



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

# Child & Family Development

FY2019



# Child & Family Development

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*Author:*

Mason Kelly, Contract Research Assistant to the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation with Business Strategy Consultants

*Submitted to:*

Mary Bruce Webb, Ph.D.

Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation  
Administration for Children and Families  
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## ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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.

### ACF programs aim to:

- Empower families and individuals to increase their economic independence and productivity
- Encourage strong, healthy, supportive communities that have a positive impact on quality of life and the development of children
- Create partnerships with front-line service providers, states, localities and tribal communities to identify and implement solutions that transcend traditional program boundaries
- Improve access to services through planning, reform and integration
- Address the needs, strengths and abilities of vulnerable populations including people with developmental disabilities, refugees and migrants

## OFFICE OF PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND EVALUATION

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) studies ACF programs and the populations they serve through rigorous research and evaluation projects. These include evaluations of existing programs, evaluations of innovative approaches to helping low-income children and families, research syntheses, and descriptive and exploratory studies. OPRE aims to build and disseminate knowledge about effective approaches to helping low-income children and families. OPRE's research and evaluation projects are conducted primarily through grants and contracts, and include collaboration with ACF programs offices, HHS's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), other Federal entities, and State, Tribal and community partners.

### OPRE includes four divisions:

- The Division of Economic Independence focuses on welfare, employment, and family self-sufficiency.
- The Division of Child and Family Development focuses on child care, Head Start, Early Head Start, and child abuse and neglect.
- The Division of Family Strengthening focuses on teen pregnancy prevention, youth development, healthy marriage, responsible fatherhood, family violence, runaway and homeless youth, and home visiting.
- The Division of Data and Improvement focuses on improving the quality, usefulness, sharing, and analysis of data on ACF programs.



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## 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, child maltreatment, and child welfare services. OPRE's research in the area of child and family development focuses on young children, parents and caregivers, families, and youth. Examples of recent focal areas include dual language learners, classroom quality, family engagement, and building workforce capacity.

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 policymakers, program administrators, researchers, 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. Over the past year, DCFD has worked with the Office of Head Start, the Office of Child Care, and the Children's Bureau to develop learning agendas that are aimed at building a culture of learning among program offices. DCFD 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 officers, 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;
- The 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

## ACF EVALUATION POLICY

ACF's Evaluation Policy, published in the Federal Register on August 29, 2014, articulates five major principles for conducting evaluations and using evidence to inform policy and practice:

- **Rigor:** ACF is committed to using the most rigorous methods that are appropriate for the evaluation questions, budget, and other constraints.
- **Relevance:** Evaluation priorities should take into account legislative requirements and Congressional interests and should reflect the interests and needs of ACF, HHS, and Administration leadership; program office staff and leadership; ACF partners such as states, territories, tribes, and local grantees; the populations served; researchers; and other stakeholders. Evaluations should be designed to represent the diverse populations that ACF programs serve.
- **Transparency:** ACF will make information about planned and ongoing evaluations easily accessible, typically through posting on the web information about the contractor or grantee conducting the work and descriptions of the evaluation questions, methods to be used, and expected timeline for reporting results.
- **Independence:** To promote objectivity, ACF protects independence in the design, conduct, and analysis of evaluations.
- **Ethics:** ACF-sponsored evaluations will be conducted in an ethical manner and safeguard the dignity, rights, safety and privacy of participants.

# CROSS-CUTTING EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH

DCFD sponsors projects that focus 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, may have several foci, or may develop research methodology that supports high-quality evaluations across OPRE's work.

## National Survey of Early Care and Education, 2012

The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) of 2012 documented the nation's utilization and availability of early care and education (including school age care), in order to deepen understanding of the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offerings and constraints in the United States. The survey oversampled low-income families because they are a significant focus of early care and education (ECE)/school-age public policy. The NSECE 2012 included five survey components and four related questionnaires, including: a Household Survey; a Home-based Provider Survey; a Center-based Provider Survey; and a Workforce Survey. Data were collected from nationally-representative samples of households with children under the age of 13, ECE programs serving children birth to age five, and staff in ECE programs working directly with children in all fifty states and Washington, D.C. A follow-up project implements enhancements to the NSECE 2012 data, provides technical assistance to data users, conducts analyses on the 2012 data, and disseminates restricted-use data.

The survey was conducted through a contract with NORC at the University of Chicago (Rupa Datta), subcontractors Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Child Trends, Berkeley Policy Associates, and Acumen LLC, and Co-PIs and consultants Lisa Gennetian, Ann Witte, Richard Brandon, Roberta Weber, Lee Kreader, and Deanna Schexnayder.

## National Survey of Early Care and Education, 2019

The National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) of 2019 will repeat the NSECE surveys implemented in 2012

with (1) child care and early education programs and providers serving families with children from birth through age five who are not yet in kindergarten; 2) the teachers and caregivers that work directly with young children; and (3) households with children from birth through age 13. Data collection is scheduled to happen between January and May of 2019.

These surveys of center- and home-based providers (both listed and unlisted) and the workforce will gather nationally representative information on the supply of child care and early education available to families across all income levels, with attention to generating a robust sample of providers serving low-income families of all racial, ethnic, language, and cultural backgrounds, in diverse geographic areas. Providers include programs that do or do not participate in the child care subsidy program, regulated, registered, or otherwise listed home-based providers, unlisted home-based providers, and center-based programs (e.g., private, community-based child care, Head Start, and state or local pre-K). The household survey with families with children ages birth through age 13-years will gather information about the characteristics of all adults in the family and all the children and will capture schedules of employment, training, and education of the adults and schedules of care used by the children, including all forms of non-parental care in center and homes. In addition, the NSECE 2019 will collect information in a manner that facilitates comparisons with data collected for the NSECE in 2012 and allows for examination of the changing landscape of child care and early education programs during that 7-year period and the interactions of demand and supply/utilization of non-parental care.

The NSECE 2019 is implemented through a contract with NORC at the University of Chicago, with partners from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Child Trends, and Mathematica Policy Research.

## Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions

This project is studying the relationship of initial child care and early education (CCEE) classroom process and/or domain-specific quality to intervention-induced changes in observed quality and children's outcomes through a rigorous experimental design. The study will provide the conditions to test the association between process/domain-specific quality and child outcomes above and below predetermined levels of quality. Questions about the quality-child outcomes relationship will be addressed in the context of an in-depth implementation study to understand the conditions necessary to plan, install, and implement an evidence-based intervention that will produce changes in process and/or domain-specific quality and in child outcomes in CCEE classrooms at different levels of initial quality. CCEE classrooms include those in Head Start and community-based child care serving children age birth through four years, not yet in kindergarten. In 2019, DCFD worked with the contractor for the project to successfully complete a pilot on the feasibility of implementation and the ability to assess impacts on quality for two quality interventions in the context of a rigorous experimental design. DCFD expects to move forward with the full study during FY2020.

This project is led by MDRC (JoAnn Hsueh as Principal Investigator) along with partners from the Abt Associates, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, and MEF Associates.

## Supporting the Sustainability of the Q-CCIIT Observational Tool

The Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) observation tool is a reliable and valid research-based observational tool that measures the quality of interactions between infants and toddlers and their caregivers in early care and education (ECE) settings. The Q-CCIIT observation tool measures the support that caregivers provide for social-emotional, language and literacy, and cognitive development and also identifies areas of concern. It is appropriate for use across ECE settings serving infants and toddlers, including center-based care and family child care homes, as

well as single and mixed age classrooms. The Q-CCIIT observation tool was developed by Mathematica and partners with funding from OPRE and the Office of Head Start.

In the Fall of 2018, ACF awarded a contract to Mathematica to develop a plan to support capacity and infrastructure-building activities intended to facilitate the long-term sustainability, proper use, and dissemination of the Q-CCIIT observation tool. As part of this project, Mathematica developed a plan to:

- Disseminate the Q-CCIIT widely to multiple audiences, for multiple purposes, and at a reasonable price;
- Develop a business model and associated infrastructure to provide the Q-CCIIT; and
- Support the integrity of the measure, protecting the Q-CCIIT copyright

Upon completion of the project in 2019, ACF provided Mathematica with a time-limited license to administer Q-CCIIT trainings and distribute the Q-CCIIT instrument in accordance with the plan they developed.

This project was led by Mathematica Policy Research (Ashley Kopack Klein as Project Director).

## Professional Development Tools to Improve Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infant and Toddler Care

The Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) observation tool was developed between 2010 and 2014 to assess the quality of caregiver-child interactions in non-parental care settings serving infants and toddlers. The Q-CCIIT PD Tools project included the design and implementation of a research-based professional development system called We Grow Together grounded in the principles and practices of the Q-CCIIT observation tool. As part of We Grow Together, teachers and caregivers work with their professional development providers (mentors, coaches, supervisors) using resources delivered on an interactive website. The resources include training videos, materials, and exercises targeting the same principles and practices assessed by the Q-CCIIT measure: support for socioemotional, language and literacy, and cognitive development. This project is examining the implementation of the We Grow Together professional development system with teachers

and caregivers of infants and toddlers and their professional development providers in Early Head Start, family child care, and community-based child care settings.

In particular, this project seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What tools and supports help early childhood professionals use We Grow Together’s responsive caregiving principles to improve caregiver-child interactions?
2. Can WGT be used by early childhood professionals to support change in beliefs, knowledge, or practice concerning infants and toddlers?

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Louisa Tarullo as Project Director, Shannon Monahan, and Sally Atkins-Burnett).

## Study of Coaching Practices in Early Care and Education Settings

To explore how coaching practices are implemented and vary in early care and education (ECE) classrooms serving children supported by Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies or Head Start grants, OPRE is sponsoring a project to advance understanding of how core features of coaching are implemented in ECE classrooms, how they may vary by key contextual factors, and which are ripe for more rigorous evaluation. The Coaching Study team has established an empirically supported conceptual model for how core coaching features may contribute to desired changes in teacher knowledge and practice. A set of surveys examining the prevalence and variation in these core features has been collected from a sample of coaches, center and family child care providers of seven states. The team is currently analyzing survey data to identify sites for 12 case studies to explore contextual drivers that shape coaching models.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Emily Moiduddin as Project Director).

## Creating a Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement in Child Care and Head Start Settings

The purpose of this project is to explore how child care

and Head Start programs can improve the quality of services received by young children, while institutionalizing continuous quality improvement activities. The project has designed and assessed the feasibility of implementation of a specific approach to continuous quality improvement — the Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) — to promote the uptake and success of evidence-based practices around social and emotional learning (SEL) in both child care and Head Start settings. In 2017, OPRE contracted with Child Trends and the team conducted a literature review, developed a theory of change framework, and designed a feasibility study with a measurement plan.

In 2018, a BSC was initiated to focus on supporting children’s SEL within seven ECE settings in an East Coast, urban area. Simultaneously, researchers have conducted a study to assess the feasibility of implementing a BSC in the early care and education context. An embedded case study design with data collection from multiple sources at multiple time points, across all phases of implementation of the BSC was implemented to learn about the overall cost of implementation, the organizational and individual characteristics that relate to feasibility, barriers related to feasibility, and the supports within the BSC that are associated with progress towards improvement. At the end of 2019, the project is in the final stages of data collection and is conducting analyses and preparing products for dissemination.

This project is led by Child Trends (Kathryn Tout as Principal Investigator, Tamara Halle as co-PI) along with partnership from the University of Massachusetts Boston (Anne Douglass as co-PI).



# SPOTLIGHT ON INFANT AND TODDLER TEACHER AND CAREGIVER COMPETENCIES

Identifying the competencies (knowledge, skills, and attributes) essential to a given profession may offer a common language and lens for assessing job performance and provide a clear structure for professional growth and development. The [Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies \(ITTCC\)](#) project examines existing efforts — across states, institutes of higher education, professional organizations, and providers— related to competencies of teachers and caregivers serving infants and toddlers. The ITTCC project began in 2017 and explores approaches to the implementation and assessment of competencies, building a conceptual foundation for measurement, research, and evaluation.

In 2019, the ITTCC project completed:

- A [scan of competency frameworks](#) relevant to the teaching and caregiving of infants and toddlers. The scan identified 58 relevant frameworks; 29 frameworks include competencies specific to I/T care and education and another 29 frameworks include competencies more broadly for the care and education of children from birth to age 5. See *Competency Frameworks for Infant and Toddler Teachers and Caregivers* for other findings from the ITTCC scan of competency frameworks.
- A [review of the literature](#) examining what is known about the links between infant and toddler teacher or caregiver competencies and outcomes in several

areas (child, family, teacher/caregiver, classroom, and/or provider). The review found that the existing knowledge base is currently limited in scope and does not fully support the content included in existing competency frameworks targeted to this population.

The ITTCC project also began designing a research study to learn more about how competencies are being implemented and assessed on the ground. This study will address the following overarching research questions:

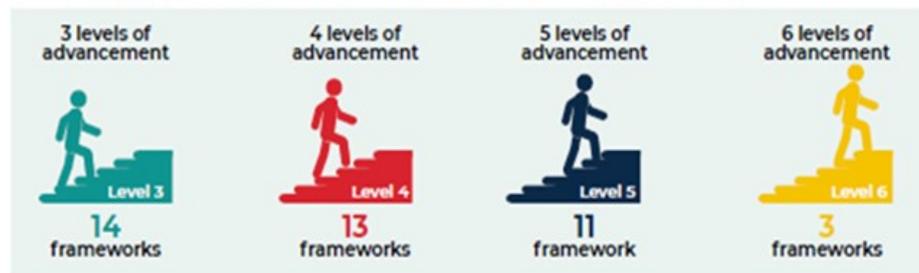
1. How have competencies and competency frameworks been developed, implemented, and assessed?
2. How do infant and toddler teachers and caregivers, program directors, center directors, and FCC owners use competency frameworks?
3. What are key lessons learned related to the implementation and assessment of infant and toddler teacher and caregiver competencies?
4. How can competencies help build the capacity of the infant and toddler workforce and support quality improvement?

The ITTCC project supports ACF in its efforts to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers in community-based child care and Early Head Start settings.

This project is led by Mathematica (Emily Moiduddin as Project Director).

## Do frameworks identify competencies essential for practice at various career stages (for example, entry, mid-career, advanced)?

41 frameworks include competencies for different levels of advancement or career stages.



See *Competency Frameworks for Infant and Toddler Teachers and Caregivers* for other findings from the ITTCC scan of competency frameworks.

## Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education

The goal of the Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education (ECE ICHQ) project is to create an instrument for research, practice, and programs to measure implementation and costs of providing ECE services at centers for children from birth to age 5. The project has two foci: (1) measuring programs' efforts to support quality; and (2) measuring the cost of operating the programs. The ultimate goal is to produce measures of implementation and costs that can be used to examine how differences in what a center does and how resources are used influence quality. In fall 2017 and spring 2018, the project collected data from 30 centers across 3 states in Phase II of the project. Following Phase II, the team refined the data collection tools and instruments and planned for a field test that will begin in March 2020. Following the field test, a user's manual will be produced.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Andrew Burwick as Principal Investigator, Gretchen Kirby as Project Director), in partnership with consultant Elizabeth Davis at the University of Minnesota.

## Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Study

The purpose of the Study of Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-child care) Partnerships is to gain a better understanding of EHS-child care partnerships aimed at supporting quality improvement, child development, and family wellbeing in early childhood settings serving infants and toddlers. The study includes a review of the literature to summarize the current knowledge base around EHS-child care partnerships; development of a theory of change model to articulate relations among key features, characteristics, and expected outcomes of partnerships; development of approaches to measuring partnerships for existing and new data collection efforts; and the design and implementation of a descriptive study documenting the

characteristics and features of EHS-child care partnerships and activities aiming to improve professional development and the quality of services to better meet families' needs. Data collection for the surveys and case studies was completed in 2017. Preliminary findings from the study were presented at ACF's 2018 National Research Conference on Early Childhood. On March 7, 2019, the final report was released: [Working Together for Children and Families: Findings from the National Descriptive Study of Early Head Start -Child Care Partnerships](#). We anticipate releasing two briefs in 2020 describing the activities EHS-child care partnerships engage in to improve the quality of care and access to comprehensive services for infants, toddlers, and their families.

In the fall of 2018, OPRE funded additional research exploring EHS- child care partnerships as a special add-on to the [Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study \(Baby FACES\)](#). This special add-on study will: (1) follow-up with the sample from the national EHS-Child Care Partnerships Study to explore questions about partnership sustainability; (2) dig behind some of the findings from the national study to try to better understand how partnerships support improved access to high quality care for infants and toddlers; and (3) examine the quality of EHS-child care partnership classrooms among center-based partners.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Dianne Paulsell, Patricia Del Grosso, Jaime Thomas).

## Child Care and Early Education Research Connections

Child Care & Early Education Research Connections (Research Connections) promotes the use of research findings in policymaking and practice. Research Connections' website offers an up-to-date searchable bibliography of scholarly research, policy briefs, and government reports from a wide range of disciplines and sources. Research Connections is a primary source for "gray" literature (i.e., reports from states, local communities, and the federal government) on early childhood research. Interactive tools allow users to refine their searches to identify key articles on early child-

hood research topics.

This project is supported through OPRE's Research Support Contract, which is awarded to ICF (Nina Johnson as Project Lead) with a subcontract to ICPSR.

## Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium

ACF created the Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC) in 1995 to increase national capacity for sound child care and early education research, identify and respond to critical issues, and link child care and early education research with policy and practice. Supported by OPRE and the Offices of Child Care and Head Start, the CCEEPRC includes former and current grantees and contractors funded by ACF to conduct child care and early education policy-related research. In partnership with OPRE, CCEEPRC holds an annual research meeting that builds on in-depth roundtables and other activities throughout the year, and provides a forum for researchers and policymakers to investigate emerging research findings, questions, and methods that relate to improved outcomes for children and families. State agency administrators, technical assistance partners, and Federal staff from other agencies and departments join with CCEEPRC members at the annual meeting to learn about emerging research findings, consider how the findings can be used to improve child care and early education policy and practice, and highlight new research questions and methodologies.

This project is supported through OPRE's Research Support Contract, which is awarded to ICF (Carolyn Swaney).

## Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Cross-Systems Evaluation

This utilization-focused evaluation of ACF's Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System (T/TA System) aims to inform ongoing improvement of the T/TA System and to support the evaluation activities of T/TA system stakeholders. The project includes a comprehensive literature review, cross-system evaluation studies, and technical support for evaluation and continuous

quality improvement among ACF's T/TA System stakeholders. Stakeholders include Federal agencies and ACF's National T/TA network, such as the national centers and the Regional T/TA network of T/TA developers and providers funded by the Offices of Head Start and Child Care.

This project is led by NORC at the University of Chicago (Carol Hafford, Rupa Datta, Marc Hernandez).

## Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers

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 who are working on issues related to the first three years of life. In March 2019, NitR members convened in Baltimore to network, discuss staff wellness, and learn about the current priorities of ACF program offices. Recently, NitR established a new monthly webinar series called *Forums* to provide an opportunity for NitR members to engage with each other and federal staff on a regular basis to discuss current research and future directions.

This project is supported through OPRE's Research Support Contract, which is awarded to ICF (Carolyn Swaney, Alexis Monahan). ICF has a subcontract for this project with Rachel Chazan Cohen.

## Human-Centered Design for Human Services (HCD4HS)

*This project is a joint effort with the Division of Economic Independence.*

In 2018, OPRE launched the Human-Centered Design for Human Services (HCD4HS) project. Human-centered design (HCD) is an approach that promotes the generation of innovative solutions to complex problems through new, creative ways of thinking about a problem

and through intentional engagement with the beneficiaries of the solution. The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of what the process of HCD looks like in the context of human services; the requirements for implementation across a range of programs; and the measurable outcomes, evaluability, feasibility, and sustainability of HCD approaches. HCD will be explored across ACF programs at federal, state, and local levels.

Work under this project began in FY 2019 with an assessment of the current state of the field through expert and stakeholder consultation, a review of literature, and key informant interviews. These efforts aim to define core elements of the human-centered design process; identify programs that are currently implementing or recently implemented human-centered design in the context of human services; and describe the current state of the field. Building on what is learned from the field, HCD4HS will conduct an implementation evaluation pilot study at up to three sites administering ACF programs. The pilot study will implement HCD and assess the implementation, feasibility, evaluability, and outcomes of interest to ACF programs.

This project is led by Child Trends (Lauren Supplee as Principal Investigator), with subcontracts to MEF Associates (Asaph Glosser and Marisa Putnam) and Anthro-Tech, Inc (Suzanne Boyd).

## Early Care and Education Leadership Study

Leadership is widely recognized as an essential driver of organizational performance and improvement, but little is known about its role in driving quality of early childhood programs and desired outcomes for staff and families. In launching the Early Care and Education Leadership Study (ExCELS), OPRE seeks to fill the definitional and measurement gaps to help the early childhood field understand how effective leaders can improve quality experiences for families in early care and education (ECE) settings. The project will identify the key features of effective ECE leadership and highlight gaps in our understanding. In 2019 the team reviewed existing research literature; constructed a theory of change that shows how ECE leaders can act as change agents for quality improvement; and developed a compendium of existing measures aligned with the theory of change to identify measurement gaps. In 2020 these products will be pub-

lished and the project work will continue by developing a short form instrument to examine key ECE leadership constructs in center-based settings, identifying promising leadership quality improvement initiatives and methods of evaluating them, and conducting a descriptive study in 100 centers that receive funding from Head Start or the Child Care and Development Fund.

OPRE contracted with Mathematica Policy Research (Gretchen Kirby as Project Director) and its subcontractor, the University of Massachusetts, Boston (Anne Douglass as Co-PI), to conduct this study.

## Next Steps for Rigorous Research on Two-Generation Approaches

*This project is a joint effort with the Division of Economic Independence.*

The overall purpose of this project is to support ACF in building the evidence for programs that aim to meet the needs of low-income families by intentionally combining services aimed at supporting child development with services intended to improve parental economic security. Building on an earlier project, [\*Integrated Approaches to Supporting Child Development and Improving Family Economic Security\*](#), which revealed that most such programs were in the early stages of development, the specific objectives of this project include: (1) conducting formative research to better understand program implementation, strengthen promising programs, and prepare them for evaluations of effectiveness; (2) building the capacity of programs and researchers to conduct rigorous and meaningful evaluations of integrated approaches to supporting child development and improving family economic security; and (3) addressing measurement issues in order to promote learning across evaluations and a better understanding of relevant processes and outcomes of two-generation programs for low-income children and their parents.

This project is led by Mathematica (Emily Sama-Miller as the Project Director).



# SPOTLIGHT ON THE CHILD AND FAMILY DATA ARCHIVE

The Child & Family Data Archive is the place to discover, access, and analyze data on young children, their families and communities, and the programs that serve them. OPRE funds numerous data collection efforts through research studies on a wide range of early care and education (ECE) topics within and across child care, Head Start, and home visiting. The Child & Family Data Archive provides ongoing support to facilitate sharing data from previous, current, and future OPRE-supported grants and contracts relevant to the ECE field. Additionally, this archive may support the sharing of datasets in other ECE-relevant fields such as economic self-sufficiency, welfare, employment, co-parenting, marriage, family formation and stability, and fatherhood involvement. The Child & Family Data Archive facilitates ongoing ECE and ECE-related research by:

- *Curating* data and supporting documentation to ensure that the information is complete, well-described, and accessible to foster users' ability to address key research questions for many years into the future;
- *Archiving* the files in a secure infrastructure to make sure that the information is faithfully preserved and migrated to new technology when available; and
- *Sharing* data in accessible and equitable ways to researchers, policy analysts, and other key stakeholders.

The Child & Family Data Archive hosts over 300 datasets. In 2019, the Child & Family Data Archive curated and archived the following datasets:

1. [National Survey of Early Care and Education \(NSECE\), 2010-2012](#)
2. [Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, 2016](#)
3. [Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey \(FACES\), 2014-2017](#)
4. [Child Care and Development Fund Administrative Data, Federal Fiscal Year 2016](#)
5. [Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study, 2017-2018](#)

In November 2019, the Child & Family Data Archive launched its website:

[www.childandfamilydataarchive.org](http://www.childandfamilydataarchive.org). The website provides user-friendly information that allows stakeholders to:

- Access downloadable data on young children and families 24/7;
- Analyze selected data online;
- Examine and compare variables across datasets to find data elements of specific interest;
- Search the bibliography of data-related literature to identify research that has already been undertaken in an area, replicate analyses of data, avoid duplicating analysis that has already been done, and much more.
- Access guides, resources, and training materials to support the sharing, analysis, management, use, and dissemination of data;
- Request technical assistance with curating, archiving, accessing, and using data;
- Find answers to Frequently Asked Questions; and
- Sign up for the listserv to receive updates and announcements.

The project is led by the [Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research \(ICPSR\)](#) at the University of Michigan (Susan Jekielek as Project Director).



# CHILD CARE: RAISING QUALITY AND SUPPORTING PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT

A growing body of research demonstrating the link between high quality early care and education and positive child and family outcomes has encouraged efforts to enhance 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 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 care.

## Child Care and Development Block Grant Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grants Cohort 1 and Cohort 2

In 2016, ACF began the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Implementation Research and Evaluation Grants program. The goal of this grant program is to provide Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies the opportunity to plan for and evaluate initiatives and policy changes in response to the goals of the CCDBG Act of 2014. The grant program has two phases: a planning grant (Phase I) to develop and plan for an evaluation research project and an implementation grant (Phase II) to conduct the evaluations designed in Phase I.

The first cohort of planning grants (Phase I/Cohort 1) includes eight CCDF Lead Agencies awarded cooperative agreements in September 2016. The second cohort (Phase I/Cohort 2) includes three CCDF Lead Agencies awarded cooperative agreements in May 2017.

The first cohort of implementation grantees (Phase II/Cohort 1) includes four CCDF Lead Agencies awarded cooperative agreements in March 2018. Projects focus on: improving infant and toddler care quality with increased set-aside for quality; evaluating extension of redetermination length of subsidies; evaluating new health and safety standards; monitoring license exempt providers; stability of subsidies for families and providers; professional development supports for home based providers; and increasing access to

care.

The second cohort of implementation grantees (Phase II/Cohort 2) were awarded cooperative agreements in November 2018 and includes two CCDF Lead Agencies. Their projects focus on improving culturally responsive practice in tribal early care and learning settings and how changes in authorization length and generosity of subsidy are associated with access to high quality care, child care continuity, and parental employment.

## Center for Supporting Research on the Child Care Development Block Grant Implementation

The purpose of this Center is to support Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies in building research capacity to help inform and evaluate policies and initiatives implemented in response to the goals of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014. OPRE also awarded research and evaluation planning grants to eight lead agencies in FY 2016 and to three additional grantees in FY 2017. The Center supports agencies that received planning and implementation grants. The Center also aims to enhance research capacity among all lead agencies, including those that are not grant recipients through developing resources and a webinar series. The first webinar focused on *A Dozen Policy Questions You Can Answer with Your Agency's Administrative Data: A Webinar for Child Care Development Fund Lead Agencies*. As a primary focus, the Center provides capacity-building activities, tailoring specific activities to meet the interests and needs of lead agencies, as well as supporting cross-grantee collaboration and learning.

This project is led by the Urban Institute (Julia Isaacs as Project Director and Teresa Derrick-Mills as Deputy Project Director).

## Child Care Policy Research Partnership Grants

The Child Care Policy Research Partnership (CCPRP) Grant Program supports active collaborations between Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies and researchers to investigate questions of immediate relevance to local and national child care policies and practices. In September 2019, ACF awarded 11 new CCPRP Grants. These grants will add to our knowledge about the efficacy of child care subsidy policies and quality improvement initiatives in promoting family economic self-sufficiency, low-income families' access to high quality child care programs, and children's healthy development and learning. The overarching goals of this grant program are to:

1. Develop research partnerships that support collaboration among child care researchers and CCDF Lead Agencies which build the capacity of lead agencies to conduct rigorous policy-relevant research.
  2. Conduct research that addresses issues of interest to CCDF decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels.
  3. Produce policy-relevant findings and information throughout the duration of the grant.
  4. Encourage collaborative research projects across lead agencies that explore common research questions.
  5. Foster the exchange of current research, ideas, and information among research, policy, and practice communities.
- Disseminate findings to relevant stakeholders at local, state, and national levels.

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

The purpose of the Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis Project (CCEEPRA) is to support the provision of expert consultation, assessment and analysis in child care and early education policy and research to the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), including activities related to:

- providing expert advice, assistance and consultation in support of the agency's research priorities and goals;
- conducting assessment, analyses and summaries of policies, practices, and research of relevance to the agency's mission;
- conducting studies to inform policy and practice and the development of new research priorities;
- identifying and refining measures and instruments to improve the collection of data related to program policies and practices and to program outcomes for families and children;
- identifying sources of data and conducting statistical analyses on national and other original data-sets to answer questions of relevance to ACF on child care utilization, child care supply, and the effects of child care and other early childhood policies on parental and child outcomes;
- providing expertise in the preparation of written materials; and
- convening experts on ECE research and policy issues of relevance to the administration of the Child Care and Development Fund and other early childhood programs in States, Territories, and Tribes.

Products supported through this contract include literature reviews, measures compendia, meeting summaries, briefing papers, webinars, research briefs, and research-to-policy/research-to-practice briefs.

This project is led by Child Trends (Tamara Halle, Kathryn Tout, Kelly Maxwell, Nicole Forry, Martha Zaslow).

## Early Care and Education Research Scholars: Child Care

The Early Care and Education Research Scholars: Child Care 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. The specific goals of the Child Care Research Scholars grants are to: (1) build capacity in the early care and education field by supporting high-quality dissertation research and student-faculty collaboration and mentorship, (2) conduct rigorous research that has the capacity to inform child care programs, policies, and practices, (3) support active communication, collaboration, and partnerships between researchers and CCDF policymakers, (4) foster the

exchange of current research, ideas, and information among research, policy, and practice communities.

## Child Care Interstate Background Checks (CC-IBaCs)

The Child Care Interstate Background Checks (CC-IBaCs) project seeks to fill gaps in knowledge to inform states' and territories' implementation of interstate background checks as mandated by the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014. The project aims to identify barriers and promising solutions to implementation of interstate background checks, and provide ACF and Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) administrators with timely knowledge, information, and options to help states achieve full implementation of the background checks requirements. In 2019, the project completed multiple activities, including: a review of available literature on background check implementation, a survey and interviews to document states' and territories' current implementation challenges, and design of a prevalence study to evaluate the added value of each component of the background check requirements. A brief summary of background check implementation challenges is expected to be published in spring 2020.

This project is led by CNA (Delilah Barton and Brittany Cunningham as Co-Project Directors, Ernie Baumann as Technical Advisor) in partnership with NORC and JRSA.

## Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and Their Families

Through this project, OPRE seeks to learn more about how states and communities coordinate early care and education, family economic security, and/or other health and human services to most efficiently and effectively serve the needs of low-income children and their families. This work builds on the Integrated Approaches to Supporting Child Development and Improving Family Economic Security project. The goal of this project is to build on previous investments by identifying the range of existing models that coordinate a broader set of services. Coordinated services approaches seek to address the multifaceted needs of families and to support children's development by providing access to high quality early care and education, while simultaneously addressing additional family needs such as parenting education, supports for family economic security, and other health and human services. By connecting and facilitating these services for families, coordinated services approaches endeavor to move families out of poverty in the short-

term and decrease the chance that poverty will continue into the next generation. The project activities include a targeted literature synthesis, a national scan of existing state and local coordinated services approaches that coordinate early care and education with family economic security and/or other health and human services, and site visits with select state and local coordinated services approaches to gather more in-depth information about how they are serving families on the ground. A series of reports and briefs will be produced to inform both ACF and the public about the findings and address gaps or needs in the field.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Elizabeth Cavadel as Project Director).

## Understanding the Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education (TRLECE)

Newly funded in 2019, this project seeks to strengthen the field's understanding of the role of the early care and education (ECE) licensing system in supporting ECE quality and outcomes for children, families, and key stakeholders (e.g., child care providers, licensing agencies, state administrations). Features of licensing systems include, but are not limited to, establishing licensing standards, practices to monitor provider compliance, pre-service and ongoing health and safety training for child care providers, and training and management of licensing staff to perform roles related to monitoring and ensuring compliance. The goals of this project are to:

- assess the current status of the research and policy literature about licensing;
- refine existing conceptual frameworks and develop new conceptual frameworks for how licensing can support ECE quality and outcomes;
- gather data on States' and Territories' perspectives and experiences about licensing in ECE;
- identify the most pressing research questions to address; and
- determine both the availability of existing data sources and the need for new data collection that may inform licensing-related decisions of States, Territories, and the Federal Government.

Additional activities include the analysis of secondary

data (e.g., national data sets, state licensing administrative data) and may include studies that require new data to be collected. The products resulting from this project are designed to inform efforts by States, Territories, and the Federal Government in evaluating and strengthening ECE licensing systems.

This project is led by Child Trends (Kelly Maxwell as Principal Investigator/Project Director and Brenda Miranda as Co-Project Director) and ICF (Nina Johnson as Project Lead).

## Home-Based Child Care Supply and Quality Project

In 2019, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation launched a new project to examine home-based child care (HBCC) supply and quality. HBCC is a vital part of our nation's child care supply and the most common form of care for children living in poverty. Yet, HBCC providers have fewer resources and supports when compared to providers in child care centers, and many HBCC providers face challenges in providing quality care. Additionally, the supply of licensed and publically subsidized family child care has declined dramatically over the past decade. This project will: (1) fill gaps in our understanding of HBCC supply; and (2) address challenges defining and measuring quality in HBCC settings. The following research questions will drive study activities:

- What are the key drivers of HBCC supply?
- What are the essential features and drivers of quality in HBCC, and how should these features be measured?

What factors support or inhibit HBCC provider participation in quality improvement efforts and in early care and education systems?

The study team will address these questions by:

- Reviewing existing literature, quality measures and indices, and data sets relevant to HBCC
- Developing a conceptual framework on quality in HBCC
- Analyzing existing data on HBCC provider characteristics and experiences

Developing a research agenda and design reports to guide future research

Potential additional activities include collecting original data and developing a new measure of HBCC quality.

The study team will engage a variety of stakeholders, including state and local administrators, quality improvement providers, provider networks and associations, policymakers, and researchers, in shaping and learning from contract activities and will communicate project insights to the field through various products, such as reports, briefs, and presentations.

This project is led by Mathematica (Diane Paulsell as Project Director and Sally Atkins-Burnett as Principal Investigator) and Erikson Institute (Juliet Bromer as Principal Investigator).

## Child Care Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Center (Child Care ECB Center)

State, Territory, and Tribal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies are increasingly asked to use, conduct, and disseminate high-quality, rigorous, and policy-relevant research on early care and education. They are also expected to use research and evidence to inform their decisions. However, lead agencies vary in their evaluation capacities. More information is needed to understand gaps and particular needs in the current research and evaluation capacity among agencies and better target support to build these capacities.

The Child Care Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Center (Center) will assess and build the research and evaluation capacities of State, Territory, and Tribal CCDF Lead Agencies. The Center will engage with stakeholders in planning activities and developing strategies. The Center will also focus on supporting *individual* and *organizational* research and evaluation capacity to create sustained change that lasts beyond the turnover of individual staff and the changing policies and priorities of federal and state policymakers.

The project is led by Urban Institute (Teresa Derrick-Mills as Principal Investigator) with a subcontract to Mathematica Policy Research (Gretchen Kirby as Co-PI).



# SPOTLIGHT ON CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND (CCDF) POLICIES DATABASE

The CCDF Policies Database is a source of information on the detailed policies used to operate child care subsidy programs under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Since 2008, the CCDF Policies Database has collected, coded, and disseminated CCDF policies for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories and outlying areas. The information in the database is based primarily on the documents that caseworkers use as they work with families and providers, as well as the CCDF Plans and amendments submitted by States/Territories to ACF, state law, and regulations used by the staff operating the program. The database 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.

On the project's website, <https://ccdf.urban.org/>, users can search the full database and download custom datasets. The website also provides access to all data documentation, project reports, and other resources.

The project's most recent annual report, is [Key Cross-State Variations in CCDF Policies as Of October 1, 2018: The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables](#). Each annual report also presents policy changes since the previous year, as well as changes in select policies over the previous five years.

From the most recent report, highlights of policy changes from 2014 to 2018 include:

- Twenty-eight States/Territories made changes to their policies regarding eligibility during periods of job search, with most of the changes occurring between 2016 and 2017.
- Thirty-six States/Territories made changes to their redetermination periods between 2014 and 2018, with most of the changes occurring between 2015 and 2016 when several States/Territories extended their redetermination periods from 6 to 12 months. Twenty-five States/Territories changed the monthly copayment amounts for a family of three earning \$15,000. Most of these changes were reductions in the copayment amounts.

The project also periodically produces policy briefs and other short reports. In conjunction with the annual report, the project released a brief providing a graphical overview of some of the CCDF policy differences across States/Territories as of October 1, 2018: [Child Care Subsidies under the CCDF Program: An Overview of Policy Differences across States and Territories as of October 1, 2018](#), as well as [fact sheets](#) that demonstrate how to use the database search tool and provide examples of policies available from the database.

This project is led by Urban Institute (Sarah Minton as Project Director).



# HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START: ENHANCING HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

Head Start research over the past decade has provided valuable information not only for guiding program improvements in Head Start itself, but also for the larger field of early childhood programming and development. 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.

## Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study 2018 and 2020

The Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (Baby FACES) is a nationally representative descriptive study of Early Head Start (EHS) aimed at informing program planning, technical assistance, and research at the national level by:

- Providing descriptive information about the quality, frequency, and intensity of EHS services;
- Describing the characteristics and qualifications of staff working with EHS families and the professional supports they receive;
- Identifying key characteristics, strengths, and needs of families served in EHS;
- Learning how EHS children and families are faring in key areas of child and family well-being; and
- Exploring associations between the type and quality of EHS services and child and family well-being.

There have been two cohorts of the Baby FACES study to date and a third is planned for 2020. Baby FACES 2009 was the first cohort of the study. It used a longitudinal design and followed two age cohorts of children (newborns and one-year-olds) through their time in EHS, from 2009 to 2012. Baby FACES was redesigned in 2015 to employ a cross-sectional approach with a nationally representative sample of programs, centers, classrooms, home visitors, and children of all age groups enrolled in EHS. Data collection for the second cohort was completed in the spring of 2018.

Baby FACES 2018 included a particular focus on unpacking how center-based EHS classrooms support infant/toddler development through responsive relationships between teachers and children. Several reports and briefs summarizing findings from the 2018 data collection were under development during 2019 and are planned for publication in 2020. A third cohort is planned for 2020 (Baby FACES 2020) which will also utilize a cross-sectional design to focus on the processes and practices in home-based EHS that support positive parent-infant/toddler relationships and child development.

Also in 2019, OPRE began the design of new research exploring the EHS-Child Care Partnerships as a special add-on under the Baby FACES study. This special add-on study will (1) follow-up with the sample from the national EHS-Child Care Partnerships Study to explore questions about partnership sustainability; (2) dig behind some of the findings from the national study to try to better understand how partnerships support improved access to high quality care for infants and toddlers; and (3) examine the quality of EHS-child care partnership classrooms among center-based partners.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Cheri Vogel, Sally Atkins-Burnett, Yange Xue).

## Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2017 and 2019

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 publicly available data were collected in the fall of 2014, spring of 2015, and spring of 2017. A number of products from these data collections,

including the data files and supporting files, were released in 2018 and 2019. In 2017, a new contract was awarded to continue the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES). In 2019 the research team completed substantial planning for the new study and launched data collection in the fall of 2019. Follow up data collection will occur in the spring of 2020, followed by the analytic and dissemination work.

The project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Lizabeth Malone as Project Director, Ashley Kopack Klein as APD, Louisa Tarullo as co-PI, Nikki Aikens as co-PI).

## American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey, 2015 and 2019

The Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) is a major source of information on Head Start programs and the children and families they serve. Since 1997, FACES has conducted studies in a nationally representative sample of Head Start programs, but has historically not included Region XI, whose programs are designed to serve predominantly AI/AN children and families. AI/AN FACES, designed to fill this information gap, was first fielded in 2015, and several reports and briefs have been released. Another cohort of AI/AN FACES is being fielded during the 2019-20 program year.

The design of AI/AN FACES 2015 was informed by members of the AI/AN FACES Workgroup which includes tribal Head Start directors, members of the National Indian Head Start Directors' Association (NIHSDA) Board of Directors, researchers with expertise working with tribal communities, Mathematica Policy Research study staff, and federal officials from the Office of Head Start, Region XI, and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. Members of the AI/AN FACES Workgroup have shared insights and information on the kinds of information needed about Region XI Head Start programs (including children's development and school readiness, parent and family demographics, health, and program engagement, and teacher, classroom, and program characteristics).

Members have also recommended recruitment practices that are responsive to the unique cultural and self-governing contexts of tribal Head Start programs.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Lizabeth Malone as Project Director).

## Early Care and Education Research Scholars: Head Start

The Head Start Graduate Student Research Grant Program is designed to build 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 conducted by graduate students working in partnership with local Head Start or Early Head Start programs. The immediate goals of the grant program are to: (1) capacity in the early care and education field by supporting high-quality dissertation research and student-faculty collaboration and mentorship, (2) conduct rigorous research that has the capacity to inform Head Start and Early Head Start programs, policies, and practices, (3) support active communication, collaboration, and partnerships between researchers and HS/EHS programs, (4) foster the exchange of current research, ideas, and information among research, policy, and practice communities.

## Early Head Start University Partnership Grants: Building the Evidence for Infant/Toddler Center-based Programs

The goal of this grant program is to examine how Early Head Start (EHS) and other early care and education programs can promote and improve early child development by supporting both parenting and caregiving. Researchers working in partnership with one or more EHS center-based programs and/or EHS-Child Care Partnership programs lead these studies, evaluating interventions that target both parents and center-based teachers as a means of achieving child development goals. Each of the four grantees is conducting an implementation study and evaluating the effectiveness of the selected intervention.

## Head Start Connects: Individualizing and Connecting Families to Comprehensive Family Support Services

The Head Start Connects project was launched in 2018 to generate knowledge about the processes through which Head Start programs individualize, coordinate, and provide appropriate services that meet families' needs. The project will address this goal through a set of research activities that build on and inform one another. First, the project will conduct a literature review on the coordination, tailoring, and provision of family support services. This review will help inform the development and refinement of a theory of change model that articulates pathways between key program activities and processes related to coordination of family support services and expected outputs and outcomes for families and children. The literature review and theory of change will guide the research design for a set of case studies, including qualitative interviews with Head Start staff and families. The staff interviews will include a reflective case file review where staff describe their work with specific families and how they engage with these families over time to coordinate family support services.

The team will use insights from the case studies to further refine the theory of change, refine a set of research questions, and develop a set of design options for a large-scale descriptive study of Head Start programs nationally that is focused on describing the coordination of family support services in Head Start and the degree to which coordination is responsive to family needs.

This project is led by MDRC (Michelle Maier as Project Director).

## The Study of Disability Services Coordinators and Inclusion in Head Start

New in 2019, this study will provide a national picture of the Disability Services Coordinators (DSC) workforce for Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS), including American Indian/Alaska Native (Region XI) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (Region XII) grantees. It will also explore practices and policies for working with staff, families, children, and the community. This effort will explore how EHS/HS serves children with disabilities and their families and

will seek to understand how EHS/HS collaborates with services in the community, including health providers, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and early intervention services.

The study goals include the following:

- to describe the characteristics and work of DSCs and related staff in EHS/HS programs;
- to describe how children with disabilities and their families are served by EHS/HS including through recruitment and selection; throughout screening and ongoing assessment; evaluation; and the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and implementation;
- to describe how EHS/HS programs engage in capacity building with families and provide supportive services to families as they understand and advocate for their children with potential or identified disabilities, delays, or other issues such as chronic health impairments;
- to describe what EHS/HS programs do when services are not available and when children do not meet Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) eligibility requirements;
- to describe how EHS/HS programs engage with LEAs, IDEA Parts B and C providers, and community programs;
- to describe the training teachers receive as well as how they individualize practice and work to fully integrate children with disabilities into the classroom; and
- to describe how EHS/HS programs work with children with disabilities and their families on transitions to HS or kindergarten.

In this first year of the study, the team will engage with stakeholders, examine and analyze existing sources of data, and refine the study design.

The project team is led by NORC at the University of Chicago (Michael López as Principal Investigator; Shannon TenBroeck as Project Director) in partnership with SRI International and consultant Amanda Schwartz.

## Understanding Children's Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten

New in 2019, this project aims to better understand how to improve children's transitions from Head Start programs to elementary schools. Central to this project is a systems approach that recognizes that effective transitions require

intentional engagement from both the sending programs (Head Start) and the receiving programs (elementary schools). This approach also recognizes that transition strategies and practices must be implemented at multiple levels – among classroom teachers in Head Start and kindergarten, families and teachers, elementary school principals and Head Start directors, Head Start grantees and school districts, and state and federal agencies. Foundational tasks include a review of the knowledge base, including a literature review and qualitative interviews with key informants; development of a theory of change; a scan of existing measures and data sources; and a comparative multi-case study describing approaches to supporting transitions from Head Start to kindergarten. Depending on findings from the foundational work of the project, additional work may include development of design options for a descriptive study of the national landscape related to transition practices within Head Start programs, development of new measures of transition practices, and/or additional analyses of secondary data to address research questions of interest.

This project is led by NORC (Stacy Ehrlich as Project Director).





# SPOTLIGHT ON MIGRANT AND SEASONAL HEAD START STUDY

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs provide child development, family support, and family engagement services to young children and their migrant and seasonal farmworker families.

Migrant or seasonal farmworker families are those engaged in year-round or seasonal agricultural labor who may have changed their residence in the preceding two-year period. MSHS programs serve children from birth until they reach the age of mandatory school attendance. Just like other Head Start programs, MSHS programs offer access to medical and dental care, nutritional services, mental health services, and other community resources. MSHS programs are designed to meet the unique needs of migrant and seasonally working families. MSHS programs usually provide bilingual services and sometimes operate in non-standard hours or in varying locations throughout the agricultural season.

The MSHS Study provides a national picture of MSHS programs, centers, families, and children.

The MSHS Study was designed through extensive engagement and input from the MSHS community to better understand:

- characteristics of MSHS programs, centers, staff, families, and children;
- services that MSHS provides;
- instructional practices in MSHS classrooms; and MSHS supports for child, parent, and family well-being.

The MSHS Study gathered information from:

- Programs and centers—collected from surveys of

program and center directors

- Classrooms—collected through classroom observations and from surveys of teachers and assistant teachers
- Families—collected from interviews with parents
- Children—collected from direct assessments, assessor ratings, and parent and teacher ratings of children.

In 2019 we released:

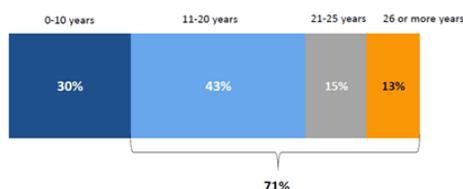
- The Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study 2017: Data Tables report describing the MSHS Study methodology, sample, measures and descriptive findings;
- The Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study 2017: Key Indicator Slides highlighting select descriptive findings from the MSHS Study; and
- A brief on Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Parents' Well-being highlighting findings from the MSHS Study on parents' stress, depressive symptoms, and sources of strength.

Additional briefs and products are forthcoming.

MSHS Study data are archived at the Child and Family Data Archive and available for secondary analysis.

The MSHS Study was conducted by Abt Associates (Linda Caswell as Project Director, Erin Bumgarner as DPD, Michael López as PI, Carolyn Layzer as PQA) and its partners, Catholic University of America (Sandra Barrueco as PI) and Westat (Sylvia Segovia, Camilla Heid, Janet Friedman, Patty Nicchitta, Pam Broene)

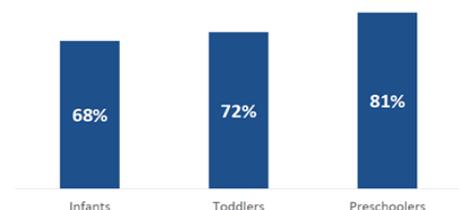
## More than two-thirds of MSHS teachers have been teaching for more than 10 years.



Source: MSHS Teacher Survey, Table E.1. Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all MSHS teachers in 2017.

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## Most MSHS centers have a formal language policy for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.



Source: MSHS Center Director Survey, Table D.23. Note: Statistics are weighted to represent all MSHS center directors in 2017.

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# 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 ACF’s 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.

## National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being

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. NSCAW also addresses 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.

In the fall of 2015, OPRE awarded a contract to field a third cohort for the study. Baseline and 18-month follow-up data collection is currently ongoing. Two new sub-studies will take advantage of the NSCAW sampling frame and data: a descriptive study of the Child Welfare Workforce, and a study of service needs and utilization for children and caregivers in Kinship Care settings.

This project is led by RTI International (Melissa Dolan as Project Director).

## Supporting Evidence Building in Child Welfare

The overall purpose of this project is to support OPRE and the Children’s Bureau (CB) in increasing the number of evidence-supported interventions for the child welfare population by conducting rigorous evaluations and supporting the field in moving toward rigorous evaluations. The project is focusing initially on interventions that have been fully implemented previously in at least one setting, undergone formative testing, and have shown some significant impacts through summative evaluation, rather than those that are in earlier stages of development and testing. Key project tasks include identification of priority areas and interventions ripe for moving to the next level of evidence; review of existing evidence and feasibility issues; rigorous impact evaluations of interventions (implementation of which will not be funded under this contract); and consultation around complex evaluation designs or statistical methods relevant for testing interventions in one or more sites. The results of the evaluations will be disseminated to meet the needs of ACF, CB, policymakers, practitioners, and other key stakeholders. They will also be published in peer-reviewed journals, for inclusion in appropriate evidence reviews.

This project is led by Urban Institute (Mike Pergamit as co-PI, Marla McDaniel as Program Director) in partnership with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago (Mark Courtney as co-PI).

## Child Maltreatment Incidence Data Linkages

The Child Maltreatment Incidence Data Linkages (CMI Data Linkages) project aims to explore how innovative administrative data linkages can improve our understanding of child maltreatment incidence and related risk and protective factors. CMI Data Linkages, which began in fall 2017, identified 5 sites using linked administrative data to examine child maltreatment incidence and related risk and protective factors. The project is supporting these sites as they *enhance* their existing linked administrative data by:

- Using innovative methods to link/analyze administrative data;
- Linking novel administrative data sources; or Scaling or replicating an existing data linkage or analysis approach in a new geographic area or jurisdiction. The project provides sites with access to experts to help address challenges and supports a collaborative cross-site learning network that facilitates communication and information sharing. The project is also conducting a cross-site feasibility study to: (1) examine the factors (including state and local context, resources, organizational capacity, peer support, training, and existing infrastructure) that promote or impede the enhancement or scaling of existing administrative data linkage and analysis practices related to child maltreatment; and (2) determine the availability and quality of information on child maltreatment incidence and associated risk and protective factors that can be gleaned from linked administrative data. CMI Data Linkages intends to inform the accurate and ongoing surveillance of the incidence of child abuse and neglect and future prevention and treatment efforts. In 2019, the project released a [brief](#) summarizing the project and highlighting the 5 participating sites.

This project is led by Mathematica (Matthew Stagner and Cay Bradley) in partnership with Washington University in St. Louis (Melissa Jonson-Reid).

## Definitions and Policies Related to the Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect

This project supports ACF in identifying federal, state, and/or local definitions and policies related to the surveillance of child maltreatment and related risk and protective factors. The project will compile meaningful information from selected definitions and policies to create variables and response categories. The objective is to create a database and files that can be used for quantitative analysis. The database and analytic files will be a resource for researchers and other analysts who are interested in examining differences in definitions and policies across states and localities as well as over time. The primary goal is to allow researchers to link the analytic files to other data sources in order to address important questions about

how variations in these definitions and policies are associated with child welfare intake, screening practices, substantiation decisions, service provision, and ultimately child safety and well-being.

This project is led by Mathematica Policy Research (Elizabeth Weigensberg as Project Director, Matthew Stagner as Principal Investigator), with a subcontract to Child Trends.

## Understanding Postadoption and Guardianship Instability for Children and Youth Who Exit Foster Care

The Understanding Postadoption and Guardianship Instability for Children and Youth Who Exit Foster Care project began in 2017 to develop and execute one or more studies to generate knowledge on post-permanency instability for children and youth who exit foster care through adoption or guardianship. The project team completed a number of activities to inform the development of design options for future studies on instability, including (1) engaging experts and stakeholders; (2) conducting a comprehensive review of the existing literature; (3) developing a conceptual model that articulates key child, caregiver, family, and contextual factors that are thought to contribute to adoption and guardianship instability; (4) compiling existing data, state policies, procedures, and administrative data related to adoption and guardianship instability; and (5) assessing the extent to which existing survey data can be used to answer key questions about instability. In 2019, ACF decided to execute 2 of the 5 study designs developed by the project team. The selected study designs will allow ACF and other stakeholders to obtain data on the prevalence of adoption instability and the factors that relate to instability. Findings from these studies are expected in 2021. In future years, the project will also support the creation of resources to help build the capacity of agencies at the federal-, state-, and/or local-level to obtain accurate and ongoing information on post-permanency instability among children and youth who exit foster care through adoption or guardianship.

The project is led by RTI international (Heather Ringeisen as Project Director, Leyla Stambaugh as As-

sociate Project Director), with subcontracts to the Case Western Reserve University (Nancy Rolock as Principal Investigator) and East Carolina University (Kevin White).

## Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child Welfare

Juvenile and family court judges are responsible for deciding when children enter and exit out-of-home care and for ensuring children in the system achieve safety, permanency, and well-being. The quality of child welfare court hearings is important because each of the hearings provides judges with an opportunity to learn about the child and parent as well as the family's strengths, needs, and progress. While some research has been conducted on child welfare hearing quality, questions remain about how to support effective judicial decision-making and improve outcomes for children and families. This project will study judicial decision-making during the life of a child welfare case as well as the quality of child welfare court proceedings, the factors associated with decision-making and hearing quality, and the influence that decision-making and hearing quality may have on case planning and outcomes such as parent engagement in services and children's permanency outcomes. The project includes a conceptual model as well as a compilation of measures and data sources that can be used to conduct research on judicial decision-making and hearing quality. Finally, design options will be developed and pre-testing and feasibility testing for the selected design(s) will be conducted.

This project is led by James Bell Associates (Anne Fromknecht as Project Director, Sophia Gatwoski as co-PI, Alicia Summers as co-PI), in collaboration with the American Bar Association.

## Building Capacity to Evaluate Child Welfare Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families

This project supports OPRE in its work with the Children's Bureau (CB) to advance the evidence around collaborative approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect. In 2018 and 2019, CB funded grants to states, communities,

and Tribes to develop, implement, and evaluate proactive strategies that build on the strengths of families. The initiative supports community-level mobilization around the development of multi-system collaboratives that provide a continuum of activities and services designed to prevent child abuse and neglect. The first cohort of four grantees received CWCC funds in 2018, and the second cohort of nine grantees received CWCC funds in 2019.

This project supports the CB effort through two primary components: 1) evaluation-related technical assistance to strengthen grantees' evaluation capacity to conduct site-specific outcome evaluations, and 2) a cross-site process evaluation of each cohort of grantees to better understand how communities came together to develop and implement integrated approaches to preventing child maltreatment, including documenting project and organizational leadership approaches, integration and alignment strategies, and recruitment and assessment methods to identify and serve at-risk families.

This project is led by Abt Associates (Allison Hyra as Project Director) in partnership with Child Trends (Karin Malm as Principal Investigator) and consultant Sharon McGroder.

## Building Capacity to Evaluate Interventions for Youth/Young Adults At-Risk of Homelessness (YARH) - Phase 3

*This project is a joint effort with the Division of Family Strengthening.*

This project will support ACF's efforts to build evidence on how to end homelessness by continuing work with organizations who conducted foundational work as part of Phases I and II of the YARH project. Phase I of YARH provided evaluation-related technical assistance (TA) to organizations awarded planning grants to develop interventions for youth with child welfare involvement who are most likely to experience homelessness. Phase II of YARH continues to provide evaluation-related support for organizations awarded implementation grants for further development and testing interventions developed under Phase I. Phase III of YARH will continue to provide important information to the field by supporting organizations

from Phase II in evidence-building activities, including providing evaluation-related TA; assessing sites' readiness for summative evaluation; designing and conducting a federally led evaluation of at least one comprehensive service model, including an implementation study and an impact study; and disseminating knowledge gained through project activities. The evaluation team will work closely with ACF, a broad range of stakeholders, and selected experts so that the TA activities and evaluation will yield timely findings that inform policy and practice.

This project is led by Mathematica (Cay Bradley as Project Director, Andrew Burwick as DPD, Russell Cole as Principal Investigator).





# SPOTLIGHT ON TITLE IV-E PREVENTION SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE

The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse was established in September 2018 by ACF to conduct an independent systematic review of research on programs and services intended to provide enhanced support to children and families and prevent foster care placements. The Prevention Services Clearinghouse, developed in accordance with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) as codified in Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, reviews and rates programs and services as “well-supported,” “supported,” “promising,” or “does not currently meet criteria.” The Prevention Services Clearinghouse reviews evidence on mental health, substance abuse, in-home parent skill-based, as well as kinship navigator programs and services.

## *Highlights of Prevention Services Clearinghouse Activities in 2019*

- In April 2019, the Clearinghouse published its *Handbook of Standards and Procedures*. The *Handbook* provides a detailed description of the standards and procedures used by Clearinghouse staff to identify, review, and rate programs and services.
- In May 2019, the Clearinghouse held a public webinar to guide users through the *Handbook of Standards and Procedures*. The webinar described the Clearinghouse’s (1) procedures for identifying programs and services and associated research studies for review or re-review; (2) standards for assessing the design, execution, and findings of research studies and for rating programs and services; and (3) definitions of key terms.
- In June 2019, the Clearinghouse launched its website (<https://preventionservices.abtsites.com/>) and released ratings for the first programs and services reviewed. The website provides user-friendly information that allows stakeholders to learn about programs and services ratings; access descriptions of programs and services; obtain detailed information about the review process and ratings; find answers to Frequently Asked Questions, including the working list of programs and services currently under review; and sign up for email updates.
- From September to October 2019, the Clearinghouse held a public call inviting stakeholders to recommend programs and services to be considered for review. A public call for recommendations will be held by the Clearinghouse at least on an annual basis (see Section 1 of the *Handbook of Standards and Procedures*). All recommendations sent to the Clearinghouse are logged and considered.
- The Clearinghouse continues to select, review, and rate programs and services as quickly as possible on a rolling basis to support states’ efforts to improve outcomes for children and families through the implementation of FFPSA.

The Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse is led by Abt Associates (Sandra Wilson as Project Director and Erin Bumgarner as Deputy Project Director) in partnership with the University of Denver (Suzanne Kerns as Principal Investigator).



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING: IMPROVING SERVICES FOR SURVIVORS

Domestic human trafficking involves both forced labor and sexual exploitation of minors and adults, of citizens and lawful permanent residents, and of men and women. To improve services for domestic victims of human trafficking, enhance performance measurement, and guide future evaluation, OPRE has partnered with the Children's Bureau (CB) and the Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP).

## Domestic Human Trafficking and the Child Welfare Population

The overall purpose of this project is to support ACF's Children's Bureau (CB) in its efforts to identify and better assist children and youth served by its programs who are victims of, or are at risk of, domestic human trafficking. Specifically, this project seeks to summarize current understanding of human trafficking and resources addressing human trafficking in the child welfare population in order to inform a research agenda. Project activities include a literature review, a state-level compendium of policies and procedures, a critical review of current practices, and a scan of existing data. A Report to Congress based on the study, "[The Child Welfare Response to Sex Trafficking of Children](#)," was published in 2019. The project will also support practice-relevant research studies, currently in the design phase.

This project is led by RTI International (Deborah Gibbs as Project Director, Melissa Dolan as Associate Project Director).

## Evaluation of Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Demonstration Projects

In 2014, ACF's Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) awarded three grants to carry out demonstration projects to provide coordinated case management and comprehensive direct victim assistance to domestic victims of severe forms of human trafficking.

In 2015, FYSB awarded three additional demonstration project grants. The intent of the grant program is to improve organizational and community capacity to deliver trauma-informed, culturally relevant services for domestic victims of human trafficking. The grantees are expected to build and sustain coordinated systems of agency services and partnerships with allied professionals in community-based organizations, such as runaway and homeless youth, domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking victim services programs.

Working closely with FYSB, OPRE is overseeing a cross-site process evaluation of these demonstration projects. Key questions of interest are related to the use of the community needs assessment, the necessary conditions for partnership expansion, factors associated with the provision and receipt of comprehensive victim-centered services, survivors' experiences with the program and their short-term outcomes, and the costs of program components. OPRE released a report and a practice brief from the first cohort of demonstration projects in the summer of 2017. A report and a practice brief from the [second cohort](#) of demonstration projects were released in early 2019.

This project is led by RTI International (Jennifer Hardison-Walters as Project Director, Kathleen Krieger as Associate Project Director).

## Evaluation of Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Program

Building on the previous evaluation of the Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Demonstration Projects, in 2016 ACF's Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) in conjunction with FYSB awarded thirteen cooperative agreement grants to implement the Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking (DVHT) Program. The DVHT Program is focused on providing comprehensive case management, direct services and assistance, and re-

referrals to domestic victims of severe forms of human trafficking. Services include, but are not limited to: long-term housing; substance abuse treatment; mental health counseling; educational opportunities; job training and skills; and legal and financial advocacy. Programs must integrate survivor engagement into their case management and service delivery strategies. The intent of the DVHT Program is to build, expand, and sustain organizational and community capacity to deliver trauma-informed, strength-based, and victim-centered services for domestic victims of severe forms of human trafficking through coordinated case management, a system of referrals, and the formation of community partnerships.

Working closely with OTIP, OPRE is overseeing an evaluation of the DVHT Program. Key objectives are to assess grantee site policies, practices, and services, including the focus of this grant program on access to long-term housing options, substance abuse treatment, and integration of survivor-informed services. Findings from the evaluation are anticipated in 2020.

This project is led by RTI International (Jennifer Hardison-Walters as Project Director, Kathleen Krieger as Associate Project Director).

## Evaluation of the National Human Trafficking Hotline Program

The primary objective of this project is to develop and execute an evaluation of the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH), a 24-hour toll-free line which provides assistance and service referrals to potential victims, service providers, law enforcement officials, and other individuals who contact the NHTH, and also provides time-sensitive tips to appropriate local, state, or federal law enforcement authorities.

Specifically, the evaluation will: describe the activities, procedures, and organization of the NHTH; describe the customer service of the NHTH; describe the immediate outcomes of the NHTH; and explore the creation of one or more new performance measures. Additionally, this project will collect information from individual NHTH users to examine the experiences of individuals who seek assistance from the [National Human Trafficking Hotline](#) (NHTH) after their interactions with the NHTH.

This project is led by RTI International (Jennifer Hardison-

Walters as Project Director, Kathleen Krieger as Associate Project Director).

## Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project

This project will conduct research to answer questions identified by the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF's) Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation and Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP) that will inform the development of anti-trafficking strategies, policies, and programs to prevent and respond to human trafficking. This project will include a variety of research and evaluation activities such as:

- Designing and conducting original studies that will inform policy, best practices of programs and strategies to prevent and respond to human trafficking, and the development of new research priorities;
- Identifying emerging policy and research questions or topics of special interest to ACF that can be addressed through research activities, such as literature reviews; convening and/or reviewing recommendations from various experts, stakeholders, and federal staff and initiating work based on those recommendations; and identifying sources of policy and data and conducting summaries, assessments, or secondary statistical analyses to answer questions of relevance; and
- Preparation of written products, such as syntheses of research evidence to inform policy and practice; methodological and analytic research documents to advance human trafficking research and evaluation; and, translation of research findings and issues for policymakers and implementers of anti-trafficking programs.

Design and planning are underway for the initial studies to be implemented within this project. Anti-trafficking experts and stakeholders will provide input and guidance at various stages of the project.

This work is being conducted through a contract to RTI International (Jennifer Hardison-Walters as Project Director, Natasha Latzman as Associate Project Director).

# RECOGNIZING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

While a growing body of research has greatly advanced knowledge of child and family development, more needs to be learned about the diversity of cultural features (e.g., language) among families accessing federal resources and the implications for early care and education programs and policies. DCFD seeks to better represent Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and other cultural minority groups in studies geared toward improving policy and practice. OPRE has launched several projects that aim to expand the knowledge base and improve resources for these communities.

## National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families

*This project is a joint effort with the Division of Family Strengthening and the Division of Economic Independence.*

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children and Families (NRCHCF) 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: (1) advancing a cutting-edge research agenda; (2) building research capacity; and (3) implementing an innovative communication and dissemination approach. The Center produced a number of reports, briefs, webinars and other resources this past year to inform the field, including national estimates of the [job characteristics](#) and [work schedules](#) of low-income Hispanic parents, analysis of the [characteristics of early care and education providers serving a high proportion of Hispanic children](#), a [synthesis of research about Hispanic children's access to early care and education](#), [interactive data tools to support research on Hispanic families and households](#), and [a guide for community-based organizations about developing culturally responsive approaches to serving diverse populations](#).

This project is led by Child Trends (Lina Guzman as co-PI).

## Tribal Early Childhood Research Center

*This project is a joint effort with the Division of Family*

*Strengthening.*

The Tribal Early Childhood Research Center (TRC) seeks to address gaps in early childhood research with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities through partnerships with tribal Head Start, Early Head Start, child care, and home visiting programs. The goals of the research are: (1) to identify needs and/or develop effective practices for early childhood initiatives in tribal communities; (2) to identify, validate, and/or develop culturally meaningful measures of program practices and outcomes for AI/AN families; and (3) to establish peer-learning communities and provide training and professional development to facilitate interest and competencies in research relevant to early childhood initiatives in tribal communities. The TRC also engages in pilot research with AI/AN communities and secondary analyses of existing data on AI/AN children and families.

This project is led by the University of Colorado, Denver (Michelle Sarche as Principal Investigator).

# LINKS TO PROJECTS AND REPORTS

## Cross-Cutting Early Childhood Research

National Survey of Early Care and Education: 2012

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-nsece-2010-2014>

National Survey of Early Care and Education: 2019

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/national-survey-of-early-care-and-education-2019-overview>

Variations in Implementation of Quality Interventions (VIQI)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/variations-in-implementation-of-quality-interventions-examining-the-quality-child-outcomes-relationship>

Supporting the Sustainability of the Q-CCIIT Observation Tool: Q-CCIIT Forward

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/supporting-sustainability-quality-caregiver-child-interaction-infants-toddlers-observation-tool-q-cciit-2018-2019-overview>

Professional Development Tools to Improve Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infant and Toddler Care (Q-CCIIT PD Tools)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/professional-development-tools-to-improve-the-quality-of-infant-toddler-care-q-cciit-pd-tools-2015-2020-overview>

Study of Coaching Practices in Early Care and Education Settings

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/study-of-coaching-practices-in-early-care-and-education-settings>

Creating a Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement in Child Care and Head Start Settings (CCL)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/creating-a-culture-of-continuous-quality-improvement-in-child-care-and-head-start-settings>

Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education, 2014-2019 (ECE-ICHQ)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/assessing-the-implementation-and-cost-of-high-quality-early-care-and-education-project-ece-ichq>

Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Study

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/early-head-start-child-care-partnerships-study>

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-care-and-early-education-research-connections>

Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium

<https://www.researchconnections.org/content/childcare/federal/cceepc.html>

Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Cross-Systems Evaluation

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/early-childhood-training-and-technical-assistance-cross-system-evaluation-project-2015-2020-overview>

Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/network-of-infant-toddler-researchers-nitr>

Human-Centered Design for Human Services (HCD4HS)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/human-centered-design-for-human-services-hcd4hs-2018-2021-overview>

Spotlight: Child and Family Data Archive

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/early-care-and-education-data-archive>

Early Care and Education Leadership Study (EXCELS), 2018-2023

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/early-care-and-education-leadership-study-excels-2018-2023-overview>

Next Steps for Rigorous Research on Two-Generation Approaches

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/next-steps-for-rigorous-research-on-two-generation-approaches-ns2g-overview>

Spotlight: Infant and Toddler Teacher and Caregiver Competencies

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/infant-toddler-teacher-caregiver-competencies>

### Child Care: Raising Quality and Supporting Parental Employment

Child Care and Development Block Grant Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grants Cohort 1, Phase I

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-development-block-grant-ccdbg-implementation-research-evaluation-planning-grants-fy2016-phase-i-cohort-i>

Child Care and Development Block Grant Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grants Cohort 1, Phase

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-and-development-block-grant-implementation-research-and-evaluation-grants-phase-ii-cohort-1>

Child Care and Development Block Grant Implementation Research and Evaluation Planning Grants Cohort 2, Phase I

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-development-block-grant-ccdbg-implementation-research-evaluation-planning-grants-fy2017-phase-i-cohort-2>

Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-care-and-early-education-policy-and-research-and-technical>

Supporting the Use of Administrative Data in Early Care and Education Research: Resource Series

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/supporting-use-administrative-data-early-care-education-research-resource-series>

Supporting the Psychological Well-Being of the Early Care and Education Workforce: Findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/supporting-psychological-well-being-early-care-education-workforce-findings-national-survey-early-care-education>

Market Rate Surveys and Alternative Methods of Data Collection and Analysis to Inform Subsidy Payment Rates

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/market-rate-surveys-and-alternative-methods-of-data-collection-and-analysis-to-inform-subsidy-payment-rates>

Validation of the Quality Ratings Used in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS): A Synthesis of State Studies

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/validation-quality-ratings-used-quality-rating-improvement-systems-qr-is-a-synthesis-of-state-studies>

Early Care and Education Research Scholars: Child Care

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-care-research-scholars>

Center for Supporting Research on Child Care and Development Block Grant Implementation, 2016-2021

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/center-for-supporting-research-on-child-care-and-development-block-grant-ccdbg>

Child Care Interstate Background Checks (CC-IBaCs)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-care-interstate-background-checks-cc-ibacs>

Assessing Models of Coordinated Services for Low-Income Children and their Families

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/assessing-models-of-coordinated-services-for-low-income-children-and-their-families-2018-2021-overview>

Integrated Approaches to Supporting Child Development and Improving Family Economic Security

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/integrated-approaches-supporting-child-development-improving-family-self-sufficiency>

Understanding the Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education Project (TRLECE)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/understanding-the-role-of-licensing-in-early-care-and-education-trlece-overview>

Home-Based Child Care Supply and Quality Project

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-based-child-care-supply-and-quality-2019-2024-overview>

Child Care Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Center (Child Care ECB Center)

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-research-and-evaluation-capacity-building-center-child-care-ecb-center-2019-2024-overview>

Spotlight: Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Policies Database

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-care-and-development-fund-ccdf-policies-database-2008-2013>

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Policies Database Website

<https://ccdf.urban.org/>

The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/the-ccdf-policies-database-book-of-tables-key-cross-state-variations-in-ccdf-policies-as-of-october-1-2017>

Child Care Subsidies under the CCDF Program

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-subsidies-ccdf-program-overview-policy-differences-across-states-territories-october-1-2016>

## Head Start and Early Head Start: Enhancing Health and Human Services for Low-Income Families

Early Head Start Family and Child Experiences Study 2018 and 2020

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/child-care-interstate-background-checks-cc-ibacs-2018-2021-overview>

Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014-2017 and 2019

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces>

American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014 and 2019

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/american-indian-and-alaska-native-head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces>

Early Care and Education Research Scholars: Head Start

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/head-start-graduate-student-research-program>

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

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/early-head-start-university-partnership-grants-buffering-children-from>

Early Head Start University Partnership Grants: Building the Evidence for Infant/Toddler Center-based Programs

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/early-head-start-university-partnerships-building-the-evidence-base-for-infant/toddler-center-based-programs-2015-2020>

Head Start Connects: Individualizing and Connecting Families to Comprehensive Family Support Services

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/head-start-connects-individualizing-and-connecting-families-to-comprehensive-family-support-services>

The Study of Disabilities Services Coordinators

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/the-study-of-disability-services-coordinators-and-inclusion-in-head-start-overview>

Understanding Children's Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/understanding-childrens-transitions-from-head-start-to-kindergarten>

Spotlight: Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/migrant-and-seasonal-head-start-study>

## Promoting Child Welfare

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/national-survey-of-child-and-adolescent-well-being-nscaw>

Supporting Evidence Building in Child Welfare

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/supporting-evidence-building-in-child-welfare>

Child Maltreatment Incidence Data Linkages

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/child-maltreatment-incidence-data-linkages-cmi-data-linkages>

Definitions and Policies Related to the Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/definitions-and-policies-related-to-the-incidence-of-child-abuse-and-neglect-and-related-risk>

Understanding Postadoption and Guardianship Instability for Children and Youth Who Exit Foster Care

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/understanding-postadoption-and-guardianship-instability-for-children-and-youth-who-exit-foster-care-2017-2020-overview>

Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child Welfare

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/understanding-judicial-decision-making-and-hearing-quality-in-child-welfare-2018-2022-overview>

Building Capacity to Evaluate Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/building-capacity-to-evaluate-child-welfare-community-collaborations-to-strengthen>

## LINKS TO PROJECTS AND REPORTS

[and-preserve-families-2018-2023-overview](#)

Building Capacity to Evaluation Interventions for YARH - Phase 3

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/building-capacity-to-evaluate-interventions-for-youth-with-child-welfare-involvement-at-risk-of-homelessness>

Spotlight: Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/title-iv-e-prevention-services-clearinghouse-2018-2023-overview>

Federal Register Notice (FRN; 83 FR 29122)

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/06/22/2018-13420/decisions-related-to-the-development-of-a-clearinghouse-of-evidence-based-practices-in-accordance>

## Human Trafficking: Improving Services for Survivors

Domestic Human Trafficking and the Child Welfare Population

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/domestic-human-trafficking-and-the-child-welfare-population>

Evaluation of Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Demonstration Projects

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/evaluation-of-domestic-victims-human-trafficking-demonstration-projects>

Evaluation of Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Program

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/evaluation-of-domestic-victims-of-human-trafficking-program>

Evaluation of the National Human Trafficking Hotline Program

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/evaluation-of-the-national-human-trafficking-hotline-program>

Human Trafficking Policy and Research Analyses Project

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/human-trafficking-policy-and-research-analyses-project>

## Recognizing Cultural Diversity

National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/center-for-research-on-hispanic-children-families>

National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families Website

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/>

Publications from the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/resources/publications/>

The Job Characteristics of Low-Income Hispanic Parents

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/the-job-characteristics-of-low-income-hispanic-parents/>

How Common Are Nonstandard Work Schedules Among Low-Income Hispanic Parents of Young Children?

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/how-common-are-nonstandard-work-schedules-among-low-income-hispanic-parents-of-young-children/>

Who is Caring for Latino Children? The Characteristics of the Early Care and Education Teachers and Caregivers Serving a High Proportion of Hispanic Children

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/who-is-caring-for-latino-children-the-characteristics-of-the-early-care->

[and-education-teachers-and-caregivers-serving-a-high-proportion-of-hispanic-children/](#)

Access to Early Care and Education for Low-Income Hispanic Children and Families: A Research Synthesis

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/access-to-ece-for-low-income-hispanic-children-and-families-a-research-synthesis/>

Interactive Data Tools to Support Research on Hispanic Families and Households

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/resources/interactive-data-tools/>

Developing Culturally Responsive Approaches to Serving Diverse Populations: A Resource Guide for Community-Based Organizations

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/publications/developing-culturally-responsive-approaches-to-serving-diverse-populations-a-resource-guide-for-community-based-organizations/>

Tribal Early Childhood Research Center

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/tribal-early-childhood-research-center>