2014 Child Care and Education Researchers Roundtable

Discussion Notes

A new feature for the 2014 Roundtable involved the articulation of questions participants would like researchers to answer. Kelli Walker and other participants did a great job capturing and charting questions as they emerged during the day. Following is the list of questions.

**Questions for Researchers**

1. Policy research: effect of change to full-day kindergarten on child care (e.g., supply of infant/toddler care)
2. What is the effect of subsidy generosity on child care provider behavior (e.g., willingness to serve children on the subsidy, proportion of capacity that is filled by children on subsidy)
3. Does subsidy generosity and continuity decrease family stress?
4. Are children who attend alternative or charter kindergartens more ready as they enter school? Why?
5. Do education levels in child care settings correlate with salary levels?
6. Consider using “breastfeeding friendly” child care practices as a variable when studying quality or programs and child outcomes for P-K-3.
7. How do early learning professionals move up to higher ed.? What paths? How long? What process? What barriers? What solutions?

As in past years, the closing session involved participants working in small groups to integrate the research shared during the day into what they already knew. Each group talked about how these findings applied to the work they did. At the end group shared the major topics they discussed. These ideas are captured below.

**Apply equity lens in deeper way**

* Ask questions of the data to better inform work.
* Do implications change with equity lens applied?
* Have people in less advantaged groups engage in the conversation to help inform the story.
* How do we know that we have the right story? Take it back to the individuals themselves for confirmation.
* Consider the ways in which we are expecting populations to change to be a certain way or should we change how we are measuring service delivery for those populations?

**P3 Alignment**

* Intentionality of connecting learning communities.
* Connect Kindergarten teachers and child care providers:
  + Come up with a way to partner,
  + Speak same language and discuss shared vision.
* Identify ways that R&R’s can support these connections.
* We keep talking about how important this relationship is but we are not supporting it
* This is all about the child – we are looking at child focused outcomes
* Should zero in on relationships and find what external supports we can be giving to build relationships
* Research who has done this well and use them as a framework

**Many groups focused on improving the quality of child care and education including support for the workforce:**

* Quality improvement is integral to a Quality Rating and Improvement System
* Can speak language of provider and can speak to community colleges and beyond
* These are the champions

**Family Child Care Homes**

* The Erikson Institute Study provides evidence of the ability of staffed networks to improve quality. (Bromer, J. (2009). The Family Child Care Network Impact Study: Promising Strategies for Improving Family Child Care Quality. Policy Brief. Chicago, IL: Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy, Erikson Institute.)
  + A positive effect on the quality of family child care networks requires that the network be staffed by an educated and skilled coordinator.
* The value of a **champion** was also noted. A champion is a provider who is able to motivate and support others in improving quality.
* The concept of a family child care navigator is similar. It is a person:
  + On the ground champion for the community
  + Calls R&R and asks for the supports needed to help people achieve the next steps in the group
* Other strategies for supporting family child care included:
  + Engagement
  + Less talking, more doing
  + Need to create opportunities at that are reasonable
  + Ask providers what they need (how can we offer supports)
* R&Rs noted:
  + Classes are offered evenings and weekends
  + Providers work long (12 hour)days and have families which makes it difficult to engage in PD
  + There may be no silver bullet.
  + Some just don’t want to advance – this is why they are doing what they are doing.
  + Small family child care providers typically do not have aids which makes this even more challenging
* Innovation in Outreach is needed:
  + The need for the right mix of skills in the workforce and in outreach.
  + It will take specific skills to have someone with the quality child development background and who can culturally and competently interact with providers (outreach and research side).
  + Translate importance to funders and policy makers.
  + Cannot put a degree set to this individual but need to acknowledge what these skillsets are that contribute to innovative strategies.
  + Using data from DHS may help with outreach but must take into account protection of confidentiality (permissions and protective laws such as HIPPA and FERPA)

\*\*Creating relationships is key for promoting accountability\*\*