A Message From Linda K. Smith

Last month I had the opportunity to be part of the Early Childhood Development in Indian Country Conference hosted by the Center for Indian Country Development at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. As some of you might know, I was born and raised on the Flathead Indian Reservation and volunteered in one of the first Head Start programs established there. My children spent their earliest years on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. Many of the life experiences from those years have stayed with me all my life and influence my work today.

Tribal communities have the capacity and a great desire to build a strong future for their people. There are great strengths in the community—such as culture, language, family, and resilience—that can help all children thrive. High-quality early childhood development programs have the potential to ensure that our youngest learners enter school healthy, prepared to excel, and infused with a love for learning; they can transform a community.

The resiliency and incredible strength that Tribal communities have shown over the many decades since colonization show that they are an enduring people who can and will thrive. The traumas they have experienced as a people have been unthinkable—the prohibition of language, spiritual practices, and ceremonies; relocation from ancestral lands; the disruption or destruction of traditional economies and agricultural practices; forced assimilation; and the removal of children to boarding schools. We assume the important responsibility of trying to right those wrongs, and in our work here at the Office of Early Childhood Development, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), we take that responsibility seriously.

During the conference I had the chance to talk about our work here at ACF, including the recent increases in child care funds, the Tribal Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships, the Tribal Early Learning Initiative, our expanded research initiatives, and language revitalization. As you will see in this newsletter, we are pleased to highlight the recent award of $13 million in grants to Tribal communities across the Nation to support their early childhood home visiting services. The Tribal Home Visiting Program supports the development of happy, healthy, and successful American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and families through a coordinated home visiting strategy. A new brief, Cultural Enrichments, Enhancements, and Adaptations of Tribal Home Visiting Programs, which was also highlighted, discusses the importance of cultural enrichments and provides examples from Tribal Home Visiting grantees.

Have you been to our Web site recently?
Learn more about the Office of Early Childhood Development:
Continued from page 1

Much has been done, but so much more is needed. During a panel discussion at the conference, a child care director described a recent situation on his reservation. The Head Start children were going on a field trip to a nearby zoo. This director asked if the child care children could go along and was told no; only Head Start children could go, and the standards wouldn’t allow it. So the Head Start bus took off for the zoo while the child care children looked on through the fence. As many of you know, no such standard exists. Somehow, in an attempt to follow the rules, this program became needlessly restrictive. Yes, there would need to be cost allocation, but that task is easily accomplished. So, what this situation told me was that despite the progress made over the last few years in trying to align the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care, we still have a ways to go.

The question is this. How can we in Washington, DC, ensure that situations such as the one described do not reoccur? First, we know you cannot regulate human responses, so the answer is not more regulations. The real question is how to change human responses. There are those who approach challenges with a “can-do” or “let’s-figure-this-out” attitude, and there are those who do not seek clarification about existing regulations because it is easier not to or they are truly misinformed. In our work ahead to align these programs, individual issues, such as a field trip to the zoo, will need to be resolved. That resolution will only happen on a case-by-case basis and will require people to speak up when the answers don’t pass the common-sense test.

As we move forward, the support and interest of the Federal Reserve “Early Childhood Development in Indian Country” initiative can shine a spotlight on the needs of our AI/AN communities. As this Administration departs, it is my sincerest hope that we have merely set the stage for a bigger effort to support our AI/AN communities—an effort that builds on the unique strengths of the Native American people and their culture and one that we all can be proud of.

Again, much has been done, but so much more is needed.

Linda K. Smith
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Early Childhood Development, ACF
New Tribal Home Visiting Grants Awarded

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, awarded $13 million in grants to Tribal communities across the Nation to support their early childhood home visiting services. The awards go to Tribal entities for the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.

Through the Tribal Home Visiting Program, ACF funds Tribes, Tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations to implement high-quality, culturally relevant, and evidence-based home visiting programs that support the development of healthy, happy, and successful American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children, families, and communities.

Seventeen cooperative agreements totaling $8.8 million were awarded to grantees to support Tribal communities to sustain or expand home visiting services. Two new cooperative agreements totaling $600,000 were awarded to grantees to support the development and implementation of new home visiting services in AI/AN communities.

The 19 New Tribal Home Visiting Grantees

- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Durant, Oklahoma ($590,000)
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, Montana ($450,000)
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Anchorage, Alaska ($350,000)
- Crow Creek Tribal Schools, Stephan, South Dakota ($250,000)
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee, North Carolina ($625,000)
- Lake County Tribal Health Consortium, Lakeport, California ($512,000)
- Native American Community Health Center, Inc., Phoenix, Arizona ($500,000)
- Native American Health Center, Inc., Oakland, California ($565,000)
- Native American Professional Parent Resources, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico ($670,000)
- Navajo Nation, Window Rock, Arizona ($350,000)
- Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, Kingston, Washington ($425,000)
- Pueblo of San Felipe, San Felipe, New Mexico ($336,000)
- Riverside-San Bernardino County Indian Health, Inc., Grand Terrace, California ($750,000)
- South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency, Shelton, Washington ($550,000)
- Southcentral Foundation, Anchorage, Alaska ($775,000)
- Taos Pueblo Central Management Systems, Taos, New Mexico ($325,000)
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, Belcourt, North Dakota ($282,000)
- United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Seattle, Washington ($540,000)
- White Earth Band of Chippewa Indians, Ogemaw, Minnesota ($560,000)

“These awards represent our continued support to Tribal communities to respond to the diverse needs of children and families in communities at risk,” remarked Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, ACF. “Through grants like Tribal Home Visiting, Tribal communities have the opportunity to develop and maintain strong programs that deliver much needed services to families and reflect the values, culture, and traditions of their community.”

Cultural Enrichments, Enhancements, and Adaptations of Tribal Home Visiting Programs

The Tribal Home Visiting Program is pleased to release the issue brief, Cultural Enrichments, Enhancements, and Adaptations of Tribal Home Visiting Programs. This issue brief describes the various ways that Tribal home visiting programs have integrated cultural approaches into their implementation of evidence-based home visiting programs. The brief discusses the importance of cultural enrichments and provides examples from Tribal home visiting grantees.

To read the brief and to learn more about integrating home visiting into a cultural context, visit the Tribal Home Visiting Program page on ACF’s Web site.

Continued on page 4
Continued from page 3

Quick Facts

Since 2010 ACF and its partner, the Health Resources and Services Administration, have administered the Federal Home Visiting program, including the Tribal Home Visiting Program.

The Tribal Home Visiting Program supports the development of happy, healthy, and successful AI/AN children and families through a coordinated home visiting strategy that addresses critical maternal and child health, early learning development, family support, and child abuse and neglect prevention needs.

With $68.3 million awarded to date, the Tribal MIECHV program has seen an unprecedented expansion of high-quality, culturally relevant, evidence-based home visiting services for vulnerable AI/AN families and children. In FY 2015 grantees provided nearly 18,000 home visits to 1,800 adult enrollees and more than 1,700 index children.

For more information about the Tribal Home Visiting Program, visit this Web site.

Child Care Across America

There are more than 11 million children in some form of nonparental child care each week. They spend an average of 39 hours per week in care. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program is our largest Federal support program for families who need assistance paying for child care. Over 1.4 million children from nearly 853,000 families are supported by CCDF program dollars every month. Nationwide, almost 370,000 child care providers serve participating children. You can learn more about the CCDF program and the new policies by visiting this Web page.

To learn more about the CCDF program and child care in your State, click on this map (see below) of the United States.

View the national profile.
Research Connections

Research Connections regularly reviews its latest acquisitions and identifies reports and journal articles of high policy relevance.

Research Findings

What is the role of English versus Spanish vocabulary in predicting the English literacy skills of low-income Latino English-language learners?
What are the recent evaluation findings from Georgia’s Rising Pre-Kindergarten Summer Transition Program?
How does a job-embedded professional development initiative impact early childhood professionals?
How does the fidelity of implementation of an early-literacy intervention impact preschool children with disabilities in early childhood special education classrooms?
How did a statewide early childhood curriculum enhancement initiative at community colleges impact faculty and students?
What are professionals responding to, and learning from, in early childhood professional development programs?

Research Findings on Afterschool

What are the afterschool program experiences of children and families living in communities of concentrated poverty?
What is the current capacity of city afterschool systems to collect and use data to inform their decisions and system-building activities?

Policy Resources

How are families accessing child care using public transportation?
What are the financial costs of interrupting a career to care for one’s own child full time?
What are some emerging responses to the issues of child care supply and demand at parental, community, and State levels?

From the Office of Child Care

The Office of Child Care (OCC) awarded four new technical assistance projects that will support the work of OCC and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program grantees.

The National Center on Child Care Subsidy Innovation and Accountability (NCSIA) contract has been awarded to Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc. (WRMA), and will continue to support State and Territory CCDF administrators as they do the work of ensuring the integrity and accessibility of high-quality child care systems. The National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development (NCTECD) contract has been awarded to ICF International. The NCTECD team will work with Tribal CCDF grantees as they implement the new Tribal requirements of the CCDF Final Rule and continue their efforts to ensure strong early learning settings in Tribal communities. Both NCSIA and NCTECD will work closely with all Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System Partners in supporting strong early childhood systems and classrooms.

A contract for a new project to support child care monitoring efforts, Office of Child Care Onsite Monitoring and Oversight System, has also been awarded to WRMA. The team on the new project will work closely with OCC’s new oversight and accountability division to develop monitoring tools and a system to ensure the full implementation of the requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 and the new CCDF program regulations. Finally, OCC will work closely with the new National Center on Child Care Data and Reporting (NCDR). For this contract awarded to General Dynamics Information Technology, NCDR will support grantees in meeting reporting requirements and will work with OCC in considering new and innovative uses for child care data.

For further resources and information, visit the Office of Child Care Web site and Child Care Technical Assistance Web site.

STAM 2016

Materials Available

The Office of Child Care’s 2016 State and Territory CCDF Administrators Meeting (STAM 2016) hosted more than 400 attendees filled with excitement and interest in talking and learning about the new Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) regulations. Were you at STAM 2016 at the end of September? PowerPoint presentations have been posted on the STAM 2016 Web site. You can find them on this Web page.

The meeting included multiple plenary sessions as well as workshops and Open Space Meetings in four tracks: Access & Subsidy, Standards & Monitoring, Continuous Quality Improvement, and Strong Workforce.
From the Office of Head Start

This release of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) Showcase features a series of videos that examine highlights and major changes to the regulations and standards. Hear from Office of Head Start (OHS) leadership about how the new HSPPS apply to major Head Start program areas. OHS will be adding more to the Showcase over the course of the fall.

See the HSPPS Showcase portal at https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/showcase.

Explore Regulation Highlights by Topic

- Governance
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance
- Program Structure
- Education
- Health
- Family and Community Engagement
- Human Resources and Professional Development
- Program Structure
- Administrative and Fiscal Requirements


Spanish versions of the HSPPS factsheet and Q&A are posted on the HSPPS page of the Policy and Regulations portal: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii.

The Spanish version of the “Weaving Connections” resource is posted in the Español and Health portals.

Español portal page: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Espanol/Cinema/Presentaciones%20por%20v%C3%ADdeo/Untapizdeenlac.htm
Health portal page: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/health-services-management/hsac/WeavingConnections.htm

Early Childhood Workforce

The Center for American Progress released Underpaid and Unequal: Racial Wage Disparities in the Early Childhood Workforce. The report provides new analyses that poor compensation and benefits are felt most acutely by African-American women in the early childhood workforce.

“A comprehensive approach to child care reform is necessary to address chronically low wages and an underfunded child care system that ultimately hurts children, families, and the economy. The Center for American Progress recommends that the United States establish a High-Quality Child Care Tax Credit, which would provide low- and middle-income families with as much as $14,000 per year to purchase child care.” Read the full report at this Web site.

Bridging the Gap: Examining Child Care’s Intersection With Postsecondary Education and Workforce Development

The Urban Institute recently posted new resources from the Bridging the Gap project that examines how child care intersects with postsecondary education and workforce development for low-income parents. You can find more information on the project and the publications so far on this Web page.

Papers Highlighting Strategies To Meet the Child Care Needs of Parents Seeking Education and Training

There are two papers highlighting six concrete steps that programs can take to address the child care needs of low-income parents seeking education and training. A longer paper discusses these steps in depth and provides profiles of 17 programs and initiatives that are addressing these needs, and a shorter policy brief summarizes the six steps.


A Summary of Key Insights From a Meeting of Diverse Stakeholders

Parent, Family and Community Engagement Resource Catalog 2.0

You can use this catalog to find research, tools, guides, and multimedia resources. These materials will help you set ambitious, yet realistic goals. They also can help you develop meaningful and effective plans for your parent, family, and community engagement (PFCE) work.

The research-based Office of Head Start PFCE Framework places adult support of child development as a responsibility that is shared, across settings, and is continuous throughout a child’s life. This systematic and integrated approach leads to positive outcomes for children, families, and communities. It realizes that families have unique strengths, rooted in culture, as well as hopes and goals.

Relationships are essential to be successful with PFCE work. To that end, supporting positive parent-child relationships is important for all early childhood staff. Staff members are committed to fostering and nurturing ongoing, trusting, and respectful relationships with families that are positive and goal-oriented. Moreover, staff members assist families with resources that support their individual and family goals and aspirations (National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement).

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education released a Policy Statement on Family Engagement from the early years to the early grades. You can access it via this Web site.

Leg-Up Child Care Payment Assistance Pilot Launched in Tennessee

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) launched a new public-private partnership with Pellissippi State Community College (PSCC) called Leg-Up. The Leg-Up program offers child care payment assistance and mentoring to single parents while they continue their education or training to reach independence and self-sufficiency. The new partnership is part of the department’s “2G for Tennessee” initiative, which focuses on a two-generation approach to creating cycles of success and is aligned with Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55.

The program is slated to start in fall 2016 and will be administered by PSCC. The program’s goal is for 80 percent of participants to complete their education and training objectives through a combination of intensive case management and supportive services provided by a dedicated PSCC case manager. The selected participants will have access to quality child care placements within and around their community to assist them in completing their educational and professional goals.

In addition to meeting income guidelines, Leg-Up participants must be registered for at least six credit hours at the college, maintain a grade-point average of at least 2.0, and be working toward a certificate or associate degree at PSCC within 2 years. Participants will receive a grant to place their children in a licensed child care facility within Blount County. The parents also will meet weekly with a program case manager and will participate in mentoring partnerships with Blount County business leaders and professionals.

To learn more about TDHS’s two-generation strategy, 2G for Tennessee, visit this Web page.

Head Start Kids Grow Up, Strong and Successful

In recognition of the first comprehensive revision of Head Start Program Performance Standards since 1975, these Head Start graduates agreed to share their stories.

#HeadStartStrong: Head Start Kids Grown Up, Strong and Successful

What does Xyus, the 17-month-old son of a Northern Virginian single mom, have in common with Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation; Bonnie St. John, a Paralympic skier; or award-winning correspondent Steve Osunsami?

They’re all Head Start kids.

See the stories of Head Start kids by visiting this Web site.
The Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR) Child Care Services Division received an Early Head Start – Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership grant in 2014 to provide high-quality early learning services to 566 infants and toddlers across the State. A total of 198 of those slots are with 61 family child care (FCC) providers concentrated in the metropolitan counties of Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery, and Mobile.

The State contracts with Auburn University to serve as a statewide FCC hub, work with licensed FCC homes to raise quality, ensure the implementation of comprehensive services, and facilitate national accreditation through the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). A State-level Program Specialist monitors the FCC partners and Auburn University hub.

Participating in the EHS-CC Partnership program means agreeing to meet Head Start Program Performance Standards, which are often more stringent than State licensing or NAFCC accreditation standards. According to staff at the Auburn hub, there are myriad rules and regulations to navigate, and this process can be a steep learning curve for FCC providers. It can take some convincing that this is not business as usual. Providers must also get accustomed to additional monitoring visits and documentation requirements.

Geneva Heard from Heard’s Daycare in Dadeville explained that although participation in the program and meeting the additional requirements is a challenge, she feels well supported. She cited the requirement to decrease group size as an example of a challenging requirement but appreciated that the increased weekly payment for children enrolled in the EHS-CC Partnership program balanced out any revenue loss. Diann Jones with Jones DayCare Home in Evergreen, who has been an FCC provider for 21 years, agrees that changing her way of doing business after so much time has been tough (particularly the extra paperwork), but she’s getting used to it.

Despite these challenges, the grantee has found that the FCC partners are eager to please, ready to improve, and thrilled to be part of the program. In the 1st year of the grant, fewer than 10 of the child care partners dropped out of the program, and those vacancies were filled within 30 days with the assistance of a provider waiting list.

There are many tangible benefits to participating in the EHS-CC Partnership program for FCC providers. Every provider has received an iPad and Auburn e-mail account, which not only helps with some of the paperwork, such as documentation for the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment system, but also with the isolation that many providers face. Although they are located in metropolitan counties, they are quite dispersed and are often located scores of miles apart. In addition, providers received the Creative Curriculum and associated materials, toys, cribs, and items needed to meet the health and safety needs of infants and toddlers. Each provider was also given the option of choosing one of three developmentally appropriate pieces of playground equipment to have installed in their outdoor space.

One reason for the low turnover is that FCC partners are well supported through the EHS-CC Partnership program. Auburn assigns a mentor to each FCC provider. The mentor engages in reflective practice and training and in one-on-one consultation with the provider. Mentors work with providers to implement the curriculum and to conduct child assessments, provide support with technology and other aspects of operating a child care business, monitor for compliance with EHS standards through monthly visits, and work with providers to address any issues.

Continued on page 9
Continued from page 8

where providers receive CDA training, including the required credit hours, portfolio development, and mentorship.

Kristi Reimer of Dalia and Company in Mobile joined the EHS-CC Partnership program in May 2015. Since then, she has completed her Infant/Toddler CDA and has even applied for admission to the University of South Alabama to finish the bachelor’s degree she began more than 25 years ago. Kristi credits the EHS-CC Partnership program in motivating her to reach her educational goals. The program and her Auburn mentor provided the resources and overall guidance to continue her professional development (PD) and helped her prioritize her education.

Increased compensation is tied to PD. Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program subsidy payments are the foundation of Alabama’s EHS-CC Partnership program. Each child care partner receives an additional per-child contractual payment through Partnership funds. These payments are tiered based on the level of education—from a high school/GED (general equivalency degree) through a master’s degree—and on accreditation status. Providers also receive stipends that cover the costs of doing business (e.g., diapers, Wi-Fi, cleaning supplies). In addition, they receive funding for their PD and related travel. The PD supports and commensurate bump in pay are incentives for FCC providers, such as Beverly McElrath of Ms. Connie’s Child Care in Sylacauga, to join the EHS-CC Partnership program. Beverly admitted that school was tough, but she was very proud to receive her graduation letter when she completed the classes for her CDA basic certificate.

The EHS-CC Partnership program is making a real difference for FCC providers in Alabama and for the infants, toddlers, and families they serve. Enhanced physical environments that meet strict health and safety standards and that house developmentally appropriate toys; a research-based curriculum; and well-educated, supported, and satisfied teachers mean higher quality care for the State’s most vulnerable children. These additional pieces, spurred by the EHS-CC Partnership program, are building on the passion and commitment that these providers bring to their work every day. For example, Lenora Cochran of the Kingdom Steps Academy in Millbrook has been a child care provider for years. Previously, she was a Center Director and now owns her own FCC home. Through the Family Child Care Partnership program with Auburn, she became accredited and is now excited to be working on her CDA. Like many FCC providers, Lenora is in the business to help people. She shared the story of a mother who couldn’t work because she couldn’t afford child care. Lenora accepted her child into her care, and when the mother became pregnant, she also cared for the new infant so that the mother could return to work. Lenora described the remarkable feeling she gets when the adults whose children she cares for want to meet her and when the children she cares for grow up and still talk about their time with her. She loves it and couldn’t see herself doing anything else.

HomVEE Releases 2016 Evidence Review and Other New Resources

The Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) review has just released several new resources, including results of the 2016 evidence review. Please visit the HomVEE Web site for more details or click on the links below.

New Reviews and Updates

This year HomVEE reviewed one new program model, the Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP). However, PCAP does not meet U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) criteria for an evidence-based program model. HomVEE also updated reviews of several previously reviewed models that meet HHS criteria (Early Head Start-Home Visiting, Family Spirit®, Healthy Families America®), and Nurse Family Partnership®) and a model that does not meet HHS criteria (Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up Intervention). A new page describing home visiting research with Tribal populations has also been added.

What’s New?

Home Visiting Programs: Reviewing Evidence of Effectiveness—September 2016

An updated three-page summary brief describes the HomVEE review process, review results, and the 19 program models determined to meet HHS’s criteria for an “evidence-based early childhood home visiting service delivery model.” The brief is based on the information presented in this updated Executive Summary, which provides more detailed information on all 45 home visiting models reviewed by HomVEE.
Our Latest Review of the Evidence of Effectiveness for Home Visiting Programs

The Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) review just released its annual review results, an updated Executive Summary, and a brief on the HomVEE project as a whole. Explore these resources that provide information on the home visiting models reviewed via this Web page.

Exploring Employment Interventions That Use Financial Incentives and Sanctions To Improve Outcomes

The Employment Strategies for Low-Income Adults Evidence Review explored 12 interventions that use financial incentives and sanctions to improve employment outcomes. Learn more about these interventions and the four promising programs highlighted by visiting this Web site.

SRCD Policy Fellowship Now Accepting Applications

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), an Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) grantee, is seeking applicants for its fellowships that provide researchers with opportunities to come to Washington, D.C., and to use their research skills in child development to inform public policy. E-mail policyfellowships@srcd.org or visit SRCD’s Policy Fellowships page for more information about the Fellowships.

New Forecast for Research and Evaluation

OPRE released a funding opportunity announcement this summer for State, Territory, or Tribal lead agencies to plan a research and evaluation project on the implementation of policies related to Child Care and Development Block Grant reauthorization. We are excited to announce that OPRE has forecasted on this Web page their intent to fund a second cohort of grantees with applications due in early 2017. Eligible applicants are Child Care and Development Fund lead agencies. Please circulate this information to any interested parties. Note: This grant opportunity is contingent on available funds.

Joint Policy Brief on the Use of Technology With Young Children

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) released a policy brief on early learning and the use of technology to help families and early educators use technology to promote active, engaged, meaningful, and socially interactive learning.

“The brain science is clear; in the earliest years, learning is dependent on adult-child interaction and on healthy relationships between children and their caregivers,” said Linda K. Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, Administration for Children and Families. “We are excited about the new learning opportunities that technology can offer young children when parents and early childhood educators use it appropriately to support and supplement one-on-one interactions between children and their caregivers, both in the classroom and at home.”

For children ages 2–5, families and early educators need to take into account that technology can be used at home and in early learning settings. New recommendations in the American Academy of Pediatrics’ (AAP) 2016 Media and Young Minds brief suggest that 1 hour of technology use is appropriate per day, inclusive of the time spent at home and in early learning settings and across devices. HHS supports more limited technology use in early care and education settings; more information on its recommendations can be found in Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards.

However, time is only one metric that should be considered with technology use for children in this age range. Families and early educators should also consider the quality of the content, the context of use, and opportunities that the technology provides to strengthen or develop relationships. At home, parents can use technology to supplement real-world interactions, for instance, by using an app at the zoo or by recapping what they experienced while there.

Recognizing the growth of technology use in early learning settings, HHS and ED released the policy brief to promote the developmentally appropriate use of technology in homes and early learning settings. HHS and ED consulted with AAP in developing this brief, which can be found on this Web page.
Early Childhood Homelessness

Joint Policy Statement on Meeting the Needs of Families with Young Children Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness Released

“I’m heartbroken that any child in America is homeless…. Part of the change in attitudes that I want to see here in Washington and all across the country is a belief that it is not acceptable for children and families to be without a roof over their heads in a country as wealthy as ours.”

President Obama

Homelessness in the United States is a complex and persistent problem. For families with young children experiencing homelessness, the challenges are highlighted based on their unique needs and characteristics. Challenges begin early and, without intervention, can continue throughout the lives of children experiencing homelessness. Hunger, homelessness, violence, and parental attention all affect childhood well-being. Children who are born to mothers who are homeless have low birth weight and require specialized care at four times the rate of their nonhomeless peers.1

We know that families experiencing homelessness share the same characteristics as other low-income families. They are usually headed by a single woman in her late 20s, with approximately two children, one or both of whom are younger than age 6. They face significant challenges, including poverty and exposure to family and community violence. However, families experiencing homelessness have less access to housing subsidies and supportive services and have weaker social networks. More than 80 percent have experienced domestic violence.2

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness is based on the vision that no one should experience homelessness and that no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home. It remains focused on four goals:

- Prevent and end homelessness among veterans in 2015.
- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 2017.
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youths, and children in 2020.
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness.

Families experiencing homelessness have varying housing and service needs. Therefore, Family Connection: Building Systems to End Family Homelessness is aimed at expanding an effective partnership with communities across the country to prevent and end homelessness for families. In our interagency work since 2013, we’ve had a working group involving multiple Federal agencies to better coordinate our work around family homelessness and early childhood homelessness.

On October 31, the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Education (ED) issued a joint Policy Statement on Meeting the Needs of Families with Young Children Experiencing and At Risk of Homelessness. In the policy statement, which can be accessed via this Web page, we provide research and recommendations on ways in which early childhood and housing providers at the local and, in some cases, State levels can intentionally collaborate to provide safe, stable, and nurturing environments for pregnant women and families with young children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. See the Policy Statement, examples of collaborations around the country, and recommended strategies and activities.

 Ending family and early childhood homelessness in America will require the concerted efforts of all of us. Every parent and child experiencing homelessness across the country is counting on us all to persevere.

HHS, HUD, and ED provide the recommendations and strategies above that can help move us closer to this shared goal so that every young child and parent has the opportunity to thrive.

Continued on page 12

1National Association of State Directors of Special Education; http://nasdse.org/DesktopModules/DNNspot-Store/ProductFiles/9_e1838c30-79a1-44a5-bcb3-6076b9f2e73.pdf.
NIGHTCARE: The Growing Challenge for Parents on the Late Shift

The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) attended the release of NIGHTCARE: The Growing Challenge for Parents on the Late Shift and shared thoughts from this convening.

Our child care supply and policies are largely geared toward the 9-to-5 economy, but there are things that we can and must do to support children in families working nontraditional hours. NAFCC supports the role of family child care (FCC) as part of the solution to these challenges. FCC providers are expected to be the most flexible. Of course, just because it is a home does not mean the provider can be open all hours. Still, we know this work is happening at nontraditional hours and that families are counting on home-based child care options.

New Resources
Aligning Early Childhood Programs To Serve Children Experiencing Homelessness. This chart compares preschool, Head Start, and child care policies for children experiencing homelessness. Organized by topic area, it compares effective dates, funding levels, definitions, eligibility, eligibility determinations, outreach and identification, enrollment, continuity/stability, transportation, collaborations, referrals, and family engagement. This publication was written in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood Development. See the chart via this Web site.

The Early Care and Education Infrastructure in My Community Grid and Resource List. This grid provides a list of key public early childhood programs and space for users to record information about local programs, including the name and contact information for accessing the program and services. The Resource List contains a comprehensive, annotated list of public early childhood programs and links to the programs’ Web sites, along with State contacts who can help identify and access local programs. See the grid by visiting this Web page.

The Early Care and Education
NIGHTCARE: The Growing Challenge for Parents on the Late Shift

States can offer an enhanced reimbursement rate for providers of care during nontraditional hours. We must look for ways to increase the base reimbursement rate, focus on access to subsidy overall, and make the investments necessary to turn around the 16-year low in services.

NAFCC supports the work and expansion of FCC networks, which are available through the CCDBG Act. FCC networks offer supports and services specialized to home-based child care, and some networks also reach parents who seek child care arrangements. Imagine a network that supported overnight care—navigating licensure, subsidy issues, and the food program; connecting providers to one another; and boosting reliability and affordability for parents.

We must always keep children at the center of our thinking. Our round-the-clock economy presents complexities for child care availability and affordability—in addition, what about the next morning and next day? Let’s make sure that families in need have access to safe, reliable, quality child care.
Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge and Preschool Development Grant (PDG)

Highlights

Innovative Work With Family Care Providers in Phase 2 and Phase 3 Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge States

This resource was prepared in response to a request for information from a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State about the innovative work with family child care (FCC) providers that is being done in RTT-ELC Phase 2 States (Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin) and Phase 3 States (Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Vermont). This information will be helpful to other States as they consider how to continue to enhance the quality of early learning in FCC homes in their States.

PDG Communities of Practice

September Webinar Recordings Available

Communicating With Families To Prevent Chronic Absenteeism

Prekindergarten (preK) absenteeism is a problem in many early learning programs. Michael Katz, Research Associate at the Center on Labor, Human Services and Population at the Urban Institute, presents his findings and successful strategies from a study on absenteeism in preK. Sedria Wilson provides examples from her work as a Case Management Specialist in the Early Childhood Education Division, D.C. Public Schools. Listen to the webinar recording.

Early Childhood Programs That Support Young Dual-Language Learners – Part 2

Lisa Luceno, Director of Early Childhood Education at the Briya Public Charter School in Washington D.C., shares how her program supports young dual-language learners by emphasizing the importance of engaging and educating the whole family. Listen to the webinar recording.

Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood

More than 10 years ago, Dr. Walter Gilliam presented data showing how pervasive suspension and expulsion practices are and the impact that these practices have on children and families. Suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs continue to be a reality in the United States. In this webinar, Dr. Gilliam discusses the state of suspension and expulsion in early childhood education settings. Listen to the webinar recording.

Early Childhood Health

Caring for Our Children Basics Health and Safety Standards Alignment Tools

Alignment Tools for Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes

This tool, prepared by the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance, is an easy-to-use resource that helps States and Territories compare their current early childhood program requirements and standards with the recommended health and safety standards in Caring for Our Children Basics (CFOCB). Users can indicate whether their standards reflect full, partial, or no alignment with each CFOCB standard. See the tool by visiting this Web page.
Additional Resources

Reaching and Engaging with Hispanic Communities: A Research-Informed Communication Guide for Nonprofits, Policymakers, and Funders

The best practices for reaching your audience.

There is no question of the challenges and need to make these outreach efforts. Latino children are a large, diverse, and fast-growing group. The time to reach them is now.

By 2050 Hispanic children living in the United States will make up one-third of the population, yet they face several challenges on their road to adulthood.

The New America Care Report

The New America’s Better Life Lab report examined cost, quality, and availability data in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. The report proposes systemic changes to the early care and learning infrastructure, including additional public and private investment in early care and learning, better training and pay and greater professionalization of the teaching workforce, and select innovative policy recommendations to help make high-quality care more affordable and accessible to all families.

Supporting Young Children: Addressing Poverty, Promoting Opportunity and Advancing Equity in Policy

Poverty in early childhood is a pervasive problem in the United States, with one in five children younger than age 5 experiencing poverty in 2015. The Center for the Study of Social Policy released Supporting Young Children: Addressing Poverty, Promoting Opportunity and Advancing Equity in Policy, which discusses poverty and its negative effects on the health and well-being of a young child.

Continued on page 15
Additional Resources

**Red Light Green Light: State Child Care Assistance Policies 2016**

Child care helps children, families, and communities prosper. It gives children the opportunity to learn and develop skills they need to succeed in school and in life; it gives parents the support and peace of mind they need to be productive at work; and by strengthening the current and future workforce, it helps our Nation’s economy. Yet many families, particularly low-income families, struggle to afford child care.

Given the importance of child care assistance to the well-being of parents and their children, it is essential for States to have strong child care assistance policies. This *National Women’s Law Center report* examines States’ policies in five key areas—(1) income eligibility limits to qualify for child care assistance, (2) waiting lists for child care assistance, (3) copayments required of parents receiving child care assistance, (4) reimbursement rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance, and (5) eligibility for child care assistance for parents searching for a job. These policies are fundamental to determining families’ ability to obtain child care assistance and the extent of the help that assistance provides.

**Updated Infant Safe-Sleep Guidelines**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has released *updated recommendations* for a safe infant sleeping environment, which are published in the October issue of *Pediatrics*.

AAP encourages a safe-sleep environment that can reduce the risk of all *sleep-related infant deaths*. 