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Policy Update: February 2021

SRCD's *Policy Update* monitors policy developments in Washington, D.C., including federal priorities for developmental science, and legislation and programs relevant to child development. It also contains information on conferences and training opportunities, new reports, and requests for comments. *Policy Update* also highlights the work and experiences of SRCD Policy Fellows in the column *Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow*.

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SRCD Child and Family Policy News

New SRCD Survey: What Do You Want to See in Policy Update?

For over 15 years, SRCD's Policy Update, and its predecessors Policy Watch and Washington Update, have kept its readership informed about SRCD policy-related activities as well as federal legislative and executive agency activities that are relevant to child development. We strive to ensure Policy Update's content remains informative and meets the interests of our readership. We would greatly appreciate your participation in a brief survey about your policy interests. The information collected from the survey will help guide future content included in Policy Update. ***Click here to complete the survey.***

Please complete the survey by 11:59 pm Eastern on March 25, 2021.

Register Now! 2021 Zigler Policy Pre-Conference

Policing and Anti-Racism: Racial and Gender Disparities in Criminal Justice Experiences and Youth Development

The 2021 Zigler Policy Pre-Conference, honoring the memory and legacy of Dr. Edward Zigler, will focus on racial and gender disparities in policing and the criminal justice system, and the implications of these systems for child and youth development. Presentations by leading scholars and practitioners will delineate key research findings, identify knowledge gaps, and discuss the translation to racial justice advocacy and anti-racist policies. The Zigler Policy Pre-Conference is co-organized by the SRCD Science and Social Policy Committee, SRCD Student and Early Career Council, and the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium. The 2021 Zigler Policy Pre-Conference will feature keynote presentations by:

- Nikki Jones, Professor, African American Studies, University of California, Berkeley
- Hedwig Lee, Professor of Sociology, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, & Equity, Washington University in St. Louis
- K. Ricky Watson, Jr., Executive Director, National Juvenile Justice Network
- Sheretta Butler-Barnes (moderator), Associate Professor, Washington University in St. Louis

The registration fee for the Zigler Policy Preconference is $20; Register now to guarantee a spot! Register for the preconference through SRCD's Biennial Meeting registration website.

Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow

Krystal Bichay-Awadalla, Ph.D., is a SRCD Federal Executive Branch Fellow who is placed in the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Read about how the fellowship has informed her understanding of the

interplay between research and policy in the federal government.

Are you interested in learning more about the SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows? Consider attending the SRCD Policy Fellowship Panel, which will feature the 2020-2021 fellowship cohort, and the Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Reflections on the SRCD Fellowship Panel, which will feature alumni, at our upcoming Biennial Meeting. Registration for the 2021 Virtual Biennial Meeting is now open.

Visit the SRCD website to read Spotlights describing the contributions SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows have made at their placements.

FABBS Call for Submissions: Disparities in Youth Mental Health

The Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS journal), *Policy Insights from Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (PIBBS), requests abstracts for proposed brief review articles from SRCD members with a particular focus on disparities in youth mental health by **Monday**, **March 15.**

This is the second of two calls to SRCD members for proposed policy-relevant research briefs linking child development research and policy. The proposals accepted through the first call have papers due in May, which PIBBS will publish in the fall of 2021. The present call is for research briefs on disparities in youth mental health. Summaries of research are invited on disparities among youth differing by race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and immigration status. Submissions are invited considering the extent of disparities, including trends over time, as well as factors underlying disparities, including contextual factors and access to services. Submissions should include consideration of the implications of the research for policy. As one example of a high priority area of interest across both research and policy, there has been growing concern about the alarming increase in Black youth suicide. This is an issue that the U.S. Congress is prioritizing in response to the Congressional Black Caucus Emergency Task Force Report on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health. The National Institute of Mental Health has recently called special attention to this critical issue, including issuing a Request for Information and a Notice of Special Interest (NOSI).

FABBS (the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences) was established in 1980, joining associations together to advocate for our sciences. SRCD is one of more than 20 member societies. As part of its mission educating, communicating, and advocating for behavioral and brain sciences, FABBS publishes PIBBS twice a year, each issue themed by member societies. PIBBS will cover policy implications of research on child development for the first time in two issues published 2021-22. SRCD's partnering with FABBS, is a rare —and no cost— opportunity for SRCD to showcase its policy-relevant research.

Interested researchers are invited to submit **150-word abstracts** for proposed brief, reader-friendly, evidence-based contributions. If selected, each 5-6,000-word article will summarize research related to the above themes, closing with some alternative policy implications. All invited articles would be reviewed with an eye to constructive feedback. **Submissions of abstracts are due by Monday, March 15** with decisions about whether an article will be invited within a month. Articles of 5-6,000 words (20-25 pp total) would be due as drafts by November, 2021, with publication in the Spring 2022 issue of PIBBS. **Please send abstracts to PIBBS Editor, Susan Fiske, sfiske@princeton.edu, with "SRCD-PIBBS" in the subject line.**

This focus for PIBBS will be an important contribution for our field, for FABBS, for SRCD, and for service to the larger society. Please consider contributing on this critical issue.

Legislative Branch Updates

COVID-19 Relief Update

Congressional Lawmakers Make Progress on COVID-19 Relief
Congressional lawmakers are making progress on a $1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief plan through the budget reconciliation process (an expedited process by which lawmakers can advance bills). According to the U.S. Senate, the reconciliation process refers to "a process established in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 by which Congress changes existing laws to conform tax and spending levels to the levels set in a budget resolution." For more information about the budget reconciliation process, read the Congressional Research Service's report, "The Budget Reconciliation Process: Stages of Consideration."

This week, the House Committee on the Budget completed their markup of the COVID-19 relief bill and reported the bill to the full U.S. House of Representatives with a 19-16 vote. View the virtual markup or read the House Committee on the Budget's press release about the markup for more information.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

President Joe Biden Issues Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda
President Joe Biden has issued several child-and-family-oriented Executive Orders and Presidential

Memoranda since taking office. Biden's recent executive actions address a wide array of policy issues, from Strengthening Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence Based Policymaking to establishing an Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families. Please find information about a subset of recent executive actions of interest to members below:

- **Memorandum on Redressing Our Nation's and the Federal Government's History of Discriminatory Housing Practices and Policies**. This Memorandum addressed to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development recognizes that, historically, all levels of government have implemented racially discriminatory housing policies that played a part in the segregation of neighborhoods and deprived Black, Latinx, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native American communities (and other underserved communities) of the equal opportunity to build wealth for their families. The Memorandum also notes the lingering effects of residential segregation and discrimination today, from the homeownership racial gap to "...systemic barriers to safe, accessible, and affordable housing for people of color, immigrants, individuals with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, and queer (LGBTQ+) individuals." In the Memorandum, President Biden directs the Federal Government to work with communities to end housing discrimination in the U.S, eliminate racial bias and discrimination from the homebuying and renting experience, address barriers that restrict housing and neighborhood choice, and provide equal access to housing opportunities, among other aims. Read the full Memorandum for more information.
- **Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking**. This Memorandum reifies the Biden Administration's commitment to evidence-based policymaking, noting "improper political interference in the work of Federal scientists or other scientists who support the work of the Federal Government and in the communication of scientific facts undermines the welfare of the Nation, contributes to systemic inequities and injustices, and violates the trust that the public places in government to best serve its collective interests." Read the Memorandum for more information.
- **Executive Order on Economic Relief Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic**. This Executive Order notes the toll the pandemic has had on individuals, families, and small businesses and recognizes the Federal Government's role in addressing the economic repercussions of the pandemic. Read the Executive Order for more information.
- **Executive Order on the Establishment of Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families.** This Executive Order reaffirms the Biden Administration's commitment to reunite children separated from their families at the United States-Mexico border and establishes an Interagency Task Force on the Reunification of Families to further this mission. The Task Force includes the following members or

their designees: the Secretary of Homeland Security, Task Force Chair; the Secretary of State, Task Force Vice Chair; the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Task Force Vice Chair; the Attorney General; other officers or employees of the Departments of State, Justice, Health and Human Services, and Homeland Security; among others. Read the Executive Order for more information.

- **Executive Order on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.** This Executive Order officially establishes the "President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST)," and details PCAST's composition. The PCAST will include up to 26 members, including the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, additional members will include "individuals and representatives from sectors outside of the Federal Government appointed by the President." Read the Executive Order for more information.

For a comprehensive list of recent executive actions, visit WhiteHouse.gov.

New NIH Networks to Advance the Study of Emotional Well-Being

Five new National Institutes of Health (NIH) research networks will update and test key concepts that will advance the study of emotional well-being by "...facilitating transdisciplinary research in the social, behavioral, psychological, biological, and neurobiological sciences."

These NIH networks are funded by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), and the National Institute on Aging (NIA), with additional co-funding from the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), and the NIH Office of Disease Prevention (ODP). Of note, these NIH networks are intended to "...encourage meetings, conferences, small-scale pilot research, multidisciplinary cross training, and information dissemination among leading scientists across disciplines and institutions." The new NIH research networks include:

- The Emotional Well-Being and Economic Burden Research Network;
- The Network to Advance the Study of Mechanisms Underlying Mind-Body Interventions and Measurement of Emotional Well-Being;
- The Plasticity of Well-Being: A Research Network to Define, Measure, and Promote Human Flourishing;
- Advancing Psychosocial & Biobehavioral Approaches to Improve Emotional Well-Being Network; and
- The Network for Emotional Well-Being and Brain Aging (NEW Brain Aging).

Read the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) press release for more information about this announcement.

NSF Solicitation: Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier

The National Science Foundation (NSF) released a solicitation titled the "Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier: Core Research (FW-HTF)." In line with "NSF's 10 Big Ideas," this solicitation fosters the inclusion of diverse disciplinary perspectives to support convergence research. The solicitation notes, "the overarching vision of this program is to support multi-disciplinary research to sustain economic competitiveness, to promote worker well-being, lifelong and pervasive learning, and quality of life, and to illuminate the emerging social and economic context and drivers of innovations that are shaping the future of jobs and work."

Read the solicitation for more information about this opportunity. The full proposal deadline is **March 23, 2021.**

NSF Dear Colleague Letter: Interdisciplinary Frontiers of Understanding the Brain

On December 14, the National Science Foundation (NSF) released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) titled "Interdisciplinary Frontiers of Understanding the Brain." NSF seeks community input on a specific set of questions. Please note feedback will inform future NSF investments.

Read the full Dear Colleague Letter for more information about this opportunity. Interested parties should consider submitting a response by **March 31, 2021.**

Federal Reports

New Reports and Briefs from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *Key Cross-State Variations in Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Policies as of October 1, 2019: The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables*. The CCDF Policies Database project produces a comprehensive, up-to-date database of CCDF policies for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. Territories and outlying areas. This report answers research questions based on the database, which contains hundreds of

variables designed to capture CCDF policies across time, allowing users to access policy information for a specific point in time as well as see how and when policies change over time.

(2) *Working with Administrative Data in Early Childhood and Related Fields*. This report contains a resource list which aims to support Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) administrators and their research partners in using administrative data to address policy-relevant early care and education research questions.

(3) *Communication Guide for Tribal TANF – Child Welfare Coordination (TTCW) Grantees: What to Consider When Sharing Program Accomplishments*. The main goal of this report is to provide guidance on communicating the findings, knowledge gained, or lessons learned from implementing TTCW programs as well as other human services programs.

(4) *Methods, Challenges, and Best Practices for Conducting Subgroup Analysis*. This report has two main goals: 1) describe the features of a well-designed and implemented subgroup analysis that uses a multiple regression framework and 2) provide an overview of recent methodological developments and alternative approaches to conducting subgroup analyses.

(5) *Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Demographic Series: A Look at Professional Characteristics, and Comparisons with Child and Community Characteristics*. These resources (two reports and one snapshot) are the first to detail the demographic alignment between ECE teachers and caregivers, children, and communities at a national level. The findings from these resources can be used to inform policy and practice in support of professional pathways for an increasingly diverse ECE workforce, as well as help policymakers and practitioners better understand families' choices for and uses of care.

(6) *Professional Development Supports for Home Visitors and Supervisors: Strengthening the Home Visiting Workforce*. This report presents findings from a national descriptive study of the home visiting workforce in local agencies that receive Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funding. This study focuses on professional development opportunities and gaps that exist to support the early childhood home visiting workforce.

(7) *Who Provides Early Care and Education for Young Children with Special Needs? Findings from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education*. This report uses data from the 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) to examine caregiving arrangements for young children with special needs to

better understand where these children receive early care and education (ECE) services. Findings are focused on children under age 6 and ECE providers serving children under age 6.

(8) *The Cost of Implementing a Home Visiting Program Designed to Prevent Repeat Pregnancies Among Adolescent Mothers*. This report summarizes key cost findings from the evaluation of the Steps to Success home visiting program in Texas. It presents information on the resources required to deliver the program and the average cost per home visit and the average cost per participant. The brief also summarizes how the average cost per participant compares to other home visiting programs.

(9) *The Cost of Implementing a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program for Middle School Boys*. This report summarizes key cost findings from the evaluation of the Wise Guys teen pregnancy prevention program in Iowa. It presents information on the resources required to deliver the program for one academic year and the average cost per student. The report also summarizes how the average cost per student compares to other federally funded teen pregnancy prevention programs.

New Reports and Briefs from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
Several new publications are available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *Freeing Children for Adoption Within the Adoption and Safe Families Act Timeline*. These reports explore how frequently states make exceptions to the timeline for termination of parental rights (TPR) for children in foster care and highlights issues behind states' difficulties in achieving timely permanency for children.

(2) *Initial Implementation of the 2014 Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant*. This report examines the initial effects of policy changes required by the 2014 reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program as well as the subsequent CCDF final rule published in September 2016 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The report 1) provides an overview of the existing literature on provider and family experiences with the child care market and subsidy system, 2) summarizes an analysis of state policies and approaches to implementing CCDF policy changes, and 3) reports on themes discussed at a roundtable convening of key child care stakeholders in July 2019.

(3) *Utilization of Mental Health Services Among Children Diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) at Birth*. This report examines utilization of mental health services among infants with NAS who have a

mental health condition when they reach the age of five.

New Reports and Briefs from the Institute of Education Sciences

Several new publications are available from the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education:

(1) *Welcoming, Registering, and Supporting Newcomer Students: A Toolkit for Educators of Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools*. This report is intended to help educators and other stakeholders identify and use research-based practices, policies, and procedures for welcoming, registering, and supporting newcomer immigrant and refugee students who are attending secondary schools (grades 6-12) in the United States.

(2) *Changes in Exclusionary and Nonexclusionary Discipline in Grades K-5 Following State Policy Reform in Oregon*. This report examined school discipline practices in a voluntary sample of 401 Oregon elementary schools to determine whether a 2015 policy reform was associated with shifts in how exclusionary discipline and nonexclusionary discipline was applied among racial and ethnic student groups.

(3) *Trends and Gaps in Reading Achievement across Kindergarten and Grade 1 in Two Illinois School Districts* . To assess educational progress in the early grades and identify achievement gaps, the Midwest Early Childhood Education Research Alliance examined reading achievement data among students in kindergarten and grade 1 in two districts in Illinois. The report documents overall reading achievement in these and examines disparities in achievement among groups defined by race/ethnicity, eligibility for the national school lunch program, English learner status, participation in special education, and gender.

(4) *Tool for Assessing the Health of Research-Practice Partnerships (RPPs)*. Aligned to the most commonly cited framework for assessing RPPs, Assessing Research-Practice Partnerships: Five Dimensions of Effectiveness, this two-part tool offers guidance on how researchers and practitioners may prioritize the five dimensions of RPP effectiveness and their related indicators.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The February 2021 FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight a few funding opportunities from this month's FFO:

(1) A U.S. Department of Education funding opportunity provides financial aid grants to students (including students exclusively enrolled in distance education), which may be used for any component of the student's cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus. Applications are due by April 15, 2021.

(2) A *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) funding opportunity supports studies that will lead to a broad understanding of the natural history of disorders that already do or could potentially benefit from early identification by newborn screening. Applications are due by June 5, 2021.

(3) A National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding opportunity supports research that seeks to explain the underlying mechanisms, processes, and trajectories of social relationships and how these factors affect outcomes in human health, illness, recovery, and overall wellbeing. Applications are due by March 17, 2021.

Read about these and other funding opportunities.