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Policy Update: April 2022

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*.

Table of Contents

- Deadline Extended: Call for Applications for Editor of SRCD's Social Policy Report
- Spotlights on the SRCD Policy Fellows
- Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences (PIBBS) Issue Released – Free Access for SRCD Members
- Biden Administration Releases FY 2023 Budget Request
- Biden-Harris Administration Releases Agency Action Plans to Advance Equity and Racial Justice Through Government
- HHS RFI: Impact of Health Misinformation in the Digital Age During COVID-19
- Interagency RFI on Federal Priorities for Information Integrity Research and Development
- NSF Seeks Nominations for National Medal of Science
- Webinar: NIH Social, Behavioral & Economic COVID-19 Health Impacts
- NIH Seeks Applications for OBSSR Director/Associate Director for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research
- Federal Reports
- Federal Funding Opportunities

SRCD Child and Family Policy News

Deadline Extended: Call for Applications for Editor of SRCD's Social Policy Report

We are seeking applications for the 2022 – 2026 editorship of the *Social Policy Report (SPR).* As one of SRCD's hallmark policy publications, the SPR serves as a critical source of scientific knowledge about human development and its application to policy. The SPR is distributed to the membership of SRCD (about 5,000 researchers) and to approximately 300 policy and science organizations, federal agency officials, foundations, advocacy organizations, and policy journalists.

Given SRCD's strong commitment to advance the developmental sciences and promote the use of research to improve human lives (see SRCD's mission and vision for more information), the search committee is especially interested in candidates' unique editorial visions, with particular focus on: (1) how they would increase the policy relevance of manuscripts through the editorial process, (2) how they would encourage robust SPR submissions from a variety of policy-relevant research areas, and (3) how they would incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) approaches into the editorial process.

The new Editor will assume the title of Incoming Editor on October 1, 2022 and will assume the Editor role on November 1, 2022. **The application deadline for the editorship is June 17, 2022.** To learn more about this opportunity and how to apply, visit SRCD's website.

Spotlights on the SRCD Policy Fellows

Eleanor Fisk is a SRCD State Policy Pre-doctoral Fellow in the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Read about Eleanor's work at OEC, which includes monitoring and evaluating initiatives that use federal COVID-19 relief and recovery funding to support the early childhood education system.

Lillie Moffett, Ph.D., is a SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellow who is placed at the California Department of Education (CDE), Opportunities for All Branch. Read about her reflections on the role research can have in a state education agency and how to make research more applicable to policymakers.

Are you interested in learning more about the contributions that SRCD U.S. Policy Fellows have made at their placements? Visit the SRCD website to read Spotlights and abstracts describing their work.

Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences (PIBBS) Issue Released – Free Access for SRCD Members

SRCD partnered with the Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS) to produce two issues of *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (PIBBS). The issues focus on policy-relevant research linking child development research and policy. The second and final issue of this FABBS-SRCD collaboration (PIBBS Volume 9, Issue 1), featuring SRCD members, was released in March 2022. Read the new PIBBS issue to explore the literature for free. To read the first issue of this collaboration, read PIBBS Volume 8, Issue 2.

Legislative Branch Updates

FY 2023 Appropriations Update

Biden Administration Releases FY 2023 Budget Request

The Biden Administration released its Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget request to Congress on March 28. The FY 2023 budget prioritizes investment in areas of central importance to the Biden Administration, such as innovation and competitiveness, cancer research, and technological advancement. In addition, similar to last year's budget request, the Administration's budget underscores the President's commitment to science as a means for addressing large societal challenges, such as climate change, racism, and, of course, pandemic recovery. However, the budget seeks to achieve these ends through targeted investments that could potentially come at the expense of other programs and agencies; some of the proposals may be viewed as controversial by some in the research community. The FY 2023 budget request also reflects, for the first time in decades, funding for two new research entities that were requested last year by the Administration and officially established in the FY 2022 omnibus appropriations bill: the new Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships Directorate at the National Science Foundation and Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) at the National Institutes of Health. There are likely to be growing pains in FY 2023 as those entities take shape and as resources are allocated.

The release of the FY 2023 budget request is the official kick-off of "appropriations season." Congressional committees have begun their oversight hearings for departments and agencies under their purview featuring testimony by Administration officials. House Appropriations Committees typically try to introduce and mark up their versions of the bills in early summer with the Senate often lagging several weeks behind. The start of the month-long August recess, in which lawmakers return home to engage with constituents, is a typical target for Appropriations Committees to complete their work on the bills and bring them to the floor for consideration. However, 2022 is a mid-term election year, which will all but guarantee that the work of Congress will grind to a halt by late summer or early fall. As always, Congress will aim to make as much progress as possible on FY 2023 appropriations before leaving Washington for the elections; however, it is common, if not likely, that Congress will delay final passage of FY 2023 funding legislation at least until after the November elections, if not until the next calendar year, depending on the outcome of the midterms.

Summary provided by the *Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA Washington Update)*. For more information, read COSSA's in-depth analysis of the FY 2023 budget request.

Additional Hearings of Interest

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Priorities. On April 6, the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing on "Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Opportunities to Advance Economic Opportunities for Racial and Ethnic Minorities. On April 6, the House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on "Overcoming Racism to Advance Economic Opportunity." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Communities in Need: Efforts to Foster Mental Health and Well-Being. On April 5, the Subcommittee on Health of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on "Communities in Need: Legislation to Support Mental Health and Well-Being." View the witness list, recording, and read witness testimonies.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

Biden-Harris Administration Releases Agency Action Plans to Advance Equity and Racial Justice Through Government

On April 14, the Biden-Harris Administration announced the release of Agency Equity Action Plans: " Advancing Equity and Racial Justice Through the Federal Government." Reflecting on the Biden-Harris Administration's first day in office, the White House recognized the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to "delivering greater equity for the American people," noting, "on his first day in office, President Biden signed Executive Order 13985 on "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," calling for a comprehensive approach for the Federal Government to transform itself—for fairness and equity to become not just ideals, but principles embedded in the daily practices by which Government serves its people." According to the White House, over 90 federal agencies, including all cabinet-level agencies, have since released their first-ever Equity Action Plans. Upon release of the plans, the Administration released a fact sheet that includes high-level summaries of new agency commitments. To read snapshots of the largest agency's plans, visit the White House's website.

CDC Releases Data from the Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES)

The CDC recently released the first nationally representative data on adolescent well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic (the Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey (ABES). The findings indicate that youth experienced myriad difficulties, including poor mental health, perceived racism, family financial impacts, abuse at home, and hunger. Underrepresented youth experienced disproportionate risks and challenges during the pandemic. According to the CDC, "Lesbian, gay, and bisexual students were far more likely to report physical abuse, with 20% reporting that they had been physically abused by a parent or other adult in their home, compared to 10% of heterosexual students." In addition, 36% of students reported that they experienced racism, and "...the highest levels were reported among Asian students (64%) and Black students and students of multiple races (both 55%)...experiences of racism among youth have been linked to poor mental health, academic performance, and lifelong health risk behaviors."

The findings also highlight that school connectedness – feeling supported, cared for, and a sense of belonging at school – was a protective factor for youth. Youth who felt connected to their school community were less likely to report persistent hopelessness or sadness and seriously considering or attempting suicide. Previous research has shown that adolescent school connectedness has positive short- and long-term effects. However, this protective factor did not hold for all youth - "young people who experienced

racism were less likely to benefit from this protection." The CDC shared that "More must be done to ensure that schools provide a safe and supportive where all students feel connected to people who care, so that all students can fully benefit from the protections connectedness provides."

To learn more, read the full summary on SRCD Commons and Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports. ABES data and documentation are available here.

HHS RFI: Impact of Health Misinformation in the Digital Age During COVID-19

The Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released a Request for Information (RFI) on the "Impact of Health Misinformation in the Digital Information Environment in the United States Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic." The primary aim of this RFI is to "... understand the impact of COVID-19 misinformation on healthcare infrastructure and public health more broadly during the pandemic including (but not limited to) quality of care, health decisions and outcomes, direct and indirect costs, trust in the healthcare system and providers, and healthcare worker morale and safety, understand the unique role the information environment played in the societal response to the COVID-19 pandemic and implications for future public health emergencies, understand the impact of exposure to health misinformation and how access to trusted and credible health information, particularly during a public health emergency, impacts lifesaving health decisions such as an individual's likelihood to vaccinate; and use the information requested to prepare for and respond to future public health crises." In 2021, U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a Surgeon General's Advisory on Confronting Health Misinformation as well as a toolkit for community leaders. This RFI will serve as a continuation of the office's efforts address the impact of health misinformation on communities. Read the full RFI for more information about this opportunity and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments by May 2, 2022.

Interagency RFI on Federal Priorities for Information Integrity Research and Development

The National Science Foundation (NSF), Networking and Information Technology Research and Development (NITRD), and National Coordination Office (NCO) released a Request for Information (RFI) on " Federal Priorities for Information Integrity Research and Development." As part of an interagency effort to combat misinformation and disinformation, NSF, NITRD, and NCO are interested in information that will help them "... understand ways in which the Federal Government might enable research and development

activities to advance the trustworthiness of information, mitigate the effects of information manipulation, and foster an environment of trust and resilience in which individuals can be discerning consumers of information." Read the full RFI for more information about this opportunity and consider submitting a comment. Interested parties should submit comments by May 15, 2022.

NSF Seeks Nominations for National Medal of Science

The National Science Foundation (NSF) released a Call for Nominations for the National Medal of Science (NMS), which are awarded by the President of the United States and are bestowed upon individuals "... deserving of special recognition by reason of their outstanding cumulative contributions to knowledge in the physical, biological, mathematical, engineering, or behavioral or social sciences, in service to the Nation. These broad areas include such disciplines as astronomy, chemistry, computer and information science and engineering, geoscience, materials research, and research on STEM education." Read the nomination description for more information about this opportunity and consider submitting a nomination. Interested parties must submit their nomination(s) by May 20, 2022.

Webinar: NIH Social, Behavioral & Economic COVID-19 Health Impacts

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Social, Behavioral, and Economic (SBE) Health Impacts of COVID-19 Initiative is holding two half-day webinars on **April 27 and 28, 2022**. According to NIH, the primary goal of these webinars is to share findings from their grants to facilitate future collaborations, noting "through your participation in this webinar, we hope to better understand research progress, provide a forum for collaboration, and continue to encourage data harmonization efforts." To learn more about the event or register for the webinar, visit the registration page.

NIH Seeks Applications for OBSSR Director/Associate Director for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research

The Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), National Institutes of Health (NIH), seeks applications for the position of Director, OBSSR. Of note, the Director also serves as the NIH Associate Director for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (ADBSSR). This position has trans-NIH responsibilities, including "coordinating the development of NIH policies, goals, and objectives and functioning as a liaison between the NIH and the extramural behavioral, social sciences, and biomedical research communities; and

with other Federal agencies, academic and scientific societies, national voluntary health agencies, the media, and the general public on matters pertaining to behavioral and social sciences research. The ADBSSR/Director, OBSSR serves as an NIH spokesperson for issues in behavioral and social sciences research and advises and consults with NIH and other scientists within and outside the Federal Government with regard to research on the importance of behavioral, social and lifestyle factors in the etiology, treatment, and prevention of disease." Among other qualifications, NIH notes "Applicants must possess a Ph.D., M.D., or comparable doctorate degree in the behavioral, social, or behavioral sciences plus senior-level scientific experience and knowledge of research programs in one or more scientific areas related to behavioral and social sciences research. They should be known and respected within their profession as individuals of scientific prominence, with a distinguished record of research accomplishments and expertise in policy development regarding behavioral and social sciences research." For more information, read the position announcement. Please note NIH will begin reviewing application on May 14, 2022 and applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

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) *Head Start's Interaction with Federal, State, and Local Systems*. This report explores Head Start programs' interaction with other systems such as licensing, quality rating improvement systems (QRISs), as well as with non-Head Start sources of funding like state and local pre-K. The findings can help policymakers and others who are working to strengthen alignment, coordination, and collaboration across the ECE system to better serve children and families.

(2) *A Portrait of Head Start Classrooms and Programs in Spring 2020: Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) 2019 Descriptive Data Tables and Study Design*. This report (1) provides information about the FACES 2019 study, including the background, design, methodology (including the impact of COVID-19 on data collection), and analytic methods; and (2) reports detailed descriptive statistics and related standard errors in a series of tables on programs, centers, and classrooms.

(3) *Measuring Head Start Children's Early Learning Skills Using Teacher Reports During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. The purpose of this report is to understand whether teacher reports of children's early learning skills can be used when in-person assessment is not feasible, such as in spring 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

(4) *Head Start Families' Program Selection and Experiences*. This report explores Head Start families' early care and education (ECE) selection and experiences, including why they choose their child's Head start program, in what activities they participate and how often, and if they are satisfied with their program experiences.

(5) *Synthesis Report: Pathways Clearinghouse: Overview of the Research*. This report summarizes the findings of the Pathways to Work Evidence Clearinghouse and provides background information to help users of the website understand how the Pathways Clearinghouse obtained those findings. Policymakers, practitioners, and researchers can use this report to learn more about the interventions and services examined by the clearinghouse.

(6) *Engaging Community Members in Evaluations of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) Programs*. This report provides practical guidance to HMRF researchers on how to engage community members in all stages of designing and conducting evaluations of HMRF programs.

New Reports 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) *Trends in COVID-19 Vaccination Intentions*. This report documents a number of key facts related to trends in COVID-19 vaccination intentions of unvaccinated adults in the United States from April 2021 to January 2022 using the Household Pulse Survey.

(2) *Addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): Examples of Successful Evidence-Based Strategies and Current Federal Efforts*. This report provides a high-level overview of several strategies to address SDOH and health-related social needs and reviews evidence on their effectiveness in reducing impediments to health and well-being, improving health outcomes, or lowering healthcare costs.

(3) *Identifying and Supporting Human Services Participants with Substance Use Disorder: Roundtable Summary* . This report summarizes discussions among experts participating in a roundtable that focused on promising strategies to identify substance use disorder (SUD) among human services participants and refer them to treatment and recovery supports. The roundtable concentrated on four programs: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), child welfare, domestic violence, and Head Start.

(4) *Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Evaluation Plan*. This Annual Evaluation Plan is one of several required Evidence Act products, including the 4-year Evidence-Building Plan (also referred to as the Learning Agenda), Capacity Assessment, and agency Evaluation Policy. The priority areas are aligned with the goals of the FY 2022-2026 HHS Strategic Plan and the FY 2023-2026 HHS Evidence-Building Plan.

(5) *Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2026 Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Evidence-Building Plan*. The HHS Evidence Building Plan is a systematic plan for identifying and addressing policy questions relevant to the programs, policies, and regulations of the agency. It identifies, prioritizes, and establishes strategies to develop evidence to answer important short- and long-term strategic questions and operational questions.

(6) *Projected Coverage and Subsidy Impacts If the American Rescue Plan (ARP)'s Marketplace Provisions Sunset in 2023*. The ARP includes two key provisions that expand and increase premium tax credit benefits for Marketplace consumers, improving affordability of health insurance coverage for millions. This report highlights projected impacts on consumer out-of-pocket premium costs (through loss of subsidies) and loss of coverage, if the ARP provisions are not extended.

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) *2019 National Indian Education Study (NIES) Data Companion*. The NIES is a special study funded by the Office of Indian Education (OIE) that includes oversampling of American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in public schools and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Schools. The responses for the write-in questions on the student and teacher surveys are the purpose of this data product.

(2) *Providing Reading Interventions for Students in Grades 4-9*. The What Works ClearinghouseTM (WWC) developed this practice guide in partnership with a panel of experts on reading interventions. The panel distilled recent reading intervention research into four easily comprehensible and practical recommendations that educators can use to deliver reading intervention to meet the needs of students in grades 4-9.

(3) *Sharing Study Data: A Guide for Education Researchers*. Open science envisions that researchers will make their study data available to other investigators to facilitate research transparency and accelerate the development of knowledge. This report describes key issues that education researchers should consider when deciding which study data to share, how to organize the data, what documentation to include, and where to share their final dataset.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The April 2022 FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight a few funding opportunities from this month's FFO:

(1) **Grant to Reestablish National Centers for Translational Research in Reproduction and Infertility (NCTRI)**: A *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) funding opportunity to support research centers that will form a national network that will facilitate and accelerate bidirectional knowledge transfers between the laboratory and clinic, with the ultimate goal of improving human reproductive health through research excellence and innovation. Applications are due by July 28, 2022.

(2) **Grant to Accelerate the Pace of Child Health and Development Research**: A National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding opportunity to solicit applications proposing the analysis of the public use dataset from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study to increase knowledge of adolescent health and development. Applications are due by June 5, 2022.

(3) **Grant to Study Suicide Risk and Protective Factors for Black Youth**: A National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funding opportunity to advance translational research to better understand factors that confer risk and resilience for suicide among Black youth. Applications are due by October 19, 2022.

(4) **Grant to Support Training and Technical Assistance for Children's Advocacy Centers**: A Department of Justice (DOJ) funding opportunity to support training and technical assistance (TTA) services to develop, improve, or expand children's advocacy centers (CACs) and multidisciplinary team responses to child abuse cases in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. Applications are due by May 17, 2022.

Read about these and other funding opportunities.