

Child Care Research Scholars: 2010 Grantees

Scholar:

Mary Elizabeth Corrington

Project Title:

Child Development at the Intersection of Early Care and Education and Child Welfare

Mentor:

Deborah Phillips

Project Funding Years:

2010 – 2012

University Affiliation:

Georgetown University

Project Abstract:

Despite growing empirical interest surrounding the effects of both child welfare and early childhood education on the development of at-risk children, there is a dearth of research at the critical nexus of these two early childhood systems. Children whose lives are affected by both systems have been overlooked in research agendas that focus on one or the other. Nonetheless, understanding factors that either promote or hinder collaboration between these systems is essential to successfully achieving their common goal: promoting the health and well-being of vulnerable young children.

The proposed study represents the launch of a new program of inquiry aimed at addressing this gap in empirical work by providing detailed descriptive data about the ECE arrangements experienced by young children (birth to five years) who become involved with the child welfare system. Specifically, it will draw upon national, and state (Illinois and Maryland) level data to address four objectives:

- 1. To provide descriptive data on the ECE experienced by young foster children, specifically the timing (age of entry), amount, and type of ECE; and to uncover any systematic differences in these patterns of ECE exposure by child or foster parent demographics;*
- 2. To examine the contribution of foster parents' work status, access to public ECE supports, and preferences about ECE use to patterns of reliance on ECE;*

3. *To explore initial associations between different patterns of ECE use and cognitive and social-emotional outcomes for children in foster care;*
4. *To examine all of these questions separately for the subpopulation of children involved with the child welfare system who also have special needs.*

This work is predicated on the notion that given the dearth of research at the intersection of these two early childhood systems, a descriptive approach is paramount. It is hoped that the descriptive data gleaned from this study will provide a rich empirical foundation, which will inform future inferential work. Ultimately, this program of research will provide critical insight into improving the services and supports available to our nation's most vulnerable young children at the intersection of the two systems charged with protecting and promoting their health and well-being.

*Scholar:
Colleen F. Manning*

*Project Title:
Occupational Exit of Family Child Care Providers*

*Mentor:
Randy Albelda*

*Project Funding Years:
2010 – 2011*

*University Affiliation:
University of Massachusetts Boston*

*Project Abstract:
This study will incorporate care work and systems psychology theories to investigate occupational exit among family child care providers. Using regression analyses, the study will explore how provider demographics, provider human capital, family child care program characteristics, and working conditions shape providers' intentions to stop providing child care. The analysis will rely on individual-level quantitative data for more than 5,000 providers from six state family child care workforce surveys conducted between 2000 and 2008 in Colorado, Maine, New York, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia. Surveys will be supplemented with state-level variables constructed from national and state child care documents and plans. Descriptive analyses and OLS regression analyses will be utilized, with separate models predicting occupational exit for each state, and for each provider motivation*

for leaving child care (e.g., to go back to school, to get a job with better pay/benefits with the child care field, burnout). Results are expected to inform workforce development and compensation and retention initiatives.

*Scholar:
Amber Moodie-Dyer*

*Project Title:
Through the Cracks: Child Care Decision-Making Among the Working Poor*

*Mentor:
Colleen Galambos*

*Project Funding Years:
2010 – 2011*

*University Affiliation:
The Curators of the University of MO*

*Project Abstract:
This study seeks to understand what factors influence parents' decisions about child care by asking how barriers and opportunities influence parental child care selection criteria, satisfaction with child care quality, and the continuity of care for children. A survey will be distributed to working poor parents in Missouri to assess the barriers and opportunities they encounter when choosing and maintaining quality child care. The project will be carried out by an interdisciplinary community team with representatives from university, state, and private organizations. OLS regression will be used to analyze the relationship between barriers/opportunities with parental selection criteria, satisfaction with quality of care, and continuity of care.*

*Scholar:
Katherine E. Speirs*

*Project Title:
Understanding and Strengthening Low-Income Parent-Child Care Provider Partnerships*

*Mentor:
Elaine A. Anderson*

*Project Funding Years:
2010 – 2011*

*University Affiliation:
University of Maryland*

Project Abstract:

Using a qualitative approach, I am investigating low-income mothers' and center-based care providers' partnerships. Specifically, I address the following questions: (1) How do low-income mothers and center-based child care providers understand and create parent-provider partnerships? Specifically, what strategies do they employ to create partnerships and what barriers do they encounter? (2) How does child care subsidy policy shape parent-provider partnerships? (3) How do parent-provider partnerships help low-income mothers maintain stable employment? The study's qualitative approach includes observations in two child care centers and in-depth interviews with low-income mothers, child care providers, and center directors. Observations take place during times when parents are present in the center (e.g., morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times), and interviews will include two center directors, 15-20 providers, and 30-40 parents.

*Scholar:
Colleen K. Vesely*

Project Title:

Child Care Decision-making, Subsidy Use, and the Development of Economic Self-sufficiency among Immigrant Parents of Young Children

*Mentor:
Kevin Roy*

*Project Funding Years:
2010 – 2011*

*University Affiliation:
University of Maryland*

Project Abstract:

This study will utilize an ethnographic approach to elucidate the child care experiences of 40 immigrant parents living in Washington, DC and Virginia who are engaged with the ECCE system. Specifically, the study seeks to address the following questions: (1) How do low-income immigrant parents of preschool-age children learn to navigate the U.S. ECCE system? (2) How do they utilize ECCE, child care subsidies and other governmental supports to promote their economic self-sufficiency and to support their parenting? In-depth interviews as well as observations will be conducted with immigrant parents living in northern Virginia and Washington, DC, hailing from both

Latin America (n=20) and Africa (n=20). Data will be analyzed using a grounded theory approach in which three waves of coding will be conducted: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The findings from this study will provide practitioners, state administrators, policy makers, and researchers with a greater understanding of how immigrant families interface with the U.S. ECCE system, and how this system supports these families' experiences with economic self-sufficiency.