



## 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 Information Resources & Government Publications at (916-654-0081; [csinfo@library.ca.gov](mailto:csinfo@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**

**NCSL Early Care and Education Legislation Database. By the National Conference of State Legislatures. (The Conference, Denver, Colorado) Online database.**

[“NCSL is proud to announce that the Early Care and Education Legislative Tracking Database is now available online. NCSL works in cooperation with State Net to bring you up to date, real time information on early care and education bills that have been introduced in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Find all 2008 early care and education legislation; conduct searches by category, state, keyword, status, title or author.” NCSL Early Care and Education News Announcement (April 15, 2008.)]

Database at: <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/legislation.htm>

**Increasing State Investments in Early Care and Education: Lessons Learned from Advocates and Best Practices. By Voices for America’s Children. Prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (Voices for America’s Children, Washington, DC) Spring 2008. 44 p.**

[“This report... profiles efforts in 10 states to increase investments in early childhood. These states - Alabama, Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming - differ widely in size, political

dynamics, budget resources, and in demographics of the under-five population. Despite the range in circumstances and experiences, some key common threads existed in the advocacy strategies applied, and these proven strategies for success are detailed in this report.” Annie E. Casey Foundation.]

Full text at: <http://www.aecf.org/~media/PublicationFiles/ECE%20Report.pdf>

**Children’s Budget 2008. By Michael Linden and others. (First Focus, Washington, DC) [2008.] 59 p.**

[“Only one penny of every new, real non-defense dollar spent by the federal government has gone to children's programs in the past five years, according to this new report from First Focus. This comprehensive guide to all federal spending on children is a great resource for anyone working to improve the lives of America's youth.” CFK Update (April 16, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://www.firstfocus.net/Download/CBook.pdf>

**Education News Parents Can Use. Early Childhood Education: Good Start, Grow Smart. (U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC) Original television broadcast date, April 15, 2008. Webcast.**

[“This month's U.S. Department of Education monthly TV show, ‘Education News Parents Can Use,’ will offer tips for parents on how to ensure young children enter school ready to read and ready to learn.... broadcast will feature:

- A discussion with Norma Garza, senior advisor to U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings... and Robert Pianta, director of the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education.... They'll describe the tools, resources and assistance offered by the Education Department to ensure students enter school ready to read and ready to learn.

- A conversation with two Early Reading First project directors and Norma Garza about best practices in early childhood education, including: how to implement ‘literacy rich’ environments for preschool youth, effective professional development techniques for early childhood educators and key strategies proven to increase preschool literacy achievement.

- A roundtable with Garza, Noel Gunther, executive director of the PBS series Reading Rockets; and Nina Sazer O'Donnell, director of National Strategies for Success By 6® for the United Way of America. They'll talk about national efforts to promote high quality early learning experiences, critical questions parents should ask teachers and administrators to ensure their children are receiving the best quality early education, and the most important factors parents should consider when choosing a preschool. And,

- Video case studies featuring Kalkaska CARES (Children Acquiring Reading Essential Skills) in Kalkaska, Mich., and a Reading Rockets video segment about print awareness.” U.S. Department of Education Press Release (April 14, 2008.)]

Webcast at: <http://www.connectlive.com/events/ednews/>

**Children and Electronic Media [Issue theme.] By Jeanne Brooks-Gunn and others. Future of Children. Vol. 18, No. 1 (Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, and the Brookings Institution, Washington, DC) Spring 2008. 253 p.**

[“One focus of the authors is the seemingly unique effect of television on children under age two. Although research clearly demonstrates that well-designed, age-appropriate, educational television can be beneficial to children of preschool age, studies on infants and toddlers suggest that these young children may better understand and learn from real-life experiences than they do from video. Moreover, some research suggests that exposure to television during the first few years of life may be associated with poorer cognitive development. With respect to children over two, the authors emphasize the importance of content in mediating the effect of television on cognitive skills and academic achievement. Early exposure to age appropriate programs designed around an educational curriculum is associated with cognitive and academic enhancement, whereas exposure to pure entertainment, and violent content in particular, is associated with poorer cognitive development and lower academic achievement.... The authors’ aim is to inform policymakers, educators, parents, and others who work with young children about the impact of media, particularly television, on preschool children, and what society can do to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs.”]

Full text at: [http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr\\_doc/Media\\_08\\_01.pdf](http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/Media_08_01.pdf)

**Differential Growth in the Black-White Achievement Gap during Elementary School among Initially High- and Low-Scoring Students. By Sean F. Reardon, Stanford University. Working Paper. No. 2008-7. Preliminary Draft. (Institute for Research on Education Policy & Practice, Stanford University, Stanford, California) March 2008. 36 p.**

[“New research into what is commonly called the black-white ‘achievement gap’ suggests that the students who lose the most ground academically in U.S. public schools may be the brightest African-American children.... For his analysis, Sean F. Reardon, an associate professor of sociology and education at Stanford University, analyzed reading and mathematics scores for nearly 7,000 elementary students taking part in a federal study known as the ‘Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort.’ From kindergarten to 5th grade, he found, the achievement gaps grew twice as fast among the students who started out performing above the mean than they did among lower-performing children. ‘The long-term implication of this is that, if these gaps continue to grow throughout their schooling career, even kids who enter kindergarten with high levels of readiness are going to end up falling below where they started,’ said Mr. Reardon.” Education Week (April 16, 2008.)]

Full text at:

[www.stanford.edu/group/irepp/cgi-bin/joomla/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=175](http://www.stanford.edu/group/irepp/cgi-bin/joomla/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=175)

**Does Readiness Matter? How Kindergarten Readiness Translates into Academic Success. A Data Report. By the Santa Clara Partnership for School Readiness. (Applied Survey Research, Watsonville, California) April 2008. 60 p.**

[“Research often shows that the skills that children possess in kindergarten are related to their academic achievement in later years of elementary school. Research also tends to show that school readiness gaps between different types of children persist in their academic scores years hence. This study was designed to explore how readiness is connected to later academic success locally, to measure the relative contributions of the Basic Building Blocks to understanding children’s academic test scores in third through fifth grade, and to examine the academic trajectories of four Readiness Portraits. Does Readiness Matter? The answer to the ‘Does readiness matter?’ question is a resounding ‘yes!’ according to these data. Children who enter kindergarten near proficient across all readiness skills (aka ‘All Stars’) perform significantly better on standardized tests of English and math in third, fourth, and fifth grades than do children of different readiness Profiles....”]

Full text at:

[http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/www/products/DoesReadinessMatter\\_ALongitudinalAnalysisFINAL3.pdf](http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/www/products/DoesReadinessMatter_ALongitudinalAnalysisFINAL3.pdf)

## **IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING**

**The Taxpayer Costs of Divorce and Unwed Childbearing: First-Ever Estimates for the Nation and All Fifty States. By Benjamin Scafidi. (Institute for American Values, New York, New York) 2008. 44 p.**

[“Divorce and out-of-wedlock childbearing cost U.S. taxpayers more than \$112 billion a year, according to a study commissioned by four groups advocating more government action to bolster marriages. Sponsors say the study is the first of its kind and hope it will prompt lawmakers to invest more money in programs aimed at strengthening marriages. Two experts not connected to the study said such programs are of dubious merit and suggested that other investments - notably job creation - would be more effective in aiding all types of needy families. There have been previous attempts to calculate the cost of divorce in America. But the sponsors of the new study... said theirs is the first to gauge the broader cost of ‘family fragmentation’ - both divorce and unwed childbearing.... Another expert not connected to the study, University of Michigan sociologist Pamela Smock, suggested that bigger investments in education would pay

long-term dividends - improving economic prospects even for children from fragmented, disadvantaged families.” AP/CNN.com (April 15, 2008).]

Full text at: [http://www.marriedebate.com/pdf/ec\\_div.pdf](http://www.marriedebate.com/pdf/ec_div.pdf)

**Is Marriage Always Good for Children? Evidence from Families Affected by Incarceration. By Keith Finlay and David Neumark. NBER Working Paper No. 13928 (National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts) April 2008. 55 p.**

[“One-third of children in the United States are born to unmarried parents. A substantial number of black and Hispanic children live with a never-married mother. Children of never-married mothers are more likely to drop out of high school, repeat grades, and have behavioral problems than are children raised in more traditional family structures. But these relationships may be driven by other factors that affect marital status at birth, post-conception marriage decisions, and later child outcomes, rather than causal effects of family structure. Given that changes in the availability of men in the marriage market should affect marriage decisions, we use incarceration rates for men as an instrumental variable for family structure in estimating the effect of never-married motherhood on the likelihood that children drop out of high school, focusing on blacks and Hispanics. Instrumental variables estimates suggest that unobserved factors rather than a causal effect drive the negative relationship between never-married motherhood and child outcomes for blacks and Hispanics, at least for the children of women whose marriage decisions are most affected by variation in incarceration rates for men. For Hispanics, in particular, we find evidence that these children may actually be better off living with a never-married mother.”]

Full text at: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w13928.pdf>

**Assisted Housing Mobility and the Success of Low-Income Minority Families: Lessons for Policy, Practice, and Future Research. Brief No. 5. By Margery Austin Turner and Xavier de Souza Briggs. (The Urban Institute, Washington, DC) March 2008. 12 p.**

[“The federal Moving to Opportunity program (MTO) was designed to help poor minority families move from distressed, high poverty neighborhoods to better locations, thereby improving their quality of life and long term chances for well-being. Low income families living in concentrated poverty face a variety of challenges to their safety, health, and economic health, including poor schools, high crime and unemployment. This brief examines areas where the MTO program helped movers with those challenges, areas still problematic even after moving, and factors affecting those outcomes and considers policy implications for the next generation of assisted housing mobility initiatives.” The Urban Institute (March 20, 2008.)]

Full text at: [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411638\\_assisted\\_housing.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411638_assisted_housing.pdf)

**Struggling to Stay Out of High-Poverty Neighborhoods: Lessons from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment. By Jennifer Comey and others. Brief No. 6. (The Urban Institute, Washington, DC) March 2008. 12 p.**

[“MTO [Moving to Opportunity] offered families living in concentrated poverty the chance to move to lower poverty areas, away from the high unemployment and high crime rates areas with the challenges and risks they present. This brief looks at whether the program was successful in helping families move away from those neighborhoods and stay away from them, noting both the reasons for subsequent moves and the characteristics of the neighborhoods to which they made those moves.” The Urban Institute (March 20, 2008.)]

Full text at:

[http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411635\\_high-poverty\\_neighborhoods.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411635_high-poverty_neighborhoods.pdf)

## **IMPROVED HEALTH**

**“Intensive Care for Extreme Prematurity - Moving Beyond Gestational Age.” By Jon E. Tyson and others. IN: *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 358, no. 16 (April 17, 2008) pp. 1672-1681.**

[“Researchers are reporting that they have developed a new way to help doctors and parents make some of the most agonizing decisions in medicine, about how much treatment to give tiny, extremely premature infants. These are infants at the edge of viability, weighing less than 2.2 pounds and born after 22 to 25 weeks of pregnancy, far ahead of the normal 40 weeks.... The new method uses an online calculator developed for such cases factoring in traits like birth weight and sex and generating statistics on chances of the baby’s survival and the likelihood of disabilities.... The statistics are not a personal prediction. They estimate risk based on data from similar infants in a large study.... Although some extremely premature infants do well, many die, sometimes after weeks or months of painful invasive procedures in the intensive care unit. Survivors often suffer brain damage, behavior problems, vision and hearing loss and other disabilities.... Doctors and parents struggle to decide when aggressive treatment seems reasonable - and when death or severe disability seems so likely, even with treatment, that it would be kinder to avoid painful procedures and provide just ‘comfort care,’ letting nature take its course and letting the child die. These decisions, made every day in hospitals around the country, are ‘heart wrenching and passionate,’ Dr. Higgins said. ‘No one ever thinks they’re going to be in this situation, and it’s difficult, for families and also for physicians.’” New York Times (April 17, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/reprint/358/16/1672.pdf>

**Improving the Delivery of Health Care that Supports Young Children’s Healthy Mental Development: Update on Accomplishments and Lessons from a Five-State Consortium. By Neva Kaye and Jill Rosenthal. (National Academy for State Health Policy, Washington, DC) February 2008. 65 p.**

[“Services that support young children’s healthy mental development can reduce the prevalence of developmental and behavioral disorders. Unchecked, social, emotional, and behavioral development delays have high costs and long-term consequences for health, education, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems - and for children’s futures. In January 2004, the second Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD II) Consortium was formed. It provided five states (California, Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, and Utah) an opportunity to develop and test strategies for improving the delivery of developmental services to young children at risk for or with social or emotional development delays, especially those in need of preventive or early intervention services. The states sought, by different means, to improve the identification of children in need of developmental services and improve the likelihood that those identified with a potential need received appropriate follow-up services, including intensified surveillance, assessment, and treatment. By the end of the three-year consortium, all produced data indicating success.”]

Full text at:

[http://www.commonwealthfund.org/usr\\_doc/Kaye\\_improving\\_delivery\\_healthy\\_mental.pdf?section=4039](http://www.commonwealthfund.org/usr_doc/Kaye_improving_delivery_healthy_mental.pdf?section=4039)

**Draft NTP Brief on Bisphenol A [CAS NO. 80-05-7]. By the National Toxicology Program. (The Program, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina) April 14, 2008. 68 p.**

[“A controversial, estrogen-like chemical in plastic could be harming the development of children's brains and reproductive organs, a federal health agency concluded in a report.... The National Toxicology Program, part of the National Institutes of Health, concluded that there was ‘some concern’ that fetuses, babies and children were in danger because bisphenol A, or BPA, harmed animals at low levels found in nearly all human bodies. An ingredient of polycarbonate plastic, BPA is one of the most widely used synthetic chemicals in industry today. It can seep from hard plastic beverage containers such as baby bottles, as well as from liners in cans containing food and infant formula. The federal institute is the first government agency in the U.S. to conclude that low levels of BPA could be harming humans. Its findings will be used to help regulators at federal and state environmental agencies to develop policies governing its use.... Some scientists suspect that exposure early in life disrupts hormones and alters genes, programming a fetus or child for breast or prostate cancer, premature female puberty, attention deficit disorders and other reproductive or neurological disorders.” Los Angeles Times (April 16, 2008.)]

Full text at:

[http://cerhr.niehs.nih.gov/chemicals/bisphenol/BPADraftBriefVF\\_04\\_14\\_08.pdf](http://cerhr.niehs.nih.gov/chemicals/bisphenol/BPADraftBriefVF_04_14_08.pdf)

**How Physicians View the Issue: Parents Who Refuse to Vaccinate a Child. Speakers - Edward Marcuse, University of Washington School of Medicine, and Joel Frader, Northwestern University, Feinberg School of Medicine. 2006 Pediatrics Bioethics Conference, Treuman Katz Center for Pediatric Bioethics, Seattle, Washington. July 14, 2006. Podcast. Runtime: 56:09.**

[“This program focuses on a variety of issues related to parental rights regarding childhood vaccinations, including the origins of immunization hesitancy, and the medical community's response to the parent who refuses to vaccinate their child. Edgar Marcuse, professor at the University of Washington School of Medicine, discusses the nature and scope of immunization hesitancy and vaccine refusal in the United States. Dr. Marcuse identifies societal factors contributing to immunization hesitancy and discusses the tension between protecting the public's health and protecting the individual's right to choose. Joel Frader, professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, discusses the pediatricians' view of families who refuse vaccines and identifies the moral issues in responding to vaccine refusal. He also discusses options for physicians when parents refuse to vaccinate their children.”]

Podcast at: <http://www.uwtv.org/programs/displayevent.aspx?rID=5170&fID=1469>

## **IMPROVED SYSTEMS OF CARE**

**Little Britons: Financing Childcare Choice. By Catherine Hakim, London School of Economics, and others. (Policy Exchange, London, England) 2008. 93 p.**

[“Mothers should be paid to stay at home and raise their children, according to a report... The review found that most women wanted to work either part-time or not at all while their children were under five, but were prevented from doing so because state help for families had been channelled into tax credits. The Policy Exchange think-tank is calling on the Government to scrap the current system of tax credits and grants in favour of a universal child care allowance - worth £60 per young child per week - that parents could keep or spend on a care provider.... The report, entitled Little Britons, claims that billions of pounds of taxpayers' money has been wasted on formal child care when parents would prefer to care for their offspring at home. Labour has spent £17 billion on services for young children in the past decade in an attempt to encourage mothers back into work. British parents pay 70 per cent of their child care costs compared with a European average of 30 per cent. Although parents were more likely to choose nursery care for their children at the age of three than they were at the age of one, the majority

still favoured family care over collective arrangements.” The Daily Telegraph (April 21, 2008.)]

Full text at: <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/376.pdf>

**Thursday’s Child: Responsible Workers, Responsive Parents: Low-Income Families in Today’s Workplace. (Chapin Hall Center for Children, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois) March 13, 2008. Audio recording.**

[“The March 13 Thursday's Child public policy forum in Washington, DC, discussed two supports designed to help parents stay in the workforce: childcare subsidies and paid family leave. While childcare subsidies help parents stay employed longer, according to research presented by Chapin Hall research fellow Robert Goerge, many eligible families do not take up the subsidy. Other panelists discussed how the lack of paid leave challenges low-income working parents, how family-friendly work policies affect large and small companies differently, and how the Council of the District of Columbia worked with employer and advocacy groups to pass a paid-leave bill.” News from Chapin Hall (April 16, 2008.)]

Full text at:

<http://www.about.chapinhall.org/conferences/urban/apr2008/presentations.html>

#### **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.]*

**“Diet Quality and Academic Performance.” By Paul Veugelers and others. IN: Journal of School Health, vol. 78, no. 4 (April 2008) pp. 209-215.**

[“Kids who eat better perform better in school, a new study in Nova Scotia... confirms. Students who ate an adequate amount of fruit, vegetables, protein, fiber and other components of a healthy diet were significantly less likely to fail a literacy test, Dr. Paul J. Veugelers of the University of Alberta in Edmonton and colleagues found.... The better a student's eating habits based on several measures of diet quality, including adequacy and variety, the less likely he or she was to have failed the test, the researchers found, even after they adjusted the data for the effects of parental income and education, school, and sex. Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables, and getting fewer calories from fat, was also associated with a lower risk of failing the test. To date, Veugelers and his team say, most research on diet and school performance has focused on the importance of eating breakfast, as well as the ill effects of hunger and malnutrition. ‘This study extends current knowledge in this area by demonstrating the independent importance of overall diet quality to academic performance,’ the researchers conclude. ‘The consistency of this

association across various indicators of diet quality gives emphasis to the importance of children's nutrition not only at breakfast but throughout the day.” Reuters Health (April 14, 2008.) NOTE: Diet Quality... will be available for loan.]

## **CONFERENCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Pre-K to 3 Education: Promoting Early Success. Harvard Graduate School of Education. November 13-15, 2008.**

[“Connecting the years from Pre-K to the Third Grade (PK-3) are crucial to creating a foundation for later school success. ‘Pre-K to 3 Education: Promoting Early Success’ will provide education leaders and practitioners nationwide with an overarching framework and practical strategies to develop and sustain effective PK-3 programs - programs that strengthen and effectively align instructional, family engagement, social-emotional, and after-school supports. Hands-on sessions will focus on components of PK-3 initiatives that are proven drivers for early success in learning. These components include: Language and Literacy, Curriculum Alignment, Family Engagement, Socio-emotional Behaviors and Climate, After-school Programs, Alignment across PK to Third Grade, and Integration. Additional sessions focus on building district-level buy-in, strategies for scaling up programs, policy supports for PK-3, and evaluation and accountability.” The Learning Curve (April 17, 2008.)]

For more information: [http://www.fcd-us.org/usr\\_doc/HvdPreKFinalBro.pdf](http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/HvdPreKFinalBro.pdf)

### **2008 California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth (CMHACY) Conference. Promoting Wellbeing through Partnerships. Wednesday, May 7 - Friday, May 9, 2008. Pre-Conference on Tuesday, May 6, 2008. Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove on the Monterey peninsula.**

[“The CMHACY Conference will provide strategies and program models that will be current, relevant, and replicable with critical PEI [Prevention and Early Intervention] information threaded through the entire conference.... This year’s Pre-Conference will feature Derek Peterson and Larry Brendtro, who will also be the keynote speaker Wednesday night. Other major speakers will be Keith Johnson, Mark Katz, a youth panel, Steve Mayberg, and an expanded panel on Friday involving policy experts and, (invited) legislative staff, who will explore the impact of the state budget on children and families.... The workshops, featuring leading voices and innovative programs, are organized in 8 focus tracks: Cultural Competence, Family-Driven Services, Zero to Five, Effective Practice, Youth Advocacy, Public Policy, Transition Age Youth, Partnerships.”]

For more information and to register: <http://www.cmhacy.org/>