

Child Care Policy Research Grants: 2004 Grantees

Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service, Institute for Child and Family Policy

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:

Helen D. Ward

Project Funding Years:

2004-2007

Project Abstract:

A case study examining the extent to which the child welfare, early care and education, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) early intervention systems are collaborating to promote the school readiness needs of children under age five in the child welfare system in Colorado. The study is based on field interviews with approximately 150 key agency staff and survey interviews with approximately 500 foster parents and 200 child welfare caseworkers, and explores:

(a) barriers to and facilitators of collaboration at the state, county and local levels; and (b) the degree to which children in the child welfare system are being linked to the IDEA early intervention and early care and education (ECE) programs. This research informs policy and program choices about best practices and models for how the multiple agencies which provide these services can coordinate their efforts.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12428/related>

Education Development Center

Project Title:

Child Care Quality:
Does Partnering with Head Start Make a Difference?

Principle Investigator:

Diane Schilder

Project Funding Years:

2004-2007

Project Abstract:

A three-year investigation of the relationship between Child Care/Head Start partnerships, observed quality, and children's school readiness, conducted in Ohio by the Education Development Center (EDC). The research expands on an existing study to examine:

(a) under what conditions child care partnerships with Head Start are related to observed child care classroom quality; (b) whether there is a link between partnerships and children's school readiness; and (c) whether partnerships are associated with observed quality in family child care homes. The study uses data collected on environmental quality and child outcomes, through the use of observational and child assessment instruments, from 67 child care center classrooms, 673 children, and 135 family child care homes, all randomly selected. This research addresses critical questions about the effectiveness of coordination efforts and provides evidence about the outcomes of strategies designed to improve child care quality.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12365/related>

MDRC

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:

Barbara D. Goldman

Project Funding Years:

2004-2005

Project Abstract:

A project led by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC), in conjunction with collaborators from the University of Texas at Austin, examining the relationship between center- and home-based care settings and the development of low-income children (primarily children of working parents), aged kindergarten to third grade. The research is based on two unique datasets:

(a) a pooled dataset of seven experimental studies of welfare and employment programs--empirical techniques that take advantage of treatment-induced differences in employment, income and child care--that is used to control for child care selection factors; and (b) The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (NICHD SECCYD)--a longitudinal child care study

following children from birth--that is used to conduct an analysis of features of different types of care settings and the resulting effects on children's development. This research addresses critical questions about the effects of center- and home-based care settings on multiple domains of low-income children's development, paying specific attention to the direction of causality in effects.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12380/related>

Oregon Child Care Research Partnership

Project Title:

Guidance for Validating Child Care Market Rate Surveys

Principle Investigator:

Deana Grobe

Project Funding Years:

2004-2007

Project Abstract:

An examination of how well market rate surveys assess the price of care in various types of communities, what methods validate market rate survey findings, and the effects of child care subsidies on the larger child care market. Multiple data sources and data collection methods are used to assess validity, market representation, and cost effectiveness of market prices, including surveys of States, territories and tribes to assess current market rate survey practices and issues, and child care administrative data, census data, and employment data to explore the relationship between child care subsidies and the price of care. The project provides knowledge needed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of surveys whose findings guide a major investment in America's children and families.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12386/related>

University of Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:
Mairead Reidy

Project Funding Years:
2004-2006

Project Abstract:

An analysis of subsidy use and employment and welfare outcomes among all low-income families in Illinois, Maryland, and Texas, with a focus on: (1) building individual-level linked administrative data from Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records within each state; (2) developing an eligibility model that takes account of income eligibility rules across states; and (3) matching individual-level 2000 decennial census and Supplemental Survey data from the Census Bureau with the state-linked databases. The project aims for a more comprehensive model of subsidy use that will allow policymakers to better estimate subsidy need, and to understand the relation between take-up patterns among different groups of low-income families and employment and welfare outcomes among low-income families. This study builds on Office of Child Care-funded research demonstrating that the child care subsidy plays an important role in supporting family self-sufficiency by increasing employment among current and former TANF recipients.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12407/related>

University of Kentucky

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:
Beth Rous

Project Funding Years:
2004-2007

Project Abstract:

A study building on the current evaluation of the state KIDS NOW Initiative by conducting research investigating the degree to which a statewide unified professional development system impacts the educational level of early care and education providers and subsequent classroom quality. The influence of

these indicators were examined to determine their impact on child outcomes. The research design includes a multi-site, mixed-methods design with 213 centers, 265 classrooms and teachers that represent three types of classroom settings (child care, Head Start, and state preschool). Child level outcome data were collected on 357 4-year-old children across settings. The primary objectives of this research is to: (1) determine the degree to which a unified professional development system developed at the state level results in positive child outcomes, and (2) the degree to which educational level of early care and education providers enhances the quality of classroom environments.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12409/related>

University of Missouri—Columbia

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:

Sara Gable

Project Funding Years:

2004-2006

Project Abstract:

An assessment of the impact of Missouri's Workforce Incentive Project (WIN) on workforce development and child care quality. Using data already collected as part of the 4-year evaluation of the WIN program, this project extends the data analyses longitudinally for comparison between 503 participants of WIN and 376 non-participants who were followed over two years at 4-month intervals. Measures include turnover, professional development, and child care quality. The study informs policy and program choices about individual and program characteristics that motivate child care providers to attain additional education and training, and the efficacy of cash incentives for increasing workforce development and child care program quality.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12414/related>

University of Nebraska--Lincoln, Center on Children, Families, and the Law

Project Title:

Midwest Child Care Research Consortium

Principle Investigator:

Helen Raikes

Project Funding Years:

2004-2007

Project Abstract:

A study that undertakes four tasks:

(1) piloting and validating four linked state child care Quality Rating Systems (QRS); (2) identifying what training providers at different levels in the QRS select; (3) measuring the effects of training on child care quality; and (4) assessing provider attitudes about professional development, and parent attitudes about quality ratings. Methods include interviews and observations involving four hundred child care centers and family child care homes, 600 classrooms, 2,200 child care providers, and 200 child care center directors in 8 randomly selected communities (1 rural and 1 urban community from each state), in addition to interviews and focus groups with subsidy-receiving and non-subsidy receiving parents. The study informs child care policy and program choices about investments in child care quality and provider training and professional development, and outcomes that relate to alternative child care subsidy policies.

Project Publications and Resources:

<http://researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/12418/related>

Urban Institute

Project Title:

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

Principle Investigator:

Gina Adams

Project Funding Years:

2004-2005

Project Abstract:

An examination of the role and relative importance of provider and program

characteristics that influence quality of care offered by child care providers, and an exploration of whether these differ for providers receiving subsidies. The project augments existing quantitative and qualitative provider data collected in five communities. A total of 417 center directors and 536 family child care providers, caring for children under age five for at least 40 hours per week, are included in a sample of subsidized and unsubsidized programs. A second project phase examines how these factors play a role in decision-making as providers decide how to allocate resources related to program quality. The study informs policy and program choices about: how provider, market, community, and subsidy policy factors shape the quality of child care; the relative importance of these factors; and whether the factors and their relative importance differ for providers receiving voucher-based child care subsidies.

Wellesley College

Project Title:

Massachusetts Early Care and Education and School Readiness Study

Principle Investigator:

Wendy W. Robeson

Project Funding Years:

2004-2008

Project Abstract:

An assessment of the impact of varying hours of early care and education on children's school readiness, and the specific factors in both infant and preschool classrooms that promote school readiness, using two samples: one group of 236 children attending child care centers that have been followed since infancy; and another group of 160 children attending child care centers primarily serving low-income families. The project measures the following school readiness outcomes:

(a) language development and communication; (b) cognition and general knowledge, including early math, social and emotional development; (c) approaches to learning; and (d) health and physical development. The study informs policy and program choices about standards for infant and preschool early care and education, the education and training of early care and education professionals, hours of care for young children, and the processes that improve school readiness among young children at risk.