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Policy Update: July 2019

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SRCD News Related to Child and Family Policy

New Child Evidence Brief on Paid Family and Medical Leave

SRCD has recently released a new *Child Evidence Brief* focused on the evidence on paid family and medical leave policies in improving child and family well-being. Introduced in 2018 as a pilot project, *Child Evidence Briefs* bring clear and succinct summaries of the scientific evidence to Congress regarding important child and family policy issues.

Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow

Paula Daneri, Ph.D., is a SRCD Congressional Fellow whose placement is in the House Committee on Education and Labor. Click here to read about her work on the reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

Legislative Branch Updates

FY20 Appropriations: House Completes Work on Most Appropriations Bills, Senate Likely Waiting Until September

The House of Representatives has now passed ten of its twelve FY 2020 appropriations bills, passing a four-bill package on June 19 that included the Defense, Energy-Water, Labor-HHS-Education, and State-Foreign Operations bills; a five-bill package on June 25 that included the Agriculture, Commerce-Justice-Science, Interior-Environment, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD bills; and the Financial Services spending bill as a standalone bill on June 26. At the time of this writing, the only appropriations bills the full House has not yet passed are the Homeland Security and Legislative Branch funding bills. Additional details on the allocations included in the Commerce-Justice-Science and Labor-HHS-Education bills, which include the bulk of scientific research funding, are available in the May 2019 edition of Policy Update.

While the House has passed nearly all of its appropriations bills, the Senate has yet to mark up any of its 12 bills. *CQ* reports that it is unlikely that the Senate will mark up any of its spending bills before leaving for the August recess, and will likely hold "marathon markups for all of its bills" upon returning from recess on September 9. The Senate has indicated that they do not intend to work on individual appropriations bills until Congress and the White House agree on top-line funding levels for FY 2020, which are currently still being negotiated. For more details on the current status of FY20 appropriations, please see COSSA's detailed summaries.

House Subcommittee Hearing on Inhumane Treatment of Children at the Border

On July 10, the Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Subcommittee of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing entitled "Kids in Cages: Inhumane Treatment at the Border." The Subcommittee noted that the purpose of the hearing was to "examine the impact of the Trump Administration's deterrence policies on the humanitarian crisis at the border, recent reports of dangerous conditions and medical neglect, and the lack of accountability for abuse and misconduct at detention

facilities." Subcommittee Chair Jamie Raskin (D-MD) opened the hearing by stating that "the American people are up in arms about reports…from the inspector general of the Department of Homeland Security, the media, and various human rights groups about the dangerous overcrowding…spreading infections….pervasive medical inattention, sexual assault, and systematic abuse of the rights of migrants in the U.S. government's care and custody." He continued, noting that while the government clearly needs to do something to address the serious regional refugee crisis at the border that continues to worsen, "the administration has failed to respond in a way that meets the actual humanitarian challenges at the border." Subcommittee Ranking Member Chip Roy (R-TX) then offered opening remarks, which covered a range of issues including: contesting the tone and messaging of the hearing, concerns about children crossing the border with people who claim to be their parents but are actually not, that dangerous cartels in Mexico are making millions of dollars by moving migrants through Mexico, and that when detention facilities lack oversight or accountability, Members of Congress have the power to change that, and should. He concluded his statements by reiterating that we have a crisis at the border, and we need to "break down any barriers to make sure that people are cared for."

Witnesses then covered several topics related to the troubling conditions and treatment of children and families at detention facilities. Topics included: that there is still no system in place for keeping track of separated families and making sure they get back together; that children are being separated from adult caretakers and then cared for by other older children; that in some child detention facilities, witnesses described nearly every child as being sick – just to varying degrees; that rather than providing funds to detain additional children, Congress should be working to ensure the expeditious release of children to their families, who are far better suited to care for these children than a government that witnesses felt is causing them harm; and that community physicians in the El Paso area offered to provide pro bono care to migrants in Customs and Border Protection (CBP) custody, as they did in 2014, but they were not allowed in.

Witnesses included: Yazmin Juárez, Asylum Seeker whose daughter Mariee died following weeks of detention; Michael Breen, President and Chief Executive Officer, Human Rights First; Clara Long Deputy, Washington Director, Human Rights Watch; Hope Frye, Executive Director, Project Lifeline; Dr. Carlos A. Gutierrez, Pediatrics Private Practice; and Ronald D. Vitiello, Former Chief, U.S. Border Patrol and Former Acting Director, Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

House Committee Hearing on Childhood Trauma

On July 11, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing entitled, "Identifying, Preventing, and Treating Childhood Trauma: A Pervasive Public Health Issue that Needs Greater Federal Attention." Chairman Elijah Cummings (D-MD) opened the hearing by stating, "Today we are examining a critical issue that does not get enough attention here in Congress or throughout the nation: childhood trauma. Childhood trauma is a pervasive public health issue with long-term negative health effects that cost the United States billions of dollars." Ranking Member Jim Jordan (R-OH) then gave his opening remarks, stating "We must all strive to better understand [childhood trauma], work to prevent [it] when possible, and treat [it] when discovered…Research shows that traumatic childhood events actually alter brain development…and are linked to higher rates of heart disease and mental health issues that lead to dramatically increased rates of suicide."

The first panel of witnesses—all survivors of childhood trauma—then shared their personal stories and how they have been able to move forward and heal as adults. The witnesses all underscored the need for Congress to understand the urgency and long-term effects of childhood trauma and the need for the federal government to provide support to families and to places such as schools, juvenile justice facilities, and foster homes in order to ensure mental health supports are available both in the aftermath of trauma and before. Witnesses included: William Kellibrew, Founder, The William Kellibrew Foundation; Creeana Rygg, Survivor and Activist; Justin Miller, Deputy Executive Director, Objective Zero Foundation; and Heather Martin, Executive Director and Co-Founder, The Rebels Project.

The second panel of witnesses included research experts and government officials. They discussed a number of topics related to childhood trauma, including: that over half of children in the U.S. experience one or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs); the need for the federal government to come up with a coordinated, comprehensive, cross-sector approach to address and reduce ACEs experiences in partnership with states and communities; the need for a national shift in norms to support healthy parenting while working to eliminate stigma and shame; the need for a population-wide approach to build a trauma-informed workforce across sectors; and the need for federal leadership, support, and funding to collectively make critical trauma-informed changes across the nation. Witnesses included: Dr. Debra Houry, Director, National Center for Injury Prevention & Control, on behalf of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Dr. Christina Bethell, Director, Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; Dr. Denese Shervington, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Tulane University School of Medicine; James Henry, Former Deputy Governor & Chief of Staff, State of Tennessee; and Charles Patterson, Health Commissioner, Clark County, Ohio. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

House Subcommittee Hearing on Federal Support to End Youth Homelessness

On July 16, the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services of the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing entitled "Strengthening Federal Support to End Youth Homelessness." Subcommittee Chair Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) opened the hearing by stating "We are here today to discuss our responsibility to provide every child and youth with a safe and stable environment to learn and grow. Today, millions of youth across the country do not have access to a stable home. For many of them the effects of homelessness are not isolated to days or weeks or months. Youth homelessness has long-term consequences that undermine their education, their safety, and their future." She also noted that youth who experience homelessness are far more likely to drop out of school, remain homeless as adults, and fall prey to exploitation or human trafficking, citing research that shows that one in five homeless youth are victims of human trafficking, and one in six have been sexually assaulted or raped. Subcommittee Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY) then offered an opening statement, noting that "there isn't a simple solution for youth homelessness. Children leave home for a lot of reasons – some run from abuse but others are lured by predators looking to harm children. That is why we need to help the folks on the ground…to do their jobs." He continued, "our children are this country's most valuable asset. They are also the most vulnerable in our society. As lawmakers we must help protect American youth from homelessness and the dangers it presents."

A panel of witnesses then discussed numerous topics, including: that youth of color and LGBTQ youth have disproportionally high rates of homelessness; discussion of the strong connections between family homelessness and youth homelessness, including that many homeless youth are parents themselves; that strategies for working with homeless young people must be different than those for adults, since young people's brains don't fully mature until age 25 and are cognitively and emotionally still in formation; that the most common reason children go missing today is because they run away, and that many runaways will leave home multiple times over a period of years; that some youth see the streets as a place of opportunity when their home life is traumatic and dysfunctional; and the need for homeless youth to learn skills such as emotional regulation, thoughtful decision-making, and financial literacy when they enter into transitional living programs.

Witnesses included: Dr. Matthew Morton, Research Fellow, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago; Dr. Melinda Giovengo, CEO, YouthCare; Robert Lowery, Jr., Vice-President, Missing Children Division, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children; and David Baker, Support Specialist, YMCA Youth & Family Services.

Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

House Subcommittee Hearing on Supporting Teachers and School Leaders

On July 17, the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee and the Higher Education and Workforce Investment Subcommittee of the House Education and Labor Committee held a joint hearing entitled "Educating our Educators: How Federal Policy Can Better Support Teachers and School Leaders." Gregorio Kilili Sablan (D-Northern Mariana Islands), Chair of the Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, opened the hearing by discussing teacher turnover and stating "we have to understand how we can train teachers better and understand what is forcing teachers to leave the profession because our children's education is at stake," and noted that insufficient teacher preparation and weak support systems are two areas where there might be a federal role. Subcommittee Ranking Member Rick Allen (R-GA) then spoke, emphasizing that the current system is failing to provide the K-12 education system with an adequate number of teachers equipped to meet the challenges of modern classrooms, and that communities around the country are facing teacher shortages. Susan Davis (D-CA), Chair of the Higher Education and Workforce Investment Subcommittee then used her opening statement to discuss the importance of investing in school leader preparation as well, stating "studies show that effective school leadership is one of the most consistent factors behind teachers' decisions to stay or leave a school or the profession entirely." Subcommittee Ranking Member Lloyd Smucker (R-PA) then spoke about the need for the Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization to support state efforts to reform their teacher and school leader preparation systems.

Witnesses then discussed a number of issues including: that some school districts are seeing success with innovations such as expanding professional development opportunities specifically geared towards teacher needs, additional peer supports, and innovative approaches to mentorship; that research indicates that achievement does not improve at schools without an effective school principal; that federal policy must also support the development of principals the same way it does classroom teachers; that teachers need to be prepared in a professional manner and declared effective at teaching *before* they take a full-time job in the classroom; that research shows there is wide variation in the quality and effectiveness of education preparation programs as well as alternative certification programs; and the need for earlier and extended opportunities for in-classroom experiences, which currently often come too late in the teacher preparation process. Witnesses included: Michael Brosnan, Teacher and Early Leadership Institute Coach, Bridgeport (CT) Public Schools; Tricia McManus, Assistant Superintendent for Leadership, Professional Development, and

School Transformation, Hillsborough County (FL) Public Schools; John White, State Superintendent of Education, State of Louisiana; and Dr. Andrew Daire, Dean, School of Education, Virginia Commonwealth University. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

Executive Branch Updates

Update on NIH Clinical Trials Registration and Reporting

On July 24, NIH announced that it is extending flexibility for registration and reporting of "basic experimental studies with humans." Please see summaries of this announcement by William Riley, Associate Director for Behavioral and Social Science Research and Director of the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research, here, and from the NIH Office of Science Policy here.

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) *Fatherhood: Ongoing Research and Program Evaluation Efforts in the Administration for Children and Families* This brief describes ACF's ongoing research and evaluation projects related to 1) the Responsible Fatherhood grant program, 2) noncustodial parents, and 3) fathers and fatherhood more broadly.

(2) *Implementation and Relative Impacts of Two Job Search Assistance Programs in Sacramento County, California* This report describes the implementation and impact findings from an evaluation of the relative effectiveness of two approaches to providing job search assistance (JSA) to cash assistance recipients in Sacramento County, California.

(3) *Assessment and Mapping of Community Connections in Home Visiting: Final Report* This report provides a summary of the work involved in designing a prototype for a tool to enhance home visiting stakeholders' understanding of community connections in the home visiting context.

(4) *Funding Home Visiting with a Pay for Outcomes Approach* This report presents key takeaways from a recent convening of a group of about 50 home visiting and pay for outcomes (PFO) stakeholders in a full-day roundtable event.

Federal Reports

New Report 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) *Aligning Federal Performance Indicators Across Programs Promoting Self-Sufficiency: Key Considerations for Policymakers* This brief summarizes the current set of federal performance indicators and provides key policy considerations for policymakers and administrators within federal and state agencies who are interested in building a framework for coordinated performance measurement.

(2) *Aligning Federal Performance Indicators Across Programs Promoting Self-Sufficiency: Actionable Steps for Program Design and Practice* This brief outlines actionable steps that program designers at the federal, state, or local level can take to build or use to align measures across programs in ways that can improve program management and increase service coordination.

(3) *Trauma-Informed Approaches: Connecting Research, Policy and Practice to Build Resilience in Children and Families* This document provides an overview of the first two resources developed as part of ASPE's Trauma-Informed Approaches project: a research summary and profiles of select trauma-informed programs.

(4) *Review of Trauma-Informed Initiatives at the Systems Level* This research summary explores trauma-informed initiatives at the systems level and summarizes common program activities, targeted outcomes, and evidence of progress towards those systems-level outcomes.

(5) *Profiles of Select Trauma-Informed Programs* This resource highlights select trauma-informed programs from diverse sectors, geographic locations, and funding sources to give examples of the wide range of existing trauma-informed initiatives within communities.

(6) *Illicit Substance Use and Child Support: An Exploratory Study* This report discusses what is known about how substance use disorders (SUDs), in particular opioid use disorder (OUD), affect noncustodial parents' labor market experiences, the establishment of child support orders, noncustodial parents' ability to pay formal child support, and current practices used to increase child support compliance and substance use treatment among this population.

(7) *Patterns of Treatment/Therapeutic Foster Care and Congregate Care Placements in Three States* This report provides a quantitative analysis of three states' use of therapeutic foster care, an intensive, treatment-focused form of foster care provided in a family setting by trained caregivers.

(8) *ASPE Research Brief: Patterns of Treatment/Therapeutic Foster Care and Congregate Care Placements in Three States* This brief summarizes the characteristics and care trajectories of children in Illinois, New York, and Tennessee who receive Treatment Foster Care services compared with those receiving congregate care, traditional, non-kinship foster care, and kinship foster care.

New Reports and Briefs from the Institute of Education Sciences

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

(1) *User's Manual for the ECLS-K:2011 Kindergarten-Fifth Grade Data File and Electronic Codebook, Public Version* This User's Manual focuses on the fifth-grade round of data collection and data for the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011), and describes the study instruments and data collection procedures used in the spring 2016 collection.

(2) *Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B:16/17): A First Look at the Employment and Educational Experiences of College Graduates, 1 Year Later* This report describes outcomes of 2015–16 bachelor's degree recipients 1 year after graduation.

(3) *Trends in Ratio of Pell Grant to Total Price of Attendance and Federal Loan Receipt* This Data Point examines trends in the total price of attendance covered by Pell Grants and the percentage of Pell Grant recipients who received federal student loans in academic years 2003–04, 2007–08, 2011–12, and 2015–16.

(4) *Adult Literacy in the United States* This Data Point summarizes the number of U.S. adults with low levels of English literacy and describes how they differ by nativity status and race/ethnicity.

(5) *The Costs of Childcare: Results From the 2016 Early Childhood Program Participation Survey (ECPP-NHES:2016)* This report provides findings about percentages of children who received any nonparental care, the type (relative care, nonrelative care, center-based care, or multiple arrangements), associated costs of care, assistance received, and the factors that influenced parents' decisions about childcare arrangements.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

This month's FFO highlights an Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) funding opportunity. The purpose of the Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program is to promote academic achievement and to improve results for children with disabilities by providing TA, supporting model demonstration projects, disseminating useful information, and implementing activities that are supported by scientifically based research. The purpose of this priority is to fund three cooperative agreements to establish and operate model demonstration projects. The models will implement frequent screening and progress monitoring measures at all elementary grades, with a particular focus on kindergarten and first grade. The models will demonstrate methods for accurate and efficient identification of evidence-based interventions for students with, or at risk for, dyslexia, as well as positive outcomes in reading achievement. The models will also address the infrastructure (i.e., professional development) needed to foster the development, implementation, and evaluation of a schoolwide process for identifying students with, or at risk for, dyslexia. Completed applications are due by August 5, 2019. Click here to read about this and other funding opportunities.