Research Connections conducted a comprehensive search of its collection for resources focused on child care licensing and regulation. This search produced results grouped in three broad areas:

- Regulatory policies and practices,
- Relationship of licensing to quality of care and child outcomes, and
- Relationship of licensing to child care and labor markets.

From the many results in each area, Research Connections selected a limited number of resources of various types, including reports and papers, fact sheets and briefs, summaries, and reviews. Selection criteria included policy relevance and relatively recent publication.

Resources are organized according to publisher type and publication date. Research Connections’ one-sentence description is included for each resource on the following list. For complete citations, which include abstracts and full text for some resources, click on the titles.
Overview:

Throughout the last decade, a growing body of research has demonstrated the importance of quality within early care and education settings. State child care licensing regulations support quality by establishing and enforcing baseline health and safety and program standards for child care centers and homes. Licensing regulations, for example, typically cover child:staff ratios, group size, and staff credentials, all aspects of care that research has linked to quality. State regulations, vary widely, as do state decisions on which early care and education providers must be licensed or regulated, particularly among home-based providers. Strong licensing policies and practices contribute to maintaining children’s health and safety, enhancing their general well-being, and ensuring that child care programs have the foundation to support quality. Researchers continue to study child care regulation in an effort to understand the policies and practices that have the most impact on quality in centers and homes, and in turn lead to more positive outcomes for young children.

Research questions include:
- How do regulatory policies and practices affect early care and education quality?
- How do licensing policies and practices affect child outcomes?
- What is the relationship between child care licensing and labor markets?
- How do licensing and regulation policies and practices vary across states?
- How do licensing policies and regulations vary across child care settings (i.e. center-based care, home-based care, Head Start, State Pre-Kindergarten)?

Acknowledgements:

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REGULATORY POLICIES AND PRACTICES


A multistate study of the relationship between child care licensing requirements and risks of care-related injuries to children, with recommendations for strengthening licensing rules in Washington State.

A comparison of the child care licensing system in Washington state to systems in ten other states, with an analysis of effective licensing system components, and recommendations for improvements in enforcement capability.


A report by the Government Accountability Office to House Representative Sander M. Levin regarding the regulation of child care health and safety requirements in states supported by the Child Care and Development Fund.

### Journals


A comparison of state and national regulations for menu options in child care centers and family child care homes


An investigation of state regulations on nutrition guidelines and physical activity requirements for child care centers and family child care homes, and a discussion of the influence of these policies on childhood obesity rates.


An overview of Minnesota’s current child care system, examining indicators of quality, and comparing Minnesota’s policies and standards to other states to assess strategies that states could use to support child care.


A comparative analysis of early education and care regulatory systems in France, Germany, Sweden, and the United States designed to help increase understanding of regulatory practices, innovations, and issues from a cross-national perspective.
An analysis of child care regulations in four states, comparing regulations aimed at child welfare and safety versus those aimed at child development.

Universities and Research Organizations

An analysis of states’ licensing standards for infant/toddler child care centers, examining if regulations mandate an educational program.

A review of states’ minimum and maximum education qualification requirements for child care center staff and directors and developmental training requirements for child care professionals.

A review of states’ licensing regulations for child care centers and analysis of states’ requirements and intentions to include educational programs as a component of licensed child care.

A review of whether states mandate educational programs as part of their licensing regulations for full-time child care and preschool centers.

A presentation of a school readiness policy logic model, with recommendations and benchmarks for state policymakers in critical areas such as child care subsidies, licensing, accreditation, standards, assessment, professional development, systems development, facilities, capital investments, and kindergarten quality.

A discussion of the state of knowledge of child care regulation in the United States, including the way licensing involves a set of trade-offs to influence desirable outcomes such as child care quality, affordability, and supply.
Other

A ranking of state regulation and oversight of child care centers, based on an analysis of state child care licensing regulations

A compilation of survey data on state licensing programs and policies for child care centers and small and large family child care homes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2007

A ranking of state standards and oversight of small family child care homes in which up to six children are cared for, based on an analysis of state child care regulations

An examination of available early childhood education and care services in Williamson County, Texas, including program descriptions, accessibility, and cost of services

A summary of a compilation of data on state child care licensing programs and policies, including staffing, monitoring, and enforcement, and child care center licensing regulations, for all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2005.

A discussion of licensing and regulation for family child care providers and the relationship between licensing and child care quality

A study of the monitoring and oversight of center based and family child care in New York City, focusing on licensing, staffing, facilities, health, and safety, with quality enhancement recommendations for city and state agencies.
An overview of current regulatory and licensing policies for early childhood education and care programs in the United States.


A compendium of state actions regarding child care, early education, and school age child care issues in the year 2000, including comparative state tables for areas such as subsidies and standards.

*For 50-state information on child care licensing regulations, go to our 50 State Databases on the Internet, and scroll down to National Child Care Information Center. Search NCCIC’s database for information by geographic region on child care licensing.

RELATIONSHIP OF LICENSING TO QUALITY OF CARE AND CHILD OUTCOMES

Government

An examination of the content standards for early childhood curricula and quality regulations for early childhood programs in South Carolina

An annotated bibliography of research conducted since 1992 on thirteen key child care quality indicators used in developing child care licensing regulations.

Journals

Kaphingst, Karen M., Story, Mary (January 2009). Child care as an untapped setting for obesity prevention: State child care licensing regulations related to nutrition, physical activity, and media use for preschool-aged children in the United States Preventing Chronic Diseases, 6(1).
A categorical study of state obesity prevention-related child care licensing regulations in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and electronic media usage for center-based and family-based child care settings
An examination of the influence of differing state regulations and subsidies on child care quality in the for-profit, nonprofit, family, and friend, and neighbor child care markets in 14 U.S. cities

Moon, Rachel Y., Kotch, Lauren, Aird, Laura (2006) State child care regulations regarding infant sleep environment since the Healthy Child Care America-Back to Sleep campaign. Pediatrics, 118(1), 73-83
An examination of the effectiveness of the Healthy Child Care America-Back to Sleep campaign in terms of how licensed child care centers and family child care homes have adapted state regulations for the infant sleep environments.

A study of the influence of family child care regulations, the concentration of children cared for who received public child care subsidies (i.e., subsidy density), providers' level of education, and reported annual training hours on global quality and caregiver sensitivity in four Midwestern states.

An examination of fatality rates in family child care, in-home child care, and child care centers, using data from media reports, legal cases, and ethnographic studies from seven states.

An analysis comparing the effects of the regulable and nonregulable features of family child care homes on infants' and toddlers' cognitive development using data from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care.

A review of the steps taken by the military to improve its child care system after the enactment of the Military Child Care Act of 1989.

A study of the relationship among process indicators and structural features of quality and regulatory compliance in child care centers.

This policy brief reviews the current status of child care licensing in the U.S. and makes recommendations for improved licensing standards to increase quality of care. The report also addresses the question of what dimensions of quality can be regulated.
Universities and Research Organizations


Other Organizations


Mitchell, Anne W., Stoney, Louise. (2003) *Early care and education system reform: Key elements*. Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center. A paper identifying the key elements of an effective early care and education system and offering a model that can be used to identify and compare the ways that each sub-system addresses the key elements.


**National Women’s Law Center.** (2002). *Key lessons from the military for improving our nation’s child care system* Washington, DC: National Women’s Law Center A discussion of the child care system reforms undertaken by the military that systematically overhauled its child care system; it is meant to be used as a checklist for assessing the quality of states’ child care systems.
RELATIONSHIP OF LICENSING TO CHILD CARE AND LABOR MARKETS

Journals

An examination of how Australian child care professionals working in long day care centers perceive government regulations and their feelings on how the regulations impact their practice.

An analysis of the estimated effects of child care regulations on the labor market for mothers of young children and outcomes in the child care market, including type of care, child care hours, costs, and expenditures per hour and per week.

Universities and Research Organizations

An analysis of the impact of state child care regulations on the supply and quality of child care services in high and low income markets, addressing questions of accreditation, labor intensiveness, supply of and access to formal and informal child care, and benefits to center workers and owners, based on data from the United States Census of Services Industries for 1987, 1992, and 1997, state regulation data, and child care center accreditation data for 1987 through 1997 from the National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC).

A study of the impact of minimum standards, in the areas of staff child ratios and staff education, on the supply and quality of child care in geographical markets within the United States between 1987 and 1997.

A discussion of strategies utilized by Washington State to improve child care and early education, focusing on issues of public funding, workforce indicators, and federal, state, and local programs.

An analysis of the effects of child care regulations on the price of child care, the type of care chosen, and the mothers' decisions to work.
A research-based investigation of key areas in early childhood care and education, including the definition of program quality, program content and curriculum, regulatory policy, financing issues, and staff training and compensation.

To view and sort the full search results from which these resources were selected, you may use the *Recreate Complete Search* function. To suggest additions to this Key Topic Resource List, please email us at contact@researchconnections.org.

The full results came from a search on: “child care licensing regulation”.