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Working Together for a Better Beginning

"In today's economy, when having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families, we need affordable, high-quality childcare more than ever. It's not a nice-to-have -- it's a must-have. So it's time we stop treating childcare as a side issue, or as a women's issue, and treat it like the national economic priority that it is for all of us."

-- President Obama, January 2015, State of the Union Address

Early Childhood Development

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development
Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

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Have you been to our website recently?

Learn more about the Office of Early Childhood Development and click [here](#).

Check out these ACF blogs

The ACF blog — The Family Room — talks about new initiatives at the agency, success stories and policy announcements.

[Lights on Afterschool](#)

Shining a light on the need for afterschool care. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/lights-on-afterschool>

[Office of Child Care Taking Steps to Ensure Program Meets Needs of Hispanic Community](#)

More than 20 percent of children served by the Child Care and Development Fund are Hispanic.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/office-of-child-care-taking-steps-to-ensure-program-meets-needs-of-hispanic-community>

[ACF Grant Will Help Rural Alaska Village Create Jobs, Decrease Costs of Living, and Help Local Environment](#)

ANA recently awarded over \$12.4 million in

Last week, we at ACF released a "[Compendium of Parenting Interventions](#)."

The document profiles parenting interventions for families of children birth to age five that are research-based and includes information on the cost, training requirements, duration and intended outcomes of each program. As a longtime volunteer parent trainer, I can attest that this is long overdue. I first started parent training programs when I directed a child development program on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation many years ago, and most recently, as part of the Virginia Tech sponsored training here in Northern Virginia. I have watched as the challenges facing parents have intensified from the typical toddler tantrum to much more complicated issues.



I recall one father who attended one of my parenting groups. The father described his own upbringing, one of violence and abuse. He recalled hiding in a cardboard box in a closet hoping to escape his father's wrath. He told the other parents in the group that he joined the group in hopes of learning how to "do better by my boy" so that "he doesn't have to grow up afraid of me".

Like the father in my group, I believe that parents absolutely want to do the right thing for their children. However, they do want – and sometimes need – help parenting in our complex world. Many have been raised in less than ideal circumstances where hitting and emotional abuse are accepted. Many don't know what effect they are having on their children's development. Others want to do better, but where do they go for help? Over the years, I have watched parents in bookstores as they tried to sort through what is good versus what I would call "junk science." Now in the age of the internet, the

new 2015 grants, including the recently reinstated SEDS-AK grant, which supports Alaska Native families and communities.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/acf-grant-will-help-rural-alaska-village>

[HHS Launches National Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#)

SAMHSA, HRSA and ACF have partnered to build strong, sustainable mental health consultation systems in states and tribal communities across the country teaming mental health professionals with people who work with young children and their families.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/infant-early-childhood-mental-health-consultation>

[Head Start is 'Life-Changing' for At-Risk Children](#)

Thirty-eight percent of the children served by Head Start are of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/head-start-is-life-changing-for-at-risk-children>

[ACF Launches a Federal Training and Technical Assistance System](#)

ACF is awarding grants for six new national centers to build the capacity for excellence in early childhood services.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2015/10/launching-a-federal-training-and-technical-assistance-system>

See more blogs and visit [The Family Room Blog](#).

Featured Reports



Recently posted on the [OPRE Site](#):
three commonly used language

web has produced a plethora of programs that are just plain overwhelming if not ridiculous.

Some parents turn to their early childhood provider for help. The truth is that many of these early childhood providers can be just as confused about what works, for what purpose and for whom. They worry that parents need help, but how to help them remains a question. The ACF [Parenting Compendium](#) is our attempt to help early care and education providers know how to select parenting programs that have evidence that they work and are likely to be effective with the families of the children they serve. This is a first and important step however; it is just that – **a first step**.

Like Head Start, a program that prides itself on parent support and engagement, all early care and education programs must rethink how they support and engage parents. In other words, we need a much more systematic and coordinated approach to parenting that is designed to ensure that all children live in homes that promote their social, emotional and cognitive well-being. And we do that by recognizing that parents are the key. No early childhood program can get kids school ready and promote well-being without strong partnerships with parents.

Our nation has a serious challenge before it. We need better policies all around that support parents. We have asked the National Academy of Sciences to study this for us. Their report should be out next spring. Until then, ensuring that child care is high quality, affordable and available is one way to support parents. Making sure that we have adequate home visiting programs is another. And making evidence-based parenting programs available to all parents is yet another way. We hope that the [Compendium of Parenting Interventions](#) will be a start that puts our country on a pathway to improving support for all parents.

Linda

Block Party Celebrates Head Start's 50th Birthday



In commemoration of Head Start's 50th anniversary and Head Start Awareness Month, the Office of Head Start, National Head Start Association and Head Start centers nationwide celebrated with a **National 50th Birthday Party** on Oct. 14. Head Start block parties were hosted in neighborhoods, bringing out Head Start children, families and community leaders. Central office employees got to participate in the National Anniversary Celebration at the **Campagna Center Head Start and Early Head Start** program in



Developing a Tool to Examine Teachers' Use of Ongoing Child Assessment to Individualize Instruction

The Examining Data Informing Teacher (EDIT) measure assesses preschool teachers' use of curriculum-embedded approaches in ongoing child assessment and individualized instruction. Interested in learning more about the creation and administration of the measure? [Explore this report](#) to learn more about the measure, its development, and lessons learned from the pretest and possibilities for its use.



A Guidebook for Implementing Parenting Interventions

What do program, state, and child care network leaders need to know in order to successfully implement a parenting intervention? [Explore this guidebook](#) to understand more about the key tasks and milestones of each of the four stages of implementation: exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation.



National Survey of Early Care & Education

Using NSECE Data to Measure Selected Predictors of Quality in ECE Settings

How can we use data from the NSECE to measure predictors of quality in ECE settings? [Explore this report](#) to learn more about predictors of quality, as well as descriptive data for each of the selected predictors.

Announcing Recently Awarded Grants and Contracts

In FY 2015, OPRE awarded new contracts and grants across our research and evaluation topic areas. Look below for more information on these new activities.

Contracts

Early Childhood

- Study on Dual Language Learners

Contractor: National Academy of Sciences



Alexandria, Virginia.

The event was webcasted throughout the nation. The webcast also shared important messages from OHS leaders.

[Watch the webcast online here!](#)



(Photos: Early Childhood Development Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda K. Smith with Elmo, Head Start students (who talked with Linda Smith), and Head Start children were treated to a petting zoo at the block party)

See a Highlight from the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Grants



Discovering the Beach in an EHS-Family Child Care Partnership

- 13th National Research Conference on Early Childhood

Contractor: IMPAQ

- Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study

Contractor: Mathematica Policy Research

- Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study

Contractor: Abt Associates

- Technical and Analytic Support on the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) Datasets

Contractor: NORC at the University of Chicago

- Professional Development Tools to Improve the Quality of Infant and Toddler Care

Contractor: Mathematica Policy Research

- Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) 2015

Contractor: Mathematica Policy Research

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

Promoting high-quality research and informing policy

[Research Connections](#) regularly reviews its latest acquisitions and identifies reports and journal articles of high policy relevance.

[What are the effects of Head Start on early literacy skills of English language learners compared to their peers?](#)

[How do early childhood teachers' psychosocial characteristics and their attitudes towards challenging students impact classroom quality?](#)

[How do face-to-face and webcam technology compare as coaching strategies for teachers with struggling readers?](#)

[Do child care regulations affect the cost and quality of child care?](#)

[What are the long-run impacts of a universal child care program on non-cognitive skills in young children and their life outcomes?](#)

[What works for reducing problem behaviors in early childhood?](#)

Westside Children's Center used their EHS-CCP grant to partner with several family child care providers. One of them was San Juana, a South L.A.-based family child care provider who had been in business for more than three years, and was eager to learn how she could provide more stimulating and age-appropriate education for the dozen or so children in her care. And while San Juana's is just 20 minutes from the Pacific, many of the children in care have never been to the ocean. With the support and guidance from Yanira and Stephanie, the Family Support Specialists (FSS) from Westside Children's Center, the kids at San Juana's center were given the opportunity to explore nature – even if it's in her living room.



The FSS began visiting San Juana a few times a week to address opportunities for tailoring her setup to meet children's needs. They lowered the hanging whiteboard, once displayed at adult-height, to the kids' eye level. A wooden table that was too high for children to sit at was cut down and furnished with chairs, puzzles, and other manipulatives. The team divided the



materials in San Juana's home into activity centers geared toward specific developmental domains, encouraging the children to learn through play and exploration in the music, science, art, math, and dramatic play centers. The kids loved the new learning games, art supplies, and arrangements, but it was

the unfamiliar tactility of sand that thrilled them the most.

After Stephanie and Yanira talked about the importance of sensory activities, San Juana filled an outdoor play table with sand. The attraction was magnetic: the children be-lined for the table and spent their entire outdoor time feeling, pouring, and digging.

For San Juana, who learned most of them had never played with sand, watching their captivation was equally fulfilling. "Children were telling their parents what they had done," Yanira said. "San Juana talks about how she never knew something could bring so much joy to a child. She was amazed at how important it was for them to have that experience in the child care." "San Juana was amazed that there was a program like this, that would support the family as a whole," Yanira said. "She was very excited about being part of our team," added Stephanie. "We told her, 'We're here to help you; we're part of a team. That's the EHS-CC Partnership.'"

For more information on Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, see [here](#) and [here](#).

[The Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)

This [report](#) published by the **Center for American Progress** examines the role of the Child and Adult Care Program (CACFP) in supporting early childhood education programs. The report makes a case to Congress to subsidize the cost of meals and snacks in various programs to make child care a more affordable option for lower-income families.

[The QRIS Resource Guide](#)

The [QRIS Resource Guide](#) published by the **National Center on Child Care Quality Improvement** is a tool intended for states to examine issues and decisions during the development and implementation of a quality rating and improvement system. The guide gives examples throughout its nine sections to explain strategies states used to develop and implement their QRIS.

Additional Resources



Invest in Us

Quality early childhood education programs help children grow. See how investments in quality programs pay. Learn more [here](#).



The [BUILD Initiative](#) released seven chapters of [Rising to the Challenge: Building Effective Systems for Young Children and Families, a BUILD E-Book](#).

See chapters and executive summaries [here](#).

NPR Looks at the Life of An Apple Picker

By John Menditto, General Counsel and Director of Risk Management at East Coast Migrant Head Start Project

The East Coast Migrant Head Start Project ([ECMHSP](#)) Policy Council has established raising awareness on the circumstances of farmworker families as a goal in the ECMHSP's strategic plan. One way they are increasing awareness is by sharing their stories with national media. On October 23, National Public Radio aired the story, "[Inside the Life of An Apple Picker](#)", [[link: http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/10/23/448579214/inside-the-life-of-an-apple-picker](http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/10/23/448579214/inside-the-life-of-an-apple-picker)], the first of a series of profiles that will take a look into the lives of the workers harvesting our favorite fruits and vegetable.

Jose Martinez, the subject to the story, is a parent attending an ECMHSP Migrant and Seasonal Head Start center operated by our delegate agency, PathStone Corporation, in Adams County, Pennsylvania.

In the story, Martinez describes the challenges they encounter when migrating to join the apple harvest. They travel from Florida every year, bringing with them only what they can carry in their car. Their constant moving along the East Coast is especially hard on their children – the oldest is 9 and the youngest just turned 1. The children are moved from one school

or preschool to another throughout the year.

The family credits the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project center as one place where migrant families can gather – a stable point in a community that is otherwise transient.

(Jose Martinez in the Adams County, Pa., orchard where he's



working this year. Photo by Dan Charles/NPR.)

Martinez is proud of the work his family does in feeding America. He reminds us that the apples he picks could end up on your table, or even the White House. You might not know where the apples you eat came from, but most likely, they were picked by an immigrant like him.

NPR will follow up [this story](#) with a look at a Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program family working in North Carolina's sweet potato harvest, which is set to air next month. To learn more about the East Coast Migrant Head Start Project and the high-quality early education services provided to farmworker families, please visit the website: www.ecmhsp.org.

The National Policy Digest is a bi-monthly newsletter from [the Ounce of Prevention Fund](#) that shares up-to-date and noteworthy developments in early childhood on the state and federal level. Drawing on diverse sources from across the field, the digest includes news on policy and funding changes, policy trends and analyses, the latest in early childhood research and information on upcoming events in the field. To subscribe, contact Elizabeth Kenefick (ekenefick@theounce.org).

Open Enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace Begins November 1: Open enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace begins November 1, 2015 and ends January 31, 2016. Visit healthcare.gov for the latest information on open enrollment and use materials at Marketplace.cms.gov to share with your community.

From the Office of Head Start:

See materials on the **Planned Language Approach**: The PLA is a comprehensive, systemic, research-based way for Head Start and Early Head Start programs to ensure optimal language and literacy services for children who speak English and those who are dual language learners (DLLs). PLA materials include handouts, examples, guides, organizational tools, and videos designed to build and refine language and literacy services for all children, to promote staff development, and to support DLLs.

Planned Language Approach:
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/planned-language-approach>

Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness:
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>

Administrative Requirements, Cost



It's the 1-year Anniversary of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014

Next week, to commemorate the 1-year anniversary of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, the [Office of Child Care](#) will be highlighting successes and resources related to the implementation of the new law. The law made sweeping changes intended to raise the health, safety, and quality of child care and to provide more stable child care assistance to low-income families. Through emails, the CCTAN Website, and a webinar, the Office of Child Care will highlight some of the new and existing tools that will be helpful to the early childhood community.

Register for the **CCDBG Act Reauthorization Anniversary Webinar on November 18, 2015, 3:30 p.m. EST** at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/625437768710042882>.



Building the Supply of High-Quality Child Care

The Office of Child Care (OCC) announced a new Information Memorandum (IM) addressing the supply-building provisions of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014. When reauthorizing the CCDBG Act, Congress added a new purpose—to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings. Additionally, the CCDBG Act includes provisions to build the supply of high-quality care in underserved areas and for particular populations, including infants and toddlers and children who receive care during nontraditional hours.

CCDF lead agencies have the flexibility to determine the best strategies to build the supply of high-quality child care that meets the needs of children and families in their communities. In selecting supply-building strategies, lead agencies can use a mix of approaches that expand the supply of high-quality care and that sustain quality over time.

Building the Supply of High-Quality Child Care provides lead agencies and other stakeholders with a menu of policy options to consider when developing their CCDF plans. We hope it is useful in your work of expanding access to high-quality child care for low-income children.

The IM is published [here](#) and is also included on the [Information Memoranda page](#).

Principles, and Audit Requirements 2014 Regulations and Related Resources

The Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) has information and implementation materials around the 2014 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements. These requirements also are referred to as Uniform Guidance and the "**Supercircular.**"

The new Uniform Administrative Requirements took effect for awards and award increments received on or after Dec. 26, 2014. Grantees are expected to transition to the new fiscal regulations throughout 2015. Use these resources to become familiar with the expectations and impact of the new fiscal regulations on your organization.

Select this link,

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ta-system/operations/mang-sys/fiscal-mang/ug-resources/index.html> , to find:

- Useful resources from entities across the government
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Comparison of Uniform Guidance to the Regulations previously in effect

New Resource: Improving Homeless Families' Access to Child Care

[NAEHCY](#) and the [Ounce of Prevention Fund](#) announced a [new guide](#) intended to assist states in utilizing their Child Care and Development Fund state plan ("CCDF Plan") as a vehicle for improving access to high-quality early care and education for children who experience homelessness. The guide provides background information on common barriers and challenges; best practices for serving homeless families; a summary of requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (CCDBG) related to homelessness; and a summary of some of the opportunities available through the state CCDF Plan to improve access.

As a companion to the guide, [a self-assessment tool](#) to assist states in assessing their current policies and practices and

HHS Launches National Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

By Shantel E. Meek, Ph.D., Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood Development

Last year, President Obama launched [My Brother's Keeper \(MBK\)](#), an initiative that brings together the public and private sectors, communities, businesses, schools, and individuals to close opportunity gaps and ensure all of our nation's youth, including boys and young men of color, have the tools they need to realize their incredible potential. The initiative sets a vision for supporting our youth from cradle to college and career by focusing on six important milestones across the life course. The first of these milestones is ensuring that children **enter school ready to learn**.

The [My Brother's Keeper Task Force Report](#) recommends building a strong foundation of social-emotional and behavioral health, fostered by warm, enriching, and secure relationships with adults like parents and early learning providers, as an integral component of **entering school ready to learn**. Social-emotional and behavioral health is robustly associated with school readiness and achievement and outcomes in adulthood, such as higher likelihood of high school completion, degree attainment, and lower likelihood of drug use and arrest.

At the same time, teachers and child care providers report that their most pressing training need is in fostering children's behavioral development. In fact, only 20% of providers who serve children under age 5 reported receiving any training on facilitating children's social-emotional growth in the past year.



Lack of training and competencies in this area may contribute to higher rates of expulsion and suspensions. Data consistently show that young boys of color are disproportionately the subjects of expulsions and suspensions from early learning and school settings, which may contribute to social-emotional challenges and set

them on a negative trajectory before they even step foot in the kindergarten classroom. Last year, the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education (ED) released a [joint policy statement](#) on preventing expulsion and suspension in practices in early learning settings.

[Continue reading here.](#)

More Info: [White House Blog Post](#); [SAMHSA Blog Post](#)

ACF announced the launch of a new cross-sector [Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance \(T/TA\) System](#). Read more [here](#).

identifying options to better support vulnerable children is included. The groups recommend reviewing the self-assessment tool prior to reading the guide.



Thirty-nine states have adopted quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) to rate and support child care and education providers and centers serving children birth to age five. Communications plays a critical role in engaging providers, parents, partners, policymakers, and the public in QRIS. From Child Trends' communications team, this report provides examples of what some states are doing to market their QRIS, and recommendations for other states.

See more [here](#).



Ready Nation released a new brief, "[The Case for Investing in America's Hispanic Young Children](#)." This brief highlights how Hispanic children are the fastest growing segment of children in the U.S., and the importance of preparing them for school and life success.

Ready Nation also released "A Healthy Bottom Line," and two new industry briefs, detailing why the [manufacturing](#) and [energy](#) industries should support early childhood development.

[Latino Children and Families](#)

Spotlight on migrant and seasonal Head Start families

While 15 percent of all U.S. workers are Hispanic, almost half of hired farmworkers are Hispanic. Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs are a crucial support for the children of agricultural workers, many of whom move frequently throughout the year and/or have variable employment. Using results from the second MSHS Supplement to the National Agricultural Workers' Survey, this blog provides a description of these families and how policymakers and practitioners can best

Watch Now! Early Childhood Development Webcast Working Together: Successful Strategies to Build Strong Collaborations across Early Childhood Programs

Too often, early childhood programs are "siloes" and have conflicting policies and inconsistent quality. This, however, does not have to be the case. On October 15th, ACF Early Childhood Development leadership including Deputy Assistant Secretary Linda K. Smith, Office of Child Care Director Rachel Schumacher, and Office of Head Start Deputy Director Ann Linehan led a webcast focusing on successful partnerships across early childhood programs. The webcast featured a panel consisting of the first group of Tribal Learning Initiative (TELI) grantees – the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of Montana, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Pueblo of San Felipe in New Mexico, and White Earth Nation of Minnesota.

The TELI, which began in 2012, is designed to support tribes to coordinate services across child care, Head Start/Early Head Start, and home visiting programs; raise the quality of services to children and families across the pregnancy-to-kindergarten-entry continuum; and identify and break down barriers to collaboration and systems improvement.

The success of the TELI provides concrete examples of how programs, with just a little bit of investment, can partner to carry out a shared vision of improved services for families and communities. On the webcast, grantees discussed how they built relationships that helped them find ways to overcome obstacles and improve quality and coordination of services for families. The TELI grantees' main lessons learned can be applicable to any cross-program partnership: take time to learn about one another's programs, and keep the client's experience as the focal point. Watch now at <https://goto.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1076701>!



Some highlights:

- Choctaw Nation described their efforts to reduce paperwork for families through a standard release of information form and a joint application form that could be used to enroll in all TELI programs. They also improved staff knowledge through shared professional development opportunities focused on autism and children with special needs.
- The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes created joint training opportunities for providers and held community events focused on building parenting skills of parents with young children.
- White Earth Nation used its TELI project to invest in WECARE (White Earth Coordination Assessment Resources and Education) a holistic case management model that requires all tribal programs to work together with clients and decreases duplication of services and

support them.

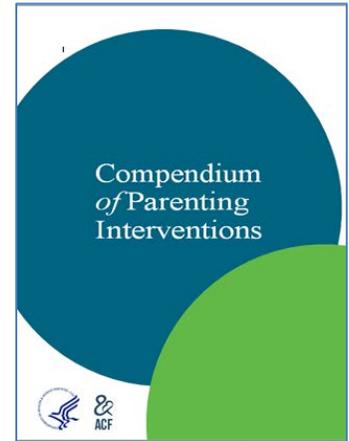
staff time by sharing data in the tribe's Rite Track data system.

- The Pueblo of San Felipe built on their growing partnership to find ways to conduct joint dental services, extend categorical eligibility for Head Start services to children receiving home visiting services, and jointly sponsor the annual "Katishtya TELI Fall Festival" celebration of young children and families in the community for the last three years.

Learn more about the TELI, and read a report with more details on these grantees' work at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/tribal-early-learning-initiative>.

New Parenting Resources from ACF!

Families are children's first, longest lasting, and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers. Positive parenting and strong family engagement is central--not supplemental-- to promoting children's healthy development and wellness, including social-emotional and behavioral development; preparing children for school; seamlessly transitioning them to kindergarten; and supporting academic achievement in elementary school and beyond. Families' engagement in children's learning at home and in early care and education programs can impact lifelong health, developmental, and academic outcomes.



Early care and education teachers and providers play a central role in partnering with families on their children's learning and development. ACF is pleased to announce three new resources that can inform early childhood programs, networks, and States in their work to partner with and support families with young children using evidence-informed approaches.

See all three resources below!

- [Compendium of Parenting Interventions](#)
- [Intervention Implementation Guide](#)
- [Tracking Progress in Early Care and Education: Program, Staff, and Family Measurement Tools](#)

[Learn more here.](#)

Early Childhood Workforce

Supportive Environmental Quality Underlying Adult Learning (SEQUAL)

By Marcy Whitebook, Ph.D., Director/Senior Researcher, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley

For seedlings to take root and reach maturity requires a hospitable growing environment. The amateur gardener knows seeds require water and light, but the seasoned gardener has learned to provide the right amount of water and light for different types of plants and to assess whether the soil needs nutritional amendments in order for healthy development to occur.

Teachers too require environments that support their development and allow the seeds of effective practice—their education and training—to take root and blossom. But too many of our ECE teachers spend their days in environments that hinder their ability to apply what they know and get better at what they do. Indeed many of our teachers are trying to grow and mature in soil that is inhospitable, [soil that lacks basic teaching supports](#) such as adequate numbers of trained coworkers, appropriate and helpful supervision and professional workplace supports.

To promote quality improvement, teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice, share ideas with one another, and to engage in thoughtful planning. But more often than not teachers do not have sufficient dedicated paid time, without responsibility for children, to meaningfully engage in these activities. When we asked teaching staff working in centers participating in a fledgling California QRIS about when and how long they spent on these professional tasks, two thirds of teachers reported planning curricula during paid work time, but one-half of these teachers did this planning while also attending to children. Nearly three-quarters of these teachers reported meeting with other teachers to reflect on classroom practice, but nearly one-half reported meeting for 30 minutes or less per week, and many reported their talks occurred while they were also taking care of children.

A preliminary review of QRIS operating in 38 states throughout the country suggests our California



findings are not atypical. In 2014, only 12 states included indicators for paid planning and/or preparation time in the QRIS; half as many directly included collaborative practices as an indicator. To ensure our investments in education and training will yield a bountiful crop of highly skilled teachers will require allotting them sufficient paid time for planning, sharing, and reflecting without simultaneously expecting them to attend to children.

To help bring about these needed changes in how we support teachers, the CSCCE has developed [SEQUAL](#) (Supportive Environmental Quality underlying Adult Learning), a tool for assessing whether a program's environment supports or impedes effective teaching practices, determining needed improvements, and measuring improvements over time. SEQUAL is administered directly to teachers and assistant teachers in centers or school-based programs, providing a mechanism for their voices to be included in the quality improvement discussion. SEQUAL generates data that helps to illuminate the interplay between teacher education, the work environment and efforts to improve program quality and can be used by multiple stakeholders to inform decision making and guide resource allocation to provide teachers what they need to help children succeed.

Click here for more information about [SEQUAL](#).

1 The Build Initiative & Child Trends. (2014). A Catalog and Comparison of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) [Data System]. Retrieved from <http://qriscompendium.org/>

Penn State Better Kid Care On Demand Modules Support CCDBG Health and Safety Training

By: Claudia Mincemoyer, Ph.D., Director, Penn State Better Kid Care

Better Kid Care (BKC) has more than 60 online self-directed learning modules and supporting resources that align with the required and recommended training in the CCDBG Reauthorization. For example, in the Safe Sleep and SIDS Prevention topic area, two BKC modules directly support this topic area: Safe Sleep Practices for Caregivers: Reduce the Risk of SUID and Infant-Toddler Care: Safety. Supporting the Food and Allergic Reactions topic area is a 2-hour module: Food Allergies: Management and Prevention. BKC also has short video trainings to show best practices that can be used to support existing training. The Healthy Practices vodcast series (Diapering 101; Handwashing 101; Changing Pull-ups and Soiled Underwear) supports the CCDBG training topic, Prevention and Control of Infectious Disease.

To access all of the online modules and vodcasts, visit the BKC website at <http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare> and select the button "CCDBG: Required Health and Safety Training." This will lead you to the modules and vodcasts aligned with the these topics:

[Prevention and Control of Infectious Disease](#)

[Safe Sleep and SIDs Prevention](#)

[Food and Allergic Reactions](#)

[Building and Physical Premises Safety](#)

[Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma](#)

[Emergency Preparedness](#)

[Handling and Storage of Hazardous Materials](#)

[Transportation Safety](#)

[First Aid/CPR](#)

[Nutrition and Physical Activity](#)

[Infant/Toddler Care](#)

[Social-Emotional Health of Children](#)

Content for these professional development modules is available at no cost. If a certificate of completion is needed or required, a \$5.00 fee is charged. Better Kid Care's professional development is approved for child care professional development credit in 39 states. Check for approval of modules in your state: <http://tinyurl.com/bkc-states>. Vodcasts are free to view and no professional development credit is offered.

Contact: Claudia Mincemoyer, Ph.D., Director, Penn State Better Kid Care, cxm324@psu.edu.

IL Tackles Early Childhood Homelessness

By Carie Bires, MSW, Policy Manager, Illinois Policy Team, Ounce of Prevention Fund

If you want to know what good collaboration between McKinney-Vento and early childhood programs look like within a school district, look no further than Rockford School District 205 in Illinois. Rockford Public Schools opened six new full-day classrooms this year as a part of Illinois' Preschool Development Grant award, which will serve 3,200 of the most at-risk four year old children in the state with comprehensive services. I recently had the pleasure of talking with Elmer Rice, [Families in Transition](#) Student Advocate, and Teresa Fillers, Dean of Early Childhood Programs at the district to hear more about their work to enroll children experiencing homelessness in the community's new preschool expansion classrooms. Their collaborative approach should serve as a model for other communities. Here are some highlights from our conversation:

- [Families in Transition](#) (FIT) and the Rockford Early Childhood program collaborated to directly outreach to homeless families who were currently enrolled in the district's preschool program at the end of last school year, as well as those who had been previously enrolled in FIT in the past. Together, they located the families, told them about the opportunity, and helped them fill out applications and get enrolled.
- Over the summer, each time a family came in to enroll with FIT, staff asked if younger children were in the household. If the family had an eligible 4 year old, they walked the family next door to the Early Childhood Screening and Placement Office to complete an application for the preschool expansion program.
- Rockford provides transportation to some preschool children and prioritizes children experiencing homelessness for this service. When a family moves and needs to change their transportation arrangement, they can do so over the phone, making it more accessible for families who can't get to the school in person to make those types of changes.
- Both FIT and the Early Childhood Program also conduct home visits with families and work together to locate children who have disengaged from services, often due to an unexpected move.
- When children experiencing homelessness leave the program and later reappear, every effort is made to place that child back into his or her "classroom of origin."



When asked to what their success could be attributed to, Mr. Rice and Ms. Fillers agreed that they work hard to be as flexible as possible and go above and beyond to meet families where they're at so they can enroll, and stay enrolled, in preschool. And the proof of their success is in the proverbial pudding: children experiencing homelessness account for nearly a third of all

children enrolled in the district's six preschool expansion classrooms. Children experiencing homelessness face tremendous barriers to enrolling in early care and education programs, but in Rockford, collaboration is making it easier for those barriers to be overcome.

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Highlight



U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services Released Early Learning Challenge Annual Performance Reports for 20 States

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a report that shows [Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge](#) states are rapidly improving the quality of early learning programs while enrolling more children, especially from low- and moderate income families, in the highest-quality programs.

What's more, thousands more children are receiving health screenings to help detect medical or developmental issues earlier, the report shows. The report comes from the annual performance reviews for the 20 states who have received more than \$1 billion in Early Learning Challenge grants since 2011. These reports capture the successes achieved and obstacles overcome by states in the last year.

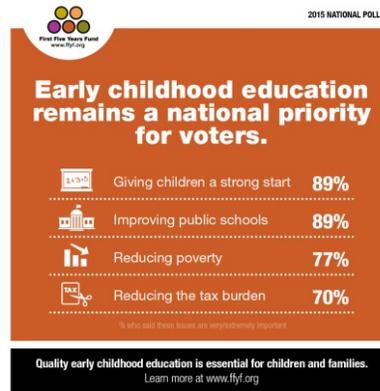
Highlights from the reports:

- More than 72,000 early learning and development programs are now evaluated under their states' Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (TQRIS) – an 87 percent increase since the states applied for their grants.
- Nearly 14,000 programs are in the highest quality tiers of their states' rating system – a 63 percent increase since the states applied for their grants.
- Significantly more children with high needs are enrolled in programs in the highest quality tiers of their states' rating system.
- More than 200,000 children with high needs are enrolled in highest rated state-funded preschool programs.
- Nearly 230,000 children with high needs are enrolled in child care programs that receive federal child care subsidy funds and are in the highest tiers.
- More than 150,000 children with high needs are enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start programs in the highest tiers.

This Early Learning Challenge report provides a high level overview of the progress made by Early Learning Challenge states in key areas as they implement their state plans. For more detailed information, see the individual state annual performance reports and highlights available [here](#).

National Poll Shows Voters Rate Early Childhood Education as a Top Priority

Once again a national poll shows strong voter support for early childhood education. The bipartisan poll shows remarkable support early learning and development.



Some key findings:

91% believe that learning in the early years is critical for future success.

89% agree that access to quality early childhood education as a necessity for today's families.

89% say that making sure children get a strong start in life so they perform better in school and succeed in the career, tied with

improving the quality of public education, and ranking far about reducing the tax burden on families.

For more details and infographics, go to: [Results of national poll](#)



National Head Start Association, Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director

As The National Head Start Association celebrates Head Start's 50th anniversary this year, we have been particularly encouraged by a number of scholars and economists who have authoritatively debunked the myth of "Head Start fadeout"—the oft-repeated, yet mistaken, assertion that the benefits of Head Start completely fade out by third grade. Last month, Nobel Laureate James Heckman spotlighted the fade-out fallacy in his opinion piece for the Hechinger Report, "[Pre-K researchers can't get past the third grade](#)", pointing to the comprehensive nature of Head Start, and the full range of skills children develop through quality early learning. And while this comes as no surprise to the Head Start community, it is encouraging to see the [list of academics](#) whose own research led to similar conclusion: Head Start works.



WE HAVE
MOVED!

The Office of Child Care, the Office of Head Start and the Interagency Team for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development all moved October 30th! Other ACF offices will soon be moving so we will all be together in one place.

You can find us at our new address:

**Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201**

Other contact information remains the same.



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