

**Provider Practices that Support
Families: Findings from a
Review of the Literature on
Home-based Child Care**

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Supporting Quality in Home-based Child Care

- Two-year project funded by OPRE
- Conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. and Bank Street College of Education
- Goals:
 - Review the literature and gather information about strategies that have the greatest potential for improving the quality of care provided by home-based child care providers—including regulated family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor caregivers—who serve children from low-income families
 - Refine or develop one or more specific initiatives that can be implemented and rigorously evaluated.

A Review of the Literature on Home-Based Child Care: Implications for Future Directions

- Patterns of use
- Characteristics of home-based caregivers
- Quality
- Initiatives
- Related literature on family support and home visiting
- Research on the family context

Findings

Literature indicates:

- Some differences in motivation; some overlaps
- Common challenges:
 - conflicts with families (depending on motivation: lack of professional respect; differences in child rearing styles)
 - work-related stress (depending on type of care: long hours, little pay; physical exhaustion and second job)
- Common interest in services:
 - communication w/ parents

Findings

Literature indicates:

- Child care initiatives
 - content does not often include parent-caregiver communication.
 - Of the evaluations of child care initiatives for home-based caregivers we examined, none looked at outcomes for parents or parent-caregiver communication as an outcome.

- Family support literature
 - Small but statistically significant effects in five parent domains (**parenting knowledge**, behavior, **family functioning**, **adult mental health/health risks**, and family economic self-sufficiency).

- Home visiting literature
 - modest benefits for parents (**parenting knowledge and attitudes**, **stress**, **social support and mental health**, and economic self-sufficiency and education).

Findings

- Other literature:
 - Three city study:
 - Parents' satisfaction with care
 - Accessibility
 - Flexibility and
 - Communication between the parent and the provider Another study of rural low-income working mothers found similar results flexibility of the care—during nontraditional hours, unpredictable work schedules, and when children were ill—was regarded as one of the most positive aspects of the child care arrangement.
 - Doting on Kids and Tutu and Me:
 - other responsibilities assumed by caregivers: meals, prescriptions, paying bills, etc.

References

- Porter, T., Pausell, D., DelGrosso, P., Avellar, S., Hass, R., & Vuong, L. (forthcoming). *A review of the literature on home-based child care: Implications for future directions.*
- Porter, T., Rice, R., & Mabon, S. (2003). *Doting on kids: Understanding quality in kith and kin child care.* New York: Bank Street College of Education.
- Porter, T. & Vuong, L. (July, 2008). *Tutu and Me: The effects of a family interaction program on parents and grandparents.* New York: Bank Street College of Education.

Discussion Questions

- What are the implications for parent choice?
- What are the implications for parent outcomes?
- What are the implications for child outcomes?
- What are the implications for policy and research?