The Role of Licensing in Supporting Quality Practices in Early Care and Education

CCEEPRC
April 18, 2019

Kelly Maxwell, Child Trends
Acknowledgement

This presentation and project is supported by the Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children & Families, with research set-aside funds in the CCDBG Act of 2014, under the Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis (CCEEPRA) Project.

• Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, Project Officer
1. Describe a framework for the role of licensing in supporting quality

2. Support research on this topic
   • Examples of hypotheses about how licensing might influence quality
   • Possible research questions
Child Care Licensing

- Historically viewed as the floor or foundation of quality

- This view of licensing as a first step toward quality is beginning to change

- Licensing beginning to be viewed as important all along the quality continuum (not just at the lower end)
How Licensing Supports Quality

Licensing Components → Activities → Short-Term Outcomes for Providers and ECE System → Long-Term Outcomes for Providers
Use Terminology from NARA’s Best Practices for Human Care Regulation

• Organizational Management
  • Leadership, strategic planning, financial and resource controls, staffing, professional development for staff, communication

• Regulatory Management
  • Statutory provisions, standards development, programmatic policy, legal enforcement, quality assurance for improvement and control, technical assistance
Staffing: Licensing staff with smaller caseloads may spend more time providing TA to programs compared to staff with larger caseloads

Professional Development: Licensing staff whose PD includes research-based updates on quality practices are better able to provide TA related to quality, including supporting compliance with licensing regulations
Examples of Research Questions

- Is compliance with all licensing regulations lower when programs are monitored on an abbreviated set of regulations?

- What’s the relationship between a providers’ participation in quality improvement activities and compliance with licensing regulations?
More Examples of Research Questions

- What is the relationship between licensing requirements and the supply of licensed or regulated family child care?
  - In states and territories in which regulated family child care has declined over time, what aspects of licensing are perceived as barriers or supports for former family child care providers who no longer serve children?

- In states and territories that coordinate licensing monitoring with other monitoring efforts, do licensing staff spend more time providing TA about quality practices compared to those that do not coordinate monitoring?
• Encourage basic descriptive studies or case studies to build our knowledge and refine questions
• Discuss the framework and conduct research to further our understanding of how licensing supports quality
• Encourage researchers to add licensing data to ongoing studies
• Encourage states to conduct research to address their questions of interest related to licensing and quality, including qualitative research
The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.