

Workforce

Defining and Measuring Quality

- How can we rate the quality of child care programs?
- What is quality child care?
 - o Characteristics
 - o As defined by parents, researchers, and professionals
- What are the most effective, realistic, and affordable ways to improve quality?
What is the most effective, realistic way to assess quality?
- What are the varying definitions and measurements of child care “quality” across states?

How is Quality Distributed?

- Who has access to high quality child care?
- How is child care quality distributed geographically?
- How/why does child care quality vary by client SES?
- Under what circumstances does child care quality not vary by socioeconomic status?
- What is the quality of care for children with disabilities?

Monitoring Quality?

- How can child care programs document program effectiveness/impact?
- What indicators are best for monitoring and reporting on the quality of child care?

Workforce Looks Like Now

- What demographic characteristics of providers promote quality care?
- What are the training needs of the child care workforce in terms of promoting “school readiness”?
- What are the training needs of the child care workforce in terms of addressing needs of diverse children (ELL, children with disabilities, etc.)?
- What are the characteristics of nonregulated child care providers?
- What are the characteristics of the child care workforce?
 - o Distribution by type
 - o Distribution by location
 - o Personal characteristics (age, education, gender, job commitment)

Desired Workforce Characteristics

- What skills are required to care for children with specific physical or emotional needs? How do we improve those skills?
- What are the training needs of child care providers and educational backgrounds, and what could be done to increase staff competencies and qualifications?
- What level of education or skills actually improve the quality of care? What are effective strategies to improve education and skills for large numbers of caregivers?

Addressing Workforce Strategies

- What is effectiveness of professional development, compensation programs and retention strategies?
- How do you raise the education level of the ECE workforce? What is the role of training? How effective is training?
- What strategies or approaches are states using to increase teacher compensation (increase in earnings and/or benefits)?
- Evaluating the impact of child care training programs
- What kind of provider training can improve quality of care for children with disabilities?
- What strategies can child care programs use to minimize staff turnover?
- What are the most effective and efficient ways of increasing the education of caregivers and teachers of preschool children?
- What are the effects of quality improvement initiatives on the child care workforce (such as: provider training and education, increased provider compensation, increased rate, and career development opportunities)?
- What provider training is most effective in improving quality of care?
- What are the perceived impediments to training?
- What is the relationship between compensation and qualifications?
- What level of compensation is necessary to recruit and retain caregivers with desired education and skills?

Standards

- What impact are various standards having on quality? How do they intersect (or how could they)?
- How are “higher” standards being met (i.e., supports, infrastructures, etc.) and how does this relate to demographics? Where are gaps?
- How do (or don’t) standards align (i.e., licensing, voluntary, funding, guidelines, public pre-K, etc.)?
- At what levels do increases in licensing regulations (e.g., adult: child ratio, professional development requirements, etc.) bring about meaningful improvements in child outcomes?

Workforce Characteristics

- How many people are in the child care workforce?
- Characteristics of workforce, e.g., education, training, experience. (policymakers)
- Characteristics of child care workforce: education levels, salaries, benefits, etc.
- What needs to be done to reduce turnover of child care providers?
- How often do children face changes of child care providers?
- Provider turnover rates by setting, why they leave, and where they go.
- Necessary/desired labor force supports: training, employee benefits.
- Number of providers who currently serve children with special needs (and the number who do not) and why.
- The composition of their workforce by type of care (center, family child care, kith and kin).
- Size of workforce.
- Long-term changes in the workforce.

- How many people (in my state) are in the early care and education workforce? (annual)

Quality

- Understanding what constitutes quality care and impact of quality care on child development.
- What are the determinants and predictors of quality in child care and early education?
- The effectiveness of their services/interventions to serve targeted populations.
- What is the level of quality of child care programs?
- What do we know about “best practices” in child care and early education that can inform policymaking and practice?
- Whether the intended populations are served by their interventions and services.
- Will the children in this state likely be in low quality or high quality child care? (annual report card)
- Change in accreditation status (Once accredited, do programs maintain same standards?).

Professional Development

- Strategies to address professional development of FDC providers in isolated communities.
- Effects of different quality initiatives on providers in different settings. (policymakers)
- How services/interventions are delivered.
- What is the cost to child care providers, parents, and the state when professional development requirements for providers are raised?
- What is the impact of professional development activities/system? Does the professional development system cross sectors? Where is/are there repetition/gaps/possibilities for collaboration?
- What training improves child care quality?
- What opportunities do staff have, in a coordinated, comprehensive system of professional development, to gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively support all children?
- What are the gaps in training for the workforce?
- How are professional development systems/activities coordinated? Where are gaps? How does it relate to demographics?
- What types of efforts to improve the professional abilities of providers (e.g., compensation, education benefits) provide the most cost efficient yet meaningful improvements in child outcomes?
- What training, wages, and benefits will improve retention (reduce turnover) in the child care workforce?
- How does a state ensure appropriate professional development of early care and education providers?

Workforce Professional Development

Supports for Family Friend and Neighbor Care

- Do we have supports in place for family providers?

- Are there any training opportunities for informal caregivers that could be replicated?
- What supports should states provide to exempt/unlicensed providers?
- What supports do family, friend, and neighbor caregivers need?

Impact of Professional Development Initiatives on Quality

- What is the impact of professional development initiatives (e.g., career lattice, wage supplement programs, etc.) on quality?
- What types and amounts of training/education improve caregiver practice?
- What are the minimum professional development qualifications needed to ensure quality? Are these the same for all roles?
- Does education or training make a bigger difference for classroom quality? How does compensation correlate to each level?

Professional Development Systems

- Regularly: What do ECE professionals need that states can provide...if the states only knew?
- Snapshot: What is higher education for ECE professionals?
- How many providers are trained and understand how to work/deal with children who have abuse in their lives?

Researcher–Policymaker Connections

What Big Questions Do Policymakers Need/Want Answers to?

- What does research tell us about the impact of early care and education programs?
- Why doesn't child care work as an economic system (supply and demand don't seem to work)?
- Routinely: What ECE categories and topics are not being addressed currently?
- Regularly (every session): What do state legislators want or need to know regarding ECE? Who answers?
- Why should government invest in early care and education? Will investment likely have an impact?

How Do You Get Policymakers To Pay Attention to Research?

- What kind of collaborative mechanism is needed in each state to keep communication open among policymakers and researchers in each state?
- Who introduces tax and funding/legislation and for which families?
- Snapshot: Who are the 10 “go-to” ECE people in the state? Does the governor know their names/faces?
- What is the best way to communication research findings to policymakers (where it will be used to inform and guide policy)?

Quality

Definitions:

- What is quality child care? What does quality child care look like?

Measures:

- What are measurable, verifiable indicators of quality?
- What are measurable, verifiable indicators of quality in child care settings?
- What self-report instruments are available that measure center or classroom quality that are correlated with observed quality?
- What instruments are available that measure parents' perceptions of quality that are correlated with observed quality?
- What role can research play in achieving consistency of definitions of terms used in child care across states?
- How can we monitor child care quality?
- Descriptions:
 - o What is the quality of kith and kin care?
 - o How many quality programs are in each community?
 - o How many children do they serve?
- Outcomes:
 - o How do child care subsidies affect the quality of care available?
 - o Is the subsidy helping to improve the quality of care available to low-income families?
 - o How can cultural differences be incorporated into assessments of provider quality?

Professional Development

- What kinds of support and training are most effective for providers?
- How best can we meet the professional development needs of child care providers?
- What do providers need to be able to meet the developmental needs of children?
- Which types of training and technical assistance have the greatest impact on quality of care?
- What training do child care providers need to provide high-quality care to children?
- What supports are available to providers to help address the health/mental health issues of children in their care?

Kith and Kin Care

- How many children are in unregulated care settings (by age group)
- How many children are in kith and kin/family friends and neighbor care?
- What are the characteristics of kith and kin providers?
- Why do families choose kith and kin care?
- What resources should be made available to assist license-exempt providers in the provision of child care?
- What requirements or standards should apply to such providers?
- Which models appear most useful in providing training and other information to license-exempt child care providers?
- How should states attempt to affect the relative distribution of resources to licensed versus license-exempt care, through policy mechanisms such as eligibility rules, payment rates, and regulatory standards?

- Are there ways to monitor quality among unregulated child care providers?

Child Care Workforce

- Gathering and tracking characteristics of providers
- What are the qualifications of child care providers in the state? Where are these providers located (i.e. in what center, family child care home, etc.)
- What are the wages and benefits of child care providers?
- Methodology for turnover rates in the child care industry
- What is the staff turnover rate in child care sites?
- What is the education level of caregivers in each of the settings (center-based, family child care, informal care)
- What are the effective statewide strategies for increasing the pay and qualifications of child care workers?
- How can government better help support the child care workforce to reduce turnover?
- What do child care providers themselves see as the most important issues to address?

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Improving Quality

- State government quality regulation—what works? What doesn't?
- What are the most effective ways for states to invest quality improvement funds?
- If states have a QRS, should all programs/persons receiving subsidies have to be a part of the system (and meet minimal standards)?
- How does the use of performance standards influence quality? What are the most important factors to regulate?
- Should states give subsidy money without on-site inspections?
- How can states support or encourage quality child care in family child care settings?
- What should the minimum standards be for programs receiving subsidies?
- What can the state do to improve quality?

- How can states best support community-based quality improvement efforts?

Workforce and Professional Development

- What is the best way to support/train FFN caregivers?
- What training or supports do child care staff need?
- What is the impact on providers when parents cannot get child care subsidies and the providers' enrollment decrease?
- What professional development is needed to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care placements?
- What strategies would most help decrease turnover?
 - o Wages
 - o Health insurance
 - o Support networks
 - o All of the above
- What if funds are limited?
- What are effective and efficient ways to increase the education of caregivers and teachers of preschoolers?
- How can states improve the retention of good child care workers' recruitment? What are the current patterns?
- What is the retention rate for child care workers? Why do they leave the field?
- What training is being offered, monitoring?
- What do child care providers know and believe about early childhood development and practice?
- What types of professional development training will lead to improved child care quality and better outcomes for children in child care?
- What are the educational and professional credentials of child care providers?
- What are the needs/difficulties that child care providers have?
- What is the nature of supervision and mentoring received by child care providers?
- What are the size demographics, education/training, working conditions (including wages, benefits, etc.) of the child care workforce? Do these vary according to the type of care, age of children in care?
- What strategies actually increase early care teacher compensation?

Capacity

- Should we be encouraging the development of particular types of child care? For infants? For preschoolers?
- Is child care capacity adequate for all ages' schedules?
- What is the local capacity of regulated child care available to (1) all families and (2) assisted families as compared to need/demand?
- Is child care capacity adequate (shortages in geographic areas)?
- What are some effective ways that states can project the need for increased child care and increased subsidies?
- How can states expand the amount of quality child care?
- Where are the different types of child care located (both urban and rural)?
- Where are the children not in regulated care being cared for? How do we assure/improve their quality of care?

- Number of child care providers in the state—broken down by countries?
- What are the child care facilities available? Type and numbers?