ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OFFICE OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Child and Family Development Research

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Administration for Children and Families

http://www.acf.hhs.gov

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is responsible for Federal programs that promote the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals and communities. ACF aims to foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership, and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services. The 2014 ACF strategic priorities include:

- Promote economic, health, and social well-being for individuals, families and communities;
- Promote healthy development and school readiness for children, especially for those in low-income families and other special populations;
- Promote safety and well-being of children, youth, and families;
- Support underserved and underrepresented populations; and
- Upgrade the capacity of the Administration for Children and Families to make a difference for families and communities.

Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

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The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) in ACF serves as principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families on increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of programs designed to improve the economic and social well-being of children and families. In collaboration with ACF program offices and others, OPRE is responsible for ACF performance management, conducting research and policy analyses and developing and overseeing research and evaluation projects to assess program performance and inform policy and practice. OPRE also provides guidance, analysis, technical assistance and oversight to ACF programs on strategic planning; performance measurement; research and evaluation methods; statistical, policy and program analysis and synthesis and dissemination of research and demonstration findings.

A central focus of OPRE's research and evaluation is developing reliable knowledge of the effectiveness of different programmatic strategies in order to inform programmatic and policy choices, with a particular focus on testing innovative approaches used by States, Tribes, communities and service organizations in major program areas, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start, child care and child welfare. Moving more families from welfare to work, persistence and progression in employment, marriage and family formation and the well-being and development of children are major focal areas. OPRE includes the Division of Economic Independence, the Division of Child and Family Development and the Division of Family Strengthening. A cross-cutting Performance Management Team leads ACF-wide efforts to plan, monitor and improve program performance.

OPRE's research and evaluation projects are conducted primarily through grants and contracts, and include collaboration with ACF program offices; HHS's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and evaluation (ASPE); other Federal entities and State, Tribal and community partners.

Child and Family Development Research and Evaluation

OPRE's Division of Child and Family Development (DCFD) is responsible for research and evaluation related to Head Start programs, early childhood development, childcare, dual language learners, child maltreatment, and child welfare services.

OPRE's research in the area of child and family development focuses on young children, mothers, families, and youth.

DCFD invests in rigorous research and evaluation on child and family development topics and disseminates findings to a diverse range of stakeholders, including federal and state policy-makers, program administrators, re- searchers, and intermediary organizations. DCFD funds experimental impact evaluations, process and implementation evaluations, descriptive and theory-building research projects, and measure development aimed at informing the design and implementation of programs and improving our ability to capture outcomes. OPRE also invests in building capacity in the research and evaluation community to answer policy-relevant questions.

DCFD works in close partnership with a number of other offices, including, among others:

- In ACF:
  - The Office of Head Start;
  - The Office of Child Care;
  - The Children's Bureau; and
  - The Office of Early Childhood Development;
- In HHS:
  - The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation;
  - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration;
  - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
  - The Health Resources and Services Administration; and
  - The National Institutes of Health;
- In the Department of Education:
  - The Institute for Education Sciences;
  - The Office of Early Learning;
  - The Office of Special Education; and
  - The Office of English Language Acquisition.

DCFD also disseminates findings to a diverse range of stakeholders, including federal and state policy-makers, program administrators, researchers, and intermediary organizations.

The following pages describe major OPRE/DCFD projects in Fiscal Year 2014.

Child Care: Raising Quality and Supporting Parental Employment

A growing body of research demonstrating the link between early care and education and positive child and family outcomes has encouraged efforts to promote and improve early care and education programs. Early care and education programs serve as resources for families, supporting young children's development in a variety of domains, assisting parents, and providing comprehensive services for children and their families. Research in this area focuses on early learning education standards, improving quality in care settings, innovative interventions, and supporting parental employment through access to high quality health care. This section contains descriptions of some of the completed and ongoing studies, initiatives, and areas of interest in this portfolio.

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Policies Database

The CCDF Policies Database informs the Fund's child care subsidy programs. Since 2008, the Database has collected, coded, and disseminated CCDF policies for each state, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories and outlaying areas. It captures detailed information on eligibility, family payments, application procedures, and provider-related policies, including dates of enactment and some of the policy variations that exist within states/territories. The project disseminates information in different forms to meet the needs of various users—quantitative and qualitative researchers, policymakers, and administrators at all levels of government. Data tables from the Policies Database were published in the fall of 2014.

Child Care Administrative Data Analysis Cooperative Agreements

Child Care Administrative Data Analysis Cooperative Agreements support Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies in conducting rigorous, policy-relevant research that analyzes child care administrative data. Grantees pursue research questions of national and state relevance and develop their methodology and research questions in partnership with local and state child care researchers and other stakeholders. Results from these research projects will speak to the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives in supporting employment and self-sufficiency outcomes for parents, increasing low-income families' access to high-quality programs and promoting positive learning and school readiness outcomes for children. These projects will also inform the field at large on the analysis of administrative data.

Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis (CCEEPRA)

The Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis (CCEEPRA) project provides expert advice, assistance, and consultation to researchers and policymakers. It conducts assessments, analyses and summaries of policies, practices, and research relevant to the Administration for Children and Families, informing OPRE's research priorities. CCEEPRA also identifies and refines measures and instruments to improve data collection and convenes early care and education experts conducting research relevant to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and other early childhood programs and systems in States, Territories, and Tribes. This contract supports the production of literature reviews, measures compendia, meeting summaries, briefing papers, webinars, research briefs, and research-to-policy/research-to-practice briefs. Examples of published reports include Best Practices in Ensuring Data Quality in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), Child Care Subsidy Literature Review, and INQUIRE Data Toolkit.

The Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC)

The Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC) meets annually and in topical workgroups throughout the year to bring together researchers, policymakers and administrators to discuss relevant issues and research findings in the field of early childhood education. The CCPRC consists of grantees and contractors who have worked on research projects and ACF-funded partnerships. The Consortium helps ACF increase national capacity for sound child care research, identify and respond to critical issues, plan future projects, and link child care research with policy and practice.

Child Care Policy Research Grants

The Child Care Policy Research Grants facilitate partnerships between institutions and public child care agencies to address research questions that are relevant to current policy work.

Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)

The Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) project has developed a number of briefs and reports that guide state administrators and researchers as they implement and evaluate their systems, including an evaluation toolkit and several evaluation case studies.

Child Care Research Scholars Grants

The Child Care Research Scholars Grants program supports dissertation research on child care policy issues in partnership with State Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies, and builds capacity in the field to focus research on questions that inform child care policy decision-making.

Head Start and Early Head Start: A National Laboratory for Early Childhood Research

Head Start research over the past decade has provided valuable information not only for guiding program improvements in Head Start itself, but also the larger field of early childhood programming and development. Dozens of Head Start programs have collaborated with researchers in making significant contributions in terms of program innovation and evaluation, as well as the use of systematic data collection, analysis and interpretation in program operations.

Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System (DRS)

In the fall of 2011, the Office of Head Start (OHS) significantly expanded its accountability provisions with the establishment of the Head Start Designation Renewal System (DRS). In response to requirements in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, the DRS determines whether Head Start and Early Head Start grantees are providing high quality comprehensive services for children and families. Where they are not, grantees are denied automatic renewal of their grant and must apply for funding renewal through an open competition process. Three categories—service quality, licensing and operations, and fiscal and internal controls—inform the DRS's determinations. In 2012, DCFD launched an evaluation of the DRS to examine how the system is meeting its goals. The project will assess the validity of the DRS and its role in improving quality in Head Start and Early Head Start.

Early Learning Mentor Coach (ELMC) Study

The Early Learning Mentor Coach (ELMC) Study examines the impact of professional development grants for which Head Start programs apply. ELMC funds are supposed to pay mentor coaches to provide on-the-job guidance, technical assistance and training to classroom teaching staff, home visitors and family child care providers who work in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The overall goal of the coaching is to improve staff qualifications and training, assist grantees to promote sustained outcomes for children, and promote career development among Head Start staff.

Head Start Coaching Study: Design Phase

The Head Start Coaching Study: Design Phase project will develop designs for a studying of coaching within the context of Head Start professional development systems. Coaching is a common mechanism through which the early care and education workforce accesses professional development services. The content and goals of coaching vary by mentee/mentor, programmatic need, and model used. Theories about the mechanisms for changing teacher/staff skills and knowledge also vary. This project identifies the key elements of coaching that result in improvements in early childhood teachers' skills. A report on the project will be available in the fall of 2014.

Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES)

The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) is a periodic survey of a nationally representative sample of Head Start Children that provides descriptive information on the characteristics, experiences and outcomes of Head Start children and families, as well as the characteristics of the Head Start programs that serve them. The most recent survey began in the fall of 2009, and tracked a sample children from entry intro Head Start through the end of Kindergarten.

Head Start Family Voices Pilot Study

The purpose of this study is to help ACF better understand the experiences and perspectives of families and staff participating in Head Start and Early Head Start, particularly around the topic of family engagement. This study is meant to develop and pilot test qualitative questionnaires on a sample of Head Start and Early Head Start families and staff that can be included in future large scale studies.

Head Start Graduate Student Research Program

The Head Start Graduate Student Research grant program builds research capacity in and knowledge of effective early childhood interventions with low-income children and families. The grant program does this by providing support for dissertation research of graduate students working in partnership with local Head Start or Early Head Start programs. Many former grantees have become leading researchers who continue to conduct research that informs and improves Head Start/Early Head Start, other early childhood intervention practices, and our understanding of low-income populations.

Head Start Leadership, Excellence, and Data Systems (HS LEADS) / School Readiness Goals and Head Start Program Functioning

The Head Start Leadership, Excellence, and Data Systems (HS LEADS) project is developing a literature review and conceptual model to describe key factors in management systems that promote effective early childhood practice. The project will support a small set of case studies of programs that use data effectively. The information developed through these efforts will be used to publish a resource guide to help Head Start programs improve their use of data and organizational systems. This guide and a final report will be published later this fall.

The School Readiness Goals and Head Start Program Functioning project will generate knowledge about how Head Start grantees develop and utilize school readiness goals. The project will include a study of the processes used to define, measure, and prioritize goals. This study will examine the mechanisms programs use to communicate goals, and how they use data to inform program planning. A report on instrument development will be published this fall.

Research Center to Support Secondary Analyses of Head Start Impact Study Data

DCFD has funded a cooperative agreement to New York University for the Research Center to Support Secondary Analyses of Head Start Impact Study Data. The grant will support analyses to answer questions related to the characteristics of effective Head Start centers, classrooms, and teachers. The Center will strengthen understanding of the relationship between center, classroom, and teachers' characteristics and Head Start's impact, build a consortium of researchers conducting complementary studies, and facilitate the application of state-of-the-art analytic techniques in the analysis of the data.

Head Start University Partnership Grants: Dual-Generation Approaches

This initiative examines how Head Start can promote family health, safety, financial security, and school readiness. Researchers working in partnership with one or more Head Start programs lead these studies, evaluating promising dual-generation approaches, which combine child-focused programs with intensive adult-focused services to support both parent well-being and children's school readiness. Each grantee will study the implementation of a partnership and assess its effectiveness.

Head Start Health Manager Descriptive Survey

The Head Start Health Manager Descriptive Survey describes the characteristics of health managers and related staff in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. It also identifies the current land-scape of health programs and services for children and families, determines how health initiatives are prioritized, implemented, and sustained, and identifies the programmatic features and policy levers that exist to support health services, including staffing, environment, and community collaboration. A Health Manager Descriptive Survey report will be available late in 2014.

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Supplement to the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS)

The Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Supplement to the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) is a project on which DCFD has worked in conjunction with the Office of Head Start and the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to develop, pilot, and implement. This supplement will provide a demographic portrait of families who are currently accessing or eligible to access MSHS nationwide.

Early Head Start University Partnership Grants: Buffering Children from Toxic Stress

The Early Head Start University Partnership Grants: Buffering Children from Toxic Stress project has three goals: identify the children and families most vulnerable to stress, augment Early Head Start services with parenting interventions aimed at ameliorating the effects of chronic stress on children's development, and advance applied developmental neuroscience. Six grants will implement promising parenting interventions in Early Head Start settings to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable infants and toddlers. Additionally, the grantees, in collaboration with OPRE and Early Head Start, have identified common measures of risk and protective factors to assess across all of the projects. Results from this research will help build a cumulative knowledge base regarding the role Early Head Start can play in promoting parenting practices that buffer children from toxic stress.

Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES)

The Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES) provides descriptive information on a sample of Early Head Start programs and children. Baby FACES has five main goals: to provide descriptive information about Early Head Start services offered, to identify key characteristics of families currently served in Early Head Start, to investigate how programs individualize services to meet family needs, to learn how Early Head Start children and families are faring overtime, and to explore associations between the type of Early Head Start services provided and child and family well-being. A Baby FACES report on outcomes for 1-year-old children was recently published and a report on outcomes for 2- and 3-year-olds will be published in the fall of 2014.

SPOTLIGHT ON CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH: CLASSROOM-BASED APPROACHES AND RESOURCES FOR EMOTION AND SOCIAL SKILL PROMOTION (HEAD START CARES)

The **Head Start CARES** project is a large scale group randomized trial of three evi dence based social emotional program en hancements within Head Start classrooms. The project includes an impact and imple mentation study of the following enhance ments: Incredible Years Classroom Manage ment program, Pre school PATHS, and an adaptation of Tools of the Mind. Head Start CARES involves 17 Head Start grantees, 104 centers, 307 classrooms, 608 teachers and teaching assistants, and 3,927 three and four year old children. Data collection began in the spring of 2009, and kindergarten follow up data collection was completed in the spring of 2012. Impact results were published in 2014.

The project has attempted to answer the fol lowing questions:

- What is the effectiveness of specific so cial emotional programs or practices with in the Head Start population?
- Are specific social emotional programs or practices more or less effective for certain populations?
- What characteristics of Head Start set tings are necessary for effective imple mentation of different programs or prac-tices?
- What factors are related to training, tech nical assistance, implementation and fi delity of programs or practices within Head Start settings?

Head Start CARES intends to meet the needs of the national Office of Head Start (OHS) and local Head Start settings by specifically ad dressing the implementation, effectiveness, and improvement of program options and practices within the Head Start community. The research will provide OHS information regarding the conditions under which evi dence based practices can be implemented successfully within Head Start settings nation wide, as well as information that can be used in technical assistance efforts. In addition, the research will assist Head Start settings in de ciding which programs or practices are most likely to improve children s social emotional development, given characteristics of their particular setting. This research offers the field a resource that practitioners can use to make decisions about program options and practic-es. The Head Start CARES impact report for 4 year olds was published in the summer of 2014.

Promoting Child Welfare

The promotion of children's safety, permanence, and well-being are the principles that guide child welfare practice and policy. OPRE's child welfare research portfolio includes studies on children who have experienced or are at risk for maltreatment, families who are investigated by Child Protective Services, and children and families who access child welfare services. OPRE partners with the Children's Bureau to conduct research covering a broad array of topics, including identification of antecedents and consequences of child maltreatment, strategies for its prevention, and service needs and outcomes for children who experience it. This section contains descriptions of some of the completed and ongoing studies in this portfolio.

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW)

The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) is a nationally representative, longitudinal survey of children and families who have been the subjects of investigation by Child Protective Services. NSCAW examines data from first-hand reports of children, parents, and other caregivers, as well as reports from caseworkers, teachers, and administrative records data. The Survey examines child and family well-being outcomes in detail and seeks to relate those outcomes to experience with the child welfare system, as well as family characteristics, community environment, and other factors. Several NSCAW research briefs, Wave 3 data tables, and data spotlights were published during the past year.

Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs (Chafee Independent Living Evaluation Project)

In collaboration with the Children's Bureau, OPRE designs and conducts evaluations of selected programs funded through the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). The Foster Care Independence Act of1999 called for these evaluations, which use rigorous, random assignment designs. The goal is to determine the effects of CFCIP-funded Independent Living Programs in achieving key outcomes for participating youth, including increased educational attainment, higher employment rates and stability, greater interpersonal and relationship skills, reduced non-marital pregnancy and births, and reduced delinquency and crime rates. Four Chafee issue briefs on characteristics and impacts of services for youth transitioning out of foster care will be published in the fall of 2014.

Services for Youth Involved with Child Welfare Services and at Risk for Homelessness

In FY2013, the Children's Bureau awarded 18 two-year planning grants that will build the capacity of child welfare systems to prevent long-term homelessness among the most at-risk youth and young adults with child welfare involvement. After the two-year planning grant, a limited number of grants may be funded to implement the planned projects. A contract managed by OPRE is working with the grantees to implement strong models and to develop the capacity for rigorous evaluation.

National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS)

The fourth national incidence study of child abuse and neglect (NIS-4) was an outcome of the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003. The NIS studies have been conducted approximately once every decade, and provide national estimates of abused and neglected children with the principal objectives of tallying incidences of child abuse and neglect in the United States and measuring changes in occurrences from earlier studies. The NIS covers both reported and non-reported cases of maltreatment, employing uniform definitions, and using community 'sentinels' who are likely to encounter children in their work, including teachers and social service and health care personnel. Sentinel reports are unduplicated against official reports from Child Protective Services to create the estimates. Planning has begun for the next iteration of the NIS.

Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII) Evaluation

The Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII) is a multi-site federal demonstration project designed to improve outcomes among children in foster care who have the most serious barriers to permanency. This 5-year, $100 million initiative supports six grantees, each with a unique intervention to help a subgroup of children leave foster care in fewer than three years. PII aims to reduce long-term foster care stays, use an implementation framework that will guide technical assistance activities, rigorously evaluate these efforts, and disseminate findings to build knowledge in the child welfare field. OPRE, in collaboration with the Children's Bureau, provides oversight for a comprehensive evaluation of the initiative. A PII Evaluation Team is designing and conducting rigorous studies that document the implementation and effectiveness of projects that the initiative funds.

SPOTLIGHT ON CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MEASURE OF FAMILY AND PROVIDER/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP QUALITY (FPTRQ)

The **Family and Provider/Teacher Relation ship Quality (FPTRQ)** project developed new measures to assess the quality of family provider/teacher relationships in early care and education programs. The measures ex amine this relationship from both the parent and the provider/teacher perspectives, and capture important elements of family provider/ teacher relationships, such as attitudes of respect, commitment, and openness to adapt ing practices. The project aims to develop measures that are appropriate for use across different types of early care and education settings, including Head Start and Early Head Start programs, center based child care, pre k classrooms, and home based child care. In addition, a high priority of the project is to make the new measures culturally appropri ate for diverse populations, including lower income and higher income families, ethnical ly/racially diverse providers and families, and non English speaking families and providers. A FPTRQ user manual and instruments will be published later this year.

Tasks for the FPTRQ project include:

- reviewing literature on family and provider/ teacher relationships;
- formulating a conceptual model of the key components of family provider/teacher relationships that promote family engage ment and lead to better family, child and provider outcomes;
- studying existing measures;
- consulting with experts in relevant fields on possible content and format of the measures;
- holding focus groups with parents and providers/teachers, developing items, and piloting measures;
- developing final measures for extensive data collection in a variety of care set tings;
- conducting psychometric and cognitive testing to ensure the soundness of the measures;
- cultivating a sustainability plan regarding training on the measures and production of future editions of the measures as needed; and
- planning and executing cognitive testing of measures to assess the relationship quality between Family Service Workers and parents in Head Start/Early Head Start.

Recognizing Cultural Diversity

Although a variety of recent research projects have greatly advanced knowledge of child and family development, many of these works have not adequately accounted for the diversity of cultural elements (e.g. language) among families accessing federal resources. In order to better represent Hispanic, American Indian, Alaska Native, and other cultural minority or historically marginalized groups in studies geared toward improving policy and practice, DCFD has launched several projects that aim to expand the knowledge base and to improve resources for minority communities.

American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start FACES

Planning activities began in FY2014 that included DCFD, the Office of Head Start (OHS), Region XI American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start directors, researchers from the Tribal Early Childhood Research Center, and Mathematica Policy Research in developing a framework to include Region XI Head Start in the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES). ACF recognizes that the needs of tribal Head Start programs and communities are unique, and therefore necessitate intense collaboration among all stakeholders to ensure that the study will be informative to tribal Head Start directors, as well as OHS more broadly. The (AIAN) Head Start FACES Workgroup has been meeting since December 2013 to plan for the study's design.

Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual Language Learners (CECER: DLL)

The Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual Language Learners (CECER: DLL) advances the research field to improve assessment, child care, and education for dual language learners (DLLs) from birth through five years of age. The Center has completed multiple reviews of the DLL research literature, developed a conceptual framework to support future DLL work, and completed roundtables including leading DLL researchers.

National Center for Research on Hispanic Children & Families (NCRHCF)

The National Center for Research on Hispanic Children and Families (NCRHCF) conducts, translates, and provides research concerning three priority areas—poverty reduction and self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education—informing ACF programs and policies that support Hispanic families and children. The Center additionally has three primary goals: advancing a cutting-edge research agenda, building research capacity, and implementing an innovative communication and dissemination approach.

Hispanic Research Work Group

The Hispanic Research Work Group convenes experts around a range of content areas to identify research priorities concerning low-income, Hispanic families. The group consists primarily of researchers who have substantial experience working with and/or studying Hispanic communities in the U.S. The group also includes practitioners to help ground the discussions in service delivery opportunities and challenges. The group encourages open dialogue about ACF/OPRE's ongoing research and prioritizes future research that is more inclusive of and culturally responsive to Hispanic communities.

Human Services Research Partnerships: Puerto Rico

The Human Research Partnerships initiative expands understanding of the most promising human services approaches to improving quality of life in a region, focusing on topics related to the Head Start and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs. The Inter American University of Puerto Rico Metropolitan Campus (IAUPR) supports partnerships among researchers, local governments, and community-based organizations to define and address research questions regarding the social and economic well-being of low-income children and families.

Tribal Research Center on Early Childhood (TRC)

The Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC) seeks to partner with American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities, programs, practitioners, and researchers to advance research on young children's development and early childhood programs and to facilitate the translation of research findings to inform early childhood practice with AIAN children and families.

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) CARES

The Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) CARES case study was a companion study to the Head Start CARES ("Classroom-based Approaches and Resources for Emotion and Social skill promotion") report. MSHS CARES studied the adaptation and implementation of an existing evidence-based, social-emotional curriculum (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies, or Preschool PATHS) to meet the needs of children and families of migrant and seasonal workers. This project provided information about methods for delivering social-emotional programs in MSHS settings, as well as findings and lessons that can inform curriculum developers and practitioners interested in adapting other program models for use in MSHS settings and with other populations. A report on the project was completed in the summer of 2014.

Report to Congress on Dual Language Learners in Head Start

The Report to Congress on Dual Language Learners in Head Start has used existing data from sources like FACES, the Head Start Impact Study, and the Early Head Start Evaluation to describe this large and growing Head Start population and to begin to identify areas for further intervention and research. The report is now being updated with more recent FACES and Baby FACES data.

SPOTLIGHT ON CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH: NATIONAL SURVEY OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (NSECE)

The **National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)** will document the nation's current utilization and availability of early care and education (including school age care), in order to deepen the understanding of families' experiences with childcare services and of the characteristics of early care and education services in the U.S. The survey focuses on low income families because they are a significant component of early care and education/school aged (ECE/SA) public policy. The NSECE was conducted with nationally representative samples of parents and of programs, and included interviews in all fifty states and Washington, DC. The first NSECE brief was published in the summer of 2014, and others will be available later in 2014 and 2015. In addition, the data will be available for secondary analysis beginning late in 2014.

The NSECE design includes five survey components and four related questionnaires:

- A Household Survey for parents or guardians of children younger than 13 years;
- A Home based Provider Survey for formal providers who offer regulated or registered home based care and informal home based providers who care for children under age 13 who are not their own;
- A Center Based Provider Survey for directors of ECE/SA programs who can be identified from state level administrative lists, such as state licensing lists; and
- A Workforce Provider Survey for classroom assigned staff members of Center based providers who complete the Center

Potential analyses questions from the NSECE include:

- How do families search for care? How does this vary by the ages of children, characteristics of parents, locations, and availability of licensed slots per population?
- How and how much do families pay for care?
- How do family ECE prices relate to family and community income?
- How does the type of ECE used relate to employment and other work related activities (e.g., education and training)?
- How do subsidized and unsubsidized providers compare? How do characteristics of care vary between low and middle income communities?
- What are the ages, levels of education, experiences, attitudes towards children and parents, wages and benefits, and bilingual skills of members of the ECE workforce?
- What are care providers' sources of funds and costs of operation?

Cross-Cutting Early Childhood Research

In addition to research that falls clearly within the program areas of Head Start, child care, or child welfare, DCFD sponsors projects focused on issues facing low-income children and families who may be served in a variety of settings. These cross-cutting projects may examine populations that multiple ACF programs serve, studies that have several foci, or research methodology that supports high-quality evaluations across OPRE's work.

Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE)

The Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE) facilitates the exchange of information related to research and evaluations of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and other quality initiatives. INQUIRE has supported the development and production of multiple briefs related to QRIS/QI research and evaluation for stakeholders at the state and national level. INQUIRE members, including researchers in early childhood quality and systemic approaches to quality improvement, determine the Consortium's work and priorities annually.

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections (RC)

Child Care & Early Education Research Connections (RC) promotes high-quality research in child care and early education and the use of research findings in policymaking. This easy-to-use Web site offers a free, comprehensive, and up-to-date collection of scholarly research, policy briefs, government reports, data sets, and instruments from a wide range of disciplines and sources. Interactive tools allow users to refine searches, download full text documents, build customized tables, and analyze research data online. RC also compiles bibliographies, develops issue briefs, synthesizes research on key topics, and hosts data-training workshops.

Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Study (EHS-CC)

The Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships Study will offer a comprehensive review and theory of change model for understanding EHS-Child Care partnerships. The study will identify constructs, including purpose, goals, and key characteristics of partnerships, supports necessary for their success, and challenges or barriers they face. This work will provide the framework for studying the implementation of ACF's EHS-CC Partnerships program, as well as inform future or existing studies or data collections of childcare partnerships nationwide. Preliminary findings from the literature review and a theory of change/conceptual model were published in 2014.

The Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers (NITR)

The Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers (NITR) answers questions concerning children's first three years of life by bringing together researchers interested in policy and practice that pertain to infants and toddlers. NITR members collaborate to identify relevant existing research and translate it for a variety of audiences. NITR builds capacity by facilitating networking and coordination among the participants to conduct future research that will inform programs. NITR members include staff from OPRE and other ACF/HHS agencies, researchers in academia, and contractors that are working on issues related to the first three years of life.

Assessing Early Childhood Teachers' Use of Child Progress Monitoring to Individualize Teaching Practices

This contract will support the development of a literature review, a conceptual model, and a plan for measuring teachers' use of progress monitoring to support children's early development. The literature review will summarize research on progress monitoring approaches in early childhood and other contexts. The conceptual model will articulate the theoretical relations between key constructs underlying progress monitoring. The measurement plan included in the literature review will outline key constructs, define relevant terms and mechanisms, and propose options for measurement that would be feasible in a variety of early childhood contexts.

Quality Features, Dosages and Thresholds, and Child Outcomes: Study Design (Q-Dot)

This project examines associations between the quality of early care and education settings and child outcomes, asking whether certain thresholds of quality or dosage need to be met or particular aspects of quality need to be present before these associations are apparent. The study will also consider the interrelationships of these factors and their relevance to children ages 0-5 participating in center-based care settings. A special focus of the project is children from low-income families, including those with risk factors affecting their school readiness.

Use of Technology in Early Care and Education

This review aims to understand and assess how technology can support and improve the quality of practices of early childhood professionals who work directly with children and families through better individualization of services, as well as through the professional development of direct services staff. The project includes a review of literature—both research studies and documents prepared by professional organizations—as well as conversations with experts in the field who have developed innovative approaches that utilize technology to improve early childhood practices. A Use of Technology report will be published in the fall of 2014.

Executive Function (EF) Mapping Project: Translating Research for Application

The Executive Function Mapping Project is a comprehensive "map" of the executive functioning (EF), effortful control (EC), and regulation literatures that connects technical and applied definitions of EF, EC, and regulation during childhood. The project explores the conceptual and developmental issues of EF, EC, and regulation across childhood and provides implications and/or recommendations for practice and policy.

Head Start's 12th National Research Conference on Early Childhood

Head Start's Biennial National Research Conference on Early Childhood provides a venue for the presentation of cutting-edge research that examines the needs of low income families with young children and the effectiveness of program services. The theme for 2014 was Early Childhood Collaboration and Coordination: Understanding Systems Supporting Young Children and Their Families. The Conference supports the dialogue between researchers, policymakers and practitioners. This conversation strengthens services for young children, brings the latest information to those establishing the national policies for low-income families, and contributes to the development of a meaningful research agenda in the early care and education field.

Learning from Assessment (LFA) Toolkit

The Learning from Assessment (LFA) Toolkit is a resource designed to support Head Start directors, managers, and teaching staff, as well as those in other early care and education (ECE) programs, in improving the well-being of the diverse group of children and families they serve. A goal of the LFA Toolkit is to help managers feel empowered to lead assessment activities that benefit their programs and their children, and to engage in data-informed policy discussions that affect Head Start or other ECE programs. The LFA Toolkit will be published through Head Start's Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center in the fall of 2014.

Development of a Measure of the Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT)

DCFD currently oversees the development of a new measure that will assess the quality of child-care settings, specifically the quality of caregiver-child interactions. The Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) will evaluate caregivers' responsiveness while accounting for the developmental levels of children from birth to three years old. Researchers will be able to apply Q-CCIIT to a variety of child care settings, including center-based and family child care homes, as well as both single- and mixed-aged classrooms. The Q-CCIIT's key tasks are evaluating the quality of child-adult interactions and care settings for infants and toddlers, demonstrating a measure to assess child-caregiver interaction, and conducting psychometric testing to ensure the soundness of the measure for diverse populations and settings. A Q-CCITT report on instrument development and field testing will be published in the fall of 2014.

Links to Projects and Reports

Child Care: Raising Quality and Supporting Parental Employment

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Policies Database
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-and-development-fund-ccdf-policies-database-2008-2013

Child Care Administrative Data Analysis Cooperative Agreements
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-administrative-data-analysis-cooperative-agreements

Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis (CCEEPRA)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-and-early-education-policy-and-research-and-technical

The Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC)
http://www.researchconnections.org/content/childcare/federal/ccprc.html

Child Care Policy Research Grants
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-research-partnerships

Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/child-care-quality-rating-and-improvement-systems-approaches-to-0

Child Care Research Scholars Grants
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-research-scholars

Head Start and Early Head Start: A National Laboratory for Early Childhood Research

Evaluation of the Head Start Designation Renewal System (DRS)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/evaluation-of-the-head-start-designation-renewal-system-drs

Early Learning Mentor Coach (ELMC) Study
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/early-learning-mentor-coach-study-elmc

Head Start Coaching Study: Design Phase
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-coaching-study-design-phase

Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces

Head Start Family Voices Pilot Study
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-family-voices-pilot-study

Head Start Graduate Student Research Program
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-graduate-student-research-program

Head Start Leadership, Excellence, and Data Systems (HS LEADS) /
School Readiness Goals and Head Start Program Functioning
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-leadership-excellence-and-data-systems-hs-leads
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/school-readiness-goals-and-head-start-program-functioning

Research Center to Support Secondary Analyses of Head Start Impact Study Data
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/research-center-to-support-secondary-analyses-of-head-start-impact-study

Head Start University Partnership Grants: Dual-Generation Approaches
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-university-partnership-grants-dual-generation-approaches

Health Managers Descriptive Study
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-health-managers-descriptive-study

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Supplement to the National Agricultural Workers' Survey (NAWS)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/migrant-and-seasonal-head-start-supplement-to-the-national-agricultural

Early Head Start University Partnership Grants: Buffering Children from Toxic Stress
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/early-head-start-university-partnership-grants-buffering-children-from

Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study (Baby FACES)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/early-head-start-family-and-child-experiences-study-baby-faces

Spotlight on Child and Family Development Research: Classroom-Based Approaches and Resources for Emotion and Social Skill Promotion (Head Start CARES)

Classroom-Based Approaches and Resources for Emotion and Social Skill Promotion (Head Start CARES)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-cares-head-start-classroom-based-approaches-and-resources-for

Promoting Child Welfare

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/national-survey-of-child-and-adolescent-well-being-nscaw-no-20-adverse-child

Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs (Chafee Independent Living Evaluation Project)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/multi-site-evaluation-of-foster-youth-programs-chafee-independent-living

Services for Youth Involved with Welfare Services and at Risk for Homelessness
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/building-capacity-to-evaluate-interventions-for-youth-with-child-welfare-involvement-at-risk-of-homelessness

National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/national-incidence-study-of-child-abuse-and-neglect-nis-4-2004-2009

Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII) Evaluation
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/permanency-innovations-initiative-pii-evaluation

Spotlight on Child and Family Development Research: The Development of a Measure of Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality

Family and Provider/Teacher Relationship Quality (FPTRQ)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/development-of-a-measure-of-family-and-provider-teacher-relationship-quality-fptrq

Recognizing Cultural Diversity

American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start FACES
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/american-indian-alaska-native-head-start-research-center-2005-2011

Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual Language Learners (CECER: DLL)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/center-for-early-care-and-education-research-dual-language-learners

National Center for Research on Hispanic Children & Families (NCRHCF)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/center-for-research-on-hispanic-children-families

Hispanic Research Work Group
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/hispanic-research-work-group

Human Services Research Partnerships: Puerto Rico
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/human-services-research-partnerships-puerto-rico

Tribal Research Center on Early Childhood (TRC)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/tribal-research-center-on-early-childhood-under-the-affordable-care-acts

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) CARES
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/head-start-cares-for-migrant-and-seasonal-families-adapting-a-preschool-social-emotional-curriculum

Report to Congress on Dual Language Learners in Head Start
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/report-to-congress-on-dual-language-learners-in-head-start-and-early-head

Spotlight on Child and Family Development Research: National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)

National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-nsece-2010-2014

Cross-Cutting Early Childhood Research

Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE)
http://www.researchconnections.org/content/childcare/federal/inquire.html

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections (RC)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/child-care-and-early-education-research-connections

Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships Study
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/early-head-start-child-care-partnerships-study

Assessing Early Childhood Teachers' Use of Child Progress Monitoring to Individualize Teaching Practices
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/early-childhood-teachers-use-of-progress-monitoring-to-individualize

Quality Features, Dosages and Thresholds and Child Outcomes: Study Design (Q-Dot)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/quality-features-dosages-and-thresholds-and-child-outcomes-study-design-q

Use of Technology in Early Care and Education
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/head-start-use-of-technology

Executive Function (EF) Mapping Project: Translating Research for Application
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/cognitive-control-executive-functions-in-young-children-relevance-of-what

Head Start's 12th National Research Conference on Early Childhood
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/events/head-starts-national-research-conference-research-on-young-children-and

Learning from Assessment (LFA) Toolkit
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Ongoing%20Assessment/lfa.html

Development of a Measure of the Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT)
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/research/project/development-of-a-measure-of-the-quality-of-caregiver

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