

## **B4: Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: New Evidence and New Questions for the Future**

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | Roanoke

### **1. Descriptive Information**

#### **B4: Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: New Evidence and New Questions for the Future**

The goal of this session is to highlight recent research that will spark discussion about how findings can inform continuous improvement of state QRIS as system structures to support ECE quality improvement. The panel will highlight state QRIS studies from Indiana, Oregon and New Mexico. Each will address a different perspective on QRIS research, including use of longitudinal methods, use of new tools to assess unique features of children’s participation in ECE settings (including family-teacher/provider relationships and child engagement) and inclusion of in-depth coding and analysis of curriculum and assessment practices. The panel will also showcase a high-level overview of findings from a 10-state synthesis of QRIS validation studies. Each study offers new insights into the topics of quality measurement and how it can be conducted.

#### **Facilitator**

**Kathryn Tout**, Child Trends

#### **Panelists**

**Shannon Lipscomb**, Oregon State University | *QRIS Validation in Oregon*

**Zach Gold, Aura Mishra, and Sara Lane**, Purdue University | *QRIS Evaluation in Indiana*

**Sarah Daily**, Child Trends | *QRIS Evaluation in New Mexico*

#### **Scribe**

**Sarah Kowiak**, ICF

### **2. Documents Available on Website**

N/A

### **3. Brief Summary of Presentations**

- **Summary of Presentation #1:** Kathryn Tout
  - Validation study using 10 states
  - Key findings: QRIS ratings distinguished low- and high-quality programs using external measures of observed quality
  - Study allowed for cross-state analyses
  - Continued focus needed on developing and refining measures to capture dimensions of quality that are most important for children
- **Summary of Presentation #2:** Zachary Gold (PI, Dr. Jim Elicker)
  - Paths to Quality (PTQ) Evaluation – the state of Indiana’s 2-year longitudinal QRIS evaluation
  - PTQ is a voluntary system with about 60% overall provider participation; “building block” structure with different levels, the highest level 4 being national accreditation.
  - Three Studies – Study 1: Random statewide phone survey of 450 parents with children under the age of 5 about PTQ awareness, knowledge, and engagement (not discussed in presentation)
  - Study 2: Provider Study - 5 provider interviews over 2 years with 179 randomly selected providers
  - Majority of providers advanced to a higher level over two years. We discovered using latent class analysis, 4 different provider subgroups with variations in education levels, child care type, engagement, and rates of advancement. We will further explore this during publication of findings.
  - Certain provider characteristics predicted more advancement, or certain obstacles to advancement, such as motivation level, confidence in advancement, provider education level, and general attitudes about advancement.

- Policy implications: develop strategies tailored to attitudes and needs of distinct provider subgroups; re-examine advancement incentives and coaching
- Study 3: Child Study included 3 child development assessments over 2 years with a random stratified sample of 221 children receiving CCDF voucher assistance (146 preschoolers; 75 infant-toddlers).
- Dichotomized by children who received high vs. low PTQ quality rated care over 2 years, toddlers who received higher rated care showed stronger gains in early learning skills than toddlers in lower rated care. CLASS ratings did not predict early cognitive gains.
- Toddlers in lower rated care showed greater gains in caregiver-reported social competence than toddlers in higher rated care (toddlers in lower rate care caught up to those in higher rated care at the end of 2 years).
- High vs. low PTQ ratings did not predict any differences in preschoolers' social skills. However, overall children in the sample gained in their social skills.
- Important to note, both toddlers and preschoolers who were in regulated care receiving CCDF vouchers experienced significant gains in their cognitive, language, and social-emotional skills.
- Policy implications: further analysis of CLASS data; did CLASS quality affect children's gains? We suggest RCTs that examine effects of using research-based curricula on child care quality and child outcomes.
- General issues: Child care providers reported issues with coach continuity. In response, state gave providers option to stay with coach and decreased coach caseloads
- Is there a measurement disconnect between child outcomes and global CLASS quality?
- Caseloads of coaches varied throughout the study; highest number was ~55 providers per coach. Requirements for coach to spend a certain amount of time "onsite" with each provider.
- **Summary of Presentation #3: Shannon Lipscomb**
  - Examine child and family experiences across programs
  - Oregon QRIS: looking at outcomes of quality of early learning experience and child and family engagement, linking to outcome in academic and social skills
  - Multiple studies: Study 1 (over 300 programs); Study 2 (172 programs). There was a difference in distribution of programs and who was included in each study. Study 2 skewed towards more highly rated programs.
  - Used FPTRQ data and inCLASS data for samples
  - Study 1 validation: modest differences between high and low rated programs
  - Study 2 validation: slightly more family engagement at higher rated programs
  - Challenge of study: examining program level quality and child/family experience
  - Classroom experiences vary within each level and type
  - Intraclass correlation coefficients across all outcomes; variation within programs and between programs
  - Differences in home-based and center-based programs: FPTRQ scores can vary by type of care. There are differences in what we are seeing in outcome measures vs QRIS
  - Consistent findings across types of care: adult-child interaction, child engagement, family-provider/teacher relationships (such as demographic of family)
  - Unique findings in home-based care and center-based care
  - Future research: measurement, conceptualizing quality at program level, diversity of experience
  - Representative sample for Oregon's diverse family, so many other questions to dig into in regards to data
- **Summary of Presentation #4: Sarah Daily/Kathryn Tout**
  - New Mexico: curriculum framework is the Authentic Observation, Documentation and Curriculum Planning (AODCP); provides tools for individualizing teaching; uses New Mexico's early learning guidelines to create a child assessment tool
  - NM Pre-K has a number of forms for teachers to complete for the AODCP process; They also provide extensive on-site coaching and consultation and focus on continuous quality improvement.
  - Can we identify high- and low-quality AODCP implementation? Are AODCP tools associated with classroom quality and child outcomes?
  - Collected various documents including child portfolios, quick checks and lesson plans

- Key coding constructs: Does written observation match the indicator? Focusing on detail (does the teacher provide enough information to show that the behavior she observed was appropriate) and objectivity (does the teacher use neutral language in the portfolio)
- Quality of the materials was assessed by coders
- Overall teachers infrequently documented plans, modifications and reflections
- Quality varied by years of experience with New Mexico AODCP; differences in quality of skill they were looking at and among children in the same classroom
- When examining reliability of the child assessments: some variation/differences in reliability of assessing were observed; quality of scoring varied across children in the classroom; on some indicators the teachers were assessing children similarly, but on other indicators they did not
- Curriculum implementation is a process; study raised questions about what best practice should be.
- Documenting some pieces of curriculum and assessment may be critical; however, coding these materials at scale would be burdensome if implementing on a larger level.
- CLASS measure was not differentiated by quality of implementation
- The AODCP assessment was validated by outside measures; there is more work to understand how the quality of implementation varies by child and by developmental domain (some children and some domains may be easier or harder to document)
- Challenge of bringing AODCP to child care programs; not clear that they would have supports for implementation.
- We still have a “black box” in understanding how teachers use assessment to individualize

#### **4. Brief Summary of Discussion**

N/A

#### **5. Summary of Key issues raised** (facilitators are encouraged to spend the last 3-5 minutes of sessions summarizing the key issues raised during the session; bullets below are prompts for capturing the kinds of issues we’re looking for)

QRIS is differentiating low and high quality care, but ongoing discussion is needed about what those ratings actually measure and reflect.

Longitudinal assessment of providers is an important research activity to better understand how providers perceive and progress in QRIS

Use of tools such as the FTPRQ that haven’t been used as frequently in QRIS raise new questions about the dimensions of quality to include in a QRIS and the different experiences that families have within the same program.

Curriculum and assessment may be addressed most effectively through TA and coaching support instead of rating (given the burden of reviewing documentation and capturing a process that is difficult to measure).