Child Care Policy Research Consortium
2011 Annual Meeting Overview

The Child Care Policy Research Consortium (CCPRC) consists of researchers, policymakers and practitioners associated with child care research projects sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The purpose of the CCPRC is to increase the capacity for child care research nationally including identification of critical child care research questions and issues; better understanding of critical policy and methodological issues; strengthening the linkages between research, policy and practice; and informing future research funding decisions.

Through the joint efforts of the Office of Child Care (OCC) and OPRE, the 2011 Annual CCPRC meeting was held with the Annual State and Territory Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Administrators Meeting (STAM). The meeting theme, *The Intersection of Research and Practice: Meeting Child Care Goals in Challenging Times,* responded to challenges faced by States, Territories, and communities across the country. The combined meetings, held November 14-18 at the Hyatt Regency Bethesda in Maryland, were designed to provide opportunities for participants to learn about and engage in discussions regarding sound directions for the future.

Sessions on November 15th focused on the State and Territory CCDF plans and on ways the OCC's new Child Care Technical Assistance Network can help States and Territories meet their goals. The joint STAM-CCPRC plenary sessions and workshops on November 16th featured presentations about the latest in research findings and discussions about how the findings can be used to shape child care policy decisions and development of innovative and effective early childhood systems. Plenary sessions and workshops on November 17th delved more deeply into aspects of child care policy-related research, including emerging research questions and issues. On November 18th, Child Care Research Scholars and Head Start Graduate Student Research Scholars met in a session designed to promote sharing of research projects and consultation among scholars and faculty mentors.

Planning for the meetings was a collaborative process that involved the CCPRC Steering Committee (SC), OPRE Child Care Research Team, OCC, the OCC State Issues Work Group, and principal investigators of funded projects. Within the framework of OCC priorities, four planning groups developed proposals for plenary and workshop sessions on the following themes: child care subsidy policies and practices; quality frameworks; collaboration, integration and linkages; and parents and families.

This overview focuses specifically on the November 16th joint STAM-CCPRC plenary and workshop sessions and the November 17th CCPRC sessions.

- The joint STAM-CCPRC meeting started on November 16th with an opening and welcome from ACF Leadership that was facilitated by Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, OPRE Child Care Research Coordinator. George Sheldon, ACF Acting Assistant Secretary, Shannon Rudisill, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development and OCC Director, and Naomi Goldstein, OPRE Director, provided opening

remarks. Themes included the importance of high quality early childhood education; the need to think across silos in early learning and related programs; and the importance of the CCPRC and its role in increasing the availability of policy-relevance research. George Sheldon announced the appointment of Linda Smith as the new Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development.

Three plenary sessions highlighted important policy issues and research tools that can help CCDF Administrators with challenging policy and practice decisions including: *(1) Building Pathways and Partnerships to Support Children's Development, (2) Applying the Implementation Science Lens to Early Care and Education Research, and (3) Findings from the QRIS Assessment Project.* Fifteen workshops in three concurrent breakout sessions provided opportunities for participants to learn what we know from research, discuss the implications of research findings, and identify gaps and areas where additional research is needed.

- The November 17th CCPRC meeting focused on research design and measurement issues with ten workshop sessions and three plenary sessions. The plenary sessions included *Preview of Cross-Cutting Child Care Research Design and Measurement Issues* and *Indicators of ECE Quality for Multiple Purposes.* The closing plenary, *What We Have Learned and Emerging Issues*, included reflections from a panel of CCPRC theme group representatives and ACF leaders including Shannon Rudisill, Naomi Goldstein, and Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy.

The products developed for this meeting including detailed session summaries and associated documents are posted on the meeting website at: www.researchconnections.org.

Overview of Plenary and Workshop Sessions

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 8:15-9:45 am

Opening and Welcome from Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Leadership
    Ivelisse Martinez-Beck welcomed participants to the meeting and introduced the ACF leaders participating in the session. Presenters included: Shannon Rudisill, Naomi Goldstein and George Sheldon. Shannon indicated her appreciation for the collaboration between OCC, OPRE and the CCPRC, and in particular, tools such as the QRIS Evaluation Kit and compendium of child assessments. Naomi talked about how as a working meeting, CCPRC is a model in its scope, density, efficiency and partnerships. Research is an important part of ACF efforts including the home visiting program and Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC). George discussed the importance of early childhood education, the need to break down silos and link programs together, and how the most significant work is done at the implementation level. Acknowledging the great work that has been done by Shannon and Joan Lombardi, George announced the appointment of Linda Smith as the new Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development.

Plenary Session 1: Building Pathways and Partnerships to Support Children's Development

This session featured innovative initiatives that are representative of pathways and partnerships to increase access to high-quality care and education for more low-income children. Presenters included: Mary Beth Jackson, Tom Layman, Kathryn Tout and Marty Zaslow. The presenters synthesized key lessons across initiatives and highlighted implications for policy and research. Tom provided an overview of Community Connections (Illinois) which builds on the flexibility and commitment of local home-based child care providers to incorporate a school readiness component into their programs. Tom also discussed the Minnesota School Readiness Connection, which is a pilot project that provides incentives to programs to promote continuity of care, promote school readiness and program quality, and support employment and school readiness. Kathryn described a process evaluation of Kentucky STARS for Kids NOW, one of the oldest QRIS programs in the country. This evaluation used a multi-method approach with a variety of data sources, and identified strengths and areas for revision or refinement. As discussant, Marty noted how each of these projects reflect OCC's guiding principles, i.e., is child focused, family friendly and fair to providers. In addition, each involves a partnership and reciprocal relationship between policy-makers and researchers.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 10:00-11:15 am
Workshop Session A1: Meeting Parents' Needs and Supporting Children's Development: Cross-Systems Initiatives

This workshop session focused on two innovative collaborative initiatives—the Community Connections Project (Illinois) and the Early Head Start for Family Child Care Project (Virginia)—that aim to meet parents' needs while supporting children's development through the formation of partnerships across systems. Presenters included: Dawn Ramsburg, Patti Banghart, Patricia Del Grosso, Tom Layman, Judith Rosen and Linda Saterfield. Challenges related to collaboration were identified including rules and regulations that differ across partners, e.g., Head Start standards versus licensing regulations, and schedules that differ (providers and school teachers). One panel member noted that partnership challenges are never insurmountable, but that they take creativity to overcome. A central theme was that relationships take time. People approach issues from their personal perspectives, so building trust and understanding differing contexts is necessary before partnering systems can understand how coordinate their priorities (as opposed to viewing them as competing demands). Implementation research can help in identifying those aspects of programs and partnerships that are unclear or in need of improvement.

Workshop Session A2: Child Care Subsidy Dynamics: Recent Research Findings from Ongoing Studies on Subsidy Stability and Arrangement Continuity (Poster Symposium)

This poster-panel session presented key findings from four ongoing projects that address issues of subsidy dynamics. Presenters included: Julie Henly, Kendall Swenson, Bobbie Weber, Liz Davis, Yoonsook Ha and Nikki Forry. Discussants included Minh Le and Lynne Shanafelt. Kendall described his study using State CCDF data. There are commonalities across States including the role of seasonality in spell length (the typical spell is 4-8 months). While cycling on and off of subsidies occurs, it does not appear to vary based on demographic factors such as age of child and race/ethnicity. Bobbie described a study of child care stability in Oregon after policy changes made it one of the more generous States in terms of subsidy reimbursement. More generous policies were associated with longer

subsidy spells, higher use of center care (especially for 2- and 3-years olds in metro areas) and more use of relative care. Parents were asked about their primary reason for exiting the program; 2/3 of parents exited because they no longer met the eligibility criteria. Liz presented results from the Maryland-Minnesota Research Partnership. This study found that the median spell length in these States is, on average, 8 months. Families working for pay tend to have longer subsidy spells while families on TANF have shorter spells. Yoonsook examined child care arrangements using administrative data and found that more than half of children experienced some form of instability and children with a new sibling were more likely to experience unstable subsidy and care arrangements. Minh discussed OCC's new information memorandum that encourages CCDF policies that promote stability. Lynne raised questions about the relationship between stability and quality of care.

Workshop Session A3: Quality Improvement Strategies and Innovations: What Do We Know from Research, and Where Are the Gaps?

This workshop explored policy options designed to improve early care and education program quality. Presenters included: Kimberly Boller, Diana Schaack, Kate Tarrant, Rosemary Allen, Gail Kelso, and Barbara McCaffery. Using an ecological framework, presenters described the research base for quality improvement strategies at multiple levels: workforce, setting, family, and system. The session began with a brief presentation of the findings from a review of the literature and then engaged participants in a series of interactive roundtable discussions regarding current research and the most pressing gaps that confront policymakers. A brief is being developed to describe quality improvement options as well as literature reviews and meta-analyses designed to identify rigorous research on interventions. Small groups discussed a series of questions including the types of quality improvement interventions States have funded along with level of intervention, the role of research, other factors that weigh into State decisions, other innovations being considered, and barriers that relate to implementing those innovations. Challenges identified included tensions between strengthening standards and not wanting to scare off providers; the influence of anecdotes rather than rigorous research; development of family level interventions; taking interventions to scale; ensuring that higher rating levels actually mean high quality of care for children; and political pressures that may compete with what the research suggests.

Workshop Session A4: Assessing the Supply of ECE and Understanding the Workforce

This workshop focused on two projects that examine early childhood education programs and the workforce: the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) and the National Research Council Workshop, "Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce." Presenters included: Bob Goerge, Aletha Huston, Janice Molnar, and Marty Zaslow. The NSECE includes four coordinated, nationally-representative surveys including households, home-based providers, center-based providers, and classroom staff. This survey is intended to help in understanding the care received by low-income children across communities, provide baseline data on community collaboration, and data to help in planning for workforce improvement. The Early Childhood Care and Education Workforce workshop was organized around three key areas: defining and describing the ECE workforce; exploring characteristics of the workforce that affect children; and describing the context that shapes the workforce and ways to build the profession. Major themes included: the need

for clearer definitions; that program quality matters in terms of child outcomes; the need for effective workforce training; and the importance of movement toward ECE as a profession with career pathways. From the State perspective, better information about the decisions made by parents, providers and communities; the ECE workforce; and effective strategies for training the low-educated workforce are needed. Follow-up to the workshop should include discussion about the development of an ECE data system that can speak to and be comparable to the K-12 data system.

Workshop Session A5: Emerging Findings from the Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual-Language Learners

Presenters shared findings from critical research reviews and a secondary data analysis (SDA) conducted by the Center for Early Care and Education Research: Dual Language Learners (CECER-DLL) as well as findings from an SDA of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Birth Cohort (ECLS-B). Presenters included: Ann Rivera, Peg Burchinal, Dina Castro, Melody Jurado, and Camille Maben. The CECER-DLL studies found that while DLL's language development differs from monolingual children, conceptual vocabulary (words they know in either language) was the same between DLL and monolingual students. The researchers found no evidence that ECE quality measures function differently in DLL versus monolingual settings. After taking into account variables such as country of heritage, income and mother's education, only a few differences emerged in the ECLS-B data analysis: DLL students had better socio-emotional outcomes, greater reading gains, and lower cognitive scores in infants. Overall, DLL status was a weak predictor of cognitive outcomes and a stronger predictor of socio-emotional outcomes. With regard to early care and education, except for Hispanic children during their preschool years, DLL children were in fewer hours of care. The discussants advocated the following: teaching in the primary language first, providing rich oral environments, honoring family culture and language, and promoting access to early child care via the media.

Thursday, November 16, 2011, 11:30 am-12:45 pm
Workshop Session B1: Research Findings at the Intersection of Early Care and Education and Child Welfare (Poster Symposium)

This poster symposium focused on emerging research findings at the intersection of early care and education (ECE) and child welfare (CW). Presenters included: Ann Rivera, Helen Ward, Shannon Lipscomb, Laura Dinehart, Beth Meloy, and Nilofer Ahsan. Among the studies discussed: a Colorado study found that caseworkers often don't recognize ECE as an intervention for at-risk children and eligibility limits for child care assistance reduce access to ECE for children in the CW system; a study using data from the Head Start Impact Study suggests that Head Start had positive impacts on an array of school readiness outcomes; in Florida, children in CW were less likely to attend accredited child care centers, and by the end of prek, children in CW demonstrated poorer performance than other children; and two studies suggest that encouraging policies that support high quality ECE for foster children could help to mitigate the negative outcomes associated with foster care for young children. Discussion themes included the importance of community-level coordination in meeting the needs of children who have experienced child abuse and neglect; the need for increased awareness on the part of foster parents; making sure that infants and toddlers in foster care aren't overlooked because the needs of older children seem more pressing; more research

that considers the intersection between subsidies and CW and takes into account pre-existing group differences; and the importance of moving beyond safety and permanency for children in the CW system to include goals around developmental well-being.

Workshop Session B2: Tradeoff of Subsidy Access and Quality

An important OCC goal is high quality care for children whose parents obtain a child care subsidy. The focus on quality and stability of subsidized arrangements in a time of budget constraints requires States to review budgets and likely make tradeoffs among competing priorities. Presenters included: Bobbie Weber, Helen Blank, Nikki Forry, and Stephanie Gehres. This session started with brief presentations that addressed the importance of child care subsidies as a support to family income and education, to school-age as well as younger children, and to providers (only three States currently reimburse providers at the 75th percentile); the role of local coalitions in Florida; and what we understand from existing studies. Participants broke into small groups and were asked to generate questions about the information they need for decision-making. In summary, administrators would like more immediate information and feedback from researchers including: What do we know about quality that convinces us to restrict access? What are tipping points: waiting lists versus decreasing eligibility and threshold issues? Continuity of care; are there other ways to get at it? Are there ways to reduce expenditures that have fewer impacts on children, families and providers than others? What child and family indicators should be tracked? What about interim child indicators? What are the cost-benefits of quality improvement strategies, licensing, etc.? What is the baseline of quality now? What are the incentive points for providers? Are market rate surveys the best way to determine provider rates?

Workshop Session B3: Compensation in Quality Improvement Initiatives

This workshop highlighted the information that is known about current wages and ECE benefits; the relationship between education and compensation; and cost considerations, including the impact of compensation on provider costs, family affordability, public financing, and incentives offered by States. Presenters included Rick Brandon, Anne Mitchell, and Laura Saterfield. Rick focused on a competitive labor market approach to examining the impact of staff compensation on tradeoffs among quality and affordability. He concluded that we know that low qualifications and compensation result in low quality and high turnover, but since we don't know what the optimal level of qualifications and compensation are, we may want to experiment with moderate increases in standards and compensation and incentivize qualifications at both the program and individual worker levels. Anne started with the premise that high quality ECE costs more than most families can afford and summarized what has been learned about the gap between cost and quality in three anonymous States. Across these States, programs at the lowest quality levels have the highest revenue and are likely breaking even or even making money. Programs at the higher levels do not break even, and instead have negative revenue. Programs do better if they don't serve infants and toddlers, if they are small, if they have near 100% enrollment, or receive prek revenue. Laura talked about strategies in Wisconsin to improve quality including the R.E.W.A.R.D program which is a stipend program based on education and longevity in the field, and a new QRIS program, which includes PD supports, onsite TA and micro-grants. Starting in July 2012, tiered reimbursement will begin and programs must earn at least two stars to receive subsidy reimbursement.

Workshop Session B4: Integrating Professional Development with QRIS

This workshop explored State practices that reflect opportunities for integrating QRIS and Professional Development Systems (PD). The goal was to provide concrete descriptions that illustrate the challenges and opportunities for effective QRIS/PD integration and alignment. Presenters included: Kathryn Tout, Anne Douglass, Allyson Dean, Martha Buell, Rena Hallam and Ellen Wheatley. Anne presented on a first year implementation study in Massachusetts that investigated newly created PD partnerships and how they communicated with and worked with the State Agency as well as how the PD partnerships aligned with the State's new QRIS. One finding was that PD partners served as ambassadors to translate information about system change to the community. Martha (Delaware), indicated that a recent breakthrough is an agreement to including TA, including coaching and mentoring, as part of the PD hours required for licensing. Allison presented about the PD system in Maine, which is intentionally integrated into QRIS. The availability of data helps providers know what they need to do to progress within QRIS and assists resource and referral specialists in targeting training at both the individual and regional level. Rena presented about Delaware's plan to integrate the PD system with early learning standards, the State career lattice, etc. In discussion, participants raised questions about developing and measuring family partnership standards in the context of QRIS and PD systems; the pros and cons of relationship-based PD versus e-learning; and the need to support those who work with providers so that burn-out is prevented.

Workshop Session B5: Measuring Quality: New Findings on Thresholds and Implications

Increasingly, policymakers are asking for more and better evidence about the nature of the association between measures of quality in ECE settings and developmental outcomes of children in these settings. Are the associations linear, such that an increase in setting quality predicts an improvement in children's outcomes, or might there be thresholds of quality above which associations are stronger? Two projects that are investigating these questions through an analysis of large-scale data sets were highlighted. Presenters included: Louisa Tarullo, Peg Burchinal, Julia Torquati and Deborah Cassidy. In the past, it has been assumed that the relationship between quality and child outcomes is linear. These projects examined the association between quality and child outcomes in a non-linear way and found some evidence for thresholds of quality (a caution is that the thresholds were established conceptually and need further testing). The results suggest that we may need to focus on getting programs to a certain "active range" of quality and then continue encouraging improvement within that range.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 1:15-2:30 pm
Plenary Session 2: Applying the Implementation Science Lens to Early Care and Education Research

Cross-disciplinary research demonstrates that effectively implemented programs share a common set of successful supports that help ensure the full and effective use of new innovations. Presenters included: Allison Metz and Tamara Halle. Core implementation components (or drivers) include *competency drivers* (selection, training, coaching and fidelity) and *organization drivers* (decision support data

systems, facilitative administration, systems intervention and fidelity). It is important to think about the drivers at each stage of implementation, and each level of the system, and to match activities to the stage of implementation. Sustainability also needs to be considered throughout the stages of implementation. The cascading logic model provides a way to measure and define change. In the cascading logic model, an independent variable at one level of the system (e.g., a process variable) becomes the dependent variable (intervention outcome) at the next level of the system. In addition to key terminology and concepts, the presenters shared examples from within ECE practice and research.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 2:45-4:00 pm
Workshop C1: Challenges and Opportunities in Studying Special Populations: Research with Families at the Intersection of Early Care and Education, Child Welfare, and Early Intervention/Preschool Special Education

This workshop considered the implications of studying populations of children and families that crosswalk multiple service systems. Presenters included: Nilofer Ahsan, Shannon Lipscomb, Beth Meloy, Beth Rous, Helen Ward, and Shannon Christian. Using a case vignette to ground the discussion, panel members discussed considerations, challenges and opportunities that arise when addressing key research questions about the role of ECE in the lives of children and families including: families must navigate multiple systems and researchers need to make a concerted effort to find out about the other systems that affect the families; large child welfare datasets often neglect ECE questions and ECE datasets frequently don't include child welfare variables; qualitative research can assist in developing questions from the family and provider perspectives; issues with confidentiality can be a barrier to linking datasets; and what does quality mean for these children and families? Recommendations about future research directions included: the development of a framework that maps the overall complexity; the need for data systems that talk to each other; use of administrative data (can be important even if not perfect); the need for a conceptual map of the policy changes going on in these systems as well as a conceptual map of research on children and families at the intersection of multiple service systems. Dissemination can be good leverage for getting a dataset because States may be motivated to share data so that they can learn from your research.

Workshop C2: Parental Perception of Child Care Subsidies (Poster Symposium)

This poster symposium focused on parental perceptions regarding some important topics related to child care subsidies. Presenters included: Wendy Wagner Robeson, Allison DeMarco, Nikki Forry, Joanne Roberts, Bobbie Weber, Amber Moodie-Dyer, Rod Southwick and Barbara West Wall. Findings from studies regarding parents' ability to find and use child care subsidies to support their employment; their attitudes and satisfaction with the variety, number, and quality of the child care arrangements for their children; and their perceptions regarding their children's school readiness as a result of their child care were described. Two somewhat competing stories emerged: subsidy and other financial assistance for child care are making a new tier of choices available to low-income parents and having positive impacts on employment, satisfaction, perceptions of quality and percentage of income going toward child care. On the other hand, many parents don't know about subsidies or have misperceptions about eligibility; some parents spend months on

waitlists only to discover they aren't eligible; parents are not gaining access to the highest quality providers and some may still find it hard to afford care; and issues exist around continuity and families cycling in and out of eligibility.

Workshop C3: Policy Implications of Systems and Data Integration Efforts

This workshop provided an overview of ECE data and systems integration initiatives and efforts to integrate child care systems with other child- and family-serving systems, including child welfare; mental health; and adult benefit systems. Presenters included: Lee Kreader, Danielle Ewen, Helene Stebbins, and Dan Haggard. Presenters discussed strategies for simplifying application and renewal processes and improving retention, e.g., in Oregon, families can access 10 programs with just one online application and TANF uses the same requirements as the child care subsidy program. Helene discussed a survey of States which found that while every State collects ECE data on children, programs or members of the workforce, data are uncoordinated across ECE programs and only one State can link child data to program and practitioner data. Dan talked about how in completing its RTT-ELC application, New Mexico identified data gaps and resources, and using an epidemiological approach, developed a combined risk factor index to measure each community's risk level. Conclusions included: what do we really need to know (let's collect ALL and ONLY the data we need); administrative data systems can answer certain questions really well, but are not appropriate all studies; and partnerships can be hard, but bring many benefits.

Workshop C4: Quality Rating and Improvement Systems through the Implementation Science Lens

This workshop explored how implementation science (IS) can inform the implementation and evaluation of QRIS initiatives. Presenters included: Tamara Halle, Kathryn Tout, Diane Paulsell, Kelly Maxwell, and Deborah Swenson-Klatt. The presenters discussed their vision for what QRIS might be as a dynamic system that continues to evolve as new evidence is available. While QRIS varies, reflecting context and the needs of States, more standard practices are expected as systems develop and mature. Stages of implementation include: exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full operation. It takes two to four years to get to full operation and sustainability is an issue at all stages. Innovation can happen at any stage. Using multiple State examples and discussion with participants, the presenters described how IS can inform QRIS design, service provision and evaluation.

Workshop C5: Providers, the Recession, and CCDF: Research Insights for Policy

Child care providers are key to the success of the CCDF program's goal of supporting working parents' child care options and access to good quality care. Presenters included: Gina Adams, Rick Brandon, Monica Rohacek, and James Bates. An exploratory study of ECE employment through the last five recessions suggests that child care employment is not affected by cyclical recession trends (likely because it is considered a vital service and has components of public funding). Some providers limit voucher involvement to protect financial well-being and stability, while others limit voucher involvement to protect quality; both strategies have the effect of limiting family access. One study found a relationship between how directors talk about quality, staffing and observed classroom quality; classrooms with lowest observed quality were typically in centers that were struggling with funding. Gina urged administrators to examine payment policies and practices in light of

this research to make sure policies support financial stability. Group discussion focused on the implications of subsidies and how subsidy policies including parent co-pays and absence policies affect the financial viability and quality of centers.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 4:15-5:30 pm
Plenary Session 3: Findings from the QRIS Assessment Project
This session described components of the QRIS Assessment Project and applied the findings to important State questions in the areas of systems-building and quality measurement. Presenters included: Kathryn Tout, Gretchen Kirby, Pia Caronongan, Kimberly Boller and Barbara West Wall. Gretchen discussed the In-Depth Study of QRIS in ECE System Integration (Indiana and Pennsylvania) including eight system components used by QRIS to connect with other ECE programs (e.g., governance and infrastructure, financing and standards); approaches to integration (one-stop shopping, cross-program accountability and reciprocal responsibilities); and key ingredients and challenges. Practical lessons include: incremental change is better than no change (jump in anywhere); use efficiencies to make the case for integration; and use the system components as a planning and analytic tool. Pia described findings from the In-depth Study of Quality Measurement which involved Miami-Dade, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania and Tennessee; she focused particularly on the validity and reliability of ratings. Lessons learned include: goals for validity and reliability evolve as systems continue to grow; availability of resources influences the breadth and depth of measures and data collection; systematic data collection is important for monitoring progress and ongoing refinement; and transparency and communication with providers are key. Barbara spoke about the importance of learning from history, the implementation process and the experiences of other States

Thursday, November 17, 2011, 9:00-10:00 am
Plenary Session 4: Welcome to the CCPRC Meeting and Preview of Cross-Cutting Child Care Research Design and Measurement Issues
ACF leaders, including Ivelisse Martinez-Beck and Mary Bruce Webb, opened the session and provided welcome and opening remarks. Presenters included: Karen Tvedt, Amber Moodie-Dyer, Michel Lahti, Beth Rous and Peg Burchinal. Across the major meeting themes—including subsidy policies and practices; quality frameworks; parents and families; and coordination, integration, and linkages—CCPRC representatives highlighted the key research design and measurement issues addressed in presentations, discussions, and problem-solving efforts throughout the meeting.

Thursday, November 17, 2011, 10:15-11:45 am
D1: Methodological Considerations for Research on Participants Receiving Integrated Services
This workshop highlighted methodological challenges, provided illustrative examples, and discussed the implications of research in this area for policy. Presenters included: Gina Adams, Beth Rous, Diane Schilder, Barbara Goodson and Rena Hallam. Panelists engaged the audience in discussion about methodological challenges in conducting research with participants (i.e., children, families, providers, and programs) receiving integrated or linked services from multiple sources. Methodological challenges across these studies speak to a paradigm shift in recognizing that single interventions don't exist without the influence of other system and community level influences. Common challenges include determining unit

of analysis, identifying intermediate outcomes, appropriate conceptualization, and, as needed, access and integration of existing data. Issues included moving to system- and community-level interventions, need to consider emotional and mental health status of children, increased complexity and difficulty in controlling for intervention exposures within control groups, more emphasis on the continuum of care, and need to consider intermediate outcomes.

Workshop D2: Child Care Decision-Making among Immigrant Families (Poster Symposium)
This poster symposium focused on child care decision-making among immigrant families. It included qualitative and quantitative findings across five studies on immigrants from Latin America, Africa, and Asia who are now living in communities across the United States. Presenters included: Kyle Snow, Dina Castro, Erin Oldham LaChance, Juan Pedroza, Melissa Raspa, and Colleen Vesely. The studies highlighted the value of mixed-method work with immigrant populations, which often do not include very large samples and present analytical challenges in disentangling immigration status, refugee status, language minority use and county of origin. Socio-demographics must be disentangled from each other and from cultural and linguistic factors. Immigrant families tend not to use center-based care and identify barriers to its use. Questions arise about the extent to which barriers to the use of child care centers should be addressed as compared to supporting the current choice patterns of families.

Workshop D3: Parent Engagement with QRIS
The goal of this workshop was to engage participants in a dialogue about parents' knowledge and engagement with QRIS. Presenters included: Kelly Maxwell, Michel Lahti, Karen Ruprecht, Tabitha Isner, and Rebecca Starr. As a tool intended for parents, States are trying to get data regarding parents' use of QRIS. Data was presented from Minnesota, Indiana, Maine and Kentucky, which suggest that while most parents have not heard of QRIS, awareness appears to increase over-time and seems to be higher in areas with more QRIS-rated programs. Parents surveyed in Minnesota and Kentucky indicated that a child care rating system would be very or somewhat helpful in selecting quality care. In Maine, a parent survey was used as a way to validate aspects of the program standards. The discussion covered a variety of topics, including the importance and difficulty of assessing parents' awareness and use of QRIS. Marketing strategies, incentives, and best investments for QRS outreach were also discussed.

Workshop D4: Child Care Subsidies and Family Well-Being
The goal of this workshop was to discuss some of the latest research examining the relationship between child care subsidies and family well-being. Presenters included: Chris Herbst, Nikki Forry, Wladimir Zanoni, Julia Henly and Taryn Morrissey. A variety of outcomes were explored by presenters—including school readiness and academic achievement, maternal health, child-parent interactions, and child care quality—across a range of data sources and empirical methodologies. Nikki discussed a study of Maryland children who received subsidies; this study found that children who attended prek had better math and literacy outcomes (but not social-emotional outcomes) than children who did not receive prek services. Wladimir's study of children in the Chicago Public Schools suggests higher reading and math scores among subsidized children who attended licensed care. And,

Chris examined subsidies and maternal well-being using three large data sets and found associations between subsidy use and reduced maternal well-being. The discussants raised questions about selection processes and suggested that potential pathways need to be tested including financial resources, family stress, family time, work conditions, etc. Questions were also raised about dosage effects and the impact of other services/programs families may be receiving.

Workshop D5: Methods for Examining the Associations Between Quality of Early Care and Education and Child Outcomes

Various methods are available to examine thresholds of quality in ECE programs. The method used can be a factor in the substantive interpretation of the resulting thresholds. Presenters included: Peg Burchinal and Greg Welch. These presenters discussed different, albeit complementary, methodological approaches in two studies. The first study involved a meta-analytic, regression-discontinuity approach to identify thresholds, while the second study relied on a nonparametric statistical modeling approach. Both studies used similar regression approaches to model the thresholds. Although the researchers noted that this research is relatively new and needs further work (there are no quick skips to policy), policy is ahead of research in this area, and the researchers encouraged policymakers to think about the relationship between quality and outcomes as non-linear. There are implications for QRIS systems, and focusing on moving programs into higher levels of quality may be more effective than moving a low-quality program up, but still not into the "active range."

Thursday, November 17, 2011, 12:15-1:45 pm

Plenary Session 5: Indicators of ECE Quality for Multiple Purposes

This session built on the recognition that as States are developing diverse quality improvement initiatives, they are faced with a variety of Federal and State requirements to use data to account for progress. Presenters included Lee Kreader, Rick Brandon, Kathryn Tout, and Liz Malone. The presenters discussed requirements including the new CCDF biennial plan and ACF-801 case-level reporting requirements, the data required for RTT-ELC, and State longitudinal data system requirements for education. Rick talked about the current environment and possibilities for integrating data for different purposes; he described elements that might be included in a quality-oriented data system based on a logic model with data at the individual, program, and systems levels. Kathryn discussed RTT-ELC data requirements and data fundamentals such as unique identifiers and transparent policies and practices. Liz provided State examples of linkages between QRIS and other data systems along with the use of quality data systems for multiple purposes. Participants in this session indicated interest in a common set of data elements dealing with quality.

Thursday, November 17, 2011, 2:30-3:30 pm

Workshop E1: Studying the Collaboration Process: Early Learning Challenge Grants

This workshop explored the opportunities for studying collaboration that exist in States applying for and receiving RTT-ELC grants. Presenters included Diane Schilder, Lee Kreader, Kathleen Dwyer, Jana Martella, Erin Oldham LaChance, and Mary Beth Jackson. Methods that exist for studying collaborative processes and what should be measured were discussed. Resources for evaluating collaborations were discussed including the INQUIRE working group, the *Research Connections'* Key Topic Resource List, and a logic model that

illustrates elements in State level collaborations. Several presenters discussed State considerations and experiences in completing the RTT-ELC grant application. Among the challenges discussed were the timeline for completion of the application and the influence of political will and financial considerations. States (both researchers and policymakers) should consider using the logic model to assess their own collaborations, so that over time they can track their progress against the model and across States.

Workshop E2: Perspectives on Family-Provider Relationships and Family Engagement

This session focused on findings from current research on understanding and measuring family-provider relationships and family engagement, and the implications of this research for efforts to improve child care quality. Presenters included: Nancy Margie, Monica Rohacek, Katherine Speirs, Herman Knopf, Toni Porter, and Emily Moiduddin. Drawing on qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the presentations offered several perspectives on these issues, including directors' views of supporting parents as an aspect of quality, parent and provider perspectives on establishing and maintaining relationships, and the results of an initiative aimed to enhance communication between parents and providers. With support from OPRE and the Office of Head Start, efforts are underway to develop a new measure (Family-Provider Relationship Quality or FPRQ) that can be used to assess the quality of family-provider relationships. The FPRQ conceptual model includes factors that influence the family-provider relationship and elements of effective provider facilitation of family-provider relationships.

Workshop E3: QRIS Validation: A Focus on Program Standards

This session presented a set of new concepts concerning validation of quality standards within QRIS and proposed a four component approach including examination of concepts of quality, measures used to assess quality, outputs or scores of the rating process, and whether ratings are related to appropriate outcomes. Presenters included: Gail Zellman, Michel Lahti, and Karen Ruprecht. Findings from a multi-site case study were presented; this study describes various approaches (and challenges) to the validation of program standards. Finally, a closer look at one State's efforts at validating a QRIS was presented. A facilitated discussion provided opportunities for others to share their ideas and efforts at QRIS validation. Critical issues included: What is the "right time" to implement a validation study? What are the differences between validation and evaluation studies? How much child care program enrollment is "enough" in order to validate components of a State-wide or region-wide QRIS? What are some of the benefits and challenges of including child and/or family level outcomes in validating a QRIS?

Workshop E4: Measurement Issues Related to Research on Subsidies

This workshop focused on methodological issues related to child care subsidy research. Presenters included: Nikki Forry, Yoonsook Ha, Chris Herbst and Liz Davis. Presentations focused on recent work about the reliability of parent reports of child care subsidy receipt, successful strategies in designing survey questions about child care subsidy status and related topics, and the implications of alternate strategies for examining subsidy duration. Themes included: while administrative data is good for learning about subsidy spells, longitudinal data is needed, and the field needs shared definitions of spells and approaches to measurement; preliminary research indicates that measurement error related to parental

reports of subsidy use is not creating significant biases in our findings—but more research on the accuracy of parent and provider reports is neededeeeeeeeeeeeeeeer; and survey data remains very important, however we may be able to get better information if we gather as much data as possible from other sources and ask questions using parents' own terms.

Workshop E5: Analytic Approach to Studying the Implementation of ECE Programs and Systems

This workshop focused on analytic approaches in studying the implementation of early childhood programs and provided an overview of a series of research briefs that are being developed. Presenters included: Tamara Halle, Lisa Knoche, Kimberly Boller, Amy Susman-Stillman and Noreen Yazejian. Challenges and opportunities in applying an Implementation Science (IS) lens to early care and education research were highlighted, along with opportunities for discussion about how IS can inform the work of early childhood researchers and practitioners. Panelists summarized current thinking about (1) how *definitions of implementation* can be applied to early childhood research and practice, (2) how *dosage* of implementation and *dosage* of the early childhood intervention relate to one another, and (3) how researchers are grappling with *measurement issues* with regard to implementation. Key discussion points included: the need to clearly define programs (including the hows and whys) to the people who will be implementing them; creating a logic model is a critical first step to guiding how to measure implementation; using a multi-dimensional approach will allow researchers to tell the story (including why an intervention didn't work); and the need to identify who reports on which data elements.

Thursday, November 17, 2011, 3:45-4:30 pm
Plenary Session 6: What We Have Learned and Emerging Issues

In a session facilitated by Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, CCPRC members (Toni Porter, Julia Henley, Beth Meloy, and Rick Brandon) briefly reflected on key findings and issues addressed during the meeting and shared their thoughts about the implications of these findings. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) leaders (Shannon Rudisill, Naomi Goldstein and Mark Greenberg) closed the meeting with their thoughts about what we have learned and how this highlights the importance of using research to inform policy and practice, especially in challenging times. ACF leaders addressed: the importance of comprehensive partnerships across programs and between researchers and policy-makers; areas of convergence including interest in implementation science; and need to better use new technologies including social media. Shannon requested that the CCPRC consider repeating some sessions; Mark asked for feedback about the need to balance large research projects versus projects that respond quickly to issues States are facing. At the end of this session, the meeting was adjourned.