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Policy Update: April 2019

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SRCD News Related to Child and Family Policy

New Social Policy Report and SPR Brief on Digital Games and Cognitive Development

SRCD has recently released a new *Social Policy Report* and two-page *Social Policy Report Brief* by Dr. Fran Blumberg and colleagues entitled “Digital Games as a Context for Children’s Cognitive Development: Research Recommendations and Policy Considerations.” The report focuses on the need for more research on the use of digital games and apps in middle childhood, as children ages 6 to 12 make up a large swath of the nonadult population that uses digital games and apps, but research focusing on this age range is limited.

New Child Evidence Brief on Preventing Child Maltreatment

SRCD has recently released a new *Child Evidence Brief:* "Creating Tiered Systems of Support to Prevent Child Maltreatment." Introduced in 2018, *Child Evidence Briefs* bring clear and succinct summaries of the scientific evidence regarding important child and family policy issues that Congress is currently considering. This *Child Evidence Brief* is of particular relevance right now, as Congress is preparing for reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

Register Now: Upcoming Webinar on Co-Regulation Supports for Adolescents

Creating Co-Regulation Supports for Adolescents: What, Why, and How

Monday, May 20**,** 3:00-4:00 PM Eastern

The term "co-regulation" has typically referred to younger children, but is now being broadly applied to describe an interactive process of support within the context of caring relationships across the lifespan. Like early childhood, early adolescence is a time of rapid brain growth, with the opportunity to build long-term perspective and problem-solve increasingly complex life situations.

Although peers become increasingly important during adolescence, youth still need caring adults who can listen supportively, model and reinforce healthy coping strategies, provide space and support when they experience strong feelings, and help them reflect on how well their strategies are helping them attain important goals. Adolescence is a critical time for co-regulation support. Unfortunately, most prevention programs for adolescent self-regulation do not train parents and teachers to systematically and intentionally utilize such strategies in day-to-day interactions with youth.

This webinar will present a co-regulation model for adolescents that was developed based on cross-disciplinary theory and literature reviews. The initial work on this model was supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) through the creation of the Self-Regulation and Toxic Stress Series.

The presentation will:

- provide ACF's rationale for this work;
- describe the co-regulation model and how it can be translated into specific actions; and
- address how co-regulation approaches are similar to and differ from parent education and therapy programs, how they can be integrated into existing programs, and how they can promote well-being on a public health scale.

Presenters:

- Desiree Murray, Senior Research Scientist, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Aleta Meyer, Team Lead, Division of Family Strengthening, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families
- Aly Frei, Project Director, Public Strategies

Click here to register for this webinar.

Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow

Rachel McKinnon, Ph.D., is a SRCD Executive Branch Fellow whose placement is in the Office of Child Care (OCC) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Click here to learn more about her experience transitioning from the SRCD Congressional Fellowship to the SRCD Executive Branch Fellowship and how that has contributed to her understanding of policymaking and implementation.

Legislative Branch Updates

House Subcommittee Hearing on CAPTA Reauthorization

On March 26, the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services of the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing entitled "Strengthening Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect." Subcommittee Chair Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) opened the hearing by noting that "In 2017, state child

protective services agencies received a total of 4.1 million referrals of possible child abuse or neglect involving 7.5 million children." She emphasized the short- and long-term negative effects of child maltreatment, the high societal costs of child maltreatment as a public health crisis, and the need to shift the focus to preventing maltreatment. Subcommittee Ranking Member James Comer (R-KY) followed by stating, "Our efforts should begin with prevention. Prevention takes a holistic approach to combatting abuse and neglect by focusing on strengthening communities and educating parents and caregivers on how to keep children safe."

The witnesses then discussed a variety of topics including: the detrimental effects of child maltreatment on children's development that can affect victims over the course of their entire lives; the research indicating that primary and targeted prevention services (e.g., parent skill-building, home visiting programs) can reduce instances of child maltreatment; that communities are ready to implement new prevention programs or bring prevention programs to a population-level scale, but lack the funding to do so; the need for further Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funding, which currently provides just 53-cents per child per year; and the importance of using holistic, evidence-based programs in prevention efforts. Witnesses included: Dr. Yo Jackson, Professor, Psychology Department & Associate Director, Child Maltreatment Solutions Network, Pennsylvania State University and Research Professor, University of Kansas; Judy King, Director, Family Support Programs, Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families; Bradley Thomas, CEO, Triple P - Positive Parenting Program; and LaCrisha Rose, Facilitator, WV Circle of Parents Network, TEAM for WV Children. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

House and Senate Hold Hearings on Higher Education Accountability

Committees in both the House and Senate recently held hearings focused on strengthening accountability in higher education. Both hearings focused on the need to build increased accountability measures into the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) in order to protect students, families, and taxpayers. Specific issues discussed included: the need for well-designed accountability policies to link policy and practice; that for-profit institutions spend a lot of money marketing to typically underserved populations; that current federal data are not always reflective of what is going on at an institution, for example, not always accurately counting transfer students or others who do not enter the institution as full-time, first-time students; and that students at for-profit institutions are sometimes vulnerable to thinking that high cost equals high quality.

Several themes emerged across both hearings, including: that the "accountability triad," established by the original HEA, of the federal government, states, and accreditors, must be strengthened in order to improve accountability and for resources to flow where they are needed most; that accreditors "can and must" hold institutions accountable for student outcomes such as graduation rates, and that federal accountability policies should also focus on student outcomes; the need to create a culture of accountability at all colleges and universities that involves the whole school, including those at the very top; and the unintended consequences of borrower protections, which have helped student borrowers avoid default, but have also shielded their institutions from accountability.

The House hearing, entitled "Strengthening Accountability in Higher Education to Better Serve Students and Taxpayers," was held on April 3 by the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment of the House Education and Labor Committee. Witnesses included: Dr. Nicholas Hillman, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Melissa Emrey-Arras, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Noe Ortega, Deputy Secretary, Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education; and Dr. Barbara Brittingham, President, New England Commission of Higher Education. Click here to read witness testimony and here to view a recording of the hearing.

The Senate hearing, entitled "Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Strengthening Accountability to Protect Students and Taxpayers," was held on April 10 by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. Witnesses included: Dr. Tressie McMillian Cottom, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Virginia Commonwealth University; Dr. Adam Looney, Director, Center on Regulation and Markets, Brookings Institute; Dr. David Tandberg, Vice President for Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association; and Dr. Belle Wheelan, President, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

Senate Committee Hearing on Child Nutrition

On April 10, the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry held a hearing entitled "Perspectives on Child Nutrition Reauthorization." Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS) opened by noting that this hearing was the first step in reauthorizing child nutrition programs in a bipartisan manner, and that it is important for the committee to review how child nutrition programs are working, since they make up approximately $30 billion in annual mandatory and discretionary spending. Ranking Member Debbie

Stabenow (D-MI) stated that “child nutrition is critical to the future of our country,” and noted that the committee should look for ways to streamline administration so that providers can focus on serving healthy meals to children.

Two panels of witnesses then discussed a number of topics related to child nutrition programs, including: the ongoing implementation of WIC EBT, which will replace paper vouchers with an electronic benefits transfer card for all WIC recipients by next year; that mismatched regulations and reporting requirements between different child nutrition programs can make it difficult for providers to keep up, for example, when an organization feeds the same children at the same location during the school year and summer but is subject to different regulations and reporting requirements depending on the time of year; the importance of reducing barriers to participation for children and families in need; and the strong desire of providers to provide excellent customer service and stay nimble in order to meet the constantly changing needs of their program participants.

Witnesses included: Brandon Lipps, Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture; Kathryn Larin, Director, Education, Workforce and Income Security, U.S. Government Accountability Office; Josh Mathiasmeier, Director of Nutritional Services, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools; Michael Halligan, Chief Executive Officer, God’s Pantry Food Bank; Lauren Waits, Director of Government Affairs, Atlanta Community Food Bank; Kati Wagner, Vice President, National Child and Adult Care Food Program Sponsors Association; and Dr. Olanrewaju Falusi, Pediatrician, Children's National Health System. Click here to view the full hearing and read witness testimony.

Congressional Briefing on the College Transparency Act

On April 1, the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) hosted a congressional briefing entitled “The College Transparency Act of 2019: Better Data to Promote Student Success.” The College Transparency Act (CTA) would overturn the current ban on collecting student-level data and set up the infrastructure necessary for the federal government to collect and report accurate data on student outcomes at every higher education program, college, and university in the country. The briefing opened with remarks from Representative Paul Mitchell (R-MI) and Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), both of whom are part of the bipartisan, bicameral group of legislators that reintroduced the College Transparency Act (H.R. 1766/S. 800) in 2019. Representative Mitchell noted that while there is now more information and data available to prospective college students and their families than there used to, this information tends to be for full

universities rather than for specific programs in specific locations, and that the CTA aims to change that. Representative Krishnamoorthi emphasized that the CTA directs the Commissioner of Education Statistics to maintain a privacy protected database with a range of outcomes sorted by university and major that could then be disaggregated by socioeconomic status, race, gender, veteran status, and other demographic characteristics to help better identify and close some of the persistent gaps in college attainment.

A panel then discussed a range of issues related to the College Transparency Act, including: that having access to this additional data will not only help students and families make more informed decisions, but could also be helpful to institutions because they would be able to see where other institutions are succeeding and where there are possible opportunities for collaboration; the fact that current federal data collection leaves out approximately a third of college students because it only includes those who receive federal financial aid; that students need more information to make an informed decision about college and deserve to know what their chances of success are; and that the current system makes it extremely difficult to access transfer data because community colleges don't have the data on where their students transfer to or how they do once they transfer. Both the panelists and the Members of Congress who spoke expressed strong support for the CTA. Speakers included: Julie Carpenter-Hubin, Assistant Vice President for Institutional Research and Planning, The Ohio State University; Sarah Henry, Director of Legislative Affairs, The Association of Big Ten Students and University of Iowa Undergraduate Student; Drew Scheberle, Senior Vice President, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; and Mamie Voight (moderator), Vice President of Policy Research, Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Congressional Briefing on School Diversity

On April 9, The Century Foundation and The National Coalition on School Diversity hosted a congressional briefing entitled "How Congress, States, and School Districts Can Take Action on School Diversity." Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) opened the briefing by discussing "the continued and increasing racial and economic segregation" in the U.S. and the importance of the Strength in Diversity Act (S.3413/H.R.6722), introduced in the Senate by Senator Murphy, as a first step to "set up federal funding streams…to invest in school diversity." Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, followed with the keynote address in which she noted "Now, we are about at the same segregation levels as in 1968." She highlighted the need for simultaneous change in school and housing policies in order to address the challenge of integration and the need to invest more in neighborhood community schools and magnet programs because the majority of students attend public schools.

The panelists then discussed a number of topics, including: the research that shows that investments in school integration return large dividends; the need for states to avoid a top-down approach to school integration and instead be partners with communities when developing plans for integration; the need for strategic, visionary, and diverse leadership in schools to facilitate the desegregation process; the importance of making sure magnet programs are available to all students in a school; the need to do extensive outreach about magnet programs to all people in a community and provide free transportation to these programs; and the importance of including all voices, especially those of students, in the school integration process. Panelists included: Sufyan Hameed, Director of Expansion, IntegrateNYC; Angélica Infante-Green, Deputy Commissioner, New York State Education Department; Richard Kahlenberg, Director of K-12 Equity and Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation; Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, Virginia Commonwealth University; and Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers. The discussion was moderated by Kimberly Quick, Senior Policy Associate, The Century Foundation.

Executive Branch Updates

Request for Comment on Proposed Priorities for the Institute of Education Sciences

Public comment is requested on the priorities that will guide the work of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The Director of IES, Dr. Mark Schneider, will submit a set of proposed priorities for IES to the National Board for Education Sciences (the Board). Prior to submitting the proposed priorities to the Board, there is a 60-day comment period for members of the public to provide their input. The public comments will be submitted to the Board along with the set of proposed priorities. As noted in the request for comment, the mission of IES is "supporting research, conducting evaluations, and gathering statistics to improve the academic achievement and the access to high-quality education of all learners from early childhood to adulthood. As an applied science agency, IES seeks to translate its work into useful and usable information that can be accessed by a wide range of stakeholders." The draft statement on which public comment is requested includes sections providing an overview of the key activities of IES; articulating goals for IES; pointing to the standards for excellence in education research supported by IES; summarizing the outcomes IES focuses on for different periods of development; and noting approaches for increasing the dissemination and use of research followed by IES. A draft of the proposed priorities for IES is available in the Federal Register here. Comments are due by May 28, 2019. IES prefers for comments to be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal, available here. However, comments can also be submitted in hard copy to

Dr. Mark Schneider, Director, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave SW, Room 4109, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington DC 20202.

Federal Reports

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) *Implementation and Relative Impacts of Two Job Search Assistance Programs in New York City* This report describes the implementation and impact study findings from an evaluation of the relative effectiveness of two approaches to providing job search assistance (JSA) to cash assistance applicants in New York City.

(2) *American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2019 (AI/AN FACES 2019) Highlights* This flyer provides background on AI/AN FACES 2015, introduces AI/AN FACES 2019, and explains the importance of nationally representative data for Region XI.

(3) *A Conceptual Model for Quality in Home-Based Child Care* This brief describes a conceptual model for quality in home-based child care that can be used to inform state and local efforts in developing quality improvement initiatives that engage and sustain home-based child care participation.

(4) *Improving Employment Outcomes: Using Innovative Goal-Oriented Strategies in TANF Programs* This brief describes the efforts of four TANF programs to implement three new interventions that are informed by evidence on self-regulation and designed to help participants reach their personal and job-related goals.

(5) *Supporting Employees and Maximizing Profit: The Case for Workforce Development Focused on Self-Regulation* This brief presents evidence for developing the self-regulation skills of low-wage labor market participants in order to improve their outcomes and employers' profitability.

(6) *The Role of Licensing in Supporting Quality Practices in Early Care and Education* This brief describes a framework for the role of licensing in supporting quality ECE.

(7) *Effects of Four Responsible Fatherhood Programs for Low-Income Fathers: Evidence from the Parents and Children Together Evaluation* This brief presents the impacts of four Responsible Fatherhood (RF) programs on fathers' parenting, relationships, economic stability, and well-being about one year after the fathers enrolled.

(8) *Effects of Two Healthy Marriage Programs for Low-Income Couples: Evidence from the Parents and Children Together Evaluation* This brief presents the impacts of two Healthy Marriage (HM) programs about one year after study enrollment on the status and quality of the couples' relationships, their co-parenting relationships, and job and career advancement.

(9) *Child Care Subsidies under the CCDF Program: An Overview of Policy Differences across States and Territories as of October 1, 2017* This brief provides selected information about State and Territory policy differences using maps and charts.

(10) *Employment and Health Among Low-Income Adults and their Children: A Review of the Literature* This literature review distills findings from existing research to understand the causal relationship between employment and health.

(11) *MotherWise: Implementation of a Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education (HMRE) Program for Pregnant and New Mothers* This report presents findings on the development and implementation of MotherWise, a HMRE program designed to serve low-income pregnant women and new mothers in Denver, CO.

New Report from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

A new publication is available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *Integrating Care Through Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans (D-SNPS): Opportunities and Challenges* This issue brief highlights lessons learned from the experience of states that have used SNPs to integrate care for

individuals who are dual-eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.

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) *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2018* This report presents data on crime at school from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals, and the general population.

(2) *Relationship Between Educational Attainment and Labor Underutilization* This Data Point examines the relationship between educational attainment and various measures of labor underutilization.

(3) *College Majors and Careers: Job Relatedness and Compensation of 1992–93 and 2007–08 Bachelor's Degree Recipients 4 Years After Graduation* This Statistics in Brief compares the labor market outcomes of 1992-93 and 2007-08 bachelor's degree recipients 4 years after their graduation, by major.

Federal Funding Opportunities

This month's FFO highlights an Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Children's Bureau funding opportunity. The purpose of this funding opportunity is to fund cooperative agreements that support the development, implementation, and evaluation of strategies that prevent child maltreatment, reduce entry into the public child welfare system, and enhance the overall well-being outcomes of children and families. Funding will be used to improve the safety and stability of all families and reinforce supportive, nurturing relationships by: enhancing the capacity of communities to offer broad-based family supports; using data to inform and align strategies across sectors to address site specific barriers; supporting strategic collaborations with traditional family-serving agencies and non-traditional partners; and coordinating, monitoring, and reporting on strategies and outcomes across multi-sector partners. The project period is for 5 years. Letters of intent are due by May 12, 2019. Completed applications are due by June 11, 2019. Click here to read about this and other funding opportunities.