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Policy Update: September 2018

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SRCD News Related to Child and Family Policy

SRCD Policy Fellowship Program: Apply Now

We are seeking applicants for the SRCD Policy Fellowship Program for the 2019-2020 academic year. There are two fellowship programs: *federal* and *state*. The purpose of the fellowship program is to provide

researchers with immersive opportunities to learn firsthand about policy development, implementation, and evaluation, and to use their research skills in child development to inform public policy at either the federal or state level. All fellowships will be from September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020.

Federal Policy Fellowship

There are two types of federal fellowships: *congressional* and *executive branch.* Both fellowships are full-time immersion experiences in Washington, D.C. as fellows work as resident scholars within congressional or federal executive branch agency offices. Application Requirements: Applicants must have a doctoral-level degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., Ed.D.), must demonstrate exceptional competence in an area of child development research, must be U.S. citizens, and must be members of SRCD. We welcome applications from early, mid-career, and advanced professionals. This fellowship will help developmental scientists at all career stages understand policy development, implementation, and evaluation; the potential for linkages between research and policy; how to communicate more effectively with policymakers; and how to formulate more informed and useful questions for policy-related research. Applications are due online by December 14, 2018, 11:59pm Eastern. For more information about the SRCD Federal Policy Fellowship Program, click here or email policyfellowships@srcd.org. To apply to the federal fellowship, click here.

State Policy Fellowship

There are two types of state fellowships: *pre-doctoral* and *post-doctoral*. SRCD will be awarding up to four part-time pre-doctoral state fellows, and two full-time post-doctoral state fellows. Fellows are placed in state executive branch agency offices for immersion experiences. In addition to a placement supervisor within the state executive branch agency, fellows will receive support from an academic mentor. SRCD expects the state fellowships to provide fellows with opportunities for exposure to policy development, implementation, and evaluation; to develop skills in mutual communication between researchers and policymakers; and to learn about ways research can be used to inform policy at the state level. Submit letters of intent by December 21, 2018, 11:59pm Eastern. For more information about the SRCD State Policy Fellowship Program, including requirements and procedures for submission of letters of intent, click here or email policyfellowships@srcd.org.

New Social Policy Report and SPR Brief

SRCD has recently released a new *Social Policy Report* and *Social Policy Report Brief* by Dr. R. Gabriela Barajas-Gonzalez and colleagues entitled "Applying a Community Violence Framework to Understand the

Impact of Immigration Enforcement Threat on Latino Children." The report focuses on research suggesting that childhood exposure to circumstances that produce persistent fear and chronic anxiety (such as the fear that many immigrant children experience of their parents being arrested, incarcerated, or deported) entails significant risk for adverse long-term outcomes. Visit the SRCD website or follow the embedded links to read the full *Social Policy Report* and the two-page *Social Policy Report Brief*.

Register Now: Upcoming Webinar on Precision Home Visiting

Title: Research Toward Precision Home Visiting: Making Services More Efficient and Effective for Families

Date: Monday, October 15

Time: 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern

Description: Traditional research often demonstrates that families engaged in home visiting do better than their peers, on average. What these studies don't indicate is that some families receive fewer benefits than others and some don't benefit at all. Precision home visiting seeks to help programs tailor services for families based on research that identifies what aspects of home visiting work for which families in what circumstances. This webinar introduces the Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative, a national research and development platform advancing the field toward precision home visiting. The webinar describes methods to examine precision home visiting innovations, highlighting as an example the evaluation of a state-level initiative that uses family goal planning to match services to families' unique strengths, risks, and needs. This webinar has been adapted from a presentation at the 2018 National Research Conference on Early Childhood and will feature a presentation by Anne Duggan of Johns Hopkins University, Jon Korfmacher of the Erikson Institute, and Matthew Poes of James Bell Associates.

Click here to register for this webinar.

Register Now: Upcoming SRCD Special Topic Meetings

DEVSEC18: Conference on the Use of Secondary and Open Source Data in Developmental Science
October 4-6, 2018
Phoenix, Arizona

Who should attend?

- Current users of secondary and open source data who would like the unique opportunity to connect, collaborate, and share expertise.
- Developmental scientists interested in incorporating secondary and open source data into their research.
- Anyone interested in learning more about how existing open sources of data can help answer questions on how children, youth, and families develop.

DEVSEC18 will include training sessions, funding opportunities and strategies, diverse presentation formats, networking opportunities, and more!

Click here for more information and to register

Promoting Character Development Among Diverse Children and Adolescents: The Roles of Families, Schools, and Out-Of-School-Time Youth Development Programs
October 18-20, 2018
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Parents, schools, and out-of-school programs are united in an interest to identify the contexts of youth that are associated with positive development. With increasing frequency, this interest is focused on a key indicator of such development: Character. Embodied by the vision of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, that “my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character,” the growing interest in character development is predicated on the aspirations of parents and of youth-development practitioners that enhancing children’s character will benefit both individuals and civil society.

Click here for more information and to register

Legislative Branch Updates

FY19 Appropriations: Large Spending Package Awaits President's Signature

On September 26, the House of Representatives adopted the conference report for a $855.1 billion spending package that includes the Defense, Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019 on a 361-61 vote. The Senate had previously voted 97-3 to adopt the conference report on September 18. The legislation now awaits the president's signature. *Congressional Quarterly* reports that he is likely to sign the bill by the start of the fiscal year on October 1, despite previously indicating that "he might veto the measure over concerns that his border wall request is not being funded as he wants." However, President Trump indicated to reporters on Wednesday that he would likely sign the bipartisan bill, stating "we're going to keep the government open."

The portion of the legislation focused on the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies contains $178.1 billion in funding. Details on the funding levels are available in the House Appropriations Committee's summary, conference committee explanatory statement, and the full conference report. The bill also includes stopgap funding through December 7 for the federal agencies that will not have full year appropriations by the start of the fiscal year on October 1, including the departments of Commerce, Homeland Security, Justice, and State, among others. Assuming the bill is signed by October 1, it will be the first time in 10 years that the Department of Defense is funded on time, and the first time in 22 years that the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education are funded on time.

Bipartisan Opioid Legislation Moves Forward

On September 17, the Senate voted 99-1 to pass H.R. 6, a legislative package focused on curbing opioid addiction. Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) was the only Senator to vote against the legislation. The House of Representatives passed its own version of H.R. 6 in late June. The Senate package includes 70 different proposals from five different Senate committees focused on combatting the opioid crisis. Senators on both sides of the aisle praised the passage of this legislation, with Senator Gary Peters (D-MI) stating, "We know that there is no silver bullet that will end the crisis overnight, but we do know how to fight it together, and that is what we are doing today," and Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN) adding, "My hope is that....we can send [this bill] to the president's desk as quickly as possible."

On September 25, a bipartisan, bicameral conference committee of nine lawmakers agreed on a final piece of legislation that resolved the differences between the House and Senate versions of H.R. 6. The agreement worked out by the conference committee now must be voted on by both the House and Senate. *Congressional Quarterly* reports that both chambers are eager to pass the legislation quickly. Additional

coverage of the opioid legislation passed so far is available in the June and July editions of Policy Update.

Congressional Briefing on the State of Free College

On September 13, the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) held a congressional briefing entitled "The State of Free College." The briefing opened with comments by Mika Morse, Deputy Legislative Director for Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), who offered a federal perspective on free college programs, stating, "Making college truly affordable is not just aspirational, it is something that is being focused on by everyone in this room. Allowing students to get a college degree without taking on debt is already a national priority." Background on the issue was then provided with an overview of recent research conducted by IHEP on the impact of free college programs for low-income students in two states – New York and Tennessee. This research illustrates that the burden is greatest on students from low-income backgrounds and outlines five key recommendations for reducing the burden of college costs on these students: invest first and foremost in low-income students, fund non-tuition expenses for low-income students, include four-year colleges in free college programs, support existing state need-based grant programs, and avoid restrictive or punitive participation requirements.

A panel of experts then discussed a range of issues related to free college programs and college affordability in general. Topics discussed included: increasing public enthusiasm around state programs in recent years, even though some of the programs have been around for decades; the ongoing challenge of student retention and low graduation rates for many programs; the immense cost of non-tuition expenses for many students and the fact that very few programs cover these expenses at all; the need for states to collect and share data on their free college programs in order to identify enrollment and retention gaps; and a discussion of how the federal government can incentivize states to be strategic in how they target their money for free college programs. Panelists included: Tiffany Jones, Ph.D., Director of Higher Education Policy, The Education Trust; Kenyatta Lovett, Ph.D., Executive Director, Complete Tennessee; and Jen Mishory, J.D., Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation. The discussion was moderated by Mamie Voight, Vice President of Policy Research, Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Senate Committee Hearing on Implications of the Reinterpretations of the Flores Settlement Agreement

On September 18, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing entitled "The Implications of the Reinterpretation of the Flores Settlement Agreement for Border Security and Illegal Immigration Incentives." Committee Chairman Ron Johnson (R-WI) opened by stating that currently, immigration laws can only be enforced by two options, "separating parents from children—nobody wants that to happen. That's no longer the policy. Or, revert to the Obama era policy which is: we apprehend these families, we can't hold them, we can't really determine parentage and we release them to the interior with very low removal rates for those that don't have valid asylum claims. I don't think that's an acceptable state of affairs." Ranking Member Claire McCaskill (D-MO) followed with her remarks, stating "I think any action on legislation at this point is premature because we don't have all the facts." However, she also noted the need to create an infrastructure for an immigration judicial system, remarking, "Wouldn't this be a better investment than building family prisons?"

Senators and the witnesses then discussed the Flores Settlement Agreement (FSA), which limits the amount of time a child can be in federal detention to twenty days. Many of the witnesses discussed their view that the FSA and other legal loopholes are considered "pull-factors" because they entice families with children to immigrate to the U.S., due to the higher likelihood of families not being detained. However, many members of the committee noted the lack of immigration judges and court facilities as issues related to the immigration judicial system that need to be addressed as well. This issue was reflected in Senator McCaskill's comment, "It is outrageous that people are waiting…three to four years for a hearing. No wonder we can't keep track of everyone." Witnesses included: Matthew Albence, Executive Associate Director, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Robert Perez, Acting Deputy Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Joseph Edlow, Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice; and Rebecca Gambler, Director, Homeland Security and Justice, U.S. Government Accountability Office. Click here to watch the full hearing and read witness testimonies.

Executive Branch Updates

National Advisory Child Health and Human Development Council Meeting

The National Advisory Child Health and Human Development Council met on September 13 to advise the Director of the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). The director of NICHD, Dr. Diana Bianchi, opened the meeting with the director's report, which provided

updates on a range of issues, including the budget and recent noteworthy research initiatives that NICHD is involved in. Regarding the budget, Dr. Bianchi noted that Congress has funded NIH generously in the last several years and that NIH is on track for an approximately $2 billion increase for FY19. She also discussed some of the ways that NICHD used its increased funding in FY18, which included: doubling the number of early stage researchers funded from FY17 to FY18; supporting the inclusion of pregnant and lactating women in research through the PRGLAC task force; launching ACT NOW to initiate clinical trials to identify, treat, and care for babies exposed to opioids in utero; and dedicating over $39 million to sustain existing research programs in preeclampsia, maternal mortality, fertility/infertility, and autism. Dr. Bianchi also discussed noteworthy research initiatives at NICHD, highlighting three of them. The Trans-NIH Pediatric Research Consortium (N-PeRC) seeks to harmonize efforts in child health research across the 27 institutes and centers at NIH; enhance communication between NIH, advocacy groups, and Capitol Hill; and support the growth of the pediatric work force. Dr. Bianchi noted that N-PeRC plans to continue meeting every other month and has already identified immediate projects to work on as well as longer-term issues to address. She also discussed INCLUDE (INvestigation of Co-occurring conditions across the Lifespan to Understand Down syndromE), to which NIH has dedicated an additional $23 million, bringing the total for Down syndrome research in FY18 to approximately $60 million. Dr. Bianchi also highlighted an upcoming study that NICHD is conducting with the National Academy of Sciences focused on maternal mortality.

A large portion of the second half of the meeting was dedicated to discussion of NICHD's strategic planning process. Dr. Bianchi opened the strategic planning portion of the meeting by emphasizing the three core principles of NICHD's strategic planning process: transparency, stakeholder participation, and decisions informed by evidence. She noted that the overall goal of the strategic plan was to improve the health of the populations NICHD serves, and that the strategic planning process provides an opportunity for internal and external stakeholders to look at NICHD's portfolio with a fresh perspective, review and refocus NICHD's science, and align resources with scientific priorities. In addition to the director's report and discussion of strategic planning, updates were provided by several divisions and offices, and presentations were given on pediatric HIV infections, PregSource, and new directions in functional MRI use. The meeting agenda, additional resources, and selected presentations from the meeting are available here, and a webcast of the event is available here.

America's Children 2018 **Report Released**

On September 19, the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics released *America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-being, 2018.* The report follows guidelines for calculating key indicators of child well-being in the U.S. agreed upon by 23 federal agencies. It provides contrasts of the most recently available data with earlier data and introduces new statistical indicators where these address important national issues and the data permit the development of rigorous indicators. In the most recently available national statistics (for which the years differ somewhat across indicators), child well-being shows areas of improvement, no change, and deterioration. For example:

- *Economic and housing circumstances.* The percent of children 0-17 years living in poverty declined from 20% in 2015 to 18% in 2016. During this period there was also an increase in the percent of children living with at least one parent employed year-round and full time (from 75% to 77%). The percent of children in households experiencing food insecurity, 18%, did not change across 2015-2016. However, there was a small but significant decline between 2013 and 2015 in the percent of households with children ages 0-17 reporting shelter cost burden, crowding, and/or physically inadequate housing (from 40% to 39%).
- *Health insurance coverage.* The percent of children who were uninsured stayed the same at 5% in 2015 and 2016, as did the percent of children who had no usual source of health care (also 5% in 2016).
- *Physical environment and safety.* The most recent data show a substantial percentage of children 0-17 living in counties with pollutant concentrations above the levels of current air quality standards (62% in both 2015 and 2016). Additionally, there has been a decline in the percentage of children served by community water systems that did not meet all applicable health-based drinking water standards (5% in 2016, down from 9% in 2015).
- *Substance use.* The most recently available data indicate no change in the percent of students reporting having 5 or more alcoholic beverages in a row in the past 2 weeks (e.g., 17% of 12th graders in 2017) or in the percent of students reporting illicit drug use in the past 30 days (e.g., 25% of 12th graders in 2017). While students who reported smoking daily in the past 30 days did not change for 10th and 12th graders between 2016 and 2017 (e.g., for 10th graders remaining at 2% across these years), the percentage decreased significantly for 8th graders (from 0.9% in 2016 to 0.6% in 2017).

This important annual report includes a number of further indicators, including youth victims of serious violent crimes, child injury and mortality, indicators of educational achievement and attainment, and indicators of emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Census Reports on 2017 Income and Poverty, Health Insurance Statistics Released

On September 12, the U.S. Census Bureau released reports on income and poverty as well as health insurance coverage in the United States in 2017. The reports, based on data from the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, reflect the U.S. population overall (including but going beyond families with children). Among the statistics reported was that median household income in the U.S. increased for the third consecutive year in 2017, from $60,309 in 2016 to $61,372 in 2017. While real median earnings for all male workers increased 3% between 2016 and 2017 (to $44,408 in 2017), there was no statistically significant change in real median earnings for female workers ($31,610 in 2017). The official poverty rate declined from 12.7% in 2016 to 12.3% in 2017, with a total of 39.7 million people living in poverty in the United States in 2017. The decline, while not statistically significant, reflects the third year showing a decline. The percent of people without health insurance at any point during the year remained consistent from 2016 to 2017 at 8.8%. Non-Hispanic Whites had an uninsured rate of 6.3% while the uninsured rate was 10.6% for Blacks, 7.3% for Asians, and 16.1% for Hispanics.

Resources

Reminder: NIH Request for Information on Clinical Trials Definition

As discussed in the August edition of Policy Update, SRCD members are urged to respond to a Request for Information (RFI) issued by NIH regarding its clinical trials definition and policy. SRCD is drafting a formal response as an organization that will be shared with membership, and anticipates signing on to letters by the Federation of Associations of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) and the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA). SRCD is a member of both organizations. In addition to SRCD's response to the RFI on behalf of the association, individual members of SRCD are encouraged to submit a comment as well. The deadline to submit a comment is November 12. Further background and guidance for members considering submitting individual responses is available in this message to SRCD members from Laura Namy, Executive Director of SRCD.

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) Experiences of Parents and Children Living in Poverty: A Review of the Qualitative Literature This literature review summarizes the qualitative literature related to experiences of parents and children living in poverty as a part of the Understanding Poverty: Childhood and Family Experiences study, which will involve in-depth interviews with members of low-income families.

(2) Forging a Path: Impacts and Costs of New York City's Young Adult Internship Program This report presents 30-month impact results from a random assignment evaluation of the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), a subsidized employment program for young people in New York City who have become disconnected from school and work.

(3) Trauma-Informed Approaches for Programs Serving Fathers in Re-Entry: A Review of the Literature and Environmental Scan This report documents what is known about trauma among fathers reentering from incarceration, how fatherhood programs can foster healing and avoid exacerbating or re-traumatizing participants, and resources that may be available to help fatherhood programs become trauma-informed.

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) Building the Next Generation of Child Support Policy Research This research agenda presents a framework for the broader child support community to collectively answer pressing policy questions over the next decade.

(2) Addressing the Opioid Crisis: Data Sources and Linking Strategies This report highlights key research questions and identifies opportunities to use existing data sources and implement data-linking strategies that can support the HHS five-point strategy to combat the opioid crisis.

New Reports 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) Mobile Digest of Education Statistics, 2017 This Mobile Digest is a compact compilation of statistical information covering prekindergarten through graduate school to describe the current American education scene.

(2) Trends in Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Submissions This Web Table combines FAFSA submission data released by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid, starting with the 2006–07 application cycle, with other nationally representative data to show variation in FAFSA submissions by region, state or jurisdiction, selected applicant characteristics, and over time.

(3) 2015–16 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): Data Inconsistencies Between the Outcome Measures (OM) and Graduation Rates (GR) Survey Components This data file documentation provides guidance to users of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data collected in the Graduation Rates (GR), 200 Percent Graduation Rates (GR200), and Outcome Measures (OM) survey components for the 2015–16 collection year.

Federal Funding Opportunities

This month's FFO highlights two National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funding opportunities. These opportunities support research to test the effectiveness of combined strategies to both detect and intervene to reduce the risk of suicide behavior, suicide ideation, and non-suicidal self-harm (NSSI) by youth in contact with the juvenile justice system. Both invite intervention strategies that are designed to be delivered in typical service settings using typically available personnel and resources, to enhance the implementation of interventions that prove effective, enhance their future uptake in diverse settings, and thereby reduce risk of suicide and self-harm in this population. PAR-16-299 uses an R01 funding mechanism and completed applications are due by February 5, 2019. PAR-18-228 uses an R34 funding mechanism to fund pilot studies in preparation for large-scale studies, with completed applications due by February 16, 2019. Click here to read about these and other funding opportunities.