



The Child Care Planning Council compiled these resources from a variety of electronic newsletters. We have now compiled them by subject. We hope it is helpful!

School Readiness/Impact of Pre-K Reports and Resources

- **New Policy Fact Sheets Available: Who Goes to Preschool and Why Does It Matter? And More:** Two fact sheets based on previously published policy briefs are now available from NIEER. You can view the fact sheets Who Goes to Preschool and Why Does It Matter? (<http://nieer.org/resources/factsheets/9.pdf>) and Child Outcome Standards in Pre-K Programs: What Are Standards; What Is Needed To Make Them Work? (<http://nieer.org/resources/factsheets/8.pdf>) on the NIEER web site. For copies of the fact sheets, please contact info@nieer.org.
- **National School Readiness Indicators Initiative Report:** Research shows that too many young children enter kindergarten with physical, social, emotional and cognitive deficits that could have been minimized or eliminated through early intervention. A new report entitled Getting Ready: Findings from the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative, shows how identifying indicators of school readiness and tracking progress on those measures can lead to more effective policies and investments in early childhood. Read the press release: <http://www.gettingready.org/matriarch/d.asp?PageID=303&PageName2=pdfhold&p=&PageName=FINAL+PRESS+RELEASE+2%2Epdf>
Read the full report: <http://www.gettingready.org/matriarch/d.asp?PageID=303&PageName2=pdfhold&p=&PageName=Getting+Ready+-+Full+Report.pdf>
Read the executive summary: <http://www.gettingready.org/matriarch/d.asp?PageID=303&PageName2=pdfhold&p=&PageName=Getting+Ready+%2D+Executive+Summary%2Epdf>
- **Perspectivas Educativas en la Primera Infancia (Perspectives on Early Childhood Education):** This book contains a set of influential papers written by Dr. Lilian Katz, an emeritus Professor at the University of Illinois, over the last 20 years. All these papers have been previously published in English but are available for the first time in one volume in Spanish. The papers have been carefully selected to appeal to an international audience. The ideas in these papers were developed in response to particular events, problems, and challenges found in the early childhood settings and carry clear messages for all teachers of young children. The book was published by the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP), an international, non-government organization, that advocates for the education of children under the age of eight years throughout the world. For more information about OMEP, visit: http://www.omep-ong.net/eng_index.html. To order the book, contact Selma Simonstein, OMEP World President, at ssimonstein@ucentral.cl.



- **Exploring Children’s Abilities as they Transition to Kindergarten: An Overview of SEDL’s Latest Research Synthesis on Readiness:** Lacy Wood, of SEDL’s National

Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools gave an overview of the Center’s latest research synthesis: Readiness: School, Family, and Community Connections. The term readiness as it relates to schools, families, and communities are a broad and multifaceted concept with a variety of definitions and approaches. Yet, studies on the topic are very narrow. Bound by the scope of what has been studied empirically, the Readiness synthesis focuses predominately on children’s readiness, rather than ready schools. This research synthesis explored three major questions related to children’s readiness and family, school, and community connections: • What is known about differences in children’s skills and performance at kindergarten entry and the contextual factors associated with those differences? • What is known about early childhood or preschool interventions that include family or community components? • What is known about children’s transition to kindergarten, including transition beliefs and practices and patterns of family-school interactions? For a full copy of the report, go to: <http://www.sedl.org/connections/research-syntheses.html>

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT A CROSSROADS:** A growing body of research has demonstrated the critical role high-quality early childhood education plays in students’ success, not only in the elementary grades but throughout their lives. The decisions we make now about the ways today’s preschool and early elementary students are taught will affect our society for many years to come. "Focus on Early Childhood Education" offers the full text of a Harvard Education Letter article series on preK-3 education, along with links to the latest research and other resources on early childhood education. In the lead article, Stanford School of Education dean and early childhood education expert Deborah Stipek assesses the state of preschool and elementary education in the U.S., evaluates current federal initiatives and their impact, and suggests directions for future development. She writes, "Preschool education programs offer us an important opportunity to narrow achievement gaps before children begin school. A question that is not yet settled, however, is what kinds of instruction will narrow these gaps without undermining young children’s enthusiasm and self-confidence. ...Increased attention to academic skills is not a problem as long as it does not come at the expense of attention to social skills, emotional well-being, and other resources (such as dental care) that Head Start centers traditionally have provided." Also, Harvard Graduate School of Education professor Catherine Snow, an expert in early reading and literacy development, talks about the importance of vocabulary and other literacy skills in preparing young children for later academic success and in closing early achievement gaps. <http://www.hel-earlyed.org/>

- **Fundamentals for Quality Early Childhood Education: Leading Early Childhood Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do,** Published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals: NAESP’s latest standards book helps principals understand the critical need for high-quality early childhood education and what their role is in advocating, supporting, and improving early childhood education in their schools and communities. Explanations of six standards, real-life examples of the standards’ application in schools, reflection questions, and assessment checklists give

principals a comprehensive guide for this important stage in a child’s education.

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<http://web.naesp.org/nprc/description.php?ll=289&UID=20050418133435166.107.158.222&naespId=ECLC-OL>

- Related articles: <http://www.naesp.org/ContentLoad.do?contentId=1571> (Excerpt: I am puzzled. Why has it taken our country until the 21st century to figure out that a high-quality preschool experience is education's most essential and cost-effective component? An overwhelming body of research has shown that, regardless of ethnic background or socioeconomic status, young children who have early and rich learning activities do better in school and in life. Thankfully, public and private support for preschool has grown in recent years, with more than 40 states providing funding for pre-kindergarten programs and several committed to include all children whose parents want to enroll them. But, we can do more. As school principals we need to raise our collective voices to call upon federal, state, and local governments to provide the resources required to create comprehensive and developmentally appropriate early childhood programs for all children.) and http://blackenterprise.yellowbrix.com/pages/blackenterprise/Story.nsp?story_id=69093095&ID=blackenterprise&scategory=New+Government%3AEducation&

- **YOUNG & HOMELESS: NOWHERE TO GO AFTERSCHOOL:** Like thousands of children in California, Pedro Jimenez learned at a young age to navigate two different worlds. During the day he was a student at Barnard-White Middle School in Union City, but at night he lived alone in a dilapidated warehouse, eating canned food warmed on his broken barbecue grill. He trudged to school to distract himself and pick up his free lunch. thousands of California school children each year find themselves in similar straights -- living in shelters, motels, cars, with family friends and even on the street because they don't have a permanent home. During the 2004-05 school year, the Department of Education found 148,842 school children were homeless in California. Those figures have caught the attention of the state Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, which Monday released preliminary homeless figures from the 2005-06 school year. The committee found nearly 95,000 school-aged children were homeless last year and two-thirds of them in elementary school. Homelessness can have many effects on a child, but professionals who work with families and children say the most obvious and perhaps universal one is that students' school work suffers. When a child's living situation is uncertain, stressful or even dangerous, they focus on basic survival, reports Grace Rauh, figuring out where they will sleep, get their next meal and earn money. http://www.timesheraldonline.com/ci_4579023.

- **New NIEER Policy Reports on School Readiness, Overlooked Pre-K Benefits, and More:** New policy reports from NIEER researchers include [Overlooked Benefits of Prekindergarten](#), [Prepared for Kindergarten: What Does "Readiness" Mean?](#), [The Benefits of Prekindergarten for Middle Income Children](#), [Making the Most of Kindergarten: Present Trends and Future Issues in the Provision of Full-day Programs](#), and [Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development Through Preschool](#). These reports are available on-line at

www.nieer.org.

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- **Building culturally & linguistically competent services to support young children, their families and school readiness:** Toolkit is the accurate word that author Kathy Hepburn uses to describe this 2004 publication. It was developed to provide guidance, tools and resources to assist communities in building culturally and linguistically competent services, supports, programs and practices related to young children and their families. Each section includes an overview of a key content area (e.g., Learning about Family and Community: Family Culture and Information Gathering); critical questions for communities; key strategies for families, providers and administrators; guides, tip sheets and checklists; promising practices and annotated resources. It's an extensive collection of current and useful information and tools. For example, don't miss "Tips for Bringing Family Strengths into the Early Care and Classroom Setting in Support of Multicultural Learning" on page 68. Download at <http://www.aecf.org/publications/data/cctoolkit.pdf>

- **Early Care and Education Toolkit:** UCLA recently posted the Early Care and Education Toolkit on their website. Please click on the link below to access the items listed below for the Early Care and Education Toolkit.
 - Early Care and Education - Brief
 - Early Care and Education - Power Point Presentation
 - Early Care and Education - Compendium of Resources
 - Early Care & Education Practitioner Brief
 - Preschool for ALL: Step by Step - A Planning Guide and Toolkit
 - Early Care and Education - Compendium of Resources
 - <http://www.healthychild.ucla.edu/First5CAReadiness/EarlyCareEducation.asp>

- **THE INFLUENCE OF PRESCHOOL CENTERS ON CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT:** The Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) center of UC Berkeley and Stanford University released a study which examined the effects of preschool and other forms of child care on children across differing socioeconomic and ethnic groups. How Much is Too Much? The Influence of Preschool Centers on Children's Development Nationwide used data from the National Center for Educational Statistics to examine the social development and early cognitive growth of 14,162 kindergartners nationwide. It found that attending a preschool center prior to kindergarten raises early language and pre-reading skills and math skills, especially for English-proficient Hispanic children and children from extremely poor families. However the study also found that attendance in preschool centers, even for short periods of time, hinders the rate at which young children develop social skills

and display the motivation to engage classroom tasks. On average, the earlier a child enters a

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preschool center, the slower their pace of social development. For more information on the study and its policy implications, please go to http://pace.berkeley.edu/pace_publications.html.

- **Easing the Transition from PreK to Kindergarten: What Schools and Families Can Do to Address Child Readiness:** This strategy brief from the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools explores ways schools and families can work together to address children's readiness for school and provides strategies schools can use to begin transition activities before children enter kindergarten. The brief is here: <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb6-readiness.pdf>.
- **NEA Offers School Readiness Guide:** Kirsten Haugen notes that the National Education Association has prepared a school readiness guide for parents, including simple pointers for academic readiness, social readiness, independence, and communication skills. The tips are not rocket science, but they are ready to use online or in a colorful brochure you can freely download, print, and distribute to prospective or enrolled families (<http://www.nea.org/parents/preparechild.html>). The NEA's brochure encourages parents to read, sing, and play with their children. It offers simple ways to explore writing, language, and problem-solving. And it gives parents tips for encouraging empathy, and positive ways to express feelings. Ideas for encouraging independence include providing clothes and shoes that are easy to fasten, and giving children time to dress and undress themselves. Parents are also reminded to communicate often with their kids, including writing notes and letting young children dictate notes to family and friends. The brochure concludes with additional parenting resources for encouraging young children in reading, science, and math.
- **Five-State Study Shows Significant Gains from Pre-K:** A just-released NIEER study of pre-K programs in Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia shows gains in vocabulary, early math skills and print awareness comparable to those seen in an earlier study conducted in Oklahoma by William Gormley of Georgetown University. As with the Georgetown work, the researchers used regression discontinuity design, testing children at preschool entry and at kindergarten entry. NIEER director Steve Barnett says the study is significant because it shows large gains occurring in a number of well-established state-funded preschool programs of good quality. The study, *The Effects of State Prekindergarten Programs on Young Children's School Readiness in Five States*, is available at : <http://nieer.org/resources/research/multistate/fullreport.pdf>
- **A New Brief Highlights the Importance of Focusing on Preschoolers' Social and Emotional Development:** In a time when children's academic achievement is being emphasized, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) released a report that suggests the importance of continual development of young children's social and emotional skills. The report points out that one of the top complaints from Kindergarten teachers is children's inability to regulate their own behavior. The report provides recommendations to policymakers to invest in preschool programs that support social and emotional development. To view the report, visit: <http://nieer.org/docs/index.php?DocID=125>.
- **GETTING EVERY CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL: A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS:** Preschool access is just the beginning of getting every child ready for first grade.

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Ensuring that pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs reach high standards of quality is a top priority. Quality means comprehensive curriculum standards and sufficient number of high-quality instructional staff. A new report from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) outlines four successful strategies: (1) Offer pre-kindergarten to all children who are at risk of academic failure, not just those from families living in poverty; (2) Strive to meet quality standards; (3) Ensure that all children have a school-readiness assessment before they enter first grade; and (4) Continue to place a priority on programs that encourage vaccinations and health insurance for children.

http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/Every_Child_Ready.asp

- **Readiness Indicators:** The fourth annual research synthesis from the National Center for Family and Community Connections With Schools of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory looks at 48 research studies on contextual factors associated with children's school readiness. The report also discusses the effectiveness of a variety of early childhood or preschool interventions that include a family or community focus.

<http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/readiness-synthesis.pdf> (125 pages)

- **NEW FINDINGS - POSITIVE EFFECTS OF PRESCHOOL ATTENDANCE ON CHILDREN'S EARLY LANGUAGE AND PRE-READING SKILLS:**

Young children from low-income families who are able to access center-based programs show markedly higher rates of cognitive development and growth in school-readiness skills, according to a report from PACE's Growing Up in Poverty Project (GUP), appearing in the journal, 'Child Development.' The Child Development journal article is posted on the web http://pace.berkeley.edu/Stanford_Child_Dev_Findings.pdf

Child-care in poor communities — the role of family child-care homes: A research paper from the Growing Up in Poverty study, published in CHILD DEVELOPMENT last month, found that children from poor families displayed strong cognitive and school-readiness gains when enrolled in center-based programs. This analysis, based on 451 California and Florida mothers and their young children, also found that children attending family child-care homes (FCCH) displayed a *modest* tendency to display more misbehavior and *slightly* more aggression, compared to children cared for by kith or kin members. Leaders of the FCCH community have asked the research team to clarify this finding.

Three points are relevant in understanding this finding. First, the negative effect on social development is small but statistically significant. Enrollment in an FCCH did not raise the incidence of misbehavior on all four subscales of the gauge of social development. Second, we observed wide variability in the quality of FCCHs in these low-income communities. Positive effects from quality indicators — providers with some college, positive interaction between provider/teacher and the child, and fewer children in the setting — apply to cognitive gains for children attending FCCHs. That is, children enrolled in higher quality FCCHs showed somewhat higher cognitive gains than children

cared for exclusively by kith or kin members. Third, children attending FCCHs totaled 12% of the total sample of 451 children and parents. Tests of statistical significance, however, do take this into account, so they are valid for our sample. Future work could usefully focus on the cognitive, school-readiness, and social developmental effects of

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FCCHs.

An earlier PACE project report detailed this variation in FCCH quality. This report also discusses how many mothers relying on FCCHs or kith and kin believe that these providers are more flexible, easier to communicate with, and offer their child more individualized attention, compared to the perceptions of mothers using center-based programs. This report, "Child care aid and quality for California families", can be found on the PACE website [pace.Berkeley.edu].

The Growing Up in Poverty Project is a six-year effort, codirected by scholars at Berkeley, Stanford, and Teachers College, Columbia University. (from a PACE email)

- **Study Finds Child Care and Preschool Benefits:** Children from low-income families who spend long hours in child care may be better off than children left in a home environment, a new study reports, countering some previous findings that suggested long periods of child care had a negative effect. The study, published in a journal titled *Child Development*, found that young children enrolled in child care centers and preschools develop early reading and language skills faster than children remaining in home-based care. For information about obtaining a copy of the study, please go to <http://www.srcd.org/cd.html>. (Society for Research in Child Development)
- **MAURITIUS STUDY SUPPORTS PRESCHOOL'S VALUE:** A new study in Mauritius, a multi-ethnic, democratic island in the Indian Ocean, found that high quality preschool education can reduce lifelong aggressive and anti-social tendencies. The study, reported in *Preschool Matters* (December 2003), a publication of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), explored whether a program that offered both educational enrichment and proper nutrition might play a role in reducing violence and crime. In Mauritius, the researchers worked with children from two separate villages, matching 100 to be in an enrichment program with 400 of their peers who ranked similarly on temperament, family situation, parental employment, and education, and the age of mom at birth. By the age of 10, the children who attended the quality preschool showed better social skills, more organized thinking and had more friends than the children who received no such enrichment. By the age of 17 and 23, the researchers found the positive effects still pronounced with the young adults more socially adjusted, calmer and better able to get along with peers. As young adults, the children who attended the enriched preschools were up to 52% less likely to commit a crime. To download this study, search for "Effects of Environmental Enrichment..." at: <http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org> (From Exchange Every Day)
http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/abstract/160/9/1627?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=&fulltext=Mauritius&andorexactfulltext=and&searchid=1079986531369_6001&stored_search=&FIRSTINDEX=0&sortspec=relevance&resourcetype=1&journalcode=ajp (from NIEER)
- **SCHOOL READINESS: CLOSING RACIAL & ETHNIC GAPS:** This issue of "The Future of Children" focuses on children's lives before they get to school in an effort to understand how to close the racial and ethnic gaps in educational outcomes. The issue addresses the following questions: (1) How large are the racial and ethnic gaps in school

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readiness? (2) How much of the gap is due to differences in children's socioeconomic background or to genetics? (3) How much do disadvantages like poor health, poor parenting, low-quality preschool childcare, and low birth weight contribute to the gaps? (4) What lessons can we learn from new research on brain development? (5) What do we know about what works and what does not work in closing the gap? The questions elicit complex answers from the authors of the eight articles in the issue, but the message of this volume is that, taken together, family socioeconomic status, parenting, child health, maternal health and behaviors, and preschool experiences likely account for most of the racial and ethnic gaps in school readiness. http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/School_Readiness_Summary.pdf

- **Getting Ready: Findings from the National School Readiness Indicators Initiative Research** shows that too many young children enter kindergarten with physical, social, emotional and cognitive deficits that could have been minimized or eliminated through early intervention. This new report shows how identifying indicators of school readiness and tracking progress on those measures can lead to more effective policies and investments in early childhood. The National School Readiness Indicators Initiative is a multi-state initiative that developed sets of indicators at the state level to track results for children from birth through age eight. The Initiative is sponsored by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Kauffman Foundation, and the Ford Foundation. The 17-state initiative is managed by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, a children's public policy and research organization based in Providence, RI. The reports and a state contact for each of the 17 participating states is available at: < <http://www.gettingready.org/> >
- **EARLY EXPERIENCE IN SCHOOL SETS THE STAGE FOR LATER PROGRESS:** Children's earliest experiences in school often set the pattern for later academic progress, according to a recent research synthesis written by Martha Boethel and published by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). "Readiness: School, Family, and Community Connections" describes 48 research studies on the contextual factors associated with children's readiness. In particular, this synthesis explores children's abilities as they make the transition to kindergarten, factors associated with these abilities, and implications of these factors on children's later success. It also discusses the effectiveness of a variety of early childhood or preschool interventions that include a family or community focus. <http://www.sedl.org/connections/research-syntheses.html>
- **Building the Foundation for Bright Futures:** (from Janice Gruendel in Connecticut) The National Governors Association has just posted their terrific 48 page report, entitled "Building the Foundation for Bright Futures." This is their final report of the Governors' School Readiness Task Force. I've cited it often using its framework of "ready children, ready families, ready schools, ready communities, and a ready state." Hope we link it into the Early Childhood Partners and ECE Finance Project frameworks. <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/0501TaskForceReadiness.pdf>
- **FUNDING GUIDE FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES:** The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) released Spending Smarter: A Funding Guide for Policymakers and Advocates to Promote Social and Emotional Health and School Readiness. The guide is designed to help state and community policymakers, agencies, families, and other advocates maximize the impact of existing funding streams to support positive social and



emotional development, early intervention, and treatment strategies that can improve school readiness. Both an Executive Summary and the full report are available at http://nccp.org/pub_ssf.html.

- **ENGAGING THE PUBLIC TO GET EVERYBODY READY FOR SCHOOL:** For communities dealing with contentious problems, public officials wrestling with tough policy choices or organizations faced with an apathetic or angry public, public engagement offers a means to: (1) Help citizens understand complex problems; (2) Involve those who are normally excluded from policy debates; (3) Promote productive public and leadership dialogue; and (4) Create momentum for change by building common ground, managing differences and creating new partnerships. To further these aims, Public Agenda had released a new discussion guide called, "Everybody Ready for School," focusing on the best ways to ensure high-quality pre-school and other school readiness programs for children. Choicework Guides support dialogue and deliberation on a wide variety of issues. They have been used by thousands of citizens looking to gain perspective on public issues. With the support of the Graustein Memorial Fund, Public Agenda created video and print discussion materials for use in community conversations nationwide. The materials are already being used in Connecticut to help communities engage on this critical education issue.
http://www.publicagenda.org/pubengage/pdfs/school_readiness.pdf.

- **Early Education A Remedy for Societal Inequities?** When Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke recently spent more time addressing economic disparities and the need for better education than he did interest rates, it raised the profile of a growing concern among key thinkers in this country — that rising inequities in wages and wealth will ultimately affect the cohesiveness of society and our standard of living. That view is detailed in a just-released policy information report from the Educational Testing Service compellingly titled America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation's Future. The authors identify disparities in the distribution of skills, economic restructuring and demographic trends related to immigration and an aging society as the three forces that must be addressed with sound policies. While ETS plans to issue its recommendations in a separate paper, it has identified education of children as one area to be addressed. Read the report at http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/AmericasPerfectStorm.pdf.

- **Delaying Kindergarten: Effects on Test Scores and Childcare Costs:** Is it beneficial to delay the age at which children begin kindergarten? New research finds that kids who enter at age 6 instead of age 5, especially kids from disadvantaged families, do significantly better on standardized tests and learn more from schooling. But delaying entry also leads to substantial additional childcare costs, especially for poor families. These findings argue that policymakers

may need to view entrance age policies as a package--one that considers both cognitive and noncognitive consequences. A RAND research summary is available at <http://www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB9082/>.



- **Building Strong Rungs To Build Sturdy Ladders: The Status of Preschool - 3rd Grade Systems in New Jersey:** As New Jersey's successful preschool program matures, the challenges of connecting it to the early elementary grades are becoming more apparent. Key stakeholders believe that the payoff in student achievement by Third Grade will make PK-3 worth the effort. This new policy brief from the Association for the Children of New Jersey, describes how New Jersey's school districts are grappling with how to integrate preschool learning experiences with the K-3 grades in ways that will benefit children. Full text at: www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/BuildingStrongRungs.pdf.

- **Early Steps with Ready Schools:**
<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/Early%20Steps%20with%20Ready%20Schools.pdf>: In this report, the School Readiness Project at the Council of Chief State School Officers examines learning and accomplishments from state teams focused on developing Ready Schools in six states: Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Oregon, Washington, and West Virginia. The report presents each state's efforts to support children's transition to kindergarten; encourage continuity and alignment between early care and education programs and elementary schools; and ensure high quality learning environments. States also identify strategies for addressing the challenges of linking these efforts to school improvement planning and sustaining funding. Information about supplemental resources is included to support the states involved in the School Readiness Project as well as the larger community of those interested in improving this crucial transition. The six Ready Schools states have demonstrated key successes in facilitating broad inter-agency collaboration, planning, and implementation. However, there is much work to be done to improve the transition from early care and education to the early grades nationwide. We hope that this publication will supplement current efforts and encourage the development of new initiatives so that states can continue to provide the best start for students.

- **Parent Involvement at Selected Ready Schools:**
http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/Parent_Involvement_at_Ready_Schools.pdf: At school entry, gaps already separate the readiness skills of white and higher-income three-to-five year olds from their black, Hispanic, and lower-income peers. While strong parent involvement has clear benefits, schools need specific strategies for involving low-income and culturally diverse families during the early grades. To contribute to these efforts, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) commissioned a small study of parent involvement in four Ready Schools states: Connecticut, Indiana, Oregon, and Washington. Ready Schools states have been working with CCSSO for several years as part of the School Readiness Project. This project works to assist schools as they ease children's transition into kindergarten and improve the alignment between early care and the early grades, with a focus on low-income communities. The purpose of the study is to describe school-based opportunities to (1) create

strong partnerships with parents and (2) involve parents in the life of the school generally and the learning experiences of their children in particular. An important focus of the study is highlighting school efforts that target communities most in need of high-quality early childhood services, including those with large populations of low-income, Latino, African American, and English language learner (ELL) students. Throughout the four states, schools profiled in this



study have tailored formal and informal welcome strategies to family needs, despite little or no earmarked funding. While practices vary from school to school, respondents emphasized the importance of offering multiple ways for parents to access information and support, offering activities at different times of the day, accommodating language needs, and providing refreshments. Schools offered a range of parent involvement opportunities including traditional parent organizations; advocacy and leadership activities; classroom help; home-based learning support; school and community events; and ideas generated by parents themselves.

- **ALIGNMENT OF PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS EMPHASIZED:** In this paper, Kristie Kauerz outlines the importance of having strong, well-aligned programs beginning in PK and extending through third grade (PK-3). It reviews the short-term impact of PK and FDK programs, then summarizes the evidence that these impacts may "fade out" by the primary grades. To fight fade-out, PK-3 alignment is proffered as one means to enable children to maintain and expand upon the gains they make in early childhood education. PK-3 suggests that PK experiences should be aligned with kindergarten and that kindergarten should be aligned with early elementary education. The paper closes with federal policy recommendations that provide both models and incentives for the nation, states, and local school districts to institute and strengthen PK-3 alignment.

http://www.newamerica.net/Download_Docs/pdfs/Doc_File_2826_1.pdf

- **Stressed out kids article** (thanks to Eric Peterson for passing along) .
<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/06/03/INGE5Q5QCO1.DTL&hw=let+children+be+children&sn=001&sc=1000>

From the article—"Twenty years ago, I had a conference with a parent, a Sikh, whose child was brilliant. I was prepared to show him all her academic work, but he brushed it aside and said, "Yes, yes, I know she is quite smart, but I want to know how her soul is developing."

- **When Should a Kid Start Kindergarten?** (Thanks to Beatriz Leyva Cutler and Linda Parfitt for passing along)

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/03/magazine/03kindergarten-t.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

From the article: "I've had parents tell me that the preschool did not recommend sending their children on to kindergarten yet, but they had no choice," as they couldn't afford not to. In 49 out of 50 states, the average annual cost of day care for a 4-year-old in an urban area is more than the average annual public college tuition. A RAND Corporation position paper suggests policy makers may need to view "entrance-age policies and child-care policies as a package."

- **ZERO TO THREE Releases Community Profiles and Cross-Community Scan:** Last spring, 32 communities responded to ZERO TO THREE's Request for Information about local collaborative efforts to build a coordinated system of services for young children (prenatal through age five) and their families. Profiles of these communities are now posted on our website. In addition, a cross-community scan summarizes characteristics of these early

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childhood system building initiatives in communities. Community leaders will be featured at a national policy summit entitled "In Our Own Backyards: Local Initiatives that Change Young Children's Lives." Co-hosted by ZERO TO THREE and Cuyahoga County, Ohio's Invest in Children, the summit will be held on June 6 - 8, 2007 in Cleveland.

http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/BM_communityscan_5_14_07.pdf?docID=3261

Profiles: http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ter_pub_communityprofiles

- **Parent Involvement at Selected Ready Schools:** Two new reports from the Ready Schools Project at the Council of Chief State School Officers provide case studies and lessons from school-readiness efforts. The first report, "Parent Involvement at Selected Ready Schools," profiles individual schools in four states that, on their own initiative, have sought to increase parental involvement in early education and the transition to kindergarten.
http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/Parent_Involvement_at_Ready_Schools.pdf.
- **Effects of Public Preschool Expenditures on the Test Scores of 4th Graders:** Jane Waldfogel and Fuhua Zhai analyze data from seven countries, including the U.S., to explore correlations between publicly-funded early education and fourth grade math and science scores in this report.
<http://www.preknow.org/documents/EffectsofPublicPreschoolExpenditures.pdf>.
- **Success By Ten: Intervening Early, Often, and Effectively in the Education of Young Children:** Success by Ten is a proposed program designed to help every child achieve success in school by age ten. It calls for a major expansion and intensification of Head Start and Early Head Start, so that every disadvantaged child has the opportunity to enroll in a high-quality program of education and care during the first five years of his or her life. Because the benefits of this intensive intervention may be squandered if disadvantaged children go from this program to a low-quality elementary school, the second part of the proposal requires that schools devote their Title I spending to instructional programs that have proven effective in further improving the skills of children, especially their ability to read. Findings from a number of rigorously conducted studies of early childhood and elementary school programs suggest that intervening early, often, and effectively in the lives of disadvantaged children from birth to age ten may substantially improve their life chances for higher educational attainment and greater success in the labor market, thereby helping impoverished children avoid poverty in adulthood. Another consequence would be to greatly improve the skills of tomorrow's workforce, thereby enhancing future economic performance. These benefits for children would be accompanied by benefits for their parents, many of whom work full time and need high-quality child care, such as the program would provide. Full report:

<http://www.l.hamiltonproject.org/views/papers/200702ludwig-sawhill.pdf>. Policy brief:

http://www.l.hamiltonproject.org/views/papers/200702ludwig-sawhill_pb.pdf



- **WestEd Research and Development Bulletin focuses on Early Childhood Education:** Children are born ready to learn, but not ready for school. Infants' earliest relationships with their caregivers are closely linked to their success in the classroom later in life. These early interactions form the basis of children's social and emotional well-being, which in turn impacts their ability to attend to the important tasks associated with learning language and growing intellectual competency. "Social and emotional development is the foundation for school readiness, and this development begins in infancy," says Virginia Reynolds, director of WestEd's Center for Prevention and Early Intervention (CPEI), which focuses on young children with disabilities and their families in a variety of settings. Yet, many caregivers who work with infants and toddlers aren't putting research findings to good use, adds J. Ronald Lally, "Unfortunately, despite the recommendations from the scientists, most school readiness initiatives persist in relating to infants and toddlers as though they were older. But because of their unique style of learning, which is a blend of great vulnerability and incredible learning competence, they need to be treated differently from how you treat first graders." In effective early learning settings, children learn they have someone to rely upon, so they feel secure, and thus become more eager to try new things. With guidance, they learn to persist and experience mastery. The lessons learned from these early interactions and relationships form the basic building blocks for later learning. One goal of early childhood education is to help children become self-confident enough to explore and self-regulated enough to function in a classroom. If you go to this site, http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/rd-05-03.pdf you can view a pdf for free, or order one printed copy at no charge.
- **Full-Day vs. Half-Day Preschool: Recent Research:** The NIEER report "Is More Better? The Effects of Full-Day vs Half-Day Preschool on Early School Achievement" "discusses a randomized trial that compared children from low-income families in half-day and full-day public preschool programs. Results show that children attending full-day programs did better on mathematics and literacy tests than children in a 2.5 to 3-hour public preschool program and the achievement gains continued at least until the end of first grade. The paper is available online at <http://nieer.org/resources/research/IsMoreBetter.pdf>
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- **New Study Shows Arkansas State Preschool Program Improves Language and Math Abilities of Children:** A new study of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) state-funded preschool education program shows significant improvement in 4-year-old children's early language, literacy and mathematical development. The NIEER study, The Effects of the Arkansas Better Chance Program on Young Children's School Readiness, estimated the effects

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of preschool education programs on entering kindergartners' academic skills. Children were tested on math, vocabulary and early literacy skills.

<http://nieer.org/resources/research/ArkansasYear1.pdf>.

- **The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development: Findings for Children up to Age 4 ½ Years:** This newly published 62-page booklet describes the findings from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development (SECCYD). Among the findings: family characteristics have more influence on child development than does experience in child care. One of their major findings: Children who were cared for exclusively by their mothers did not develop differently than those who were also cared for by others. To read the booklet, visit: http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/upload/seccyd_051206.pdf
- **Transition Resources for Children Entering Kindergarten:** Researchers at the National Early Childhood Transition Center (NECTC) have recently released findings from two studies. The first study, Use of Transition Practices by Public Preschool Teachers, provides information from a national survey on the use of practices to support the transition to preschool and the transition to kindergarten <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/researchBriefpreschool%20survey1.pdf>. The second publication, Strategies to Support Transition for Children with Special Needs, highlights successful strategies that were identified via national focus group sessions <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/NECTC/Documents/researchBriefs/focusGroup.pdf>.
- **Childhood Loss and Behavioral Problems: Loosening the Links:** (From a Children's Defense Fund Emerging Leader) I just received a copy of the attached article regarding the long term impact of childhood loss on behavior. It looks very good, and I thought others in the CDF leadership group would be interested in reading it. Here is an excerpt: KEVIN* WAS IN PRISON when he described the trajectory of his life and, by his account, the long-lasting negative consequences of a major loss he experienced as a child: "I been in the system since I was a young youth. When I was five years old, my father got murdered, and that's when I started getting in trouble. In elementary school I became a problem child: fighting the teachers, not wanting to listen. Didn't care what happened. Because I lost something very, you know, special to me, and that was my father. My mother couldn't deal with me. I didn't want to listen to her. And that led me into boys' homes. Now the courts took over...." The 16 page pdf is attached.



Child Loss Behavior
Problems....

- **WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT SCHOOL-BASED CHILD CARE?:** Each year, half a million teenagers become mothers in the United States. School-based child care programs are a positive way for educational institutions to encourage young mothers to return to or stay in school, prepare for employment, and acquire accurate information about child development and appropriate parenting practices. Nationwide, school-based child-care centers are increasing in number and are used to meet a variety of needs: They give teenage

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mothers an incentive to stay in school, and students interested in working with babies and young children get practical experience by changing diapers, resolving disputes over toys, and writing lesson plans. For some schools, career education is the main objective for operating child-care facilities. And in some cases, the centers provide on-site child care for teachers and other school employees. Evidence suggests: (1) When there are child care centers in public high schools, teen-age parents whose children attend the facility are more likely to complete their education and less likely to become dependent on welfare. (2) Schools benefit through lower dropout rates, improved parent education programs, vocational training for students, and increased performance from faculty who enroll their children in the facility. (3) Communities profit from having a lower number of welfare participants; more efficient use of public health, nutrition, and social services; and more accessible high quality child care. (4) The child care profession gains trained professionals, and all the children involved benefit from a high-quality preschool education.

<http://www.principalspartnership.com/schoolbasedchildcare.pdf>

- **Early Childhood Development and Social Mobility:** W. Steven Barnett and Clive R. Belfield write about early childhood development and social mobility for The Future of Children's fall journal issue. In the article, the authors discuss the links between preschool programs and academic skills, crime, welfare, and teen parenting. For more information, click on http://www.futureofchildren.org/information2826/information_show.htm?doc_id=389415.
- **PK-3 Education: Programs and Practices that Work in Children's First Decade:** Arthur Reynolds (University of Minnesota), Katherine Magnuson (University of Wisconsin), and Suh-Ruu Ou (University of Minnesota) have synthesized evidence on the pre-K to third grade (PK-3) practices that lead to children's school success. The authors analyze data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort of 1998-99 (ECLS-K) to show links between PK-3 components and children's performance in grade 3. The analysis shows that children participating in educational programs that include PK-3 program components perform better in school than their peers who do not. The complete report is available at http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=447398.
- **Fully Funding Head Start Will Boost Graduation Rates, Cut Crime:** A new report from Fight Crime: Invest in Kids suggests that if Head Start were fully funded, it could increase graduation rates by 10 percentage points. That, says the report, would decrease murder and assault by 20 percent, motor vehicle theft by 13 percent and arson by 8 percent. Economists Lance Lochner, University of Western Ontario, and Enrico Moretti, University of California, Davis, calculated the reductions in crime using their research on how graduation rates affect crime. The report is available at <http://www.fightcrime.org/reports/gradrates.report.pdf>.
- **Abbott Pre-K Follow-up Study Shows Achievement Gains Through Kindergarten:** The gains children made in language, literacy and math during preschool were largely sustained during their kindergarten year, leading to a narrowing of the achievement gap, say researchers who conducted the just-released NIEER study of New Jersey's Abbott Preschool Program. Kindergarteners who attended the Abbott program serving the state's neediest districts closed more than 50 percent of the gap between their literacy scores and the national average. Those who didn't attend the program closed 18 percent of the gap. In math, children

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who attended Abbott pre-K continued to outperform in kindergarten those who did not. NIEER Co-Director Ellen Frede, principal author and former head of the department at the New Jersey Department of Education responsible for implementing the Abbott pre-K program, said the findings are heartening because "One of the goals of mandating the program was to help underprivileged children close the achievement gap." Other findings from the Abbott Preschool Program Longitudinal Effects Study (APPLES), which will continue to track the Abbott children, are these: 1. Children who attended for two years at ages 3 and 4 significantly outperformed those who attended for only one year at age 4. 2. The gains in language and math from two years of Abbott attendance are quite large — nearly double for language and 70 percent larger for math. 3. Adequate funding, high quality standards and intensive professional development have resulted in good classroom quality across all Abbott classrooms whether in private provider or school district settings. 4. Almost 90 percent of Abbott classrooms evaluated in 2006 scored above the average score found in 2000. 5. Areas of classroom improvement were those most directly related to child learning such as language and reasoning activities, interactions and program structure. Download the study at <http://nieer.org/resources/research/APPLES.pdf>