

Oregon Child Care Research Partnership
March 5, 2008
Minutes

Attendance: Bobbie Weber, Deana Grobe, Becky Vorpapel, Mary Nemmers, Robi Henifin, Art Emlen, Diana Kruse, Kim Cardona, Mark Anderson, Tom Olsen, Dawn Norris, David Mandell, Kathy Seubert.

I. Oregon Employment Department Survey of Oregon employers

One of the Child Care Divisions Performance Measures is 'percent of Oregon employers providing child care benefits for full time employees'. Currently data is collected on three child care benefits. In a previous meeting the group felt the questions should be broadened. Dawn talked with Cynthia at CCD who is educating employers about work/life benefits. She and Dawn came up with a two page work/life audit for employers (see handout). The employment department is gearing up for their next survey and Dawn will need to submit questions to them soon. Dawn asked the group (1) if this audit was what we wanted to ask, and (2) if not, what were the key pieces. Here were comments from the group:

- Question from Art: does part-time schedule mean real part-time jobs with benefits?
- Bobbie - this is overwhelming. Which ones do we think are most important?
- Important benefits mentioned by the group: any kind of job flexibility, sick leave, dependent care flexible spending account, health benefits.
- David cautioned that you want to make sure a yes/no answer gives you what you want.
- Art also mentioned that he did a one-page document about a year ago that indicated what he thought would be good benefit questions to ask of employers.

Next Steps:

- Art will send the group his one-page document he created about a year ago on child care benefit questions we could ask of employers.
- We will try to come to some kind of agreement via email on which benefits make the most sense to ask employers.
- If the email conversation is not sufficient, Dawn will convene a one time workgroup to complete this work.

II. Early Childhood Assessment System

[Guests: Misten Antholz, Helen Young, and Jennifer Olson]

Helen and Misten presented how the early childhood assessment tool was developed, pilot-test results, field-test results, and how the tool works (see powerpoint handout). They would like to see someone invest in the continuing use of this assessment system.

Comments/Issues/Concerns from the Group:

- Costs in sustaining the system – someone with computer programming knowledge to keep the system running, staff to answer questions and provide technical support on using the system, and training to new and on-going providers.
- One thought is that it might be used in conjunction with the mentoring program.
- Concerns that we should not even be assessing young children because development is so uneven among children at this age.
- Policy question - who owns the data and who has access and for what purposes? What are the legitimate questions to ask?
- Policy issue – we do want caregivers to be observing children, however assessments can get out of hand.

- What is the problem we are trying to solve that we need to be assessing young children? Concern with unintended consequences.
- Is there a curriculum piece to give providers instruction once they have used the assessment tool? Is 'Born to Learn' a viable tool?
- Providers seemed to rate this assessment positively. What are providers needing that this assessment seems to provide? Are there other ways to boost their self-esteem and make them feel less like babysitters?
- Pro of this assessment is the connection between child care foundations and born to learn. What is anyone doing with 'Born to Learn'.
- Tom – it is not the responsibility of this group to figure out the right message to send to facilities that are still using this assessment if support ends.
- Mary did feel as though we owed a response to the presenters.

Next Steps:

- Bobbie will organize the above issues, concerns, and potential uses.
- Dawn will play with the assessment tool and look into the connection between the child care foundations and 'Born to Learn'.
- David will put together a one-page summary on the standards assessments should meet from national task force work.
- We will revisit this issue at the next meeting and form a response.

III. Oregon Population Survey

Bobbie talked with the Progress Board and also with Rebecca at the survey firm about learning more about school-age kids. Rebecca indicated that they were already discussing adding a grade question, which would assist us in separating the analysis between 0-5 (not in kindergarten) and school-age children. Bobbie asked the group if they thought we need to add the following 2 categories to the list of grades: transitional kindergarten and prefirst grade? The group said 'No', these categories are not happening in Oregon.

Bobbie also asked whether it would be worth asking, for those children who are in kindergarten or higher and in center care, more information about the place that it happens (Question SH18 on handout) and/or activities (Question SI2 on handout). The group said 'No', they did not think these questions would add enough information to make it worth it.

IV. 2008 Researchers Roundtable

We did not get to this agenda item. Tom did mention that Region X would like to do a researchers' roundtable.

Next Steps:

- Bobbie will add this item to the April agenda.

V. April meeting data

There is a conflict with the April 2 meeting date. The group decided to meet on Wednesday, April 9 instead.

VI. Updates

Percent of CCDF eligible served – Mark went to a session at the State Administrator’s Meeting last summer on how they calculate the percent of CCDF eligible served. He was concerned with the current TRIM model. The Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) contracted with urban Institute in the 1990s and they developed a TRIM model that uses various data sources (demographic information from the Current Population Survey, state child care policy) to estimate the number of children eligible in a given state. Bobbie uses data from Deb Tremmel to come up with an average number of children served in a month (numerator) and the estimate from ASPE as the denominator. This gives the percent of CCDF eligible served that Oregon uses as a benchmark. This is calculated every 2 years. Another person has developed a computer model that uses other factors to estimate eligible children served – we don’t have enough information to assess this other potential model for estimating eligible children served. Mark would like to see more qualifications added to the current benchmark that uses the TRIM model.

Next Steps:

- Bobbie will work with Mark this month to draft context around the qualifications of using the TRIM model.

OCCF Evaluation of Family, Friend, and Neighbor project – the bid for the evaluation for this project closes on March 14th.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2008 – 9:30am-12:00pm