

Making the Most of Connections:

Illinois License-Exempt Providers' Use of Information About Early Childhood Education and Care

Douglas Clark

Diana Hiatt-Michael, Ed.D.

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education & Psychology

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Making the Most of Connections

A descriptive study using both qualitative and quantitative data to assess Illinois license-exempt child care providers' knowledge and use of information resources about early childhood education and care.

Research Objectives

- Describe the **communication channels** that Illinois license-exempt child care providers do and would prefer to use for seeking resources to inform their caregiving practices.
- Identify **communication technologies** which hold promise as a means of connecting providers with information to enhance their practice.

Research Question One

- How do Illinois license-exempt child care providers **describe their knowledge** of available information resources about early childhood education and care?

Research Question Two

- What **communication channels** do Illinois license-exempt child care providers utilize to seek and acquire information about early childhood education and care?

Research Question Three

- What **communication technologies** do Illinois license-exempt child care providers currently utilize on a regular basis?

Data Sources

Illinois license-exempt child care providers who receive state-administered Child Care Development Fund subsidy funds for the services they provide.

Research Sites

- **North and South Lawndale**
neighborhoods of Chicago

- **Peoria County**

- **The “Southern Seven”**

*Alexander, Hardin, Johnson, Massac,
Pope, Pulaski, and Union Counties*

Methods – Phase One

Key Informant Interviews

- **Open-ended questionnaire** administered to 30 license-exempt providers regarding the sources they use to acquire information about their caregiving practices.

Emergent themes will inform the design of another survey instrument for Phase Two.

Methods – Phase Two

Provider Survey

- **Semi-structured survey** administered to Illinois license-exempt providers about their access to and current use of technology.

Phase One Project Activities

October 2004 - September 2005

Interview Instrument Design and Validation

Telephone Interviews with Key Informants

Phase One Data Analysis

Begin Design of Phase Two Survey Instrument

Phase Two Project Activities

October 2005 - September 2006

Survey Instrument Validation

Administer Provider Survey

Phase Two Data Analysis

**Summative Analysis and
Dissemination of Findings**

Contact Information

Douglas Clark

dclark@nl.edu

(847) 947-5062