Factors behind the family child care decline: What does the research say?

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Acknowledgements

• Research team
  – Marina Ragonese-Barnes
  – Sam Melvin
  – Patricia Molloy
  – Margaret Reardon
  – Kirsty West

Support for this study comes from a grant from
The Foundation for Child Development
Background on decline

Multi-State Study of Family Child Care Decline

• Exploratory study to examine reasons licensed providers enter the field, stay in the field, leave the field
• Four states: CA, FL, MA, WI
• Comprehensive literature review on factors behind the decline
• Primary data collection
  – 24 focus groups with current providers
  – 40 interviews with providers who have left the field
  – Interviews with stakeholders (licensing, QRIS)
Literature Review
Overview

• 85 articles reviewed
• Focus on five factors:
  – individual provider characteristics
  – provider program features
  – regulatory and quality system requirements;
  – available professional development supports
  – parent demand for child care
Figure 1. Conceptual model for factors shaping the decline of regulated family child care

**Provider and Program Factors**
- **Individual characteristics**
  - demographics, stress and well-being, motivations
- **Program features**
  - working conditions, running a business, working with children

**System and Support Factors**
- **Policy and system requirements**
  - cross-system inconsistency, standards don’t fit FCC, paperwork, low reimbursement rates
- **Support and professional development availability and accessibility**
  - access, match between needs and available support, cost

**Parent Demand Factors**
- Child care choices and preferences

**DECLINE OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE**
Findings

Individual provider characteristics

• Demographics
  – Income
  – Education
  – Age

• Stress and psychological well-being

• Motivations
Findings

Program characteristics

• Working conditions
• Running a business
  – Policies that limit enrollment
  – Business skills and limited administrative capacity
  – Nurturing and making money
• Working with children
  – Mixed-age groups of children
  – Own children in care
• Working with families
Findings

Regulatory and quality system requirements

• Cross-system inconsistency
• Paperwork burden
• Standards that do not align with family child care
• Language barriers
• Low reimbursement rates
Findings

Available professional development supports

- Transportation
- Fit with provider needs and interests
- Cost of support and training
- Access to support – language and education
Findings

Parent demand

• Developmental preferences
• Cultural preferences
• Cost of child care
Program and policy implications

- Initiatives that offer opportunities for peer support and professional development
- Funding to support quality of care and sustainable working conditions
- Business and financial management supports
- Alignment and coordination across systems
- Increased access for linguistically diverse workforce
- Increased inclusion of FCC in universal pre-K initiatives, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships
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