Wisconsin Data Sharing Project

Funded in part by the Child Care Bureau, Grant #90YE0012

Goals:
- Establish a statewide research infrastructure to strengthen analysis, interpretation, and sharing of critical administrative child care data from multiple state sources
- Create a merged program and provider file and distribute key quality indicators to parents
- Change public policy through collaboration of research and data systems

The Wisconsin Idea:
"A government infused with the talent of trained professionals, guided by the expertise of our wisest scholars, and answerable to an active and educated citizenry"

-- Robert M. La Follette

Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership

Policy research in Wisconsin used three main sources in addition to literature reviews: (1) classroom observations, (2) surveys from teachers, directors and family child care providers, and (3) administrative data. A brief list of some of the findings that are pertinent to the quality rating system policy are highlighted below:

Research Sources

Classroom Observations
- Results of observations in167 Centers for Excellence classrooms and 174 classrooms of randomly-selected comparison centers using environment rating scales and other assessment tools.

Surveys from Teachers, Directors and Family Child Care Providers
- Surveys on workforce characteristics from a statewide random sample of all child care programs serving children who receive a state subsidy.

- Surveys returned in 2001: 256 directors, 784 teachers, and 452 family child care providers.

- Analysis of trends based on statewide workforce studies in 1980, 1988, 1994, compared with 2001 survey.

- Survey of 240 nationally accredited centers in Wisconsin.

Administrative Data
- Analysis of child care subsidy from data in the subsidy system's Data Warehouse, with information on all children and their families, programs, and subsidy payments ($300 million).

Research Findings

- **Education counts.** Teachers with more education had significantly higher quality interaction with children than teachers with less education.
- **Director qualifications matter.** Directors' education correlated with teachers' education and the quality of their interactions with children.
- **Family child care characteristics link to quality.** For family child care programs, four characteristics were correlated with quality: (1) level of regulation, (2) training in child development, (3) business practices, and (4) professional commitment.
- **Low levels of education.** The majority of Wisconsin's child care teachers (58%) identified a high school diploma as their highest level of education; 80% of family child care providers had no more than a high school diploma.
- **Decline in education credentials.** The educational credentials of Wisconsin child care teachers dropped precipitously in two decades, from 44% with B.A.s in 1980 to just 14% in 2001. The percent of child care directors with bachelor's degrees or above dropped from 73% in 1980 to 47% in 2001.
- **Investment can improve quality.** Investing in child care programs (Centers for Excellence) serving low-income children resulted in significant improvements in child care quality.
- **Centers with high density of subsidy have poorer quality.** Centers with higher density of children funded through the child care subsidy program averaged fewer degreed teachers, higher staff turnover, and lower wages.

System Data

The Merged Child Care Program and Provider File (housed at DWD) was integral in supporting decision-making for the proposed Quality Rating System. This file has multiple input systems and feeds data to numerous and varied systems. Highlights of this file and the systems to which it relates are as follows:

- Primary data originate from regulatory systems (licensed care and certified family child care).
- Additional descriptive data are provided by multiple systems.
- Data are stored on approximately 10,000 active provider records.
- Data are stored in separate, unique tables on DWD mainframe; DB2/Oracle data base platform.
- All programs have a unique 13 digit code: corporate entities (e.g., KinderCare) share common leading 10-digits; additional 3-digits identify program location.
- Data are extracted on a monthly basis to populate Child Care Data Warehouse.
- Data are used to support policy decision-making for Quality Rating System.

Input	**Input and Output**	**Output**
Child Care Provider Certification (CCPC) System	**Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program**	**Child Care Data Warehouse**
- Tool for collecting and processing data relating to applications to become a certified (license-exempt) provider - CCPC issues and mails certificate, maintains current data including any violations of administrative rules, and interfaces with state licensing system to identify providers who are dually regulated - Approximately 5,000 active provider records stored on data base - Complete two-way data exchange capability with *Child Care Statewide Administration on the Web* (CSAW)	- Makes subsidy payments to regulated providers through linkage with Provider File - More than 30,000 families and 52,000 children served every month - Front-end user interface shared with Food Stamps, Medicaid, TANF – Welfare Reform, and other entitlement programs	- Data originate in CSAW/Provider File transactional data bases and are exported to Data Warehouse via monthly extract files - Data (i.e. provider and subsidy information) are grouped into 12 "universes," separated according to topic area
	Child and Adult Care Food Program	**Market Rate Data Analysis**
	- DWD sends Food Program state agency (Department of Public Instruction, DPI) monthly extract file of licensed providers; DPI uses data for federal reporting and to determine reimbursement amounts - DPI is expected to send Food Program data to merged file for the Quality Rating System	- Data originate from annual rate survey of licensed programs to obtain private market prices, by age - Data stored in state agency data base, accessible through the Data Warehouse - Analyses to simulate impacts of various policy decisions on program costs (e.g., changing max rates for tiered reimbursement, capping increases, changing age groupings, combining counties to determine rates)
Children's Licensing Information Computer (CLIC) System		**Child Care Resource and Referral**
- Tool for collecting and processing data relating to applications to become a licensed provider - Nightly batch processing jobs upload new and changed records to DWD Provider File - CLIC stores data on more than 5,000 active licensed locations, including both group centers and family child care providers	***The Registry*** - Professional recognition system created by independent, not-for-profit agency; participation required for all new teachers and directors - Runs on client-server platform; data base is on SQL Server - Approximately 30,000 individual records stored - Data maintained on credit-based training and educational achievements	- Data transferred (beginning Spring 2005) to Wisconsin's NACCRRAware server via nightly extract files (NACCRRA responsible for software program to update provider files for the 16 CCR&R agencies) - Up to 22 standardized data elements will be transferred for each new or updated provider record
		Child Care Web Mapping
Accreditation		- Public website (at UW-Extension) displaying a combination of child care data from the merged file (updated quarterly) and 2000 census data - Reports available in tabular format as well as maps
- Nationally and locally accredited programs tracked on a monthly basis (in an Access database) - About 300 programs accredited through national institutions (i.e. NAEYC, NAFCC, NAA)		**Public Web Site** - Will allow free public access to the quality rating level of all regulated programs in Wisconsin - Data will be continuously updated (real time)

Policy Changes

Formation of the statewide Quality Rating System and Tiered Reimbursement policies are superb examples of the Wisconsin Idea, "A government infused with the talent of trained professionals, guided by the expertise of our wisest scholars, and answerable to an active and educated citizenry" (Robert M. La Follette). These policies were influenced by research and data from multiple systems. Although these policies are proposed and not yet in effect until there is legislative approval, the Governor has made these among his top budget agenda items and they received special mention in his 2005 "State of the State" address. The policies are summarized below:

Proposed Quality Rating System

The proposed quality rating system differentiates five tiers of quality of Wisconsin child care. All regulated programs are to be included in the system and receive between one and five stars according to the following criteria:

- **Regulatory status** determines whether or not a program may earn any stars. All regulated programs earn at least one star. Programs that are out of **regulatory compliance** earn only one star.
- Programs in regulatory compliance earn between two and five stars based on the following point distribution:

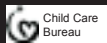| Points	Stars Earned
0-4	★★
5-12	★★★
13-22	★★★★
23-30	★★★★★

- **Staff qualifications** (i.e. teachers, directors, and family child care providers) allow programs to earn up to fourteen points.
- The **learning environment** is rated from zero to ten points. Accredited programs earn ten points. Other programs earn points based on:
    - o Well-equipped learning centers
    - o Use of quality improvement assessment process
    - o Curriculum aligned with WI Model Early Learning Standards
    - o Weekly lesson plans including reading
- **Professional practices** give a program up to six points. Two points can be earned for each of the following:
    - o Business practices
    - o Staff benefits
    - o Parental involvement

Proposed Tiered Reimbursement

Programs participating in Wisconsin's subsidy system (WI SHARES) presently are reimbursed at the rate charged to privately paying parents up to a maximum set for each county (less family co-pay). The maximum rate is set at the 75th percentile slot for each age group in a county.

For programs earning three stars, the proposed tiered reimbursement system will be the same as the current payment method. Programs earning less than three stars will have their maximum reimbursement rates reduced by 30 percent if they earned one star and by 5 percent if they earned two stars. Programs earning four or five stars will receive bonuses of 10 percent and 25 percent, respectively. Note that these rates were suggested by a Task Force and may change under implementation. The change in reimbursement is summarized below:

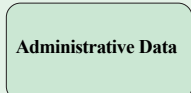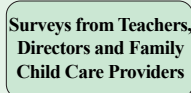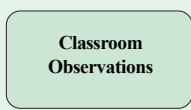| Star Level in the Quality Rating System	Percent of Change in Reimbursement Rate to Be Paid
★★★★★	+ 25%
★★★★	+ 10%
★★★	No Change
★★	- 5%
★	- 30%

THE WISCONSIN IDEA

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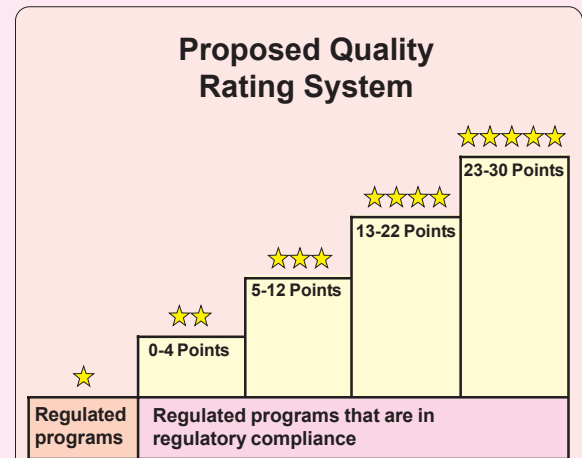*-- Robert M. La Follette*

Child Care Bureau

Research

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Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership

- Classroom Observations
- Surveys from Teachers, Directors and Family Child Care Providers
- Administrative Data

Policy Change

Proposed Quality Rating System

★
★★ 0-4 Points
★★★ 5-12 Points
★★★★ 13-22 Points
★★★★★ 23-30 Points

Regulated programs	Regulated programs that are in regulatory compliance

Staff Qualifications 0-14 points
Professional Practices 0-6 points
Learning Environment 0-10 points
Regulatory Status
Regulatory Compliance

System Data

Wisconsin Data Sharing Project

Input
Input and Output
Output

- Accreditation
- Child Care Provider Certification (CCPC) System
- Regulatory Programs
- Children's Licensing Information Computer (CLIC) System

- Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- *The Registry*

Merged Child Care Program and Provider File

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- Child Care Data Warehouse
- Market Rate Data Analysis
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Child Care Web Mapping
- Public Web Site

Key

- = Data system with implemented link to merged file
- = Data system with planned link to merged file

Proposed Tiered Reimbursement

★★★★★ + 25%
★★★★ + 10%
★★★ No Change
★★ - 5%
★ - 30%