

Child Care and Education Researchers Roundtable

Sharing Tool

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Oregon Early Learning Workforce: Three Years Beyond Baseline, Comparison of 2012 and 2015

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Web Link: <http://health.oregonstate.edu/early-learners/early-learning-workforce>

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Abstract/Short Description

This brief, the fourth annual, describes Oregon's early learning workforce in 2015. As of 2012, Oregon has had in place a system that allows it to answer policy-relevant questions about the early learning workforce employed in regulated child care and education facilities. This brief captures key characteristics of the 2015 workforce and compares them with those of the 2012 workforce. Annual reports enable the State to measure workforce turnover and provide decision makers with information critical for designing the training system. With access to four years of data, this study provides a new look at turnover and stability of the workforce.

Research Questions and Key Findings

- Approximately 24,700 persons make up the early learning workforce, that is, persons who work directly with young children and their families in regulated child care facilities.
- About three-quarters of the workforce are employed in centers with the rest in large (13%) and small (12%) home-based programs.
- The early learning workforce is more diverse than other adult Oregonians, but not as diverse as children under 5. Over one-fourth (27%) of Oregon's workforce are persons of color compared to 36% of children under age 5 who are Non-White or Hispanic.
- About a third of small home-based providers have a primary language other than English, compared to 12% of center staff and 13% of large home-based staff.
- Over a third of the workforce has a bachelor's degree or higher and another third have some college or an associate's degree. The remaining third have a high school diploma, GED, or less, with only a small fraction of that third having less than high school.
- Early learning teachers, on average, earn only slightly more than the minimum wage. For teachers in Oregon regulated child care centers, the median lowest wage was \$10.80 and the highest median wage was \$15.00.
- Individuals with required training hours exceeded what was required and those in positions without required hours had substantial numbers of training hours. All positions saw an increase in the average number of hours between 2012 and 2015.
- Overall, 36% of the entire workforce (8,910 individuals) were enrolled in the Registry in 2015 but participation varied by type of care.
- Turnover is complex and of high policy relevance due to its impacts on multiple individuals and organizations. Oregon has experienced a loss of 16% to 24% of its workforce in each of the last three years.
- Stability of the workforce was measured by looking at the number of individuals at the baseline who remained employed for entire measurement period. Of persons employed in a regulated child care facility in 2012, 47% had been in the workforce all four years.

2015 Child Care and Education Characteristics: Structural Indicators

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Abstract/Short Description

Oregon measures structural indicators of quality for all regulated child care and education programs annually. Structural quality includes measurement of characteristics such as teacher education and training, teacher retention, and teacher compensation. Researchers think that having structural quality in place enables a program to have process quality, which in turn affects child outcomes. The 2015 data provides a snapshot of how child care and education varies across communities on some key characteristics. Reports are compiled at the level of the state, county, and Early Learning Hub.

Research Questions and Key Findings

See reports on the Early Learners website for findings.

Extending the Quality Improvement of Child Care to Include the Carer: Identifying the Extent of Occupational Health Risks for Child Care Providers

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Abstract/Short Description

This project examines associations between occupational health risks for early childhood education (ECE) professionals and links to classroom quality. ECE professionals are subject to a variety of health and safety risks including infectious disease, musculoskeletal strain, and psychosocial stress, which may limit the quality of the classroom. While these risks are identified in the literature, they have not been systematically linked to classroom quality. Using survey and observational methods, this student project aims to contribute to knowledge concerning teacher health generally, and within quality improvement initiatives.

Research Questions and Key Findings

What is the extent of infectious disease exposure, musculoskeletal strain, and psychosocial stress for early care and education professionals, and are these risks associated with early childhood classroom quality?

Project EF: Executive Function in Infants and Toddlers Born Low Birth Weight (LBW) and Preterm

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Abstract/Short Description

The purpose of Project EF: Executive Function in Infants and Toddlers Born Low Birth Weight (LBW) and Preterm is to examine whether traditional assessment methods that have components of EF in their structure can discern early indicators of executive functioning in children born LBW and preterm and in children born full-term. We expect that the groups will show differential performance on the early developmental measures. We expect that all children's early cognitive and self-regulation skills will predict later skills in EF.

Funded by NIDILRR, U S Dept of Health & Human Services

Research Questions and Key Findings

See attached.

Spark (QRIS) Validation Study 2

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Abstract/Short Description

Oregon's second QRIS Validation Study examines association between a programs's Spark Rating and measures of child and family engagement.. Child engagement is measured by the Individualized Classroom Assessment Scoring System (inCLASS) and family engagement by the Family Provider Teacher Relationship Quality. One would expect more highly rated programs to have higher levels of child and family engagement. 171 programs participated (126 centers, 45 large family homes. Almost 600, children were observed and over a 1,000 parents completed surveys. they were racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse.

Research Questions and Key Findings

- 1) To what extent do children attending programs with higher QRIS ratings (2-5) show more positive child engagement (with teachers, peers, tasks)?
- 2) To what extent do programs with higher QRIS ratings (2-5) exhibit stronger family-teacher relationships (knowledge, attitudes, practices)?

Findings will be published on both the OSU and Early Learner websites.

Early Childhood Obesity Risk and the Role of the Early Care Environment

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Web Link: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4955211/pdf/12889_2016_Article_3198.pdf
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Abstract/Short Description

I am interested in the nutrition and physical activity environment in early care and education settings, interventions to improve nutrition and activity, barriers and supports to improving the food and activity environment, and relevant policies at the local, state, and federal level. Specifically, I am interested in the Child and Adult Care Food program and how the recent updates to the meal pattern requirements (October 2017) are impacting child nutrition and health outcomes. I also am interested broadly in early childhood obesity risk factors, particularly the contributions of diet, physical activity, and sleep. With regards to the early care environment, I am interested in examining how mandatory nap times relate to child physical activity levels, if this relationship differs by age, and potential impact on child weight status.

Research Questions and Key Findings

I am relatively new to Oregon, so wanted to share the links to two articles I published recently on a physical activity intervention in early care settings in Wisconsin that improved both the physical activity and nutrition environments. The first version of the project, Active Early 1.0, was evaluated in higher-resourced settings, while the second iteration (Active Early 2.0) was evaluated in lower-resourced settings serving a higher proportion of children from diverse background and from low-income families. Both manuscript are available free online, see the links below.

Live and Learn evaluation: A focus on parent-child interactions

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Abstract/Short Description

The purpose of this study is to understand the change in responsive, sensitive parent-child interactions (e.g., engagement in play, positive affect) and children's behavior, due to participation in a parenting series --- the Live and Learn Series at LBCC. Observational and survey data will be collected at pre and post. Our hypothesis is that responsive parent-child interactions will increase after participation in a Live and Learn series. We also expect to see decreases in child behavior problems (e.g., aggressive behaviors).

Research Questions and Key Findings

Do parent and child behaviors change after participation in a Live and Learn parenting education series?

Evaluating CCDBG in Oregon: Impact of the 2014 Act on Children, Families, and the Quality of Home-based Care in Oregon

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Abstract/Short Description

The 2014 CCDBG Act has potentially large impacts on the children, families, and providers that participate in the subsidy system. In Phase 1, Oregon proposes to build the capacity to conduct research whose overarching goal is assessing the impact of the Act's implementation on children, families, providers, and the quality of home-based child care. Oregon will expand its ability to a) merge administrative data sets so as to be able to assess the extent which implementation affects participation and b) conduct a randomized control trial to assess the impact of PD/Support on the quality of home-based care in Phase 2 (dependent on funding).

Research Questions and Key Findings

This planning grant enables Oregon to build capacity to conduct research to better understand the effects of CCDBG on Oregon families, children, and providers. We are a little more than 1 year into our 18 month planning grant and we are ready to launch rigorous research on the effect of core components of the new laws in 6 months (dependent on funding). We have begun to merge administrative data on subsidy program participants before and after implementation to document changes in who is served as well as the quality and stability of the care provided. We have also developed initial PD models to support home-based providers---Navigators for regulated subsidy providers and focused family child care networks, and hope to test the effectiveness of these in a randomized control trial design. The results from this study promise to inform efforts in Oregon and the nation to improve the supply and quality of home-based early care and education.

Testing the Efficacy of an Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment During Early Elementary School to Prevent Problem Behavior and Improve Academic Outcomes (AKA The Kindergarten Study)

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Abstract/Short Description

This study is evaluating the efficacy of the Family Check-Up during the transition into elementary school by targeting family contextual risks and family management skills; self-regulation, academic learning, and social competence skills; and problem behavior. Children and families are followed from kindergarten entry until the end of 2nd grade in order to evaluate effectiveness of the intervention.

Research Questions and Key Findings

The transition to elementary school is a critical time for the development of key skills that are necessary for school success. Parent support at home, such as positive parenting and support for learning, is associated with school readiness indicators that predict successful school outcomes. For many children at risk for poor developmental outcomes, this transition to elementary school can be difficult and may lead to early academic problems, which in turn may lead to a pattern of poor school performance. This randomized intervention trial, funded by the U.S. Department of Education/Institute of Education Sciences (R324A130002; E. Stormshak, PI), is designed to link families and children with cost effective, efficient, and scientifically supported interventions that will improve student behavior and academic outcomes. It is anticipated that children and families who receive the support provided through this intervention will show improvement in academic skills through the early elementary school years.

For this study, 365 families with a child entering kindergarten were recruited and randomly assigned to the Family Check-Up (FCU) or an elementary school –as-usual condition. The overall goals of the study are:

- 1) Test the efficacy of the FCU in comparison with a randomly assigned control condition for reducing the growth of problem behaviors and academic problems in early elementary school.
- 2) Test the efficacy of the FCU on the proposed mediators in this model, including parenting skills, children's self-regulation, and early literacy skills in early elementary school.
- 3) Understand moderating factors related to engagement of families in the intervention and successful school adaptation, including behavioral adjustment and academic competence.

Data collection began in the Fall of 2014. Staff from our Portland office are working with 2 cohorts of students from 5 ethnically and economically diverse elementary schools in the North Clackamas School District. Data collection will be underway until the end of the school year in June 2018, once Cohort 2 finishes 2nd grade. The assessment battery includes parent and teacher screeners collected within the first few weeks of kindergarten and again at the end of the school year. It also includes a more in-depth parent survey of family stress and support, children's health and behavior, family management skills, and home-school connection. These parent surveys, along with videotaped family observations and school records, will be collected annually for three years, from kindergarten through second grade. As with other FCU studies, the main targets of intervention include improving family management skills, children's self-regulation and social competency skills, and decreasing problem behavior, such as aggression and oppositional behavior at home and at school. Additional intervention targets unique to this study include academic learning skills, such as early literacy skills and identification of learning disability.

Preliminary analyses examined children's outcomes at school. Teachers of 365 children reported on children's emotional and behavior problems at kindergarten entry and in first grade. Results indicated children in the FCU condition outperformed children in the elementary school as usual condition on teacher-report of emotional and behavior problems in first grade ($t = -2.51$, $df = 191$, $p = .013$). Model estimated differences in gains between FCU and elementary school as usual was -1.71 (Hedges $g = -0.28$). Estimated differences between FCU and elementary school as usual conditions in pretest to posttest change in the outcome were -1.34 for children at the 50th percentile at baseline ($p = .021$), and -2.41 for children at the 75th percentile at baseline ($p < .001$). Subgroup analyses for children at or above the 50th percentile on teacher-report of emotional and behavior problems at pretest generated an effect size of $g = -0.43$ ($p = .035$). These findings suggest that children randomly assigned to the FCU experienced greater decreases in emotional and behavioral problems when compared to children in the elementary school as usual condition, using an intent-to-treat approach to analyses. In addition, children experiencing higher levels of emotional and behavior problems at kindergarten entry benefited most from the intervention when compared with children who were experiencing lower levels of emotional and behavior problems.

Southern Oregon Early Learning Professional Development Consortium Project (SOELPDC)

Author(s): Program Coordinators: Eileen Micke-Johnson, Margie McNabb

Organization(s): The Ford Family Foundation, Early Learning Division, Rogue Community College, Southwestern Community College, Umpqua Community College, Klamath Community College, South Coast CARE Connections Child Care Resource & Referral, Southern Child Care Resource Network, South Central Care, Connections & Education Child Care Resource & Referral, South Coast Regional Early Learning Hub, Southern Early Learning Services Hub, South Central Early Learning Hub

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Abstract/Short Description

SOELPDC's overarching vision is to improve current and future child care educator competencies in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, and Lake Counties to ensure more young children are ready for kindergarten. Specific goals: 1) Expand and scale up partnerships to recruit and train 400 non-traditional, under-represented, culturally and/or linguistically diverse Early Educators; 2) assist Early Educators enroll, participate, persist and complete articulated stackable and portable credentials, certificates and degrees through navigators/coaches and cohorts of Early Educators.

Research Questions and Key Findings

These aren't necessarily research questions - they represent some the data will be collecting:

- What are the readiness factors in Higher Education Institutions to support non-traditional Career to College Early Educators?
- What are the collaborations that need to be in place with key partners who work with Early Educators?
- What is needed to create portable, stackable and articulated certificates, credentials and degrees across the state?
- How can this project be replicated throughout the state?
- Number of Early Educators representing diverse language, race and ethnicity advancing in degrees, Oregon Registry & Spark
- Total number of Early Educators advancing and achieving degrees, Oregon Registry & Spark

Ford Family Foundation approached ELD about continuing SOELPDC and building of the momentum of a successful and innovative collaborative project to support Early Educators in obtaining higher education credentials, certificates and degrees. This project enhanced existing and created new pathways to degrees that meet Early Educators where they are on the professional development continuum. Research based practices such as relationship-based professional development through navigators or coaches and cohorts, culturally and linguistically responsive classes, scholarships and non-traditional times and locations are utilized. The grant was submitted on behalf of the above organizations and schools, and we are waiting to hear the results.