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:
- What is the quality of kith and kin care?
- How many quality programs are in each community?
- How many children do they serve?

Outcomes:
- How do child care subsidies affect the quality of care available?
- Is the subsidy helping to improve the quality of care available to low-income families?
- 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?