

### E3: Policies to Improve Continuity of Subsidized Child Care

Thursday, February 8, 2018

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. | Richmond

#### 1. Descriptive Information

<b>E3: Policies to Improve Continuity of Subsidized Child Care</b>  This session focuses on policy levers designed to increase the stability of children’s participation in subsidized childcare. The session will open with a presentation on key factors influencing the continuity of subsidized childcare. Then three presentations will highlight novel policy approaches designed to improve subsidy stability: (1) the use of contracted providers to assess voucher eligibility, (2) the centralization of eligibility determination at the state level, and (3) the promotion of partnerships between Child Care and Early Head Start programs. Two discussants will consider these examples in light of state CCDBG implementation efforts broadly and with consideration of their potential to improve children’s wellbeing. By bringing together experts from different states and diverse disciplines, and through audience participation, the session will spark conversation across researchers and practitioners and across childcare and early education experts about promising strategies to support the stability of children’s care.	<b>Facilitator</b> <b>Anna Johnson</b> , Georgetown University and Child Trends  <b>Panelists</b> <b>Yoonsook Ha</b> , Boston University   <i>Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Reassessment and its Impact on the Stability of Child Care Subsidy Receipt and Care Arrangements</i>  <b>Rebecca Madill</b> , Child Trends and <b>Rene Williams</b> , Maryland State Department of Education   <i>Improving Stability Through Centralizing Child Care Eligibility Process: The Case of Maryland</i>  <b>Belvie Herbert</b> , Delaware Health and Social Services   <i>Strategies to Support Continuity within EHS-CC Partnerships: The Example of Delaware</i>  <b>Discussant</b> <b>Anna Johnson</b> , Georgetown University and Child Trends and <b>Leigh Ann Bryan</b> , National Center on Subsidy Innovation and Accountability (NCSIA)  <b>Scribe</b> <b>J.R. Sayoc</b> , ICF
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#### 2. Documents Available on Website

Presentations not on website

#### 3. Brief Summary of Presentations

- **Summary of Presentation #1: Yoonsook Ha – Child Care Subsidy Eligibility Reassessment and its Impact on the Stability of Child Care Subsidy Receipt and Care Arrangements**
  - Background
    - Reasons for subsidy instability are complex including family, system issues, or contextual issues.
    - Subsidy programs are administration intense by nature, eligibility reassessment process can be burdensome and difficult for families
    - Massachusetts conducted administrative change in 2012, shifting voucher reassessment overview
  - Massachusetts Child Care Subsidy system
    - Income eligible children
      - When eligible:

- Waiting list first then voucher or contracted slot
    - Initial assessment
      - Go to CCR&R
  - Study overview
    - Data sources
      - Massachusetts CCDF admin data merged with licensing data base
    - Sample
      - Study focused on income eligible and
      - Users of subsidy
      - Observed over 42 months
    - Analysis
      - Spell analysis focused on first spell
  - Conclusion
    - Children in study group especially older children are less likely to leave subsidy in the month after reassessment
    - CCDBG family friendly policy requirements can bring positive influences on subsidy stability
    - Ways states can relieve burdens related to eligibility reassessment
      - Minimize need to reassess prior to the reassessment month
        - Changes in income, service needs, or family size
      - Implementing family friend practices
        - Send reminders, allow walk in's, offer off business hours for office visits, remote reassessment, etc.
- **Summary of Presentation #2: Maryland – Rebecca Madill – decision to centralize child care subsidy authorization**
    - Continuity of care and centralization
    - Decision to centralize
      - Administrative oversize of 24 programs to 1 program
    - Delinking program eligibility
    - Case management structure
      - Former structure had caseload workers managing and implementing
        - Case managers have been gate keepers of policy prior to restructure
          - Restructure has impacted continuity of care and provided oversight
    - Obtaining subsidy
      - To obtain subsidized child care a family must:
        - Establish eligibility, then get voucher
    - Research questions
      - RQ1: were subsidy eligibility period and vouchers longer after the shift to provide, centralized subsidy case manage system (for families not receiving TANF)?
        - Subsidy eligibility length
          - Eligibility periods were significantly longer after transition to CCS central.
        - Subsidy voucher length
          - Significantly longer after the transition to CCS Central
      - RQ2: Was there greater consistency in voucher and eligibility across counties after centralization?
        - Consistency found across MD counties, especially after centralization
    - Recommendations
      - Know the factors that impact subsidy authorization
      - Ensure that admin procedures are aligned with federal regulations for the subsidy program
      - Assess the variability in subsidy receipt at the county or local level
      - Consider how a family's participation in other eligibility based programs affects their experience with the subsidy program

- **Summary of Presentation #3: First Delaware EHS-CCP Collaboration with Purchase of Care**
  - Early care and Education Infrastructure- partnerships
    - Office Early Learning and QRIS= Department of Education (DOE)
    - Licensing= Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF)
    - Subsidy=Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS)- Division of Social Services (DSS)
    - CCR&R=private
    - Part b= Delaware Health and Social Services-Division of Public Health
      - Challenging to bring all state organizations under one roof
  - History
    - 2014 Delaware Department of Education office of Early learning (OEL) submission of application for EHS-CC partnership grant
    - Memo of understanding established between Department of Health and Social services and Department of Education
  - Logistics of OEL and DHSS partnership-OEL
    - OEL responsibilities
      - Identify a project manager
      - Identify providers
      - Identify the families and assist them with the subsidy process
      - Ensure slots were filled
      - Continues subsidy payments for families who lost subsidy
      - Provide monthly report to DHSS
    - DHSS responsibilities
      - Identify a project manager
      - Identify an eligible worker in each county
        - Delaware consists of three counties
      - Commit to buy-in 72 slots using state general funds
      - Waive parents co-pays
      - Reimburse providers for a full 21 days
      - Pay for 4 absences
      - Continue child care for teen payments, so they can look for work, continue education, etc.
  - Layered funding for EHS-CCP
    - Cost based off of market rate
      - Generated by vendor in area
  - Changes in partnership
    - Need to meet more regularly, in at least a quarterly basis
      - Grantee
      - Provider and subsidy partner
      - TA partners
    - Provide more outreach to FFC homes
    - Ensure all necessary parties are at the table from the very start
      - I.E. eligibility works, systems, fiscal, procurement, etc.
- **Summary of Presentation #4: National Center on Subsidy Innovation and Accountability - Leigh Ann Bryan**
  - Excited about data related to subsidy
    - Data finds impact of policies on subsidy
  - 35 states that have implement minimum 12 month eligibility
    - Only reason all states have not implemented is due to regulatory requirements within state
  - Graduated phase out
    - 38 states have implemented
  - Continuity of care – disruption of work

- Reducing the amount of times parents need to get into subsidy office
- 53 states and territories have implemented policy related to continuity of care

#### 4. Brief Summary of Discussion

##### Q&A and Discussion

- a. Once case managers realized that voucher lengths impact children, case managers have started to adjust eligibility period
  - i. Important that case managers understand that their work affects child development.
    1. Case managers often:
      - a. Do not have a background in child care
      - b. Look to align eligibility lines or various programs vs considering child development
      - c. Are the gatekeepers of policy
    2. Without knowing what case managers are you doing, you do not have a clue about how the policy is truly being implemented
      - i. Saying what should happen vs what is actually happening
- b. Are trainings being made on how caseworkers should get trained? Often how to use the system is taught, but not the knowledge base of content—learning how child development can be disrupted by their work.
  - i. Maryland- caseworkers must watch three early education webinars and take an exam before starting work.
    1. To let case workers know what happens to children when policies are broken (i.e. continuity of care)
      - a. Historically if a parent does not attend TANF, case managers would end eligibility, despite supervisor instruction not to end eligibility based off attendance. Proves there can be disconnect between supervisors and case managers.
- c. We can make subsidy a lot better for parents if we link work support programs, efforts to align eligibility periods, create a simple process in Oregon. Moved to one form to apply for SNAP and CC.
  - i. Single enrollment is different from marrying programs
    1. If family is receiving SNAP, subsidy, and Medicare; do they need to submit financial work multiple times?
      - a. States must think about burden on family and potential of easing paperwork burden
  - ii. You can align programs but cannot shorten eligibility to less than 12 months but can increase to more than 12 months.
- d. In Georgia, we have centralized eligibility, state agency is in charge of eligibility, paperwork can be done online or via email to reduce burden on parents and providers. Recently shifted to Dept. of Early Care and Learning, and made eligibility a part of early learning versus having eligibility aligned with assistance programs. Separate staff work on child care, solves some of issues of eligibility period being shortened, having specialization in early learning helps staff make more informed decisions.
  - i. Panelist: Encourage to look at case managers background:
    1. Do they have a background in child development
    2. Ensure entry training for case managers
    3. Train staff who do not have backgrounds in early child development

#### 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)

N/A