

Contracted Slots Pilot Program Evaluation: Assessing an Investment in Continuity and Quality

Oregon Child Care Researchers Roundtable
October 21, 2015

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Policy Context

Major changes at the federal and state levels:

- Creation of ELC and ELD with clear and limited goals:
 - Children ready for success in kindergarten,
 - Stable and attached families, and
 - Aligned and integrated services.
- Increased focus on young children's development by federal partners:
 - Race to the Top
 - Major changes to CCDF with reauthorization
 - Creation of Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership

Program Goals & Design

- Goals:
 - **Children** have access to **continuous quality** care and education;
 - **Families** have continuity of quality child care and education to **support their employment**; and,
 - **Providers** have **stable funding** in serving low-income children in programs of documented quality.
- Program Design
 - Co-managed by ELD and DHS
 - DHS contracted with programs of documented quality
 - OHSPK
 - OPQ
 - Children had 12-month protected eligibility
 - Families had reduced copay

Data Sources

- Administrative Data (includes UI wage) for two groups of parents and children:
 - Participants
 - Matched control group of voucher recipients
- Surveys of Directors
 - At beginning and end of Pilot year one
- In-depth Interviews with Stakeholders

Key Evaluation Study Research Questions

1. Who participated in the Contracted Slots Pilot program?
 1. Programs
 2. Children
2. To what extent did the Contracted Slots Pilot Program achieve its goals?
 1. Impact on children
 2. Impact on families
 3. Impact on providers
3. What challenges emerged as the program was implemented?

Findings: How Many Children and Programs Participated?

Children	Children in OHSPK Programs	Children in OPQ Programs	Total Participating Children
2012-2013	230	89	319
2013-2014	229	83	312
2014-2015 (as of May 2015)	208	50	258
			889

Providers	OHSPK Programs	Participated in CS Pilot	OPQ Programs	Participated in CS Pilot	Total Potential Programs	Total Participating Programs
2012-2013	29	7	22	17	51	24
2013-2014	29	7	19	16	48	23
2014-2015	29	8	17	14	46	22

Note: Only 2 OPQ program never signed a contract during the 3 year pilot study.

Findings – How Many Families Participated?

	# of Families
CS Non-Participants	7,577
CS Participants	
OPQ	92
OHSPK	186

Findings: Impact on Children

CS Non-participants

9,594 children with admin. data who were on ERDC and who were 0-5 years old

CS Participants

	Number of Children With Data		
	<i>OPQ</i>	<i>OHSPK</i>	<i>Total</i>
Year 1 only	34	115	149
Year 2 only	28	110	138
Both Year 1 + Year 2	59	52	111
Total	121	277	398

Total number of Children Served Year 1 + Year 2 = 631

% of total children with data Year 1 + Year 2 = 63%

% for OPQ – 70%

% for OHSPK – 60%

Impact on Children – How Long Did Children Participate?

A. Total # of months with same primary provider over the 2 years

	Median
CS Non-Participants	
ERDC only [N=11,445]	6
CS Participants	
OPQ [N=121]	11
OHSPK [N=277]	12

What percent remained for 12 or more months?

OPQ = 50% stayed for 12 months or more

OHSPK = 51% stayed for 12 months or more

Impact on Children – How Much Time Did Children Spend in Program?

CS Non-participants

Average = **189.87** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all months with primary provider)

CS Participants

OPQ

Average = **167.7** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all contract months with OPQ program)

OHSPK

Average = **139.30** hours per month (average over all children's dosage/all contract months with HS program)

Impact on Children – Reasons for Exit

Overall, **232** children out of 398 children with data (58%) exited a contracted slot between 2012-2014.

- Majority (84%) exited at end of contract period they entered
- Directors reported three primary reasons for exits:
 - Family move,
 - Loss of employment or reduction in hours,
 - Child's entry into kindergarten.
- Operationalization of protected eligibility more complicated than expected.

Impact on Families – Description of Families

	Participants		Non-Participants
	OPQ Families N=92	OHSPK Families N=186	ERDC Families with Children 0-5 N=7,577
Variable	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency
Number in household	3.21	3.43	3.43
Number of children on ERDC	2.92	3.22	3.02
Age of youngest child (months)	33.08	NA	24.6
Age of oldest child (months)	49.97	NA	51.0
Single parent households	85.9%	94.6%	91.0%
Monthly household income	\$1,118	NA	\$1,176
Eligibility group: Job readiness or assessment	6.5%	0%	0%
Eligibility group: Employment-related care	93.5%	100%	100%
SNAP participation	90.2%	90.6%	91.3%
Nonmetro	5.4%	NA	23.6%

Impact on Families – Description of Families (continued)

	Participants		Non-Participants
	OPQ Families N=92	OHSPK Families N=186	ERDC Families with Children 0-5 N=7,577
Variable	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency	Mean/Frequency
Parent's education level			
No formal schooling	1.9%	1.7%	1.4%
1-11 Grade completed	3.7%	18.3%	22.4%
12 or GED	61.1%	61.7%	65.3%
13-16 years of college	29.6%	17.5%	10.5%
Credits toward post graduate deg	3.7%	1%	<1%
Race/Ethnicity of family			
Black	16.3%	NA	8.5%
White	65.2%		65.5%
Hispanic	1.1%		3.5%
Other	3.3%		3.6%
Unknown	14.1%		19.1%

Impact on Families – Stability of Employment

	Participants				Non-Participants	
	OPQ Families with UI Wage Data N=92		OHSPK Families with UI Wage Data N=186		ERDC Families with Children 0-5 with UI Wage Data N=7,577	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
# of employed quarters (9 potential quarters)	7.03	8	7.39	9	5.4	5
Quarterly hours worked	356	388	372	432	337	366
# of job changes	1.55	1	1.32	1	1.07	1

Impact on Providers – Financial Stability

Impact on Budget	OPQ Programs	OHSPK Programs
Positive	9	6
No impact	4	1
Negative	2*	0

Note: Based on director reports at end of Pilot's first year.

*One reported not having parent pay fee differential. The other reported payment was less than she thought she was owed.

Findings: Challenges Encountered

- Merging two agencies' policies, practices, and priorities
- Operationalizing protected eligibility
- Operationalizing parent choice
- Targeting families, programs, and communities
- Monitoring compliance
- Integrating or holding separate OHSPK
- Contracting and procurement processes
- Identifying data needs and data collection processes
- Staffing

Key Thoughts & Recommendations

- Think broadly—CS acted as learning lab for key policy changes.
- Develop clarity on how partnership addresses agency differences.
- Reach consensus on operationalized definition of “12-month protected eligibility”.
- Articulate shared understanding of parent choice and agree on its implications for marketing and referral processes.
- Reach consensus on targeting and use it to shape eligibility and other policies.
- Clarify monitoring policies and practices.
- Address challenges for OHSPK participation.
- Clarify program eligibility requirements.