



## 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**

**Preschool Adequacy and Efficiency in California: Issues, Policy Options, and Recommendations. By Lynn A. Karoly. (Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, California) 2009. 197 p.**

[“Facing mounting evidence that California has fallen behind on many key indicators of educational performance, policymakers and the public share considerable interest in exploring whether California should expand public funding for preschool education. This expanded funding will be most effective if resources can be directed to their most efficient uses. Doing so requires an understanding of how resources are currently allocated, what educational objectives preschool education can help achieve, and where preschool resources can be most effective. To investigate these issues, the RAND Corporation undertook a multicomponent study called the California Preschool Study to examine the adequacy and efficiency of preschool education in California. Researchers completed three studies to advance knowledge of (1) gaps in school readiness and achievement in the early grades among California children and the potential for high-quality preschool programs to close existing gaps, (2) the use of early care and education

(ECE) services among California's children and the quality of those experiences, and (3) the system of publicly funded ECE programs in California in the two years before kindergarten entry. The objective of this analysis, the fourth and final study component, is to integrate the results from the series of studies, as well as relevant prior research, and make recommendations to advance preschool adequacy and efficiency in California.

Research Brief: 5 p.

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/2009/RAND\\_RB9452.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/2009/RAND_RB9452.pdf)

Summary: 19 p. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND\\_MG889.sum.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG889.sum.pdf)

Full text at: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND\\_MG889.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG889.pdf)

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**Kindergarten Readiness Data: Improving Children's Success in School. By Children Now. Issue Brief. (Children Now, Oakland, California) May 2009. 24 p.**

Full text at:

[http://publications.childrennow.org/assets/pdf/preschool/prek09\\_policybrief.pdf](http://publications.childrennow.org/assets/pdf/preschool/prek09_policybrief.pdf)

[“This policy brief explores the concept of kindergarten readiness observation tools and their benefits to local and state level stakeholders.... California does not currently gather data on students' readiness levels upon kindergarten entry; however, at least five counties have kindergarten readiness observation projects. Their results have allowed school districts, county agencies and local nonprofit organizations to strategize how to address gaps in school readiness and to monitor counties' success in preparing children for school at regular intervals. Building on those local endeavors, statewide data would make it possible to garner reliable information on readiness trends at the state and regional levels and inform policies that will improve school readiness throughout the state.” Children Now.]

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**The 2009 Foundation for Child Development Child and Youth Well-Being Index (CWI) Report, Including: An Update of the CWI for the Years 1975-2007, Projections of the CWI for 2008, and A Special Focus Report on Anticipating the Impacts of a 2008-2010 Recession. By Kenneth C. Land, Duke University. (Foundation for Child Development, New York, New York) May 2009. 31 p.**

Full text at: [http://www.fcd-us.org/usr\\_doc/Final-2009CWIRreport.pdf](http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/Final-2009CWIRreport.pdf)

[“The first comprehensive report on the impact of the current recession on the overall health, well-being and quality of life of America's children... shows that the downturn will virtually undo all progress made in children's economic well-being since 1975.... ‘Though our research proves what many of us know and see - that children suffer during a recession - the harm of this downturn is even greater than that of economic hardship. It

will affect children socially and emotionally; it will affect their health and educational attainment,' said Kenneth Land, project coordinator.... 'The fact that we may actually reverse hard-won gains made over the last 35 years is alarming.'... The report also states that the economic downturn will take a greater toll on children in communities of color. 'Years of studying the CWI show us that African American and Latino children are generally more susceptible to the consequences of economic fluctuations. When the economy is doing well, their well-being gains are more dramatic. When the economy slumps, they are harder hit than their white counterparts because more children of color live in poverty to begin with,' said Ruby Takanishi, President of FCD." Foundation for Child Development, Press Release (May 18, 2009.)]

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**Building a Solid Foundation: How States and School Districts Can Use Federal Stimulus Funds to Support Proficiency by Third Grade. By Sara Mead, New America Foundation. Issue Brief. (The Foundation, Washington, DC) May 2009. 9 p.**

Full text at: [http://www.newamerica.net/files/Building\\_A\\_Solid\\_Foundation.pdf](http://www.newamerica.net/files/Building_A_Solid_Foundation.pdf)

[“States and school districts are receiving billions of dollars in federal economic stimulus funds for education appropriated under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). In this latest issue brief from New America, Mead argues that states and school districts must use this unprecedented federal investment to not just maintain the status quo in education, but to institute lasting reforms that will yield ongoing gains in student learning and help fuel America's long-term economic growth. As the issue brief shows, one of the most important ways that states and districts can do this is by investing stimulus funds in PreK-3rd reforms to ensure that all students establish a solid foundation of math, literacy, and social/emotional skills by the end of third grade. In her report, Mead explains why states and school districts must make PreK-3rd reforms a priority in the spending of stimulus funds and offers examples of how states and school districts can use these funds to advance a PreK-3rd reform agenda.” New America Foundation, Press Release (May 26, 2009.)]

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## **IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING**

**The Strengths of Poor Families. By Sherylls Valladares and Kristin Anderson Moore. Research Brief. No. 2009-26. (Child Trends, Washington, DC) May 2009. 8 p.**

Full text at:

[http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child\\_Trends-2009\\_5\\_14\\_RB\\_poorfamstrengths.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2009_5_14_RB_poorfamstrengths.pdf)

["In the minds of many people, poor families equal problem families. Indeed, that perception is not surprising, giving compelling evidence of the harsh effects that poverty can have on family life and child well-being. However, far less attention has been paid to the strengths that many poor families have and the characteristics that they may share with more affluent families. This Research Brief examines these issues. To explore the similarities and contrasts between poor and non-poor families, Child Trends analyzed data for more than 100,000 families from the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). Our results suggest that, although poor families experience socioeconomic disadvantages, these families may be enriched by the strengths found in their family routines and relationships."]

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**Changing Patterns of Nonmarital Childbearing in the United States. By Stephanie J. Ventura, Division of Vital Statistics. NCHS Data Brief. No. 18. (National Center for Health Statistics, Hyattsville, Maryland) May 2009. 8 p.**

Full text at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db18.pdf>

["The number of babies being born out of wedlock has increased sharply in the United States, driven primarily by significant jumps in women in their 20s and 30s having children without getting married, according to a federal report released yesterday. More than 1.7 million babies were born to unmarried women in 2007, a 26 percent rise from 2002 and more than double the number in 1980, according to the report from the National Center for Health Statistics. The increase reflected a 21 percent jump in the rates of unmarried women giving birth, which rose from 43.7 per 1,000 women in 2002 to 52.9 per 1,000 women. That means that unmarried women accounted for 39.7 percent of all US births in 2007 - up from 34 percent in 2002 and more than double the percentage in 1980. 'It's been a huge increase - a dramatic increase. It's quite striking,' said Stephanie Ventura, who led the analysis of birth certificate data nationwide. Although the report did not examine the reasons for the increase, Ventura and other specialists said the trend has been driven by a combination of factors, including the lessening of the social stigma associated with unmarried motherhood, an increase in couples delaying or forgoing marriage, and growing numbers of financially independent women and older and single women who decide to have children on their own after delaying childbearing." The Boston Globe (May 14, 2009.)]

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**Turning Point: The Long Term Effects of Recession Induced Child Poverty. By First Focus. (First Focus, Washington, DC) May 2009. 15 p.**

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

["Today, a new report has found that children who fall into poverty during a recession fare worse far into adulthood than their peers who avoided it altogether. Specifically,

children who are forced into poverty earn less, achieve lower levels of education, and are less likely to be gainfully employed over their lifetimes than those who avoided poverty. In addition, these children are more likely to be in poor health as adults. The report... follows children who lived through post-war recessions for up to 30 years, analyzing individuals' income, employment, education, and health into adulthood. The report resoundingly concludes that those children who experience recession created poverty fare far worse along these variables than do children who do not become poor, even though both groups of children start off in the same place." In Focus: The First Focus E-Newsletter (May 12, 2009.)]

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## IMPROVED HEALTH

**“Child Care as an Untapped Setting for Obesity Prevention: State Child Care Licensing Regulations Related to Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Media Use for Preschool-Aged Children in the United States.”** By Karen M. Kaphingst and Mary Story. IN: *Preventing Chronic Disease*, vol. 6, no. 1 (January 2009) pp. 1-13.

Full text at: [http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2009/jan/pdf/07\\_0240.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2009/jan/pdf/07_0240.pdf)

[“Early childhood is an important period for developing dietary and physical activity behaviors, and practices of child care facilities can improve children’s dietary intake, physical activity levels, and energy balance. However, little is known about state policies related to food intake and physical activity in child care settings. This study examines state-level child care licensing regulations for all states related to nutrition, physical activity, and media use for preschool-aged children in 3 types of child care settings: 1) child care centers (CCCs), 2) small family child care homes (SFHs), and 3) large family or group child care homes (LFGHs).” AAP Healthy Childcare America Newsletter (May 2009.)]

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**Recommendations for Counties on Improving and Expanding Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Services.** By Carla Denner. (Mental Health Association in California, Sacramento, California) 2009. 16 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.mhac.org/pdf/infant%20ec%20mh%20paper%20full%20document1.pdf>

[“Infant/ Early Childhood Mental Health, with its focus on children ages birth to five years and their families, should be a priority area of funding under the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). An investment in infant/early childhood mental health services will not only help vulnerable children but also will save money by preventing mental health issues later in life, decreasing the need for more costly mental health, social service and criminal justice programs later in the child’s life.... Currently, there are a patchwork of programs that target key mental health needs for infants and toddlers.

In fact, many young children in California in need of mental health treatment never receive it. This report summarizes essential elements for counties to improve mental health service delivery for their youngest children.”]

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**Promoting Oral Health in Schools: A Resource Guide. Edited by Jolene Bertness and Katrina Holt. (National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center, Washington, DC) April 2009. 56 p.**

Full text at: <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/ResGuideSchoolOH.pdf>

[“The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) developed this publication... to help health professionals, program administrators, educators, researchers, policymakers, parents, and others working in school settings prevent disease and promote oral health in children and adolescents. The resource guide is divided into three sections. The first section lists journal articles appearing in the literature from January 2007 to January 2009. The second section describes recent materials, including brochures, fact sheets, guidelines, curricula, and reports. The third section lists federal agencies, policy and resources centers, professional associations, and voluntary organizations that may serve as resources.”]

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**Obesity Prevention in Young Children: What Does the Evidence Say? By Anne-marie Boxall. Background Note. (Parliamentary Library, Parliament of Australia, Canberra, Australia) May 1, 2009. 11 p.**

Full text at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/Library/pubs/bn/2008-09/ObesityChildren.htm>

[“There is a large body of evidence on obesity prevention in adults and school-aged children, but very little focusing solely on younger age groups. Most childhood obesity prevention programs aim to shape children’s food preferences and activity habits and therefore are targeted towards older children. Unlike school-aged children and adults, young children have little control over their diet and physical activity levels. Instead, they are largely determined by parents and child care centres, if they are in care. Therefore, most obesity prevention programs and policy proposals are not particularly relevant to younger children. This paper discusses the main issues relating to overweight and obesity prevention in early childhood (that is children aged between 0 and 5 years). It examines trends in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Australian preschoolers; comments on the evidence suggesting that obesity in early childhood increases the risk of adult obesity; considers the challenges associated with measuring weight in young children; and summarises the evidence underpinning obesity prevention and treatment options commonly used for young children.”]

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## IMPROVED SYSTEMS OF CARE

**Preparing Teachers of Young Children: The Current State of Knowledge, and a Blueprint for the Future.** By Marcy Whitebook and others, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment. (The Center, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, University of California at Berkeley) May 2009.

[“No early care and education (ECE) program can succeed without teachers who can establish warm and caring relationships with children, light the fires of children’s curiosity and love of learning, and foster their development and readiness for school. But what is the best way to prepare skilled and effective teachers of young children? And how can ECE programs best support teachers in continuing to learn and grow as professionals, implementing the approaches to early care and education that they have been taught? Practitioners and policy makers are increasingly embracing higher qualifications for ECE teachers, confident that these will lead to better care for children - while others continue to question the value of additional education beyond a two-year degree.... The purpose of this two-part paper is to help bridge the worlds of ECE and K-12, and to help shape a coordinated research agenda, by examining their differing vantage points, language, and terminology, and the current state of knowledge about the effective preparation of excellent teachers.” Center for the Study of Child Care Employment.]

Executive Summary: 15 p.

[http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher\\_prep\\_summary.pdf](http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher_prep_summary.pdf)

Part I: Teacher Preparation and Professional Development in Grades K-12 and in Early Care and Education: Differences and Similarities, and Implications for Research. 17 p.

[http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher\\_prep\\_1.pdf](http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher_prep_1.pdf)

Part II: Effective Teacher Preparation in Early Care and Education: Toward a Comprehensive Research Agenda. 38 p.

[http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher\\_prep\\_2.pdf](http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/teacher_prep_2.pdf)

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**Issues for the Next Decade of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems.** By Kathryn Tout and others, Child Trends. Issue Brief. Prepared for the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (Child Trends, Washington, DC) May 2009. 10 p.

Full text at:

[http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child\\_Trends-2009\\_5\\_19\\_RB\\_QualityRating.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2009_5_19_RB_QualityRating.pdf)

[“Since the first child care Quality Rating System (QRS) was implemented in Oklahoma in 1998, sixteen other statewide systems have been launched and numerous states are

piloting or developing a QRS. As QRS stakeholders across the nation look ahead to the next decade, it is important to take stock of what has been learned and identify priorities for generating new research and information about QRSs. A new Child Trends issue brief... examines the new challenges faced by QRSs; the status of research and evaluation on QRSs; what new information is needed to design and implement effective QRSs; and what available tools can be used as a framework to guide QRS evaluation.” Child Trends E-Newsletter (May 19, 2009.)]

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**What We Know and Don’t Know About Measuring Quality in Early Childhood and School-Age Care and Education Settings. By Child Trends. Issue Brief. Prepared for the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (Child Trends, Washington, DC) May 2009. 4 p.**

Full text at:

[http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child\\_Trends-2009\\_5\\_20\\_RB\\_WhatWeKnow.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2009_5_20_RB_WhatWeKnow.pdf)

[“Measures assessing the quality of children’s environments and interactions in nonparental care settings were developed originally for use in child care research and as self-assessment tools for practitioners. Within the last decade, however, these measurement tools have moved into the public policy arena, where they are now used to make programmatic decisions and inform consumers about the quality of settings. As new demands are placed on quality measures to be used in accountability systems, important questions emerge about how measures function in these new contexts and in what ways measurement strategies could be strengthened. This brief provides an overview of what we know and what we don’t know, given the current status of the research, about three key questions concerning the measurement of quality. It also provides suggestions for ongoing research and dialogue related to each question.”]

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**Multiple Purposes for Measuring Quality in Early Childhood Settings: Implications for Collecting and Communicating Information on Quality. By Martha Zaslow and others. Issue Brief. Prepared for the Office of Planning Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (Child Trends, Washington, DC) May 2009. 11 p.**

Full text at:

[http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child\\_Trends-2009\\_5\\_20\\_RB\\_MultPurposes.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2009_5_20_RB_MultPurposes.pdf)

[“The measurement of quality in early care and education settings is expanding as states and communities launch initiatives to strengthen quality. While there may be a common, underlying concern with strengthening quality, there are nevertheless important distinctions in the more specific purposes for the collection of data about quality. This

issue brief reviews previous research that highlights the importance of identifying the purposes of measurement; distinguishes among different purposes for conducting assessments of quality in early childhood settings; discusses the need for caution when assessments seek to address multiple purposes at once; and raises implications for developing future measures.” Child Trends E-Newsletter (May 20, 2009.)]

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**Fostering a New Future for California’s Children: Ensuring Every Child a Safe, Secure, and Permanent Home. Final Report and Action Plan. By the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care. (Judicial Council of California, San Francisco, California) May 2009. 108 p.**

[“The courts and child welfare agencies share ‘parental’ responsibility for the more than 75,000 children in foster care in California, more than any other state in the nation. Nearly half - 45 percent - of these children are in care for two years or more, 17 percent of them for more than three years. These children too often find themselves in a foster-care limbo, shifted from placement to placement, separated from siblings, friends, and schools. We know that the longer children remain in care, the less likelihood they have of reunifying with their parents. We also know that African-American and American Indian children are disproportionately represented in the system.”]

Executive Summary: 31 p.

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/documents/brc-execsummary.pdf>

Full text at: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/tflists/documents/brc-finalreport.pdf>

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### 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.]

### IMPROVED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**“Peer Effects on Children's Language Achievement During Pre-Kindergarten.” By Andrew J. Mashburn, University of Virginia, and others. IN: Child Development, vol. 80, no. 3 (May/June 2009) pp. 686-702.**

[“Young children learn how to speak and understand language from the words parents speak at home and teachers speak in preschool. A new longitudinal study has found that their preschool classmates also play a part.... The researchers took a look at more than 1,800 preschoolers in over 450 pre-kindergarten classrooms in 11 U.S. states.... Children’s abilities to both speak and understand words developed faster when they were with classmates with better language skills. Going to school with children who had better

language skills was even more beneficial for children who began preschool with higher language skills, and for those who were in classrooms that were well-managed. 'Classmates are an important resource for all children, especially for children who begin preschool with higher language skills,' suggests Andrew J. Mashburn, ... the study's lead author. 'This is likely because these children are better able to capitalize on their peers' skills for learning language. These results also indicate that teachers can promote children's language development by effectively managing children's behavior, which creates an environment in which children feel comfortable to converse with and learn language from one another.'" Society for Research in Child Development, Press Release (May 15, 2009.) NOTE: Peer Effects on Children's Language... will be available for loan.]

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## **IMPROVED HEALTH**

**"Early Childhood Health Promotion and Its Life Course Health Consequences."**  
**By Bernard Guyer and others. IN: Academic Pediatrics, vol. 9, no. 3 (May 15, 2009.)**

["Promoting the health of young children, before five years of age, could save society up to \$65 billion in future health care costs, according to an examination of childhood health conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health... 'Our review found convincing evidence that the four health problems we studied - early life tobacco exposure, unintentional injury, obesity and mental health - constitute significant burdens on the health of preschool-age children and are antecedents of health problems across the life span," said Bernard Guyer, MD, lead author of the study.... 'These health problems affect approximately one-third to one-half of children born in the U.S., and we estimated that total lifetime societal cost could be about \$50,000 per child - which translates to \$65 - 100 billion for the entire birth cohort of children. The currently available research justifies targeted investments in early childhood health promotion as a means to averting future health costs and improving overall health during their life span.'" Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Press Release (May 15, 2009.) NOTE: Early Childhood Health Promotion... will be available for loan.]

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## **CONFERENCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Early Learning Advocacy Day. June 9, 2009. Cosponsored by the California Association for the Education of Young Children and Preschool California. Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento, California.**

For more information and to register: <http://caeyc.org/main/page/navhome>

[“Early Learning Advocacy Day... will bring together early learning advocates from across California to brief state legislators on why effective early learning programs are an essential investment for California and the nation. WHO: Key early learning supporters and stakeholders from across the state.... WHAT: An opportunity to:

- Participate in small-group visits with state legislators.
- Get the latest updates on the effects of the special election and the governor’s budget revision.
- Hear from the new policy and planning bodies for early learning in California.
- Find out what’s happening on early learning in Washington D.C., in Sacramento and in communities across the state.
- Meet and network with other early learning advocates.

WHY: To brief state legislators on why high-quality early learning programs are an essential investment for California and the nation.”]

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**Ninth National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute. “Yes We Can: New Opportunities for Young Children with Disabilities and their Families.” July 14-16, 2009. Sponsored by the FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the National Early Childhood TA Center. The William and Ida Friday Center for Continuing Education, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.**

For more information and to register:

<http://www.nectac.org/~meetings/inclusionmtg2009/splash.html>

[“The Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provides exciting opportunities for young children. The Inclusion Institute has always been a place where the many sectors (Head Start, IDEA Programs, Child Care, Resource and Referral, parent leaders etc.) that serve young children, especially children with disabilities, come together to learn and share. This year the institute will provide participants an opportunity to problem solve and learn from others about how the ARRA funds can help state or local programs promote inclusive services and supports for young children with disabilities. Institute participants will also learn about the latest research findings and resources to guide inclusive policy, professional development and practice; develop collaborative relationships and cross-agency systems to support early childhood inclusion; gain awareness of strategies and models to support inclusive services; and have the opportunity to meet, learn from and problem solve with peers.”]

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