



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; cslinfo@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

Parsing the Achievement Gap II. By Paul E. Barton and Richard J. Coley. (Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey) 2009. 38 p.

Full text at: <http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PICPARSINGII.pdf>

[“Syntheses of many research studies establish that 16 factors related to life experiences and conditions are correlated with cognitive development and academic achievement. This report asks whether there are differences in these 16 ‘correlates of achievement’ among different population groups that mirror the large and persistent gaps that are found in school achievement. The answer is yes, there are differences in these correlates of achievement among racial/ethnic and income groups, and those differences do mirror the

achievement gaps. The unavoidable conclusion is that if we are to close the gaps in achievement, we must first close the gaps in these life experiences and conditions.”]

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“The Inner Workings of a Baby's Brain.” By Katherine Lanpher and others. Guest: Jonah Lehrer. The Takeaway, May 25, 2009. (PRI, Public Radio International, Minneapolis, Minnesota and WNYC, New York, New York) Listen online or download mp3. Program length: 6:21.

Audio at: <http://www.pri.org/science/workings-of-babies-brain1408.html>

[“Jonah Lehrer is the author of ‘Proust was a Neuroscientist’ and ‘How We Decide,’ and on ‘The Takeaway,’ he talks about how we should interact with babies and support their developing minds.... New scientific research suggests that the mind of a baby is a humming, buzzing, supercharged learning machine, capable of taking in and processing enormous amounts of information. Now that we know this, how should we interact with babies and support their developing minds?”]

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“Latino Immigrant Children and Inequality in Access to Early Schooling Programs.” By Ruth Enid Zambrana and Tamyka Morant. IN: Zero to Three, vol. 29, no. 5 (May 2009) pp. 46-53.

[“Latino children in immigrant families are less likely than their peers to participate in early schooling programs, which puts them at increased risk for learning problems and school failure. Factors such as family structure and size, parental education, and income are strongly associated with early learning experiences, participation in early schooling programs, and later academic performance. The authors present an overview of family, health, and institutional factors associated with access to and enrollment in early schooling programs, and they discuss barriers to participation among low-income Latino families.” NOTE: Latino Immigrant Children... is available for loan.]

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Fighting Fade-Out through PreK-3rd Reform. By Christina Satkowski and Jerry Weast. (New America Foundation, Washington, DC) June 2009. Video length: 31:57.

[This video “makes the case for comprehensive PreK-3rd reforms that begin with high-quality early childhood education programs and build on the benefits of those programs through the elementary school years and beyond. Research has documented impressive academic advantages among children who attend high-quality early education programs. Yet many teachers have seen the promise of programs like pre-kindergarten and Head Start “fade-out” by the time children finish 3rd grade because their elementary schools

are not prepared to nurture and sustain this early growth. The video features a discussion with Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools in Maryland, a district that has successfully used PreK-3rd reform as a way to close achievement gaps and improve academic success for all students in the district.” New America Foundation, Press Release (June 2, 2009.)]

Full video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNrFCCZMnGc>

Short video: 7:03

<http://www.newamerica.net/blog/early-ed-watch/2009/so-what-exactly-prek-3rd-12181>

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Maximizing Reform in the Stimulus Bill: Supporting Effective Early Education. By Sara Mead, New America Foundation. ECS Briefing Memo. (Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado) May 2009. 3 p.

Full text at: <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/80/59/8059.pdf>

[“Countless studies have shown that high-quality pre-kindergarten programs narrow achievement gaps and produce long-term gains in student learning and educational attainment. States have made substantial investments in pre-K and other early education programs over the past decade. But current state budget shortfalls threaten states’ progress in improving access to high-quality early education programs. The Solution: Use ARRA Funds Creatively to Support Quality Early Education Programs.”]

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The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness. By Daniel Weisberg and others. (The New Teacher Project, Brooklyn, New York) 2009. 48 p.

[“Few parents, principals, or even teachers themselves agree that all teachers are equally effective at helping children learn. Yet formal teacher evaluations tell a different story.... In many school districts, nearly all tenured teachers... are deemed above average concludes a study.... Conducted by the New Teacher Project...the report analyzes the results of a survey of more than 15,000 teachers and 1,300 administrators across four states and 12 districts. More than nine in 10 tenured teachers in those districts met local standards in recent evaluation cycles.... Because distinctions in effectiveness aren’t formally documented, districts are missing out on opportunities to link the evaluation systems to professional-development tools, to decisions for granting tenure to novices, and to bonuses or career-ladder initiatives.” Education Week (June 1, 2009.)]

Executive Summary: 10 p.

http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect_execsummary.pdf

Full text at: <http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect.pdf>

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An International Comparison of Early Childhood Initiatives: From Services to Systems. By Neal Halfon and others. (The Commonwealth Fund, New York, New York) May 2009. 48 p.

Full text at:

http://www.commonwealthfund.org/~media/Files/Publications/Fund%20Report/2009/May/International%20Comparison/1241_Halfon_intl_comparison_early_child_init_svcs_to_sys_FINAL.pdf

[“It can be argued that much of the evidence generated in the United States on the importance of early childhood to future health and attainment has had a greater effect on the national policies of other countries than it has in the U.S., which lacks a national policy agenda for young children. However, the U.S. is not the only country to struggle with the direction early childhood policy should take: England, Canada, and Australia all started with similarly fragmented early childhood services, and have tended to favor market-based solutions with limited reliance on the welfare state. This report describes some of the components of all four countries’ efforts to develop policies that produce lasting gains for their youngest citizens. The authors also consider the implications of experiences in England, Canada, and Australia for the development of early childhood policy in the U.S.”]

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Impact of Full-day Prekindergarten Program on Student Academic Performance. By Huafang Zhao and others. (Office of Shared Accountability, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland) February 2009. 40 p.

Full text at:

http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/sharedaccountability/reports/2009/FD%20PreK%20outcome%20evaluation%20report_final_2_19_09.pdf

[“In 2007–2008, MCPS offered its Title I schools the opportunity to expand their existing Head Start half-day classes into Head Start full-day classes.... The expansion was intended to provide more instructional time for non-English speaking children as well as children highly impacted by poverty and mobility. Instructional time was extended as a strategy to close achievement gaps among socioeconomic and racial/ethnic groups.... Added benefits include decreased childcare expenses, more convenient arrangements for many participating families, and a greater opportunity to foster the academic, social, and emotional growth of the children.... The empirical evidence suggests the following: - Increased instructional time in Head Start full-day pre-K classes has contributed to greater academic achievement.... - Students in the Head Start full-day classes made significantly larger gains in reading and mathematics skills compared with their peers in

the MCPS half-day classes. - Gains were significantly larger for female and Hispanic students, and students receiving English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services in the Head Start full-day classes.... - The full-day program effect is significantly large enough to justify its higher cost per student.”]

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Reroute the Preschool Juggernaut. By Chester E. Finn, Jr. (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, Stanford, California) 2009. 123 p.

Full text at: <http://www.hooverpress.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=1346>

[“Prekindergarten is one of the most hotly contested topics in American education today. In ‘Reroute the Preschool Juggernaut,’ Chester E. Finn Jr. outlines the issues that drive and complicate this contentious debate: Which children really need it? How many aren't getting it? Who should provide it - and at whose expense? What's the right balance between socialization and systematic instruction - between education and child care? Where does Head Start fit in? What are reliable markers of quality in preschool programs? The author looks at recent social and educational changes that have brought unprecedented attention to school readiness, the hazy boundary between preschool and child care, and the extent to which American youngsters already have access to various pre-K services. He then examines the shaky state of standards and quality in this field and the largely inconclusive nature of research and evidence as to ‘what works’ with young children. After reviewing of two of America's most prominent examples of universal pre-K education in Florida and Oklahoma and looking at the four-decade-old Head Start Program, Finn tackles the matter of costs and benefits and the fractious issue of alternative delivery systems before offering some conclusions and ideas for the path ahead.”]

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Debunking Reroute the Preschool Juggernaut. By W. Steven Barnett. (National Institute for Early Education Research, New Brunswick, New Jersey) 2009. 3 p.

Full text at: <http://nieer.org/pdf/CheckerFinnResponse060409.pdf>

[“Finn’s ‘Reroute the Preschool Juggernaut’ is an inaccurate and poorly reasoned attack on the movement to secure all children a good preschool education. Finn cherry-picks a few weak studies to fit his preconceptions and builds a case for targeted programs based on errors, exaggeration, misrepresentation, and logical inconsistency. An even-handed review of all the evidence reveals that preschool for all is a better policy when all the costs and benefits weighed.”]

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IMPROVED FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Parent Training Programs: Insight for Practitioners. By the Centers for Disease Control. (The Centers, Atlanta, Georgia) 2009. 16 p.

Full text at: http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/Parent_Training_Brief-a.pdf

[“Parent training programs are widely used to improve parenting practices and prevent child maltreatment. Although many programs have been evaluated for their effectiveness, the various components of the programs have rarely been examined. CDC behavioral scientists recently conducted a meta-analysis of the current research literature on parent training programs to identify components associated with more effective and less effective programs. ‘Parent Training Programs: Insight for Practitioners’ summarizes the findings of this meta-analysis and provides practitioners who work with parents and families guidance in making evidence-based program decisions to improve parenting skills and prevent child maltreatment.”]

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The Relation between Parenting, Children's Social Understanding and Language: Full Research Report. By Nicola Yuill and others. ESRC End of Award Report. No. RES-000-23-0278. (Economic and Social Research Council, Swindon, United Kingdom) 2007. 13 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/ViewOutputPage.aspx?outputid=12225&outputtype=19>

[“The way that mothers talk to their children when they are young has a lasting effect on children's social skills, according to a research study funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The researchers found that children whose mothers often talked to them about people's feelings, beliefs, wants, and intentions, developed better social understanding than children whose mothers did not include much 'mental state talk' in their conversations. The study, based at the University of Sussex, followed children from the age of 3 to the age of 12, measuring their ability to perform tasks designed to measure their social understanding.... The link between early mental state talk and the development of social understanding was strongest in early childhood and was independent of the mother's IQ or social understanding.”] ESRC Press Release (May 13, 2009.)]

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“Barriers to School Involvement: Are Immigrant Parents Disadvantaged?” By Kristin Turney and Grace Kao, University of Pennsylvania. IN: Journal of Educational Research, vol. 102, no. 4 (May2009) pp. 257-271.

Full text at:

<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=36419490&site=ehost-live>

(NOTE: State employee access link.)

[“Parental involvement at school offers unique opportunities for parents, and this school-based involvement has important implications for children’s academic and behavioral outcomes. The authors used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Kindergarten Cohort (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001) to examine race and immigrant differences in barriers to parental involvement at school. Minority immigrant parents, compared with native-born parents, reported more barriers to participation and were subsequently less likely to be involved at school. Among immigrant parents, time spent in the United States and English language ability were positively associated with involvement, but these associations differed by race. Barriers to involvement serve as another source of disadvantage for immigrant parents and their children.”]

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IMPROVED HEALTH

Even Very Low Levels of Food Insecurity Found to Harm Children’s Health. By John T. Cook. Policy Action Brief. (Children’s Healthwatch, Boston, Massachusetts) May 2009. 2 p.

Full text at: http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/upload/resource/chwbrief_FI.pdf

[“New research by Children’s HealthWatch found that children suffer negative health and developmental effects at very low levels of inadequate access to nutritious food. Children under age three in marginally food-secure households were found to have health outcomes that are significantly worse than children in fully food-secure households. They are more likely to: - Be in fair/poor health - Be at risk for developmental delays - Have been hospitalized since birth - Lack stable housing - Live in households with inadequate heating or cooling - Have caregivers experiencing symptoms of depression - Have caregivers with fair/poor health.”]

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Child Food Insecurity in the United States: 2005-2007. By John Cook. (Feeding America, Chicago, Illinois) [2009.] 6 p.

Full text at: <http://feedingamerica.org/our-network/the-studies/child-food-insecurity.aspx>

[“One in six young children live on the brink of hunger in 26 states in the U.S., according to a ... report by Feeding America. The rate of food insecurity in young children is 33 percent higher than in U.S. adults, where one in eight live at risk of hunger. ‘Child Food Insecurity in the United States: 2005 - 2007’ states that 3.5 million children, ages five and under, are food insecure. The analysis includes the first ever state-by-state analysis of

early childhood hunger, using data collected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).” Feeding America, Press Release (May 6, 2009.)]

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The Last Piece of the Puzzle: Providing High-Quality, Affordable Health Coverage to All Children Through National Health Reform. By Jocelyn Guyer and Dawn Horner. (Center for Children and Families, Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, Washington, DC) May 2009. 32 p.

Full text at: <http://ccf.georgetown.edu/index/piece-of-the-puzzle>

[“The nation has made significant progress in covering children, but nine million children still lack insurance and many more are at risk of not receiving the health care services that they need to develop and grow properly. To address these issues, children will need to be an integral part of the much larger health reform debate now underway. This report provides a blueprint of what children and families need from health reform, including an overview of where the remaining gaps are for children’s coverage, and recommendations on the key challenges that must be addressed in order to complete the puzzle.”]

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Oral Health for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Priorities for Action - Recommendations from an MCHB Expert Meeting. By Sandra Silva, Altarum Institute, and others. (National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center, Georgetown University, Washington, DC) 2009. 20 p.

[“The Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) defines children with special health care needs (CSHCN) as those ‘who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.’ Families of CSHCN cite oral health care as the most common unmet health care need. In recent years, policymakers, health professionals, advocates, and families have increasingly recognized the need to improve access to oral health care for CSHCN and to enhance dental school curricula to better prepare students to care for and treat CSHCN.... To address these issues, MCHB convened an expert meeting ‘Oral Health for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Priorities for Action’ on April 14–15, 2008, in Washington, DC. The meeting brought together 29 special health care needs experts representing academia, advocacy and support groups, general and oral health professional organizations, Medicaid, and federal and state government to identify strategies, next steps, and key partners for improving the oral health of CSHCN as well as the oral health care delivery system for this population in three priority areas: medical home and dental home interface, education and training, and financing.”]

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

Presentation at: 18 p.

http://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/CSHCNExpertMeeting_Pres.pdf

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ASTDD Support For State CSHCN Oral Health Forums, Action Plans and Follow-Up Activities: Interim Evaluation Summary. By J. Balzer and B. Isman. (Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, New Bern, North Carolina) March 2009. 18 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.astdd.org/docs/FinalCSHCNMarch2009InterimEvaluationReport.pdf>

[“In 2005, the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) began a project to provide modest financial support to states for conducting oral health forums and developing action plans to promote the oral health of children with special health care needs (CSHCN). The project was identified as an ASTDD priority because few state oral health programs had conducted activities that specifically addressed this population’s oral health needs.... Between 2006 and 2008, the ASTDD provided \$5,000 in support to each of 17 states to plan and implement statewide oral health forums for CSHCN, and to develop state action plans that included recommendations for follow-up activities. Subsequently, the ASTDD has awarded \$2,500 in support to 8 states to conduct follow-up activities that were identified in their state action plans.... The project has been successful so far in supporting 17 state CSHCN forums and 8 follow-up projects. The CSHCN forums created an opportunity for diverse constituencies, including health professionals and families, to collaborate in developing state-specific CSHCN action plans that define strategies to improve the oral health of CSHCN.”]

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IMPROVED SYSTEMS OF CARE

Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care: State Examples. By the Center for Law and Social Policy. (The Center, Washington, DC) 2009. Various pagings.

Full text at: http://www.clasp.org/publications/cp_state_examples.htm

[“As part of its ongoing Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care project, CLASP is profiling State Examples of specific policy initiatives states are undertaking to improve child care for infants and toddlers. State examples posted recently include using licensing and subsidy policies to promote continuity of care; promoting competitive compensation; providing training specifically on infant and toddler care; and working with family, friend, and neighbor caregivers.”]

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Early Care and Education Quality and Child Outcomes. By Peg Burchinal, FPG Child Development Institute, and others. Research-to-Quality, Research-to-Practice Brief. (Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC and Child Trends, Washington, DC) May 2009. 4 p.

Full text at:

[http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child Trends-2009 5 21 RB earlycare.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_5_21_RB_earlycare.pdf)

[“This research brief reports on the findings of coordinated analyses examining the strength of associations between early childhood program quality and children’s development in the multiple research studies and to reflect on the implications for policy, programs, and the measurement of quality.”]

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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

“Audible Television and Decreased Adult Words, Infant Vocalizations, and Conversational Turns: A Population-Based Study.” By Dimitri A. Christakis and others. IN: Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, vol. 163 no. 6 (June 2009) pp. 554-558.

[This study “adds to the debate over whether television impairs children’s language development. It found that parents and children virtually stop talking to each other when the TV is on, even if they’re in the same room. For every hour in front of the TV, parents spoke 770 fewer words to children, according to a study of 329 children, ages 2 months to 4 years.... Adults usually speak about 941 words an hour. Children vocalized less, too, says author Dimitri Christakis of the Seattle Children’s Research Institute. In some cases, parents may have spoken less because they sat a child in front of a TV and left the room, he says. In others, parents simply zoned out themselves while watching TV with a child. Researchers didn’t note the content of the TV shows. Parents may not realize how little they interact with children when a TV is on, Christakis says. A mother may think she’s engaged with a baby because they’re both on the floor playing blocks. But if a TV is on in the background, the two of them talk much less, he says. That may help explain earlier studies finding that babies who watch a lot of TV know fewer words, although they catch up to their peers by 16 months, Christakis says. ‘Babies learn language from hearing it spoken,’ he says.” USA Today (June 1, 2009). NOTE: Audible Television... will be available for loan.]

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CONFERENCES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Webinar - Assessing K-2 English Language Proficiency: Principles, Purposes and Practices. By the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. June 15, 2009. 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.

For more information and to register: <http://tinyurl.com/p8mm5a>

[“The webinar will share information on k-2 assessment of English language learners from two perspectives: - classroom-level assessment, - large-scale assessment. The presenters will address the k-2 assessment information, issues and considerations for English language learners from these two perspectives in attempt to resonate with the range of webinar participants. The Presenters: Dr. Margo Gottlieb.... Dr. Edynn Sato.” NCELA (June 8, 2009.)]

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NACCRRRA Professional Development Institute. By the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. September 16-18, 2009. Scottsdale, Arizona.

For more information: <http://www.naccrra.org/conferences/PDI/>

[“NACCRRRA is pleased to announce its third Professional Development Institute, designed specifically for CCR&R [Child Care Resource and Referral] staff. The Institute will feature the information, resources, and tools to help you do what you already do well... better. Please join us for this exciting opportunity to expand your skills, grow professionally, and meet and network with CCR&R staff from around the country. The institute will feature high-level training on business and community engagement, core competencies, data and technology, parent services, provider services, and subsidy management.”]

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Early Childhood Care and Education grants. By the Rosie’s for All Kids Foundation. Inquiries accepted throughout the year.

For more information:

<http://www.forallkids.org/site69d7.html?module=article&pageid=56>

[“The Early Childhood Care and Education program offers the following types of grants: Tuition Subsidies.... Small Renovations, Supplies, and Equipment Upgrades.... Playground Construction.... Staff Development Opportunities.... Grant Range: Early Childhood Care and Education grants range from \$5,000 to \$15,000.”]

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