

Measures of Quality: At the Intersection of Research, Practice, and Policy

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*Washington, DC
August 1, 2007*

Take Away Messages

(1) Purpose in measuring quality and selection of measures are linked

- The identification of appropriate measures of quality is related to our purpose in measuring quality within quality rating systems and other quality initiatives. For example, it may be
 - ❖ to monitor and improve the quality of early care and education (and school age child care) so that the overall quality of children's experience is positive
- OR
- ❖ to strengthen children's school readiness
- If the priority is to strengthen school readiness, there is an emerging need to select measures of quality that predict most strongly to important child outcomes
- There may also be a need to develop new measures of quality, focusing on those facets that are most closely related to children's school readiness

(2) Single measures or combinations

- Strong prediction to child outcomes may require a combination of measures rather than a single measure
- Helen Raikes and colleagues from the Midwest Consortium (2006; 2007): multiple indicators of quality accumulate to produce overall quality. No single indicator is enough to consider
- From this perspective, we may need to ask what is the combination of measures of quality that most strongly predicts to child outcomes, rather than which single observational measure predicts most strongly.

(3) Follow-up steps

- The sessions at this meeting that follow this plenary will provide multiple opportunities to go into greater depth on what we are learning about measuring quality within systems, and the relationship between measures of quality and child outcomes
- There are plans to follow up with some further activities focusing on linkages between measures of quality and child outcomes, and determining which are the measures that need further development.

(4) Breadth of focus

- The focus on measures of quality needs to extend to home-based as well as center-based care
- It also needs to extend to care and education settings in the earliest years as well as the school years