Background

• What we know
  – Take-up rates are low
  – Families receiving subsidies are more likely to use center-based care
  – Quality of care children with subsidies use vary by comparison groups

• Inconsistency in findings
  – Different study samples (e.g., welfare recipients, pre-school children)
  – State policy context
  – Omitted variables (e.g., culture, languages, BE psychologies)
  – Varying comparison groups (e.g., low-income families in general, subsidy-eligible)
What needs to be done

• Research on subpopulations
  – Infant/toddler, pre-school, and school-age children
  – Two-parent families relative to subsidy use
  – New parents vs. parents with multiple children

• How to target subsidy $$
  – Subsidies targeted to care with higher ratings in QRIS
  – Which children need to be targeted
  – Who will benefit the most

• Mediators to link between subsidy receipt and child outcomes
  – Teacher education, salary or teacher well-being
  – (Observed) Quality
  – Other family or community factors??
What needs to be done (cont.)

• Research on the collaboration with other publicly funded ECE programs (e.g., public pre-k, Head Start, and home visiting)
  – How do families use them?
  – How to align subsidies with these programs
• Research focusing on “ghost outcomes”
  – Do subsidies free up family income?
  – How much do subsidies smooth bumps in employment?
  – How do subsidies affect other family disruptions and challenges?
• Constellations of subsidy policies and practices
  – Contract vs. vouchers
  – Implementation of policies
  – Reviewing clusters of policies (e.g., income eligibility, reimbursement rate, copayment rate)
What needs to be done (cont.)

• Measures of quality
  – Are we measuring it right?
  – What is missing in current definitions?
  – What is the “acceptable” threshold of quality? How much do we need to invest to produce high quality of care?
  – Which components of QRIS are more relevant to child outcomes?

• Cross-state analysis
  – What characteristics are important to consider when taking lessons from other states?
  – What are the commonality in policies that lead to positive outcomes?
What needs to be done (cont.)

• Consumer education on subsidies & quality
  – Effective outreach activities?
  – How to present information effectively to parents?
  – How to effectively evaluate consumer education strategies?
  – Applying behavioral economics psychologies
• Capitalizing upon existing data in research
  – Use planned variation in states using administrative data
  – Increase access to national- and state-level administrative data