to meet monthly for facilitated discussion.
- The focus of each Research Collaborative was developed based on policy research priorities within our ACF program offices and further shaped by the facilitator and Research Collaborative members.
- One subject matter expert from within our CCEEPRC membership was invited to serve as a facilitator for each of the Research Collaboratives. Facilitators were selected based on their aligned subject matter expertise and with an intention to represent the diverse perspectives, roles, and organizations that are represented by our CCEEPRC membership.
- More than 100 CCEEPRC members responded to this invitation, including researchers, state agency representatives, nonprofit policy research collaborators, and federal staff.

Content and Facilitation of 2022-2023 Research Collaboratives:

Targeted Communities, led by Stephanie Curenton, Ph.D. Areas or populations that have been historically disenfranchised, that face challenges in accessing publicly funded child care and early education programs. These communities may be tribes, territories, migrant, rural, or in areas where language may limit participation in federal programming. Discussions included insights and suggestions about the ways in which the quality definition and measures need to be updated and expanded. Some of the things that we have not articulated are the "how" or the "who" would be important in leading the efforts around these new measures.

Data Systems and Application, led by Yoonsook Ha, Ph.D. This Research Collaborative focused on building and utilizing databases and systems that are "owned" and operated through public state

agencies/partners, which do or do not interface with federal systems or across programs. Discussion topics included:

- Opportunities for integrating provider-level data
- Cataloging of integrated data systems across the states
- Integrating innovative methodologies to inform policy and practices and the data systems that enable such methods (e.g., forecast and project, inferential).

Workforce Development and Quality Improvement, led by April Crawford, Ph.D. Discussions focused on professional development, technical assistance, and QRIS/QIS, with focus on initiatives designed to improve and strengthen services to support positive child and family outcomes. This Research Collaborative focused on Quality Improvement related aspects of workforce and program improvement. Their goal was to make strong connections between participation in Quality Improvement activities and career pathways.

Sustaining the Early Childhood Workforce: Growing, Thriving, and Leading, led by Anne Douglass, Ph.D. The focus was on strategies and policies to build and sustain the early care and education workforce including equity, compensation, leadership and professional development, career pathways and pipelines, working conditions and professional recognition. This Research Collaborative had a specific focus on an asset and equity lens on the strengths and opportunities within the ECE workforce (who the workforce is, career pathways, how it thrives and leads), defining a vision for a thriving early childhood education workforce.

Supply Building and Mapping, led by Herman Knopf, Ph.D. This Research Collaborative focused on understanding and increasing availability and affordability of child care. Discussions focused on families' needs and demand for care and the extent to which supply aligns with demand. Examining access, affordability and quality of care that aligns with family choice by family demographics was critical to this group's work.

Cost of Quality, led by Pia Caronongan, Ph.D. This RC focuses on issues and challenges related to the measurement and analysis of the costs of quality early care and education programming: including innovations, best practices, and current evidence about the cost-quality relationship.

Sessions at CCEEPRC 2023:

The opportunity to engage with colleagues across projects and organizations resulted in meaningful connections throughout the 2022-2023 Research Collaborative season and created the foundation for deep, enriching, and well-coordinated sessions for the CCEEPRC 2023 in-person meeting. Outlined below are the many conversations at the CCEEPRC 2023 in-person meeting that grew out of discussions that took place during the first Cohort of Research Collaboratives. All of the CCEEPRC 2023 in-person meeting materials, as well as all past CCEEPRC meetings are archived on Research Connections.

Targeted Communities, led by Stephanie Curenton, Ph.D.

- *Breakout Session C4:* Collaboratively Constructing a Multidimensional Model for Considering Quality

- *Breakout Session C5:* Approaches to Incorporating Parent and Provider Perspectives in Child Care and Development Fund Policy Research
- *Breakout Session E1:* Looking at Quality Through Different Lens: Variations in the Conceptualization of Quality

Early Childhood Data Systems and Application, led by Yoonsook Ha, Ph.D.
- *Breakout Session C3:* State Early Childhood Integrated Data System: System Building and Utilization
- *Breakout Session D4:* Using State Child Care and Early Education Workforce Data to Advance Process Implementation and Evaluation in Early Care and Education
- *Breakout Session E4:* Supporting Data-Driven, Family-Centered Child Care and Early Education Improvements Through Maps

Workforce Development and Quality Improvement, led by April Crawford, Ph.D.
- *Breakout Session B2:* Defining and Aligning Workforce Development and Quality Improvement Efforts: Supporting Equitable Child Care and Early Education Workforce Outcomes
- *Breakout Session C6:* Applying Evidence-Based Quality Improvement Approaches to More Equitably Strengthen Knowledge and Skills of the Child Care and Early Education Workforce
- *Breakout Session D6:* Implementation and Testing of Coordinated Workforce Development and Quality Improvement Initiatives: Supporting Equitable Child Care and Early Education Workforce Outcomes

Sustaining the Early Childhood Workforce: Growing, Thriving, and Leading, led by Anne Douglass, Ph.D.
- *Plenary Session 3:* The Early Care and Education Workforce: Research that Elevates Early Educator Strengths and Assets
- *Breakout Session A1:* What Do We Know About Leadership in Early Care and Education?
- *Breakout Session B1:* The Child Care and Early Education Workforce: A Descriptive Portrait

Child Care Access: Social, Economic, and Geographic factors, led by Herman Knopf, Ph.D.
- *Breakout Session A2:* Measuring Child Care Access: Taking Stock and Ideating for the Future
- *Breakout Session D2:* Child Care Access: Market Failure or Priority Failure?
- *Breakout Session E2:* Challenges and Opportunities in Studying Child Care and Development Fund Policy Levers' Effects on Early Care and Education Access

Cost of Quality in Early Care and Education, led by Pia Caronongan, Ph.D.
- *Plenary Session 1:* Understanding Costs of Early Care Education: Key Developments and Next Steps for the Field
- *Breakout Session A6:* Cost Studies in Child Care and Early Education: Existing Guidance, Best Practices, and Resources Needed
- *Breakout Session E3:* Cost Modeling for Child Care Policies: What Data Are Needed and How Can States Deliver?

Conclusion

We are grateful for the thoughtful planning and guidance from our six facilitators and each of the more than 100 individuals from our CCEEPRC community that made the work of the 2022-2023 Research

Collaboratives so meaningful. Each Research Collaborative came together around key questions within their topics and discussed the development of frameworks and visuals to guide research in key areas, critical questions within their topical areas, book proposals, data briefs and more. While the 2022-2023 Research Collaboratives have ended, some members are continuing to pursue these activities as unofficial groups.

Given the positive reception of the 2022-2023 Research Collaboratives, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation is planning a new cohort of Research Collaboratives for CCEEPRC members to launch in spring 2024. The 2024-2025 Research Collaboratives will provide opportunity for connection until the CCEEPRC 2025 in-person meeting anticipated for Summer 2025.