



State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network

Financing School Readiness Strategies: An Annotated Bibliography

February 2003

Charles Bruner, with Sheri Floyd and Abby Copeman

Network Resource

About the State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network (SECPTAN)

State decision-makers face awesome challenges in developing public policies. They must balance competing demands across broad issue areas, with finite resources. They must respond to diverse political pressures while seeking solutions that ultimately best reflect societal values. They must be good stewards of public resources, requiring accountability based upon efficiency and effectiveness.

State decision-makers must do all this under time and resource constraints that often make securing credible information to inform their decision-making problematic. Particularly for early childhood issues, there often are not recognized and easily available sources for the most current evidence in the field.

The State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network (SECPTAN) was created to assist these state decision-makers in the important area of accessing the best available information and evidence about effective policies and practices on early childhood issues.

The Child and Family Policy Center administers SECPTAN, which is funded through the joint efforts of the Ford Foundation, the Kauffman Foundation, and the Packard Foundation. SECPTAN currently operates in the seventeen states that are part of the School Readiness Indicators Initiative, a companion grant administered by Rhode Island Kids Count.

One aspect of SECPTAN's work is to make current information about early childhood policy initiatives readily available to state policy makers. This publication is part of that work. SECPTAN would like to thank the following individuals for reviewing and providing comments on this publication: Nilofer Ahsan, Joan Lombardi, Anne Mitchell, James Perrin, Marion Pines, Ed Schor, and Karen VanLanderghem.

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Overview of Young Children’s Needs and Resultant “School Readiness” Policy and Program Components

The 1st National Education Goal states that “all children start school ready to learn.” States are examining what policies and investments of resources they can make to achieve this goal. They are seeking to determine what they are investing today in school readiness and what gaps exist in their current policies and funding that need to be filled to better achieve this goal.

Clearly, there is no single program or magic bullet to produce school readiness. Instead, achieving the 1st National Education Goal requires attention to insuring that a full range of young children’s needs are met. Fortunately, most of these needs are met for most children most of the time, but too many children remain at risk.

The following framework starts with what are recognized as universal needs of children to grow and develop, needs that apply to all children. In many instances, these needs are met without specific public sector involvement, through family and private and voluntary activities. In other instances, however, these needs are not met, and children’s growth, well-being, and school readiness is jeopardized as a result. It is in these instances that there may be a public sector role, often involving public and private partnerships. Recognizing a need, of course, are not the same thing as fashioning effective policies, practices, and programs to address it. There may not be programs or policies that can address all these unmet needs or that can address them perfectly. Still, there is a growing body of research and experience that can be drawn upon in determining what programs and policies can do to meet these needs.

The left-hand column of the framework describes the universal needs of young children. The right-hand column describes the program or service counterparts to meeting these needs. It may well be that those undertaking efforts to improve school readiness will focus upon specific program or service areas – such as early care and education programs or programs and strategies to strengthen parenting. It is important, however, that these efforts recognize the other essential needs of children and, as they do their own focused work, identify how these efforts can coordinate with other programs and policies to meet other needs. This is needed to develop a more seamless overall system for young children and families that most effectively works to achieve the first national education goal. This framework is similar to other frameworks in the field (such as those of Sharon Lynn Kagan and Lisbeth Schorr), but is explicit in starting from the base of what children need, rather than from specific service strategies designed to meet those needs.

Framework: Universal Child Needs and their Policy and Program Counterparts

Universal Need

Program/Service Counterparts

Health and nutrition (adequate food and exercise for physical and mental growth, protection against and response to disease and injury, and early identification and treatment of health risks and special health needs)

Basic health and nutrition services

Health and developmental services to address identified special needs

Competent and confident parenting (at least one, and preferably two, parent figures who provide nurturing, protection, and stimulation and with whom the child bonds and forms attachments that is constant and consistent through the early years)

Services promoting confident and competent parenting (e.g. family support programs, home visiting, and parent education programs)

Supports for safe, stable, and economically viable families

Constant, stable, appropriate supervision (continuous adult oversight and support enabling the child to safely explore the environment)

Parental supervision in the home and adult supervision in all supplemental arrangements

Guidance and instruction (help and practice in developing large and small motor skills, pre-literacy cognitive development, and socialization with adults and children)

Developmentally appropriate child care and enriched pre-school programs, e.g. quality early childhood care and education

Safe and supportive communities (safe conditions within the child's immediate environment, including environmental and physical safety, and supporting social networks, including relatives, friends, and neighbors who contribute to a positive environment for all children and families)

Housing, policing, and community development and community building programs and strategies, particularly focused on poor, disinvested neighborhoods

School Readiness Financing Areas

Drawing from this framework, this annotated bibliography provides information on financing opportunities for each of these early childhood program and service areas, in the following order:

- **enriched pre-school programs** (both for disadvantaged three- and four- year-olds and as a voluntary, universally available service);
- **child care services** (to expand availability and affordability and to improve program quality);

- **services promoting confident and competent parenting** (including home visiting, parenting education, and other family support programs, as well as broadly based public information and education campaigns);
- **basic health and nutrition services** (both to ensure access to care through insurance or eligibility coverage and to ensure the provision of comprehensive, primary and preventive health services);
- **health and developmental services to address identified special needs** (including outreach, screening and assessment and follow-up services to address developmental delays and developmental risks, including social and emotional concerns);
- **supports for safe, stable, and economically viable families** (to ensure that parents are financially able to provide for their children, including family leave);
- **programs promoting safe and supportive communities** (emphasizing those specifically focused on young children).

States and communities further are seeking to draw from each others' experiences in more generally developing comprehensive school readiness approaches, including:

- estimating the financing necessary to fully develop programs and services to meet the statewide or community-wide need;
- identifying specific funding sources to begin to meet that need (including divisions of funding responsibility among state, federal, and local government budgets and family, employer, and other private sector funds);
- developing strategies to convince the policy makers and the public of the need to secure those resources.

This annotated bibliography describes some of the work in this field and is arranged according to the categories provided above. The first section deals with specific programmatic areas and financing resources; the second with more general financing issues and resources.

I. Financing School Readiness: Programs and Service Strategies

A. Early Care and Education – Enriched Pre-school Programs and Child Care Services

Enriched Pre-School. In large measure due to research showing the large potential positive benefits of pre-school, particularly for low-income children, there has been substantial interest in expanding pre-school opportunities for children. The federal Head Start program currently serves only a portion of all three- and four-year old children that meet its eligibility standards (100% of poverty unless the child has a disability), and those eligibility standards leave out a large number of children whose families struggle economically and whose children could be expected to benefit from pre-school.

While most states either have provided supplemental funding for Head Start or developed pre-school programs for disadvantaged children on their own, very few states can claim that they make available pre-school for all three- and four-year-old, low-income children who could be served, let alone all children.

The 2000 census, as well as the Urban Institute's New Federalism surveys, clearly shows that three- and four-year-old children from lower-income families (with incomes less than 200% of the poverty level) are less likely to participate in pre-school programs, whether or not their parents are employed.

In 2001, the Pew Charitable Trust established a new initiative to promote voluntary, universal pre-school. In 2002, the Packard Foundation set a high priority for its funding in California on voluntary, universal pre-school. To date, however, Georgia is the only state to establish a universal pre-kindergarten system, although New York has statutory language to that effect and is moving in that direction, and Florida has passed a referendum to require universal pre-school. Further, New Jersey is developing, under the *Abbott* case, universal pre-kindergarten in high poverty areas of the state and seeking to extend that to other jurisdictions.

Pre-school is generally recognized as a service that can benefit all children, but particularly low-income children or other children identified with specific developmental issues and concerns. This is true whether parents are working and their children require some form of child care, or their parents stay at home. The term enriched pre-school is used to emphasize that the research on effective pre-school programs that have shown strong, long-lasting gains for children (such as the Perry Pre-School program) are very intensive and enriched programs, well-above those even for Head Start. As states look to expanding pre-school programs, attention must be given to the degree of intensity and comprehensiveness required of programs to meet the needs of the children they are serving.

Current Funding Sources for Pre-School

- Federal Head Start funding
- State pre-school funding, to supplement Head Start or to develop state program
- School district funding for pre-school programs out of general K-12 funding or federal Title I funds
- Private pre-school paid for by parents, possibly subsidized by other sources (including laboratory schools at universities)

Child Care. Since Head Start and most state pre-school programs are funded as half-day, part-year programs, they do not necessarily meet the needs of working parents, including those parents who now are working as a result of new welfare requirements under the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Therefore, there has been an emphasis upon connecting or integrating pre-school with child care, recognizing that many families require full-day (or near full-day), year-round care for their children.

Research clearly shows that good quality (developmentally appropriate) child care improves child development, while poor quality care can actually harm that development. This is especially true for low-income children. Studies also have shown that a small proportion of all child care provided in the country can be considered to be of good quality, and a significant share is of poor quality. If all child care were of consistently high quality, providing developmentally appropriate care, the need for pre-school programs would be diminished substantially.

Since there is such a strong interplay between child care and pre-school, some discussions of financing an early care and education system do not differentiate between the two, seeking simply to improve the quality of all early care and education services that are provided. A young child does not differentiate between “learning time” in pre-school and “caregiving time” in child care. All care arrangements have their potential for providing developmental guidance and learning for children and should be supported in that context.

Focusing upon improving all child care settings to the highest level, however, also expands the scope and costs of financing a system. Funding for pre-school programs can be established based upon part-day and part-year programming that builds on existing Head Start and other state funding sources.

Funding for a quality early care and education system must give attention to the costs of building up the current system. As stated succinctly in *Design Choices: Universal Financing for Early Care and Education*,

The system of paid ECE [early childhood education] that has developed in the U.S. faces a perverse equation: care costs too little to achieve high quality, but it costs too much to be affordable for many parents.

Developing an early care and education system that supports quality child care services at affordable levels for parents is a much more expensive proposition than developing a pre-school system for three- and four-year-olds alone. At the same time, however, this is where many children spend most of their out-of-home time and where opportunities for growth and development should exist. While separated into two subheadings for discussion and enumeration of funding streams, many experts and advocates believe policies should be developed on the basis of building a single, high quality early care and education system.

Current Funding Sources for Child Care

- Federal Child Care and Development Block Grant, now Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)
- Federal TANF funds re-directed for child care
- Title IV-B funds for child care for children in foster care
- State funds for child care
- Federal tax credits for child care
- State tax credits for child care
- Employer contributions to child care
- Parent payments for child care

Annotated References

Mitchell, A., Stoney, L., & Dichter, H. (2001). *Financing child care in the United States: An expanded catalog of current strategies*. Kansas City, MO: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

This catalog shares information on innovative financing strategies currently used to fund child care in the United States. It provides synopses of 78 different financing methods, including: taxes and fees, resource allocations, private sector approaches, and public-private partnerships. The 78 financing approaches vary greatly in their financing capacity, from relatively small funding streams capable of financing little more than a few demonstration efforts to large funding streams that could enable a state to make significant improvements in its overall funding support of child care or pre-school.

Gomby, D. & Krantzler, N. (Eds.). (1996, Summer/Fall). *Financing child care*. In *The future of children*. (Vol. 6, No. 2). Los Altos, CA: Center for the Future of Children & David and Lucille Packard Foundation.

This collection of articles from experts in the field covers the history of federal financing for child care, current child care arrangements and use patterns in the United States, the relationship between child care operating costs and child care quality, and emerging trends in child care financing. The introductory article asserts that implementing recommended reforms and developing a comprehensive, quality child care system would require an additional \$80 billion to the \$40 billion already expended on child care. Alternative visions, including a

public education approach and an approach providing child allowances and family leave, are also included in the series of articles.

Stoney, L., Groginsky, S. & Poppe, J. (2002). *Investing in our future: A guide to child care financing*. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

This guide provides a good basic discussion of the different elements involved in financing child care to insure adequate supply, to make care affordable to families, and to improve quality. It discusses such issues as start-up assistance for center or home development, subsidy and eligibility structures for state subsidy programs, and training and education strategies for developing a quality workforce. It also includes a brief section on comprehensive strategies that incorporate health and family support services.

Vast, T. (2001). *Learning between systems: Adapting higher education financing methods to early care and education*. Indianapolis, IN: Lumina Foundation for Education.

This research report seeks to draw lessons from higher education financing strategies and adapt them to early care and education services, including a financial aid need analysis, financial aid packaging and administration, use of diverse forms of financial aid, use of diverse sources of revenues, and approaches to institutional (program) support and pricing. It provides recommendations on what a fully realized system should look like, including a standard application form and community-based financial aid agency as a hub for families and providers.

Kagan, S.L. & Cohen, N. (1997). *Not by chance: Creating an early care and education system for America's Children*. Prepared by the Quality 2000 Initiative. New Haven, CT: Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University.

This report of the Quality 2000 Initiative sets out the vision and rationale for developing quality early care and education programs and the infrastructure to support them. Chapter Four discusses the governance and funding support needed for such a system, with a recommendation that 10% of all new funding for early care and education be set aside explicitly for quality enhancements and that local and state early care and education boards be established to oversee design and implementation efforts.

Hanson Langford, B. (2000). *Creating dedicated local revenue sources for early care and education*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Corporation of New York & The Finance Project.

This brief discusses one way to generate local funding for early care and education programs – the establishment of dedicated revenue sources that

raise or direct public funds for a specific purpose. It discusses the pros and cons of establishing dedicated revenue sources and discusses six specific strategies: local taxing districts, special tax levies, guaranteed expenditure minimums, children's trust funds, fees and dedicated specific taxes, and income tax check-offs. It offers specific examples of the use of each of these six dedicated revenue sources.

National Women's Law Center. (2001, November). *A catalog of tax-based approaches for financing child care*. Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center.

Based upon a series of meetings with policy experts from various fields (including child care, community development, and low-income housing), this report reviews a variety of tax-based approaches to supporting child care. Tax-based approaches have certain benefits in generally not requiring reauthorization and often providing entitlements to the tax benefits. The report discusses various state programs that have used tax deductions and credits, tax-subsidized debt financing, and tax-financed social insurance models, as well as consumer-directed tax breaks, to support child care, with detailed descriptions of 28 different approaches.

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation & David and Lucile Packard Foundation. (1999). *Stepping up: Financing early care and education in the 21st Century*. Vol. 1. Four papers commissioned for Working Meeting. Making it economically viable: Financing early care and education. Santa Cruz, CA: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation & David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

The first paper, by Louise Stoney, provides an introduction to the current "child care funding maze" and suggests next steps related to reevaluating: tax policy, program administration, and business practices. The second paper, by Nancy Sconyers, discusses how five state advocacy efforts were successful in securing additional funding for early care and education. The third and fourth papers, by Ethel Klein and Deborah Wadsworth, assess current public opinion and support for early care and education and suggest strategies for creating the climate needed for investment.

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation & David and Lucile Packard Foundation. (1999). *Stepping up: Financing early care and education in the 21st Century*. In Proceedings for Working Meeting: Vol. 2. Making it economically viable: Financing early care and education. Santa Cruz, CA: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation & David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

These proceedings provide an overview of the working meeting, including brief descriptions from four working groups on: tax and financing mechanisms, infant and toddler care, universal pre-school, and creating a climate for change. The proceedings also include a participant list and contact information, as well as a compendium of brief proposals that participants submitted in preparation for the working meeting.

Stoney, L. (1998). *Looking into new mirrors: Lessons for early childhood finance and system-building*. Dorchester, MA: Horizons Initiative.

This paper draws from financing policies and strategies in a variety of fields — housing, higher education, health care, and transportation — to draw lessons and implications concerning how early care and education might be better financed. The paper provides a summary of next steps to take in adapting strategies from other fields to develop more comprehensive approaches to financing early care and education.

Eichman, C., Ferlauto, R., Flood, M., Stumberg, B., and Talbert, D. (1992). *Investing in the future: Child care financing options for the public and private sectors*. New York, NY: Child Care Action Campaign and Center for Policy Alternatives.

This report is based on a 1990 Financing Roundtable that included experts in public finance, housing, health care, higher education, and business exploring the feasibility of adapting strategies from these fields to child care. The report provides a summary of ideas generated and highlights specific alternative child care financing strategies, including use of the Community Reinvestment Act, linked deposits, and community development corporations.

B. Supports Promoting Confident and Competent Parenting

Parenting Education, Home Visiting, and Family Support. The 1st National Education Goal that “all children start school ready to learn” stresses supports to insure that parents serve effectively as their “child’s first teacher.” There exist a wide array of programs designed to improve parenting — from free-standing family resource centers and parenting education programs and home visiting programs to family-centered counseling or case management services operated within programs with larger overall missions. The latter include family service workers within the Head Start program or family development specialists serving TANF families in a holistic way that includes moving from welfare-to-work but also gives recognition to parent and child relationships and child development.

A few state programs, such as Missouri’s Families as First Teachers and Minnesota’s Early Childhood Home Education, are universal in their scope, although participation is voluntary. Massachusetts Healthy Families Newborn Home Visiting Program provides universal state-wide home visiting for new parents that are 21 and under. Kentucky currently funds Family Resource and Youth Service Centers in or connected to 98% of all of its public schools. Most freestanding home visiting, parenting education, and family support programs, however, are provided on a grant or demonstration basis. Some are provided as options under funding to community collaboratives, such as local Smart Start boards in North Carolina, Community Empowerment boards in Iowa, First Five Commissions in California, and Family and Community Safety boards in Washington state.

Current state child welfare programs or systems often provide counseling or case management services that are designed, at least in part, to improve parenting. Some of these are funded with federal IV-B funds (federal block grant funds available for child welfare services, including safe and stable families and adoption assistance act funding). Others can be funded with federal IV-E dollars (federal funds matching investments for certain eligible child welfare children for certain services, primarily directed to foster care), where the federal government matches state funding for specific, eligible services, enabling states to leverage additional resources. Health programs, federal maternal and child health block grant funds, and case management or care coordination services through Medicaid and CHIP, also may cover some parenting education and support services. Under Medicaid's targeted case management program option, some states have secured Medicaid funding match for such programs as Healthy Families America, a home visiting program based upon Hawaii's Healthy Start program. Like Title IV-E, Medicaid matches state expenditures and therefore is a source for leveraging additional funds, particularly under targeted case management and administrative claiming options.

States have been given broad discretion by Congress to use Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds in ways to reduce welfare dependency in addition to providing cash assistance to those on welfare. The decline in welfare rolls has freed TANF funds that states have used to fund child care and to fund a variety of preventive programs, with home visiting and parenting education, and fatherhood programs often funded through TANF. At this point, however, most states have committed their TANF funds and do not have unallocated TANF funds available for new programs. A number of states are using Welfare to Work, child support enforcement, or justice system dollars to fund fatherhood programs aimed at keeping non-custodial fathers engaged in their children's lives. Additionally, there is a growing interest in the juvenile justice field in family support as an early prevention strategy for juvenile delinquency issues. The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funds Parents Anonymous, a parent support group program aimed at high stress families, as well as maintaining a database of family strengthening strategies which includes classic parenting education programs such as the Nurturing Program.

A few nationwide programs are being replicated and implemented in a number of states and localities. Parents Anonymous, a parent support group program for families at risk of abuse and neglect is being replicated in states and communities across the country. Healthy Families America is being replicated in 96 communities. MELD, a parenting education program in Minnesota, is being replicated in communities in 19 states. Parents As Teachers (PAT) is being replicated in 2,800 locations, in all 50 states and a number of foreign countries. The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youth (HIPPY) is being replicated in localities in 27 states. Funding for the local replication of these national models generally comes from a mix of federal, state (including many of the sources listed above), as well as local funders such as United Way, foundations, and fundraising by community-based groups.

Current Funding Sources for Home Visiting, Parenting Education, and Family Support

- State funding for specific home visiting, parenting education, and family support programs
- Community funding (local government, United Way, foundation) for programs
- Federal funding used by states and communities for parenting support: including family service workers under Head Start, family development specialists under community development block grants, food and nutrition workers under cooperative extension, family support programs and centers under Title IVA, programs funded under social services block grant, care coordination under the maternal and child health block grant, etc.
- Care coordination and targeted case management state service options funded under Medicaid
- TANF funding
- Family-centered services provided under child welfare, potentially funded with either IVB or IVE federal funds
- Child support enforcement and criminal justice funding for fatherhood programs
- Children's Trust Funds providing funding for child abuse and neglect prevention activities including a number of family support and parenting oriented programs and services
- The Community-based Family Resource and Supports Grants program, a federal program providing a small amount of funding to each state for child abuse and neglect prevention activities

Annotated References

Carter, N. (1996, December). *See how we grow: A report on the status of parenting education in the U.S.* Philadelphia, PA: Pew Charitable Trusts.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of parenting education programs and services in the United States up to the mid-1990's. Chapter Nine describes the array of funding sources used to support parenting education, including federal funding such as the Family Preservation and Support Act, state funding, and a detailed list of private funding, including descriptions of activities of 15 leading national foundations supporting parenting education and family support in its many facets.

VanLandeghem, K. (2002, June 14). *The benefits and financing of home visiting programs.* (NGA Center for Best Practices Issue Brief). Washington, DC: National Governors Association.

This issue brief provides several examples of how states have used different

federal funding sources, including Medicaid and SCHIP, Title V, and TANF, to support home visiting.

Thompson, L., Kropenske, V., Heinicke, C., Gomby, D., & Halfon, N. (2001) *Home visiting: A service strategy to deliver Proposition 10 results*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities.

This is one of a series of reports, *Building Community Systems for Young Children*, designed to support implementation of California's Proposition 10: The California Children and Families Act. This report summarizes funding available for home visiting and family support in California, with an Appendix that includes both state and federal funding streams.

National Conference of State Legislatures. (2000). *Financing fatherhood programs*. In Connecting low-income fathers and families: A guide to practical policies. Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures.

This brief report describes some of the policy options available to states in financing fatherhood programs, including TANF funds, welfare-to-work grants, Workforce Investment Act funds, child support enforcement funds, and Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) (Title XX) funds. It provides a few state examples of funding fatherhood initiatives, with a map showing states, which have used TANF to fund such initiatives.

Rankin, N. (forthcoming). *Financing Parenting*. Parent Leadership Institute (www.parentleaders.org). To be published in: Hewlett, S.A., Rankin, N., & West, C. (eds.) *Taking parenting public*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

This chapter makes the case for enabling parents to use social security benefits as a means to stay at home and care for their young children, in effect treating social security as an employment savings account.

Johnson, K. (2001, May) No place like home: State home visiting policies and programs. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

This report summarizes the results of a survey of states regarding home visiting activities. It also includes in-depth analyses of selected state programs and approaches. The survey findings focus on program structure and authority; program financing; case management and home visiting services under Medicaid; program approach and characteristics; staffing patterns; and program objectives, monitoring, and evaluation.

US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. *Helping families achieve self-sufficiency: A guide to funding services for children and families through the TANF program*. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from <http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofa/funds2.htm>

This document describes how TANF funds can be used to ensure that all families get the essential supports they need to get a job, succeed at work, and move out of poverty. This guide suggests some of the many flexible ways states may expend their federal TANF and state MOE funds to further the purposes of the TANF program and illustrates a few of the possibilities that state and local agencies, state legislators, communities, community-based organizations, and advocates may consider when designing an array of benefits, services, and supports. Washington, D.C.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention & the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. (1999). *Strengthening America's families: Effective family programs for prevention of delinquency*. Author. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from <http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org/>

This report gives a short review of programs selected from a 1999 study designed to identify family strengthening programs that have an impact of juvenile delinquency.

The National Center for Children in Poverty. (2001). *Promoting the well-being of infants, toddlers, and their families: Innovative community and state strategies*. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from <http://www.nccp.org/it/index.html>

In 2001 the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) sponsored a national call for nominations of comprehensive initiatives to support infants, toddlers, and their families. Information presented throughout this website draws on the experiences of 25 selected initiatives across the country to provide a menu of concrete, innovative strategies other states and communities can use to promote more targeted and effective policy and practice attention to infants and toddlers.

Map and Track 2000: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families
Map and Track 1999: State Initiatives to Promote Responsible Fatherhood.
Retrieved January 21, 2003 from <http://www.nccp.org/>

The Map and Track reports provide brief overview of policies relating to young children and families or fatherhood. Map and Track provides information that is useful for looking at changes in state policy over time, as well as making comparisons across states.

Watson, S. & Westheimer, M. (2000). *Financing family resource centers: A guide to funding sources and strategies*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Corporation of New York & The Finance Project.

This monograph is intended to help those who run family resource centers, and those who fund them, make well-informed, strategic decisions about financing.

The guide describes the characteristics of family resource centers, principles and strategies for financing them and current financing sources. It also discusses potential reforms for improving the financing environment.

O'Brien, M.M. (1997). *Financing strategies to support comprehensive, Community-based services for children and families*. Portland, ME: National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement.

This paper presents an overview of eight initiatives that have overcome some of the barriers of fragmented funding by bringing funds together across programmatic lines to support the development of more comprehensive, community-based services. The discussion of financing and system reform draws lessons from the bold and promising experiments that states and counties around the country have implemented to improve services for children and families.

C. Basic Health and Nutrition Services

Children need basic health services and good nutrition for their physical development and well-being. Basic health services include both preventive and primary health care (including well child visits) and treatment for acute illnesses and injuries. Most families have health insurance that covers a large share of this care, although there may be co-payments or deductibles that require families to pay part of the cost and insurance coverage may vary in what care it provides.

Both at the federal and state level, there has been considerable funding made available to expand the number of children who receive health insurance coverage under new federal funding (State Child Health Insurance Program or SCHIP), either through state expansion of Medicaid to higher eligibility limits or state creation of a state health insurance system or both.

At the same time, simply providing health insurance coverage does not insure that children receive primary and preventive health services. The content of the care that children receive is dependent upon them getting into care and then receiving appropriate services. In most instances, this requires a regular source of primary and preventive services, or a medical home, that the family can go to and receive advice on a variety of health issues.

While health care insurance coverage is one component for ensuring good care, what that health insurance benefits covers and the degree to which it supports outreach and trans-medical services is likely to be equally important in meeting children's health care needs.

The same holds for nutrition services. Families need to be financially able to provide proper nutrition to their children, which may require Women Infant and Children (WIC) coupons or food stamps for low-income families. They also need information and

support in providing nutritious meals. The WIC program provides nutritional counseling as part of its mission, and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) provides outreach workers that can provide families with nutrition advice. The child care food program provides nutrition information and nutritious food for participating child care centers and homes. These programs all are designed to improve the nutrition of children. Some states supplement these federal programs, and others provide programs of their own that deal with nutrition concerns.

Annotated References

Current Funding Sources for Basic Health and Nutrition

- Private health insurance coverage
- Medicaid and SCHIP health insurance coverage
- Federal WIC services
- Enhanced state funding for WIC services
- Child care food program
- Federal maternal and child health funds
- Special immunization programs, lead poisoning programs, etc.
- Community health centers

Scott Collins, K., McLearn, K., Abrams, M., & Biles, B. (1998, November). *Improving the delivery and financing of developmental services for low-income children*. (Issue Brief). New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from http://www.cmf.org/programs/child/collins_serviceschildren_ib.304.asp

This brief describes some pediatric developmental services that improve children's health and describes some strategies for improving the delivery of developmental services as part of the health care system through existing funding sources.

Bruner, C., & Perrin, J. (1996). *More than health insurance*. New York, NY: Milbank Memorial Fund.

This monograph describes five different programs designed to improve infant or child health and well-being through comprehensive services that were expanded to be statewide in scope while maintaining program quality and integrity — Hawaii's Healthy Start, Washington's First Steps, North Carolina's Baby Love, South Carolina's EPSDT access programs, and Florida's community-based services program for children with special health care needs. The monograph suggests the issues important in expanding programs to scale, both in building political will for investment and maintaining program quality and integrity.

Rosenbaum, S., Proser, M., Shin, P., Wilensky, S., & Sonosky, C., (2002, January). *Child development programs in community health centers*. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

This report examines the role of community health centers in providing child development programs for children age three and younger. In addition, the report presents findings from a 2000 survey of four categories of child development programs at 79 health centers, examines the prospective payment system for health centers and its potential impact on the provision of child development services, and offers recommendations for improved delivery of these services at health centers.

Rosenbaum, S., Proser, M., Schneider, A., & Sonosky, C. (2002, January). *Using the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant to support child development services*. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

This report examines how services provided through Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant can be used to foster optimal child development intervention services in the early years of life. As the report notes, Title V can work alone or with other sources of funding, specifically Medicaid and SCHIP. By paying for services that Medicaid cannot, Title V allows for the creation of more comprehensive and “wrap-around” child development services.

Rosenbaum, S., Proser, M., Schneider, A., & Sonosky, C. (2001, June). *Room to Grow: Promoting child development through Medicaid and CHIP*. New York, NY: The Commonwealth Fund.

This report is an analysis exploring federal and state health policy in the area of early childhood development. It examines how public insurance programs covering low-income children—namely, Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) can be used to support and foster optimal child development interventions.

Rosenbaum, S. & Sonosky, C. (2001, June). *Medicaid case management services and child development*. (Issue brief). Portland, ME: The National Academy for State Health Policy.

Case management services can be effective means by which to deliver early child development services. This issue brief examines approaches for financing child development related case management services through Medicaid.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (1998). *Free and low cost health insurance: children you know are missing out*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

This handbook contains information for those people interested in securing health insurance coverage for uninsured children. It is useful for a wide variety of

outreach workers who are concerned with making the enrollment process accessible, obtaining funds for outreach strategies. The handbook has three main sections: 1) 10 steps states can take to help enroll children in free or low-cost health insurance, 2) 10 steps organizations can take to help enroll children in free or low-cost health insurance, and 3) approaches for reaching out to special populations. The handbook also contains an income eligibility screening tool and fact sheets on the need for outreach, the fundamentals of the major child health insurance programs, and Medicaid.

D. Health and Developmental Services to Address Identified Special Needs

Every young child has a need for some medical care – for accidents or illnesses and for basic check-ups and screenings. Some children, however, have health conditions that require ongoing care and support. These can include children with special physical health care needs as well as children with developmental delays or social and emotional needs.

Children with special needs benefit greatly from early diagnoses and appropriate treatments to address these needs, treatments which usually include some form of care provided by a practitioner of the healing arts but also may require other trans-medical services including case management and social supports to both the child and the family.

The U.S. Department of Education's IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) legislation has set a framework for providing services under special education to both infants and toddlers (Part C) and to pre-schoolers with special needs (Part B – Pre-School grants), specifically developmental delays. While the federal government provides grant funding, states define populations to be served and structure programs.

Medicaid and SCHIP require that early periodic screening, diagnosis, and treatment (EPSDT) services are provided for children, with EPSDT services designed to be comprehensive in scope and identify needs entitling patients to services to address those needs (whether or not they fall into the category of traditional medical services). Many states have used EPSDT as a means to secure Medicaid funding for services that meet developmental needs of children, including social and behavioral needs, that might not be eligible for coverage as a medical service. At the same time, the use of EPSDT as a means both to diagnose and to treat special needs is very mixed within and across states, and can be perfunctory rather than comprehensive in scope. Even when EPSDT has identified a treatment need, there is no guarantee that treatment will be available or provided.

Still, EPSDT and IDEA provide a strong foundation for providing financial access to services to address special needs for many vulnerable children. How they are used and implemented is dependent upon state and local policies and practices.

In addition to these sources of funding, there are a variety of other federal funding sources to address special needs and states have developed their own funding streams, sometimes for very specific populations.

Current Funding Sources for Early Intervention and Special Needs

- Private health insurance
- Medicaid and SCHIP health insurance coverage
- EPSDT screens under Medicaid, and follow-up services
- Special education funding, including federal Part B and Part C IDEA funds and state funds
- State funding for institutional care
- State special programs, including family support subsidies
- Foster care and adoption assistance programs under IVE
- Social services block grant
- Block grants for community health services
- Community mental health services for children with serious emotional disturbances

Annotated References

Wishmann, A., Kates, D., & Kaufmann, R. (2001, March). *Funding early childhood mental health services and supports*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development Report for Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

This report provides a matrix of federal early childhood mental health services, supports, and funding streams, including those through the Department of Education (IDEA, Title I, Even Start, Goals 2000), through the Department of Health and Human Services (including Medicaid and SCHIP, CMHS services, SSBG, Title V, and Title IV-E), and through other federal agencies (including food stamps, WIC, and CDBG). There is a basic description of each funding stream that includes: authorizing statutes and contact agency, objectives and covered services, applicant and beneficiary eligibility requirements, funding flows, and FY 01 estimated appropriations.

Johnson, K., Knitzer, J., & Kaufmann, R. (2002). *Making dollars follow sense: Financing early childhood mental health services to promote healthy social and emotional development in young children*: New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.

This monograph draws upon the lessons from six case studies – of Florida, Indiana, Ohio, Vermont, Cuyahoga County, OH, and San Francisco, CA – to

describe policies and practices that can better address the social and emotional needs of young children, particularly by drawing upon existing financing streams. It provides ten key findings and ten recommended action steps for states, along with contact and resource information.

Hill, I., Schwalberg, R., & Butler, P. (1995). *Delivering and financing services for vulnerable children under health care reform*. Washington, DC: Health Systems Research, Inc.

This monograph discusses important design options for service delivery and financing of children's health services under managed care and other health care reforms, with a particular emphasis upon children with special health care needs and children with social and emotional health needs.

The Child Mental Health Foundations and Agencies Network. (2000). *A good beginning: sending America's children to school with the social and emotional competence they need to succeed*. Bethesda, MD: The Child Mental Health Foundations and Agencies Network.

This monograph summarizes the research on the social and emotional risk and protective factors that predict early school outcomes, and it analyzes the federal policies that seek to improve these factors. It also explores the existing gaps between research and practice and provides recommendations for change.

E. Supports for Safe, Stable and Economically Viable Families

Young children need consistency and continuity in their lives, predictability that their basic needs for food, clothing, and housing are met. Poverty, and particularly extreme poverty, place young children at great risk, but families with incomes well above the poverty level often struggle to meet basic needs on a consistent basis. Although there are substantial differences across the country in living costs, studies that have been conducted to establish the basic needs for families of young children (often referred to as self-sufficiency studies) consistently show that families need incomes in at least the 200% of poverty range in order to meet basic and essential needs, with the figures higher in higher cost-of-living states and communities. Currently in America, nearly 36% of all families with young children fall below 185% of poverty level.

For these families, income supports are needed to help insure that the basic needs of young children can be met. These include income supports through the federal (and, where they have them, state) earned income tax credits, through food stamp benefits and WIC coupons, and through housing subsidies and supports. For workers who have been laid off, they include benefits through the unemployment insurance trust fund. For families with children who are not in the workforce, they include time-limited temporary assistance to needy families (TANF) benefits. For families with severe disabilities that prevent work or require substantial additional care, they include federal supplemental security income (SSI) benefits.

For those who are not currently working or not able to secure traditional employment, they include work and training programs and subsidized work programs.

Recently, there has been considerable attention given to how to support poor working families, as a large portion of families living in poverty are working but not making enough to provide for their families. There is increasing interest in strategies that can help families build assets that can be invested in bettering themselves economically, such as individual development accounts. There are other strategies to reduce costs that many families living in poverty incur, such as reducing the high cost of credit and predatory lending practices targeted to those without assets and collateral.

Finally, there have been efforts to enable a parent to stay at home to care for a newborn, with one state (California) establishing a paid family leave program funded through the unemployment insurance trust fund.

**Current Funding Sources
for Family Leave and Income Support**

- Unemployment insurance trust fund
- Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Subsidized work programs
- Employment and training programs.
- TANF benefits
- State emergency assistance programs
- Housing subsidies
- Food stamps

Annotated References

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (2001). *Help workers boost their paychecks: Promote tax credits for people who work*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

This outreach kit is for the Earned Income Credit Campaign 2002. The kits contains information on: Earned Income Credits (EIC), the new Child Tax Credit (CTCC), how to promote the EIC and new CTC, and helping workers claim the tax credits they have earned. The kit also includes an outreach tool envelope with posters, flyers, and envelope stuffers.

Dailey, C., & Boshara, R. (2000). *Achieving economic self-sufficiency through asset building: Opportunities for low-income workers*. Washington, DC: Corporation for Enterprise Development.

This paper provides an overview of asset-building strategies for working poor families, discusses the effect community-level initiatives are having on these families, and offers policy recommendations for creating a “universal asset-building system” to reduce inequality and assist families in self-sufficiency.

Johnson, N. (2001). *A hand up: How state Earned Income Tax Credits help working families escape poverty in 2001*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

This paper provides rationale for why a state might consider implementing an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), why the state might model their program on the federal EITC, and gives information on ways to finance a state EITC, including using funds from a state’s general fund, or using Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) dollars.

Miller, M., & Gruenstein, D. (2002). *Encouraging savings: Financing Individual Development Account programs*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project.

This strategy brief provides information for community leaders, policymakers, and program developers on financing Individual Development Account (IDA) programs as a method for enhancing the economic and social well-being of working families. The brief describes three main ways to finance IDA programs, including accessing federal resources, state resources, and obtaining private resources.

Sweeney, E., Schott, L., Lazere, E., Fremstad, S., Goldberg, H., Guyer, J., Super, D., & Johnson, C. (2000). *Windows of opportunity: Strategies to support families receiving welfare and other low-income families in the next stage of welfare reform*. Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

This report explains various innovative strategies and practical plans for helping low-income families with children, which can be financed through the use of federal or state welfare funds. It describes creative ways that states can use their Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds to meet the needs of the families who are trying to reach self-sufficiency in their state.

F. Programs Promoting Safe and Supportive Communities

Parents are a child’s first teacher and remain the most important determinant of how a child grows and develops, and what a child learns. Extended networks of support that the family has also contribute to a child’s growth and development.

At the same time, however, place also matters. Children who are most at risk of starting school behind and experiencing difficulties in school disproportionately come from selected neighborhoods, neighborhoods characterized by high rates of poverty and joblessness, delinquency and crime, and the absence of supporting neighborhood institutions providing youth child, youth, and family recreational and cultural opportunities.

Clearly, it is in these neighborhoods where the proportion of children facing developmental risks are greatest and, therefore, improvements in services and supports (primary and preventive health services, health services to address special needs, services to improve parenting confidence and competence, child care, enriched pre-school) are most needed. Building effective services and supports in these neighborhoods may take on additional challenges, particularly if the goal is to build an indigenous base of staff and providers.

In addition, however, research suggests that living in such disadvantaged neighborhoods has some independent impact on child development, regardless of the strength of parenting and the use of quality services. In particular, neighborhoods without a sufficient base of professionals, role models, and mentors place children at risk of harm across multiple dimensions of child well-being.

Creating a supportive community may call for community building and community capacity development, in addition to more individualized work with children and families.

At the federal level, community development block grants (CDBG) provide funding for community action agencies and other entities and initiatives to produce change. The EZ/EC (Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community) provided direct funding for community building, with additional priorities to EZ/EC sites in securing a broad array of discretionary federal grants. Housing funds available through Section 8 provide subsidies to individual families, but also provide funding for low-income housing projects, which can incorporate community spaces and even child care facilities at their sites. Different tax credits and supports enable Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in community-building work, particularly in developing housing infrastructures. Further, the Federal Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) provides some direction to what financial institutions must do to invest in their communities.

States also may have both tax credits and direct programs to encourage community development within designated low-income neighborhoods.

**Current Funding Sources
for Safe and Supportive Communities**

- Community development block grant
- EZ/EC legislation
- Discretionary grants
- Housing funds, including Section 8 subsidies
- Community Reinvestment Act
- State program

Annotated References

Jobs for the Future. (2003). *Community investments for family economic success*. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation Technical Assistance Resource Center.

This guide provides a good overall introduction to a variety of investment sources and tools to help families, local business owners, and the poor communities build and maintain equity, including: the Community Reinvestment Act, community development financial institutions, the New Markets Tax Credit, and other federal and state resources. It provides a listing of different people and organizations that have helped communities and states leverage such investment opportunities.

Knitzer, J., & Adely, F. (2002). *The role of community development corporations in promoting the well-being of young children*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.

This report provides findings from research conducted on Community Development Corporations (CDCs), including information on what types of services are being provided, the effects of CDCs on families, and some suggestions for how CDCs can continue to expand and provide support to families and communities.

II. Financing School Readiness: Comprehensive Approaches and Strategies

Part One addressed funding strategies to address each of six specific elements of an overall school readiness strategy. Clearly, some of the financing strategies described under one element could be employed as a financing strategy under another element. In general, however, the financing sources and strategies described in Part One have

been used for specific programmatic efforts rather than for a comprehensive, overall approach.

At the same time, there are a growing number of efforts to develop more comprehensive and integrated approaches which discuss overall system funding needs. Several efforts have been made to “cost out” what financing a comprehensive school readiness approach would entail. Other efforts have described financing strategies more generically, often including discussions of how to build the political will to make new investments.

In particular, several resources have employed cost-benefit or return-on-investment analysis as one way to place new investments in early childhood and school readiness strategies in context. Others have sought to define the economic impact of early care and education systems (particularly child care) on local economies. Still others have identified some of the experiences and lessons learned from efforts to scale up investments in early care and education.

Annotated References

General Discussions and Guides

Riley, B. (2002). *Proposition 10 fiscal leveraging primer: A decision-making strategy for revenue enhancement and systems integration*. Sacramento, CA: Center for Health Improvement/Proposition 10 Technical Assistance Service Center.

This primer provides an overview of a large variety of potential funding streams, including federal grant and entitlement funding sources that can be used to fund early childhood services. It is written for California’s Proposition 10 (now First Five) Commissions, county entities broadly charged with developing comprehensive services for young children that can ensure school readiness. It provides a wealth of examples from counties, as well as worksheets and exercises and references and represents one of the most recent and comprehensive approaches to delineating early childhood funding strategies and opportunities.

Rosenblatt, A., Griffin, M., Mills, N. & Friedman, M. (1998). *Capturing cash for kids: A workbook for reinvesting community based prevention approaches for children and families*. Sacramento, CA: Foundation Consortium for Community Approaches.

This document is designed to provide guidance in using an investment-based approach to securing resources for prevention programs, including those for young children. It is based upon identifying the “cost of bad outcomes” for children and families and using that information to make the case for investing in strategies to reduce those bad outcomes through cost-benefit or return-on-investment approaches.

Hayes, C. (2002). *Thinking broadly: Financing strategies for comprehensive child and family initiatives*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project.

This guide provides an overview of general principles that should guide investments in families, children, and youth and advice on: maximizing federal and state revenue, creating more flexibility in existing categorical funding streams, building public and private partnerships, and creating new dedicated revenue streams.

Bruner, C. (2000). *Polk county business case*. Des Moines, IA: The Child and Family Policy Center.

Drawing upon available data regarding public spending and service use of early childhood services in Polk County from state, federal, and local sources and overall demographics suggesting the potential population that might be served and benefit from these services, this business case estimates, for one county, the costs for establishing a fully-realized early childhood system that includes child care, enriched pre-school for low-income children, family support and parenting education for vulnerable families, and health care services. It is one of the first efforts to consider the financial implications of “going to scale” with a comprehensive, early childhood/school readiness strategy.

Return on Investment Analyses and Modeling

Bruner, C. (2002). *A stitch in time: Examining the costs of school unreadiness*. Washington, DC: The Finance Project & The National Center for Service Integration.

This monograph discusses how states can review their current levels of funding in relation to investments in very young children vs. school-aged children and college-aged young adults and in relation to investing in school readiness strategies vs. spending on remediation and compensation. It provides a discussion of cost-benefit studies that have showed the potentially large returns-on-investment from different high quality early childhood programs and provides an extensive, annotated bibliography of these studies and modeling approaches.

Heckman, J. (2000). *Invest in the very young*. Chicago, IL: Ounce of Prevention Fund & the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy Studies.

This policy brief is a synthesis of a longer article by Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences James Heckman that concludes that investments in the youngest years of life have the greatest potential pay-offs to society. Drawing upon selected research in early childhood and in later life investments in employment and training, the brief also concludes that altering social skills and motivation at a young age represents a key to achieving strong rates of return.

Economic Impact Analyses

Retrieved January 21, 2003 from <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/restructuring/doc/reports/childcare/contents.htm>

This website provides a complete summary of, and links to, child care economic impact studies that have been completed or are in process.

National Economic Development Law Center. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from www.nedlc.org/programs/child_care_program.html

The National Economic Development Law Center works with many states and cities to conduct economic impact studies, and helped develop the Local Investment in Child Care (LINCC) Project in California.

Implementation Experiences and Issues

Gill, B., Dembosky, J. & Caulkins, J. (2002). *A "noble bet" in early care and education: Lessons from one community's experience*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Retrieved January 21, 2003 from www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1544

This book is a detailed analysis of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Initiative, a public-private partnership designed to move to scale in providing high quality early childhood services in Allegheny County's highest risk neighborhoods. The book details many of the unforeseen start-up challenges and underestimating of costs of developing those services. It includes an analysis both of the political issues in securing public funding support and the implementation issues in building capacity to deliver quality services. It provides good insights into the issues that need to be addressed in moving to scale with program strategies, particularly in poor neighborhoods and communities.

Bruner, C. (2000). *The dilemma of getting ahead*. (Occasional Paper No. 25). Des Moines, IA: The Child and Family Policy Center & The National Center for Service Integration.

This occasional paper shows how the array of means-tested financial supports to families with young children (TANF, food stamps, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), child care subsidies), while serving to provide some safety net support, make it difficult for families to "get ahead" and achieve self-sufficiency, as they all phase out and the cumulative effect is to provide a very high effective "tax on earnings" for families, particularly those with very young children. As states and communities seek to develop strategies to support families with young children in getting ahead, they must contend with or change these realities.



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