Bridging the Birth to 3rd Grade Workforce: Early Care and Education at the Crossroads of Transformation

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FOUNDATION FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT
Agenda

• Early Care and Education At-a-Glance

• Challenges to the field

• Unifying the field

• Asking different questions
Early Care and Education: At-a-Glance
Birth Through 8 Continuum

Infants & Toddlers

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PreK-3rd

Early Elementary

Preschool
Early Care and Education

- Head Start/Early Head Start
- State Funded Preschool
- Private Providers
- Special Needs (IDEA)
- Childcare
- Home Visiting
Wins

• 1965  Federal Head Start Program

• 1990  Child Care Development Block Grant

• 2001  PEW Charitable Trust: (PreK NOW, NIEER)
Wins

• 2002  Neurons to Neighborhoods

• 2009 – Present (Federal attention – ED & HHS )
  - Race to the Top, Promise Neighborhoods, i3
  - Head Start/Early Head Start, Child Care, Home Visiting
 Wins

• 2013 POTUS calls for high-quality preschool in SOTU

• 2014 White House Summit on Early Learning
  (Public/private investments)

• 2015 National Academy of Sciences:
  *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*
High-Quality Coordinated Early Learning System

- Early Learning Standards
- Program Standards
- Assessment Systems
- Useful Data Systems
- Health Promotion
- Family and Community Engagement
- Competent ECE Workforce
What is the most important component of a high quality system?
What is the most important component of a high quality system?

1. Early Learning & Program Standards
2. Assessment Systems
3. Health Promotion
4. Family and Community Engagement
5. Competent and Compensated Workforce
Poll
Existing Challenges

Professionalism of the Field of Early Care and Education

Deepening Our Understanding of What Really Works
Professionalism of the Field of Early Care and Education
Key Adults in Children’s Lives:
Who Are They?

Early Childhood Teachers
Teacher Assistants
Administrators
Mental Health Providers
Pediatricians
Parents
Home Visitors
Principals
No single nationally agreed upon set of standards that define what early childhood professionals should know and be able to do
Should there be one nationally accepted set of standards defining what early childhood professionals should know and be able to do?
Poll
Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation

www.iom.edu/Birthtoeight

Study Sponsors

• US Department of Education

• US Department of Health and Human Services:
  • Administration for Children and Families
  • Health Resources and Services Administration
• Robert R. McCormick Foundation
• W.K. Kellogg Foundation
• Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
• David and Lucile Packard Foundation
How can the science of children’s health, learning, and development inform how the workforce supports children from birth through age 8?
Committee Members

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Children are already learning at birth.

Development & learning in the early years is rapid and cumulative – and is the foundation for lifelong progress.

Adults who care and educate children, from birth through age 8, bear a great responsibility for their health, development, and learning.
Just when consistent, continuous support is so important, systems & services for children – and systems that support the adults who work with them – are fragmented.

Practices and policies do not always reflect the knowledge and competencies indicated by the science.

High-quality practice requires more than individual mastery of competencies.
Can an underprepared adult be harmful to young children?
Poll
… adults who are under-informed, underprepared, or subject to chronic stress themselves may contribute to children’s experience of adversity and stress and undermine their development and learning…
A care and education workforce for children birth through age 8 that is unified by:

– A foundation of the science of child development and early learning,

– Shared knowledge and competencies, and

– Principles to support quality professional practice at the individual, setting, systems, and policy levels.
The Science:

Four Broad Categories of Insight

• Interplay between biology and environment

• Developmental time

• Importance of early psychosocial adversities

• Individual differences
Shared Knowledge & Competencies

• Foundational Core in Child Development

• Core for Care and Education Professionals

• Core for Instructional and Other Practice Specific Educators
Professional Roles in Care and Education: Shared and Specialized Competencies
• Accessing and engaging in available professional learning resources.

• Recognizing need for more comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and support.

• Knowledge of other professional roles and available services
Continuously Improving the Quality of Practice

**Developing and Using Partnerships**

- Communicating and connecting with **families**
  - setting goals
  - preparing families to engage in behaviors and activities that enhance development and early learning.
Managing one's own physical and mental health, including the effects of their own exposure to adversity and stress.
Who should decide the competencies for early care and education professionals?

1. Government (local, state, federal?)
2. A coalition of the early care and education professional organizations?
Poll
Use the IOM report’s synthesis of current science and its proposed recommendations to:

• Define itself,
• Demand appropriate preparation & compensation, and
• Outline the critical elements for professional monitoring and accountability systems.
An unprecedented level of cooperation across the birth through 3rd grade continuum
Birth Through 8 Continuum

- Infants & Toddlers
  - Birth
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7
  - 8

- Preschool

- PreK-3rd

- Early Elementary
Deepening Our Understanding of What Really Works
Asking Different Questions
Do we really know?

- What works?
- For whom?
- Under what conditions?
• Do poor children achieve test scores that are higher or lower than children with more resources?

• Do black and brown children achieve test scores that are higher or lower than their white peers?
To achieve maximum positive impacts for specific subgroups of children:

– What is the optimal combination of program elements?
– What is the optimal dosage?
• What are the possible factors and agents responsible for successful implementation of an early care and education intervention?

• What is the implementation?

• What is the context in which implementation occurs?
More Implementation Research Can…

• Reveal the critical program and policy components for specific subgroups of children

• Determine who benefits and who does not

• Improve program quality

• Ensure that *all* children reach their full potential
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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