

**Cost-Effective Analysis of Existing Early Childhood Care and Education Services:
Restructuring to Improve Quality and Access to Services for All Children**
(Topic: Early Learning Programs and Policies; Goal: Development and Innovation)

Summary

The purpose of the proposed project is to examine the relationships between costs and quality of existing early childhood care and education services in order to increase access to high-quality services for all children through efficient use of current funding. This will be accomplished by (a) analyzing the costs, benefits, and quality of existing early care and education services in three cities with similar demographics and (b) developing a model early childhood care and education plan that provides maximum benefits to all children at a minimum cost. The research team will collect data on existing early childhood care and education services in several cities in Ohio that have similar demographics to identify three target cities for full participation in the study. Next, the research team will design a model early childhood care and education plan in collaboration with the pilot site participants and conduct the pilot study to determine feasibility of implementation. The research team and pilot study participants will engage in an iterative development process to refine the model early childhood care and education plan and improve the feasibility of its implementation. Three primary research questions will be answered through this project: (a) What are the most cost-effective early childhood care and education service delivery models? (b) Are there specific components of high-quality early childhood care and education services that are more cost-effective than others? (c) If so, can we design and implement a model early childhood care and education plan using the most cost-effective quality components of existing programs and systems to improve the cost-effectiveness of early childhood care and education services?

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Significance

Logic Model

1. Children who have high-quality early childhood care and education experiences demonstrate short- and long-term gains.
2. Evidence of the long-term cost-benefits of early childhood education to society is well-established.
3. Targeted early childhood care and education programs have been developed to increase the availability of high-quality early childhood care and education experiences for some at-risk populations, but the current system still does not meet the needs of all children.
4. The basic components of high-quality early childhood programming have been well-researched.
5. Research is needed on the cost-effectiveness of specific components of high-quality early childhood programming to produce the most cost-efficient and highest quality services possible for all children with existing funds.
6. Restructuring of current early childhood care and education programs and funding could lead to high-quality services available for all children.

Definition

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) refers to child care and education services for children ages 3-5 years. It includes all private, public, and parochial preschool programs and child care, home-based care and education, at-risk programs, and preschool special education services.

Context of Proposed Research

Extensive research shows the short-term benefits of quality early childhood experiences on children's later school success (e.g. Burchinal & Cryer, 2003; Gilliam & Ziegler, 2004; Puma, et al., 2010). Specifically, preschool attendance is a significant predictor of kindergarten readiness (Magnuson, Lahaie, & Waldfogel, 2006; Taylor, Gibbs, & Slate, 2000). Research on Head Start shows it improves short-term outcomes in cognitive and social-emotional domains for at-risk children (e.g. Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, 2003; Puma, et al., 2010). Additionally, three well-known longitudinal studies of early childhood programs for at-risk children provide clear evidence that quality early childhood experiences have positive short-and long-term effects on children: Carolina Abecedarian Project, Chicago Longitudinal Study of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, and the Perry Preschool Project (Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann, 2002).

The long-term cost-benefit of high-quality ECCE experiences to society have been well-established (e.g. Knudsen, Heckman, Cameron, & Shonkoff, 2006; Masse & Barnett, 2002; Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann, 2002; Schweinhart, 2003; and Temple & Reynolds, 2007). Children who have quality early childhood experiences are more likely to finish high school, attend college, and contribute financially to society as productive adults. Children who have quality early childhood experiences are less likely to require later academic remediation or

special education services, and are less likely to engage in criminal behavior. The financial benefit to society of the increased productivity and decreased educational and criminal justice expenses outweigh the costs of providing the quality early care experiences.

The known benefits of quality ECCE have led to development of targeted ECCE programs to serve children at-risk for school failure. Programs such as Head Start, Title I preschools, and Child Care and Development Block Grant programs provide preschool experiences to children based on risk factors. However, the current system still does not meet the needs of **all** children and families. There is disparity in the availability and quality of services for children based on region, family income, and child's disability status (Maher, Frestedt, & Grace, 2008; Marshall, et al., 2001; Parish, Cloud, Huh, & Henning, 2005). Further, the current disconnected service delivery system may be cost-inefficient. The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) operates a unique, comprehensive, high-quality system of ECCE across the globe to serve military families (Campbell, 2000). A cost study indicates that the DoD is able to provide these high-quality services at comparable cost to similar civilian ECCE programs in the United States (Fagnoni, 1999).

Over the past decade, many states have developed quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) to address quality issues in ECCE settings (Mitchell, 2009). Throughout this QRIS development process, several definitions and criteria of quality care have been developed. Although differences exist in these definitions and criteria of quality, their similarities illustrate the core components of quality care. Layzer and Goodson (2006) identify two basic categories under which quality ECCE characteristics fall: environmental and process-related. Environmental characteristics include the physical classroom environment as well as global program structure components. Process-related characteristics illustrate dynamic components of the classroom environment such as how adults relate to children and how children interact with one another.

NAEYC accreditation is widely considered the hallmark of a high-quality ECCE program. The NAEYC Early Childhood Standards (NAEYC, 2009) identify necessary components of high-quality ECCE grouped into ten strands: relationships, curriculum, teaching, assessment of child progress, health, teachers, families, community relationships, physical environment, and leadership and management. High-quality ECCE programs promote positive relationships among staff and children. They use a comprehensive curriculum in combination with effective and individually sensitive teaching approaches. They engage in systematic, ongoing, and functional assessment of child progress to inform decisions. High-quality ECCE programs promote nutrition and health of children and staff, and provide a safe and appropriate physical environment. They employ qualified, knowledgeable teachers and support continued professional development of all staff. They collaborate with families and build community relationships to support program goals. Lastly, high-quality ECCE programs support staff, children, and families through effective leadership and management. The NAEYC Early Childhood Standards encompass both the environmental and process characteristics that influence quality of care.

Research is needed on the cost-effectiveness of the specific components of high-quality early childhood programming to produce the most cost-efficient AND highest quality services possible with existing funds. Few studies have begun to address this research gap. Marshall, et al. (2001) analyzed the cost and quality of center-based ECCE programs in Massachusetts. A random sample of 90 preschool-age classrooms revealed the most costly quality indicators, child to staff ratio, teachers' education level, and direct care provided more often by teachers rather

than teacher assistants, were also the indicators most strongly associated with higher quality programs. Burchinal, Vandergrift, Pianta, and Mashburn (2010) examined a large sample (n=1129) of children from 671 preschool classrooms across 11 states to identify the relationships between specific quality indicators and child-level outcomes. Results showed that moderate-to-high quality teacher-child interactions have positive effects on social skills and are predictive of reduced behavior problems. Also, moderate-to-high instruction quality was associated with higher academic skills in language, reading and math.

The proposed project seeks to examine the possibility that a restructured design of current ECCE programs and funding could lead to high-quality services available for all children at no additional cost to the current system.

Research Plan

The goals of the proposed project are (a) to analyze the costs, benefits, and quality of existing ECCE services in three cities with similar demographics and (b) to develop a Model ECCE Service Plan that provides maximum benefits to all stakeholders at a minimum cost. The project is divided into two phases. In Phase I, the research team will collect data on existing ECCE Services in several cities that have similar demographics to identify three target cities for full participation in the study. The criteria for a target city will include accessible historical data about ECCE services city-wide for the previous 5 years. The data in this phase will be collected primarily from public data sources such as the state department of education, census, state department of child and family services, and related local agencies. In Phase II, the researchers will design a model ECCE Service plan in collaboration with the pilot site participants and conduct the pilot study to determine feasibility of implementation. The research team and pilot study participants will engage in an iterative development process throughout Phase II to refine the model ECCE Service plan and improve the feasibility of its implementation. Table 1 provides a timeline of research activities, outcomes/deliverables for each activity, and identifies the personnel who are involved in each activity.

Table 1.

Phase I: Participant recruitment and research on existing EC service delivery systems			
Timeline	Activities	Outcomes/Deliverables	Personnel
Aug 2011-March 2012	Collect and analyze information about public and private child care and education services for children ages 3-5 in several cities.	Identify several potential target cities with adequate data sources	PM GA 1 PI
Aug-Sept 2011	Recruit 3 cities to participate in the research project	Permission obtained to collect data from appropriate agencies in 3 cities	PM
Aug-Dec 2011	Recruit one city to serve as pilot site.	Permission obtained to conduct pilot and collect data from all appropriate agencies in pilot city.	PM GA 2
Phase II: Design Model ECCE Service Plan and conduct pilot study			
Timeline	Activities	Outcomes/Deliverables	Personnel
Jan-July 2012	Create pilot study implementation plan in collaboration with public and private service providers using data collected in phase I.	Fully-developed Pilot Study Service Delivery Implementation Plan	PM IS GA 2 PI
April-July 2012	Collect pre-implementation data on sample groups of children, and classrooms in pilot	Pre-implementation data	GA 2 PM
Aug 2012-May 2013	Conduct pilot study	Generate pilot study data	PM, IS, GA 2
May 2013-Aug 2013	Complete data analysis and revise Service Delivery Plan	Completed Model Service Delivery Plan ready for efficacy study.	PM, PI, IS GA 2

The overarching research questions to be answered through this project are (a) what are the most cost-effective ECCE services (b) are there specific components of ECCE services that are more cost-effective than others, (c) if so, can we design and implement a model ECCE services plan using the most cost-effective components of existing ECCE services to improve the cost-effectiveness of ECCE services? Phase I addresses questions a and b, and Phase II addresses questions c.

Phase I: Cost-effective analysis of current ECCE services in three cities

During Phase I, the research team will identify three target cities for detailed cost-effective analysis of their existing ECCE services. The cities will be chosen based on total population, demographics, availability of data for the past 5 years, and structure of ECCE services. The research team will seek out cities with similar total populations and demographic variables. The city that will be the site of the pilot study will also be identified during Phase I. The research team will collect and analyze the ECCE services data as described in Table 2 to identify the cost-effectiveness of each component of ECCE services. The results of the data analysis will lead to the development of the Model ECCE Service Plan in Phase II.

Table 2.

Research Question	Procedures	Analysis
What are the early childhood care and education services available to children ages 3-5 in each city?	PM and GAs develop a database of ECCE Services for each city in the study and code by type of service (e.g. childcare, preschool special education, Head Start)	Descriptive statistics
What are the features of each service?	PM and GAs will code the features of each service including hours available, nap, recreation, food, educational programming, related services (e.g. physical therapy, speech therapy), curriculum, assessment, parent involvement, transportation.	Descriptive statistics
What is the per-child cost of each service?	PM and GA1 will calculate the per-child cost following the methods described in Besharov, Meyers, and Marrow (2007).	Descriptive statistics
Who pays for each service?	GAs will collect the funding source(s) information for each service and indicate the percentage and dollar amount of funding provided by each source.	Descriptive statistics
What is the quality of each service?	GA 2 will use the ECERS-R or FCCERS-R, when appropriate, to rate all services. PM and GAs will code other quality features as well.	Descriptive statistics
What are the demographics of the children who receive each service?	PM and GAs will collect demographic information for children who receive each service.	Descriptive statistics
What are the educational outcomes for children who receive each service?	Obtain KRAL scores for children entering kindergarten	Descriptive statistics
What variables are associated with better educational outcomes?	PM and GA 1 will conduct analysis of complete data set.	Correlation/ Inferential statistics
What variables are associated with higher cost?	PM and GA 1 will conduct analysis of complete data set.	Correlation/ Inferential statistics
What is the relationship between educational outcome and cost?	PM and GA 1 will conduct analysis of complete data set.	Correlation/ Inferential statistics

Phase II: Design Model ECCE Service Plan and conduct pilot study.

The purpose of Phase II is to (a) design a highly cost-effective Model ECCE Service Plan and (b) determine the feasibility of implementing the plan in a small pilot study. Key members of the existing ECCE services in the pilot city including staff and administrators from public schools, private preschools, childcare centers, and Head Start programs will participate in all aspects of the planning and implementation of the pilot model.

The pilot study will be a quasi-experimental quantitative design using the regression-discontinuity model. The experimental group will be services for children ages 3-5 who reside in one district-specified elementary school zone. The control group will be the services for children ages 3-5 who live in the school district outside of the district specified elementary school zone. Data will be collected about the cost, quality, and characteristics of services provided during the school year in the identified district. Teacher satisfaction, parent satisfaction, and administrator satisfactions will also be measured. Detailed descriptive information about the development of the Model ECCE Services Plan and its implementation will be collected.

Personnel

The proposed project will utilize the expertise of the Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Pretti-Frontczak to develop the research team, design the research plan, and provide overall guidance on the project. As the first order of business, the PI will hire and train the Project Manager (PM). The bulk of the research activity and day-to-day project management will be delegated to the PM. The Graduate Assistants (GAs) will hold primary responsibility for data collection. The Implementation Specialist (IS) will hold primary responsibility for the pilot implementation.

Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak will serve as the *Principal Investigator*. She is a Professor of Special Education at Kent State University and serves as Director of the Early Childhood Intervention Specialist Program there (see vita). She has extensive experience conducting research in early childhood special education with a particular focus on blended programs, meaning programs that include children with and without disabilities. She has a clear record of success managing large grants and conducting research comparable to the scope of the proposed project. She served as PI or Co-PI on eight externally funded projects in the past twelve years totaling over \$3 million, including five projects funded through the Office of Special Education Programs.

The *Project Manager (TBA)* will have a formal educational background in both Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education. The PM will also have work experience in both fields and demonstrate significant knowledge of early childhood funding systems and relevant state and federal laws. The PM should have experience accessing public databases for research purposes and be proficient with database technologies including statistical analysis software such as SPSS. The PM must have research experience including development of measures, project design, data collection, data analysis, budget management, and grant management. It is expected that the PM will either hold a doctorate in a related field or be an advance-standing doctoral candidate in a related field. The PM will have excellent personal communication skills necessary for day-to-day team management, recruitment of participants, and dissemination of findings. The PM will have a record of published research to demonstrate his or her ability to conduct research, analyze findings, and communicate results through writing according to the conventions and standards of the field.

Two *Graduate Assistants (TBA)* from Kent State University will be hired for this project, one at the doctoral level and one at the master's level. The doctoral level GA (number 1 on the person-loading chart) will have coursework in education-specific research design and data analysis. The doctoral GA should have some experience collecting data in the field and have advanced technology skills necessary for accessing public databases to secure research data and manipulating such data for analysis. The master's level GA (number 2 on the person-loading chart) will have at least one course in education-specific research design. Additionally, the

master's GA will have sufficient teaching experience in early childhood and/or early childhood special education such that he or she is able to collect data in early childhood settings with minimal disruption to the environment.

The *Implementation Specialist (TBA)* will be an individual with education, training, and experience providing preschool special education services in community settings using a consultative delivery model. Additionally, the IS will have at least five years experience delivering professional development to early childhood and early childhood special education teachers, assistants, and administrators. The IS is expected to have at least a master's degree in a related field and hold related state licenses necessary to provide the services described above.

Person-Loading Chart

The table below shows the amount of time in hours (Year 1 +Year 2) that each person will spend engaged in each project task.

Task	Principal Investigator	Project Manager	Graduate Assistant 1	Graduate Assistant 2	Implementation Specialist
Hire Staff	60+0	48+0			
Train and supervise PM	80+80				
Train and supervise GAs and IS		72+100			
Recruit participants		216+0			96+0
Liaise with participants		300+50			25+250
Data collection		600+240	520+0	600+600	
Data analysis	0+30	434+1160	50+0	0+50	
Manage grant including budget		50+50			
Develop/revise implementation plan	10+20	160+50	50+0		79+50
Support day-to-day operations of pilot		0+30			0+1700
Writing	0+20	120+320	80+0	0+50	
Totals (Yr 1+Yr 2)	150+150	2000+2000	700+0	600+700	200+2000

Resources

Kent State University (KSU) is a large public institution with eight campuses enrolling just over 38,000 students. It exceeds the necessary resources to support the proposed grant. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching rates KSU's main campus as a research university with high research activity. During the fiscal year 2009, KSU received \$58 million in federal grants and contracts. The Division of Research and Sponsored Programs at KSU assists faculty in the acquisition and management of external funding. In addition to campus-wide research support, the College of Education, Health, and Human Services has its own Research Bureau and a full-time staff person in charge of supporting grant acquisition and management activities within the college. The college Research Bureau supports faculty with activities such as program evaluation, research design, and data analysis.

Budget

Personnel	Time/ Qty	Year 1 11/12	Year 2 12/13	2 year Cumulative
Faculty C, AY time	12.5%	\$10,091	\$10,394	\$20,485
Grad Asst (PhD) AY f/t	1	\$13,905	\$0	\$13,905
Grad Asst (MA) AY f/t	1	\$9,270	\$9,548	\$18,818
Grad Asst (PhD) Summer f/t	1	\$4,635	\$0	\$4,635
Grad Asst (MA) summer f/t	1	\$0	\$3,183	\$3,183
Support staff (CY)	100.0%	\$53,818	\$55,432	\$109,250
subtotal personnel		\$91,719	\$78,557	\$170,276
Fringe Benefits				
Faculty C - AY 27, 27, 28, 30% yrs 1-4		\$2,725	\$2,910	\$5,635
GA, AY 30, 32, 33, 35% yrs 1-4		\$7,416	\$3,151	\$10,567
GA, summer, 16%		\$2,225	\$1,528	\$3,753
Tuition, GA, AY		\$20,859	\$22,110	\$42,969
Tuition, GA, summer		\$5,501	\$5,831	\$11,332
subtotal fringe benefits		\$38,726	\$35,530	\$74,256
Travel				
In-State		\$14,880	\$500	\$15,380
Out of state		\$2,400	\$2,400	\$4,800
subtotal travel		\$17,280	\$2,900	\$20,180
Equipment				
Two Laptop computers		\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
subtotal equipment		\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Supplies				
		\$3,000	\$1,000	\$4,000
subtotal supplies		\$3,000	\$1,000	\$4,000
Contractual				
Subcontract A, first \$25K		\$10,000	\$25,000	\$35,000
Subcontract A, beyond first \$25K		\$0	\$35,000	\$35,000
subtotal contractual		\$10,000	\$60,000	\$70,000

Other			
Participant Costs			
Participant stipends 10@ 500 Yr 2	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
subtotal other	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
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Total Direct Costs	\$163,725	\$182,987	\$346,712
MTDC (indirect base)	\$134,365	\$120,046	\$254,411
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Total Indirect Costs			
26% MTDC off-campus rate	26%	\$34,935	\$31,212
			\$66,147
<hr/>			
Total Costs	\$198,660	\$214,199	\$412,859
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Budget Justification

The budget justification describes the rationale for each item included in the budget. It details both the direct costs that are essential to the operation of the proposed project and the indirect costs that Kent State University will incur. The budget lists costs separately for year one (AY 2011-2012) and year two (AY 2012-2013) of the proposed project.

Personnel. The principal investigator, Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, is a full-time faculty member at Kent State University. The proposed project will require 12.5% of her time for each of the two academic years. Funding for two graduate assistants is requested. Each graduate assistant will work 20 hours per week. A doctoral student will be needed to collect data at all three sites and support data analysis during year one. A master’s student will be needed to collect data at the pilot site during year two. The primary staff member for both years of the project will be the Project Manager, who will be hired as support staff through Kent State University. The Project Manager will work full-time for the duration of the two-year project with 100% of her time dedicated to the grant-funded project. The salary calculations are based on the Kent State University 2009-10 salary schedule plus a 3% raise each year.

Fringe benefits. Fringe benefits have been calculated for all personnel hired through Kent State University. Benefits include items such as health insurance, retirement contributions, and tuition. Benefit costs are based on 2009-10 rates with modest increases projected each academic year.

Travel. Significant in-state travel will be required during year one to recruit participants and collect data. The in-state travel costs were calculated based on an average of two trips per month to each of three sites during year one. Lodging and meal costs were calculated for the Project Manager and Graduate Assistant 1 at a rate of \$110 per person per day. Mileage costs were derived from the federal reimbursement rate of \$0.50 per mile with trips averaging 120 miles round trip. In-state travel costs for year two represent mileage reimbursement for Graduate Assistant 2 and Project Manager when travel between Kent State University and the pilot site is required in the course of one work-day. It is expected that the Graduate Assistant 2 and the Project Manager will primarily be either on-campus or on-site for a given work-day.

Out-of-state travel costs represent the grant-required annual meeting in Washington, DC for the Program Manager and Principal Investigator. Lodging, meal, and ground transportation

costs were estimated at \$250 per day per person for three full days of meetings. Roundtrip airfare from Cleveland to Washington, D.C. is currently available for approximately \$300 including taxes and fees. An additional \$150 per person per trip is allotted for miscellaneous travel expenses which could include airport parking and baggage fees.

Equipment. Funds are requested for the purchase of two laptop computers for on-site data collection, data analysis while travelling, and to facilitate the secure transfer of data between graduated assistants and the Project Manager. The budgeted amount is based on two Dell Studio computers. Computer 1 for the Project Manager will be an XPS and have 6 GB Memory, Intel i7 quad core processor, built-in wireless, and 500GB hard drive. Computer 2 for the graduate assistants will be a studio and have 4 GB Memory, Intel i3 quad core processor, built-in wireless, and 500 GB hard drive. All necessary software for the computers is outlined in the supplies section.

Supplies. Supply costs for year one include purchase of computer software, printing, and postage. Software needed for each laptop includes a statistical software package such as SPSS or SAS, a qualitative software package such as Nvivo, Microsoft Office Ultimate, and a geographic analysis software package such as ArcGIS. The estimated cost for all necessary software for each computer is only \$1000 due to special university pricing. Printing and postage are estimated at \$1000 per year to cover costs associated with participant recruitment, data collection, and pilot implementation (year two only).

Contractual. One subcontract will be made with the pilot site school district for the Implementation Specialist position. This position will be part-time (20%) during the spring semester and following summer of year one. Beginning in year two, the Implementation Specialist will be full-time for the remainder of the school year. The projected cost is based on current regional salaries for teachers with 10-15 years experience and a master's degree.

Other costs. A \$500 stipend will be given to each teacher who participates in the pilot study during year two of the proposed project.

Direct costs. The total direct costs represent the sum of personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, and other costs. The direct costs associated with the pilot study include the subcontracted position in year two, the participant stipends in year two, and the graduate assistant in year two. The sum of the pilot study costs represents 29% of the total cost of the proposed project.

Indirect costs. The authorized off-campus indirect cost rate for Kent State University is 26% of the Modified Total Direct Costs. The Modified Total Direct Costs include the sum of the total direct costs minus equipment, tuition, and subcontract amounts over \$25,000.

Dr. Smith, Superintendant
Your Local Public School
21 Main St
Local, OH

April 5, 2010

Dear Dr. Pretti-Frontczak,

The Board of Education has reviewed your grant proposal for the **Cost-Effective Analysis of Existing Early Childhood Care and Education Services** project. We are excited about the prospect of working with you and your research team on this project. As our district is just beginning to offer some preschool services, like many other districts in the area, we would be grateful for your assistance developing a model preschool program that is both high-quality and cost efficient.

If your grant is funded, we will guarantee your researchers access to the relevant aggregate data that we have on all of our preschool students and incoming kindergartners for the past 5 years. Additionally, we will commit one full-time Early Childhood Intervention Specialist position for the 2012-13 school year to participate in the pilot study.

Sincerely,

Dr. Smith

Jaimie Smith, Director
Your Local Childcare
23 Main St
Local, OH

April 15, 2010

Dear Dr. Pretti-Frontczak,

I recently received your grant proposal for the **Cost-Effective Analysis of Existing Early Childhood Care and Education Services** project. As you may know, our agency struggles to provide high-quality services at an affordable cost to families. We currently receive Head Start funds, public child care vouchers, and private support from local charities. We have tried various partnerships with other agencies in the past, but have had little success.

I would be thrilled to provide you with access to our data on program costs and services in hopes that you might be able to provide us with guidance about the most cost-effective services. Additionally, I would be delighted to collaborate with you to recruit teacher and caregiver participants from our agency to participate in the pilot program during the 2012-13 school year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jaimie Smith

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Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Cost-Effectiveness of Early Childhood Care and Education Services Pilot Study

Principal Investigator: Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:

This research project is a small pilot study component of a larger research project that is designed to analyze costs, benefits, and quality of existing early care and education services to develop a model early childhood care and education plan that provides maximum benefits to all children at a minimum cost. The goal of this pilot study is to examine how feasible it is to implement the model early childhood care and education plan, while refining the model plan throughout the implementation process. Additionally, researchers will gather data about the relationships between the costs and benefits of specific services delivered during the pilot study.

Procedures

This pilot study will begin in January 2012 and in August 2013.

- Parents of the children in your program will be contacted by researchers and/or your program's administrator to request their consent to obtain their children's educational records and to complete a survey.
- Researchers will gather information about your child's education and childcare experiences including cost of services, hours and types of services received, academic records from age 3 through kindergarten entrance (or until August 2013 whichever occurs first), records of educational testing completed prior to kindergarten including special education eligibility assessments, and any special education documents that are part of your child's academic record.
- You may be asked to participate in a work-group to help develop a model service delivery plan for early childhood care and education services in the city where you live.
- You will be asked to complete a survey about your experiences as a parent of a preschool-age child receiving early childhood care and/or education services prior to the study and during the study.

Benefits

This research will not benefit you directly. However, your participation in this study will help us to better understand the relationships between cost and quality in early childhood care and education services, which may lead to improving quality of early childhood education and care services for all children as well as improving access to those services.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Your study-related information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from your study data. Research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Your research information may, in certain circumstances, be disclosed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which oversees research at Kent State University, or to certain federal agencies. Confidentiality may not be maintained if you indicate that you may do harm to yourself or others.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Kristie Prettifrontczak at 330- 672-0597. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330-672-2704.

Consent Statement and Signature

I have read this consent form and have had the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that a copy of this consent will be provided to me for future reference.

Participant Signature

Date

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Cost-Effectiveness of Early Childhood Care and Education Services Pilot Study

Principal Investigator: Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:

This research project is a small pilot study component of a larger research project that is designed to analyze costs, benefits, and quality of existing early care and education services to develop a model early childhood care and education plan that provides maximum benefits to all children at a minimum cost. The goal of this pilot study is to examine how feasible it is to implement the model early childhood care and education plan, while refining the model plan throughout the implementation process. Additionally, researchers will gather data about the relationships between the costs and benefits of specific services delivered during the pilot study.

Procedures

This pilot study will begin in January 2012 and in June 2013. During that time:

1. Parents of the children in your program will be contacted by researchers and/or your program's administrator to request their consent to obtain their children's educational records and to complete a survey.
2. Researchers will present signed parent consent forms to you (or your program administrator) when requesting access to student records.
3. You may be asked to participate in a work-group to help develop a model service delivery plan for early childhood care and education services in the city where you work.
4. Researchers will conduct an assessment to rate the quality of your classroom at least twice during the study using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R). If you work in a home-based program, researchers will use the Family Childcare Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (FCERS-R).
5. Researchers will request information from you (or your program administrator) about the costs of services provided in your facility.
6. An Early Childhood Specialist may provide you (and possibly other teachers in your facility) with regular professional development related to areas of need identified by you, your administrator, families, and/or the ECERS-R (or FCERS-R for home-based programs).
7. If your program enrolls children eligible for Part B section 619 services, you may be asked to co-teach part of your program with a highly-qualified Early Childhood Intervention Specialist.

8. You will be asked to complete a survey about your experiences as an Early Childhood professional prior to the study and during the study.

Benefits

As part of the study, you will receive free professional development services at your program site targeted at specific needs of your program. You will receive periodic documentation of your professional development hours which can be used to meet ODJFS or ODE annual requirements.

Additionally, indirect benefits from this study may include improving quality of early childhood education and care services for all children as well as improving access to those services.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life for participants in this research project.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Your study-related information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from your study data. Research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Your research information may, in certain circumstances, be disclosed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which oversees research at Kent State University, or to certain federal agencies. Confidentiality may not be maintained if you indicate that you may do harm to yourself or others.

Compensation

Teacher/Caregiver participants who complete item 3 and/or 7 listed in the Procedures section will receive a \$500 stipend at the end of the study to compensate for the extended time commitment involved with those activities. No compensation will be provided to other participants.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Kristie Pretti-Frontczak at 330- 672-0597. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330-672-2704.

Consent Statement and Signature

I have read this consent form and have had the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that a copy of this consent will be provided to me for future reference.

Participant Signature

Date