



Studies in the News for



Children and Families Commission

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Introduction to Studies in the News

Studies in the News: Children and Family Supplement is a service provided to the First 5 California Children and Families Commission by the California State Library. The service features weekly lists of current articles focusing on Children and Family policy. Prior lists can be viewed from the California State Library's Web site at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/ccfc/>.

How to Obtain Materials Listed in SITN:

- When available on the Internet, the URL for the full-text of each item is provided.
- California State Employees may contact the State Information & Reference Center (916-654-0206; csisirc@library.ca.gov).
- All other interested individuals should contact their local library - the items may be available there, or may be borrowed by your local library on your behalf.

The following studies are currently on hand:

IMPROVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Closing the Achievement Gap: Report of Superintendent Jack O'Connell's California P-16 Council. By the California P-16 Council. (California Department of Education, Sacramento, California) January 2008. 90 p.

[“California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell gave high-quality pre-K a boost when he accepted the education reform recommendations from the California P-16 Council, a statewide group of education, business and community leaders who identified providing high-quality pre-K as their first recommendation. ‘We must work toward the day when quality preschool is available to all California children, so no child starts school already lagging far behind his or her peers,’ he said. O'Connell vowed to work on legislation to consolidate and streamline existing state-funded Title V child development programs as a first step.” NIEER Online Newsletter (January 25, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/pc/documents/yr08ctagrpt0122.pdf>

Child Care and Early Education 2007 Legislative Action. By Kelli Kelty and Caroline Smith. NCSL Report - Early Care and Education. (The National Conference of State Legislatures, Washington, DC) December 2007. 20 p.

[“Thirty-nine states enacted substantial legislation that affects child development and early education in the 2007 legislative session. Bills addressed prekindergarten programs and school readiness, child care, quality initiatives, early intervention, and task forces and governance. Additional actions that were taken through the state budget appropriations process are not included in this document. The bills highlighted in this document are stand-alone bills. This summary is divided into two sections - legislative highlights and enacted legislation. The first section is further divided by subject area, including child development, prekindergarten, child care, early intervention, facilities, and task forces and governance. The second section contains summaries of enacted legislation from the 2007 legislative session by state.”]

Full text at: http://www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/2007_highlights_summaries.pdf

“Neither Art nor Accident: New Research Helps Define and Develop Quality PreK and Elementary Teaching - A Conversation with Robert Pianta.” By Sue Miller Wiltz. IN: Harvard Education Letter, vol. 24, no. 1 (January 2008) pp. 6-8.

[“Study after study shows that quality teaching is the most powerful factor in student learning. But how do you define quality teaching in a way that can be measured and taught? Dr. Robert Pianta, director of the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning and the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education, developed the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to measure quality instruction in the preK–5 classroom. Nearly 1,000 observers from schools and districts in 23 states are now trained in administering CLASS, and about 600 teachers in 8 states are beginning to use MyTeachingPartner, an online professional development program based on CLASS. Pianta, who also serves as dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, spoke with Harvard Education Letter contributing writer Sue Miller Wiltz about how his research can help clarify and improve the quality of teaching in preK and elementary classrooms.”]

Full text at: http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/PiantaArticle.pdf

Teaching and California’s Future: The Status of the Teaching Profession 2007. By Marjorie Wechsler and others. (Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, Santa Cruz, California) December 2007. 122 p.

[“For the past decade, as concerns over the quality of California’s schools have risen, state policymakers have sought ways to strengthen the state’s teacher workforce. In the face of severe teacher shortages, numerous policy efforts have focused on preparing,

recruiting, and retaining fully qualified teachers. The results of these policies have been dramatic. The number of underprepared teachers in California dropped from about 42,000 in 2000-01 to about 15,000 in 2006-07. In percentage terms, this represented a reduction from 14% of the workforce to just 5%. These overall figures, however, mask a number of sobering trends: poor students are still more likely to get an underprepared teacher... and nearly a quarter of new teachers enter the workforce without having earned the state's preliminary credential. These facts, combined with the increasing age of the teacher workforce and a drop in credential production, underscore that policymakers need to continue to focus on ensuring that all students have a fully qualified teacher.”]

Full text at: <http://www.cftl.org/documents/2007/tcf07/TCFReport2007.pdf>

School Readiness and the Transition to Kindergarten in the Era of Accountability.
By Robert Pianta, Curry School of Education. (University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia) December 4, 2007. Podcast.

[“This talk was part of the Faculty Author Series and was given at the Colonnade Club on December 4. Afterwards Mr. Pianta answered questions from the audience.” (Listen online or download podcast.)]

Podcast available at:

<http://www.virginia.edu/uvapodcast/search.php?submit=true&school=4>

Measuring Children’s Progress from Preschool through Third Grade. By Sally Atkins-Burnett. Prepared for the National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force. (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., Washington, DC) 2007. 37 p.

[“Research in the past few decades illustrating the potential benefits of quality early childhood education has led to an increase in state-funded programming. This paper discusses measurement of child outcomes in the context of evaluating effectiveness of preschool programs and highlights ways in which this challenge is being addressed. Problems related to relying solely on traditional, on-demand standardized tests to assess achievement of young children are explained. The author notes that observational measures that span the preschool to elementary age range offer an alternative to direct testing. The use of these measures in formative evaluation efforts is discussed with the caution that high stakes should never be attached to these measures. Using a multi-method approach would provide a richer portrayal of children's performance. The paper concludes with a brief discussion of measuring classroom quality and recommendations for next steps.” News from Mathematica (January 22, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Pre-education/atkins-burnett%20final%20apper%207-3-07.pdf>

Quality Counts 2008: Tapping into Teaching, Unlocking the Key to Student Success. Education Week, vol. 27, no. 18 (January 10, 2008) Entire issue.

[“New from ‘Education Week’ - you'll find strategies that states can use to ‘unlock the full potential of the teaching profession,’ an examination of why working conditions trump pay, a grading calculator, commentaries, an online forum and more. Free registration required.” CFK Weekly (January 23, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2008/01/10/index.html>

The Effects of Oklahoma’s Pre-K Program on Hispanic Children. By William T. Gormley, Jr., Public Policy Institute, Georgetown University. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Washington, D.C., November 8, 2007. (Center for Research on Children in the U.S. (CROCUS), Georgetown University, Washington, DC) 2007. 32 p.

[“Objective. To determine how much Hispanics benefit from a high-quality pre-K program and which Hispanic students benefit the most. Methods. Hispanic students in Tulsa, Oklahoma were tested (in English, Spanish) in August 2006. A regression discontinuity design addressed potential selection bias by comparing pre-K alumni (treatment group) with pre-K entrants (control group), controlling for age and other demographic variables. Results. Hispanic students experienced substantial improvements in pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math skills. Hispanic students whose parents speak Spanish at home or whose parents were born in Mexico benefited the most. Students whose teacher spoke some Spanish also seemed to benefit more. English language test gains were stronger than Spanish language test gains, but the latter were also significant. Conclusions. Preschool education has considerable potential to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic children.”]

Full text at: <http://www.crocus.georgetown.edu/reports/CROCUSworkingpaper11.pdf>

IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Birthrates in California. By Hans P. Johnson, Public Policy Institute of California. California Counts: Population Trends and Profiles, vol. 9, no. 2 (The Institute, San Francisco, California) November 2007. 24 p.

[“California’s fertility rates are slightly higher than those in the rest of the United States, and U.S. fertility rates are higher than those in most other developed countries. California’s relatively high fertility rates, coupled with its relatively youthful population, have led to large numbers of births in the state, thereby contributing to robust population growth.... California’s fertility rate is higher than that of any developed country in the world. These rates have important implications for future population growth in the state, and thus have important implications for accommodating that growth. Because most

children born in the state do not move away from California... fertility patterns have immediate implications for programs and policies focused on children....”]

Full text at: http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/cacounts/CC_1107HJCC.pdf

Handbook of Parent Training: Helping Parents Prevent and Solve Problem Behaviors. Third edition. Edited by James M. Briesmeister and Charles E. Schaefer. (John Wiley and Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey) 2007. 548 p.

[“A guide to the latest tools for teaching effective and positive parenting skills. In the last three decades, parent training has established itself as an empirically sound, highly successful, and cost-effective intervention strategy for both preventing and treating behavior disorders in children. ‘Handbook of Parent Training’ ... offers a unique opportunity to learn about the latest research findings and clinical developments in parent training from leading innovators in the field. Featuring new chapters, this thoroughly revised and updated edition covers issues that have emerged in recent years. Readers will find the latest information on such topics as: Behavioral family intervention for childhood anxiety; Working with parents of aggressive school-age children; Preventive parent training techniques that support low-income, ethnic minority parents of preschoolers; Treating autism and Asperger’s Syndrome; Parenting and learning tools including role playing and modeling positive and effective parenting styles.” NOTE: Handbook of Parent Training... is available for loan.]

IMPROVED HEALTH

Implementing Policies to Reduce the Likelihood of Preschool Expulsion. By Walter S. Gilliam. FCD Policy Brief. Advancing PK-3. No. 7. (Foundation for Child Development, New York, New York) January 2008. 10 p.

[“Children are much more likely to be expelled from prekindergarten in programs with high student-teacher ratios and in extended day programs, according to new research.... The report... also found that teacher job stress, which may be connected to high student-teacher ratios and extended day programs, is related to high rates of expulsion in prekindergarten. ‘This research can help parents choose prekindergarten programs that provide the support their children need,’ explained Walter Gilliam, director of the Zigler Center and author of the study. ‘Classrooms with fewer than eight students per teacher are much less likely to expel children. In programs that are open for eight or more hours per day, parents should ask whether teachers have sufficient time to recuperate from the stress of the classroom.’ ... ‘Prekindergarten teachers should have access to early childhood mental health consultants,’ concluded Gilliam. ‘Teachers who have ongoing relationships with classroom-based mental health consultants are about half as likely to report expelling preschoolers as teachers with no such support.’” FCD Press Release (January 10, 2008.)]

Full text at: http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/ExpulsionBriefImplementingPolicies.pdf

“Effects of Neighbourhood Income on Reported Body Mass Index: An Eight Year Longitudinal Study of Canadian Children.” By Lisa N Oliver and Michael V Hayes. IN: **BMC Public Health**, vol. 8, no. 16 (January 14, 2008) 20 p.

[“This study investigates the effects of neighbourhood income on children’s Body Mass Index (BMI) from childhood (ages 2-3) to early adolescence (ages 10-11) using longitudinal data. Methods. Five cycles of data from the Canadian National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth are analyzed for a sub-sample of children... aged 2-3 at baseline (1994) and assessed at two year intervals to 2002. Body mass index percentiles are based on height/weight estimates reported by proxy respondents (child’s person most knowledgeable). Family and neighbourhood factors were assessed at baseline. The prevalence of neighbourhood low income was obtained from the 1996 Census and divided into three categories from ‘most poor’ to ‘least poor’. Longitudinal modelling techniques were applied to the data. Results. After controlling for individual/family factors (age, sex, income, education, family structure) living in the ‘most poor’ neighbourhood was associated with increasing BMI percentile... over time compared to a ‘middle’ income neighbourhood. Living in an urban (vs. rural) neighbourhood was associated with a decreased BMI percentile... across all time periods. Conclusions. These findings provide evidence that effects of neighbourhood disadvantage on children’s BMI occur between childhood and early adolescence and suggest that policies should target the conditions of childhood, including the neighbourhood environment.”]

Full text at: <http://www.biomedcentral.com/content/pdf/1471-2458-8-16.pdf>

Preschoolers Benefit from Mental Health Screening. FPG Snapshot. No. 50. (The FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.) January 2008. 2 p.

[“A new study by FPG researcher Oscar Barbarin demonstrates that preschoolers can benefit by a simple and inexpensive mental health screening process designed to flag potential signs of more serious problems. Dr. Barbarin developed ABLE - a screening tool to identify young children with self-regulation problems with attention, behavior, language, and emotions.”]

Full text at: <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/snap50.pdf>

“Mental Health Screening of Preschool Children: Validity and Reliability of ABLE.” By Oscar A. Barbarin, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. IN: **American Journal of Orthopsychiatry**, vol. 77, no. 3. pp. 402-418.

[“Children with behavioral, emotional or language problems struggle to do well at school often with limited success. ABLE (Attention, Behavior, Language, and Emotions) a new

screening tool was used to estimate the prevalence and the severity of concerns parents and teachers have about children's school adjustment and evaluate their need for services. Data obtained from the parents and teachers of children randomly selected from public Pre-K classrooms in 6 states... and from a mental health screening of rural and urban children... support the validity and reliability of ABLE. Parents identified severe problems in 18.4% of children and Pre-K teachers identified 10.5%. By kindergarten, the proportion of children identified by their teachers with serious problems more than doubled to 23%. Inattention/overactivity and behavior problems were identified most often. These children were 3.4 times more likely to be certified later for special education services by kindergarten than children not identified with problems by ABLE. However, fewer than 14% of children in public Pre-K identified with serious problems in Pre-K had received mental health services by the end of Kindergarten." NOTE: Mental Health Screening... is available for loan.]

“Preventive Care for Children in Low-Income Families: How Well Do Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Programs Do?” By Cynthia D. Perry and Genevieve M. Kenney. IN: Pediatrics, vol. 120, no. 6 (December 2007) pp. e1393-e1401.

[“In this ‘Pediatrics’ article, Cynthia Perry and Genevieve Kenney examine receipt of clinician advice by low-income children by type of insurance coverage. They find that publicly-insured children were more likely than privately insured, full-year - uninsured children, and part-year - uninsured children to have had a preventive care visit in the past year. Importantly, though, many children went without preventive care, regardless of type of insurance coverage. Moreover, even conditional on having had a preventive care visit, 48 percent did not receive clinician advice in any of the areas measured. For example, 41 percent of overweight children were not advised about healthy eating or exercise in the past year.” Urban Institute's Health Policy Newsletter (January 22, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/120/6/e1393>

IMPROVED SYSTEMS OF CARE

Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care: Policy Framework Summary. By Rachel Schumacher, Center for Law and Social Policy, and others. (CLASP and Zero to Three, Washington, DC) 2008. 4 p.

[“In the first year of the multi-year Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care project, CLASP collaborated with Zero to Three to develop a Policy Framework. The Framework offers four fundamental principles which form a basis for the supports that all babies and toddlers in child care need. In addition, the Policy Framework offers 15 recommendations that should be tackled in state child care licensing, quality, and subsidy policies.” The Baby Monitor (January 22, 2008.)]

Full text at: http://www.clasp.org/publications/cp_framework_sum.pdf

Random Assignment Evaluation Studies: A Guide for Out-of-School Time Program Practitioners. By Kristin Anderson Moore and Allison Metz. Research-to-Results Brief. No. 2008-03. (Child Trends, New York, New York) January 2008. 6 p.

[“Random assignment experimental studies involve using a ‘lottery’ system to randomly assign participants to either a treatment group that receives program services or a control group that does not receive these services, and then comparing outcomes for the two groups. Only rigorous experimental studies can definitively establish that a program *causes* changes in outcomes for children and youth. This brief explains why these studies are important, how to conduct them, and addresses reservations that program providers might have.” Child Trends E-Newsletter (January 16, 2008.)]

Full text at:

http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2008_01_16_Evaluation5.pdf

Quasi-Experimental Evaluations. By Kristin Anderson Moore. Research-to-Results Brief. No. 2008-04. (Child Trends, New York, New York) January 2008. 4 p.

[“Although experimental studies are described as the ‘gold standard’ for assessing the effectiveness of a program in changing outcomes, in some cases, quasi-experimental studies may be more feasible or appropriate. Many types of quasi-experimental studies are possible. For example, an implementation study can provide valuable information on whether, how, and for whom services are provided, and an outcome monitoring study can provide early information on whether outcomes are changing as expected. In this brief, we describe varied types of quasi-experimental evaluations and the circumstances under which they are useful.”]

Full text at:

http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2008_01_16_Evaluation6.pdf

Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care. Systems of Care: Guide for Strategic Planning. (Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Systems of Care, Children’s Bureau, Administration on Children Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC) 2007. 44 p.

[“The Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Systems of Care is working with the Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau to provide support to grantees developing systems of care in their communities for children and families involved in the child welfare system. This document provides information and materials that can be especially valuable during the first year of designing a system of care, when

strategic plans are developed and refined. This document contains an overview of the 'Improving Child Welfare Outcomes Through Systems of Care' initiative, including some of the major activities and milestones, and presents procedures any community can use to support the planning and development process for designing a system of care. Included are models that have been helpful in similar systems of care initiatives.”]

Full text at:

<http://basis.caliber.com/cwig/ws/library/docs/gateway/Blob/56550.pdf?rpp=-10&upp=0&m=1&w=NATIVE%28%27TITLE+ph+is+%27%27improving+child+welfare+outcomes%27%27%27%29&r=1&order=native%28%27year%27FDescend%27%29>

(Note: This publication takes a few minutes to download.)

Improving Child Welfare Outcomes through Systems of Care: Building the Infrastructure: A Guide for Communities. By Gary DeCarolis and others. (Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Systems of Care, Children’s Bureau, Administration on Children Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC) 2007. 140 p.

[“Systems of care’ bring child welfare professionals together with their counterparts in other agencies to provide the range of physical, mental, social, emotional and educational services that children in the child welfare system need. This... guide is designed for communities looking to build such systems of care; it outlines definitions, goals, activities, personnel and expected outcomes.” CFK Weekly (January 23, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://basis.caliber.com/cwig/ws/library/docs/gateway/Blob/60188.pdf?rpp=-10&upp=0&m=2&w=NATIVE%28%27TITLE+ph+is+%27%27Improving+Child+Welfare+Outcomes+Through+Systems+of+Care%27%27%27%29&r=1&order=native%28%27year%27FDescend%27%29>

STUDIES TO COME

[The following studies, reports, and documents have not yet arrived. California State Employees may place requests, and copies will be provided when the material arrives. All other interested individuals should contact their local library - the items may be available there, or may be borrowed by your local library on your behalf.]

“Childhood Personality Predicts Long-Term Trajectories of Shyness and Aggressiveness in the Context of Demographic Transitions in Emerging Adulthood.” By Jaap J. A. Dennis and others. IN: *Journal of Personality*, vol. 76, no. 1 (February 2008) pp. 67-100.

[“Ever wonder if that quiet girl who hid in the back corner of the classroom ever burst out of her shell? Perhaps she became a whiz at computers. And what about the class clown? Did all his attention-grabbing antics develop into a charm that would later earn him big bucks selling timeshares in Bermuda? New research shows that in most cases the

personalities displayed very early in life - as young as preschool - will stay with us into adulthood. The wallflowers will stay shy and reticent, though they will learn in time to be a little more sociable and assertive. And the average kids, the more resilient ones, will remain so. But there is an interesting exception: The study found that as the most noisy and rambunctious kids hit their 20s, they still were more aggressive than the others yet they had become considerably more withdrawn than they were earlier in life. The researchers suspect that negative feedback from peers over the years makes these kids more self-conscious and quiet.” MSNBC (January 15, 2008.) NOTE: Childhood Personality... will be available for loan.]

CONFERENCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

AIA Conference: Strengthening Connections Between Parents and Children Affected by Substance Abuse, HIV, & Incarceration. Sponsored by the National Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center, University of California, Berkeley, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation, San Francisco, California. March 12–14 2008, Hotel 480, San Francisco, California.

[“Parents who struggle with drug addiction, HIV and/or incarceration face many personal and institutional barriers to developing and maintaining healthy relationships with their children. The primary purpose of this national conference is to promote practices that help to strengthen these relationships, and minimize trauma and attachment disorders among infants and young children.”]

For more information: http://aia.berkeley.edu/strengthening_connections/index.html

NCSL Education Finance Summit Pre-Conference, "Financing Preschool through the Education Finance Formula and Other Options." February 15, 2008, 12:30-3:30 p.m. NCSL Education Finance Summit, February 15-17, 2008. Saint Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas.

[“NCSL will be hosting an Education Finance Summit Pre-Conference on Friday, February 15, 2008 from 12:30-3:30 p.m. in San Antonio, Texas. This pre-conference event will provide a snapshot of state experiences with funding preschool through the school funding formula and other financing methods and discuss the pros and cons of various approaches. Diana Stone, Washington Appleseed Center, will present the latest trends on how some states are funding pre-k through the education school funding formula. Gina Day, Texas Education Agency and Bobbi Lussier, Tennessee Office of Early Learning will offer state perspectives and experiences on funding pre-k in their states. In 2007, thirty-six states appropriated new funds for preschool. While states are using a variety of strategies, the school finance formula is a growing mechanism for financing both school- and community-based preschool. If you would like to attend the pre-conference event or if you have any questions, please contact Julie Poppe, (303) 856-1497, julie.poppe@ncsl.org. This pre-conference will take place prior to the start of the NCSL Education Finance Summit that runs from February 15-17, 2008 in San Antonio,

Texas.” NCSL Child Care and Early Education Legislative Network E-Update (January 25, 2008.)]

For more information: www.ncsl.org/edfinancesummit.