

Archived Information

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

Contents

About the Institute.....	3
National Education Research and Development Centers Program	6
Field-Initiated Studies Program Research Program (FIS).....	15
The Institute's Sponsored Research Projects	41
Interagency Education Research Initiative (IERI).....	47
21st Century Community Learning Centers.....	54
Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE).....	57
Ready-to-Learn Television.....	65
Early Childhood Institute Staff Directory.....	68
State Listing of Projects by State.....	69

About the Institute

Who Are We?

The National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECI, Early Childhood Institute) was created to carry out a comprehensive program of research, development, and dissemination to improve early childhood development, learning, and education.

Where Are We Located?

The Early Childhood Institute is part of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) within the U.S. Department of Education.

What Do We Believe?

The Three Rs of Early Childhood Education

When people think of the three Rs, Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic come to mind. Long before children enter school, three other Rs build the foundation for later success. At the U.S. Department of Education's Early Childhood Institute, we support research and share information about the three Rs of early childhood education: readiness, relationships, and resilience. The three R's of early childhood are an integrated part of healthy, strong child development and learning.

Readiness

Readiness for school has many parts. School readiness means that young children have had experiences and opportunities that build foundations for good learning and school success. Young children's language, literacy, and reading foundations are developing in environments that have books, printed words, and rich conversations. They learn to recognize letters of the alphabet, begin to understand that letters have sounds, and then recognize that letters and sounds make words. The children have experiences that

build number, color, and shape recognition and discrimination. Readiness is stimulated when children's cognitive development is nurtured by the adults who spend their days with them.

In addition, getting "ready for school" requires good health, positive relationships, enriching educational activities, and schools that are ready to help every child succeed at the highest levels. These are the ingredients that: (a) build young children's language and literacy competencies needed to become successful, independent readers; (b) develop problemsolving skills; and (c) foster later academic achievement.

The Early Childhood Institute supports activities that identify the various ingredients of readiness and activities that increase each family's and community's ability to prepare every child for a successful experience in an excellent, welcoming school.

Relationships

Loving relationships in early childhood with parents and other adults build young children's security and confidence in themselves as capable learners. Parents are their children's first teachers. In the early years, parents create important learning attitudes and build essential skills. Outside the family, excellent early childhood teachers are the key to quality education. The Early Childhood Institute supports research activities that tell us how relationships can support and strengthen children's development and learning.

Resilience

What helps a child meet challenges successfully? All children face challenges, but many children face the greater obstacles of violence, poverty, bias, or disability. The Early Childhood Institute wants to learn why some children overcome obstacles better than others, and why some children are more resilient than others. We also want to know what adults can do to help young children reach their full potential. The Early Childhood Institute supports activities that strengthen children's resilience and improve their learning environments so that all young children have the tools they need for success.

This *Directory* contains the projects and programs that the Early Childhood Institute funded from March 2, 1996, through August 31, 2005. Several of the studies will end in 2001; others will continue for up to 3 more years. Since our funding changes regularly, we update this *Directory* every year. We hope that you take an interest in the projects listed here, and that you will follow them as the results of their work are made known. All of the work described in the *Directory* adds to the knowledge base on how to improve young children's learning and development.

For more information about projects not contained in the *Directory*, either call the contact person listed, or visit our Home Page (www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ECI).

National Education Research and Development Centers Program

The National Education Research and Development Centers Program provides assistance to institutions of higher education to establish centers that will carry out long-term research and development that will address nationally significant problems and issues in American education.

This program provides a stable foundation for sustained research and development on the core issues and concerns regarding the development and education of young children. The Early Childhood Institute supports two research centers.

The National Center for Early Development and Learning is fully funded by the Early Childhood Institute. The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement is a collaborative funding activity with OERI's National Institute on Student Achievement, Assessment, and Curriculum.

The National Center for Early Development and Learning (NCEDL)

**Contact: Richard Clifford and Donna Bryant
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
105 Smith Level Road
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-8180
Phone: (919) 962-4737
Fax: (919) 962-7328
E-mail: dickclifford@unc.edu or bryant@unc.edu
Web site: <http://www.NCEDL.org>**

Focus:

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement has funded the National Center for Early Development and Learning to conduct a multistate study of U.S. pre-kindergarten (pre-k) programs. For this study, "pre-k" includes center-based programs for 4-year-olds that are fully or partially funded by education agencies, and that are operated in schools or under the direction of state and local education agencies. Several surveys of state pre-k programs have been conducted, but this will be the first multistate study to include extensive classroom observations, child assessments, and kindergarten follow-up. This study will generate completely new data about the nations pre-k programs.

The study will take place in approximately six states selected from among states that have committed significant resources to pre-k initiatives. States will be selected to maximize diversity with regard to geography, program settings (public school or community setting), and program intensity (full day vs. part day). Within each state, there will be a sample of approximately 40 classrooms selected for observation and teacher interviews, and approximately 4 children in each classroom for individual assessment. Data collection will begin in the fall of 2001 and end in the spring of 2003, following children from the beginning of pre-k through the end of kindergarten.

A collaborative team of researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Virginia will conduct this study. Key pre-k administrators from each participating state, and national early childhood experts, will comprise an advisory group that will meet annually to evaluate progress, discuss preliminary results, and strategize about next steps. Within each state, a team of data collectors will conduct the observations, interviews, and assessments.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This information about how public schools are supporting young children's learning and development will provide the early childhood community with new knowledge in several key areas:

pre-k teacher education and training;

- practices teachers use in the classroom and how they relate to the acquisition of language literacy, mathematics, and science competencies, and social-emotional development;
- community partnerships for funding early learning programs;
- effective strategies for disseminating early childhood education information to teachers, policymakers, and parents; and
- impact of pre-k programs on early education and development.

The results of this research will provide guidance to public policymaking at the state and local level, and to practice at the school and classroom level. While the data collected will not provide a precise description of child outcomes and classroom quality at the level of each state, it will give participating states a broad picture of their current pre-k and kindergarten programs.

State Selection:

The selections will be based on geographic diversity, program settings, and intensity, creating a target (rather than nationally representative) sample. A Constituent Advisory Board will be established, consisting of personnel from the

participating states and local education agencies, as well as interdisciplinary research partners. This group will provide overall guidance and advice to NCEDL staff in the design, implementation, and dissemination activities of the study. In addition, state-specific guidance on project design and dissemination will be sought through annual meetings of a statewide constituency advisory board in each participating state, consisting of pre-k leaders, teachers, and parent representatives.

Information to be Collected About States and Programs:

Information will be collected within each of the six states in order to thoroughly describe the nature and extent of the school-linked pre-k programs because information regarding basic operations of pre-k services in school-related programs is currently unavailable, and many states have not systematically compiled this information. This information will be used to provide important context about the state's programs, as well as to decide how to select the specific pre-k programs and classrooms that will be asked to participate in the study. The NCEDL team will use existing data, document reviews, phone interviews, and possibly new surveys to obtain information about: (1) level of services, (2) numbers of children served, (3) proportion of children receiving services, (4) class size, (5) financial support (both from the education agency as well as other sources of support), (6) professional development opportunities, (7) curriculum and materials, (8) facilities and equipment, (9) transportation, and (10) administrative support. This phase of the study will provide policymakers and early childhood community leaders with much needed descriptive information concerning the role of public schools in young children's lives. In addition, these data will help decide how to best select the classrooms in the states that will be asked to participate in the study.

Information to be Collected About the General Quality of Classroom Services and Specific Instructional Practices:

Detailed quantitative and qualitative information will be gathered about what is actually happening in the pre-k and kindergarten classrooms. This data will provide insight into what early childhood teachers think about child development and how they actually teach, including instructional practices around literacy, mathematics

concepts, and social-emotional competencies. Additionally, the data will provide information about the practices teachers and schools use to help young children make the transition from pre-k to kindergarten. Research on transition issues was an integral part of NCEdL's work during its first 5 years and will continue to be the primary focus in the years to come since transition to kindergarten is a major event in a child's life and can affect educational success.

Within the 40 classrooms in each participating state, carefully trained data collectors will conduct classroom observations and teacher interviews twice each year. Surveys may be used with administrators/principals, as well as parents. These data should provide early childhood teachers and administrators, policymakers, families, and teacher educators with new knowledge as to how teachers' professional development/training experiences match actual classroom practices and provide a thorough description of pre-k and kindergarten classroom environments.

Information to be Gathered about Children:

Within each participating pre-k classroom, approximately four randomly selected children will be assessed using an appropriate battery of individual instruments to measure language, literacy, mathematics, and related concept development, as well as social competence. A variety of standardized and nonstandardized assessments are being reviewed, and input from the Constituent Advisory Board will be helpful in selecting assessment tools. In addition, NCEdL staff will seek consultation on appropriate measures and strategies to use when assessing young children whose primary language is not English.

The pre-k child assessments will be conducted in the fall and spring of 2001-02. The same children will be followed into kindergarten in the fall and spring of 2002-03. These data will help understand whether the specific practices employed by pre-k teachers will make a difference in the transition to kindergarten. The data will also provide an understanding as to how pre-k programs help prepare young children to be successful in kindergarten. This approach will allow for a much clearer understanding of the relationship between specific instructional practices in pre-k and kindergarten classes, and the various components of child outcomes under investigations.

Dissemination:

A strong dissemination effort is planned, commensurate with the importance of the NCEdL Pre-kindergarten Study. The project-wide and within-state constituent advisory boards will provide guidance about the most effective strategies for reaching the primary target audiences (teachers, teacher aides, administrators,

policymakers, and parents). In addition, after the pre-k data collection, the pre-k teachers and aids that participated in the study will be invited to share their ideas about disseminating the information to those that need it to effect change. The Web site developed during NCEDL's initial funding period, press releases and press conferences, as well as a variety of print resources will also be used. The key work will continue to be published through quality peer reviewed journals.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R307A600004

Project Period: 03/02/96-02/28/01; renewal through 02/28/04

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)

**Contact: Susan Neuman
University of Michigan
610 E. University, Room 1600 SEB
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1259
Phone: (734) 763-6718
Fax: (734) 615-4858
E-mail: dbirdy@umich.edu
Web site: <http://www.ciera.org>**

Focus and Mission of the Center:

Learning to read is a critical aspect of school success. Further research on learning to read and teaching reading is required for informed decisionmaking by families and communities, teachers, administrators, and policymakers facing increasingly diverse student populations, rapidly changing technologies, higher literacy needs in business and industry, and shrinking budgets.

The University of Michigan, in collaboration with Michigan State University, is creating a research agenda to improve the early reading achievement of children. The goal is to use their collective knowledge and resources to help teachers, children, and parents become immersed in reading, excited about reading, and skilled at reading. CIERA's mission is to improve the reading achievement of America's children by generating and disseminating theoretical, empirical, and practical solutions to persistent problems in the learning and teaching of beginning reading.

The University of Michigan collaborative research studies include basic research on fundamental processes of reading. The Center will conduct research and development on the specifications of those features of curriculum and instruction that are essential to success in early reading, including oral and written language as

forms of communication. Of central focus are the concepts that readers interact with the text, and the need to understand the dynamics of developing skills and knowledge that allow children to break the code and understand messages in print. The Center will focus on helping children who come to school with characteristics that may indicate risk for school failure, problems such as poverty, motivation, language differences, and lack of literacy support at home. They will study how resilient children overcome these circumstances. The Center will also examine the surrounding contexts that influence children's early reading. Specifically, they will investigate successful reading practices that link home and schools, provide community resources for family reading, and establish solid foundations with effective preschool activities. They will follow examples of best practices of their teacher partners throughout the nation as they examine effective teaching of reading in early primary grades and disseminate the results to educators.

The University of Michigan collaborative will study programs of teacher education to understand how to prepare new teachers to teach reading effectively, and how staff development programs can be enhanced. Finally, they will examine the influences of policies, standards, assessments, and interventions established by state and federal agencies.

The Center will study how these imposed expectations and programs affect how teachers provide reading instruction and how children respond to them. Their proposed studies analyze the impact on all levels of stakeholders so that they understand the myriad of contextual influences on children who are beginning to read.

In order to accomplish the Center's mission, the University of Michigan collaboration has organized its programs of work into six strands: the reader and the process of reading acquisition; individual differences; home, school, and community environments; classrooms and schools; teacher development and student achievement in early reading; and policy and assessment.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This Center will work collaboratively on a series of research projects and development activities that gain power from bringing a variety of disciplines and research traditions to bear on reform of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

This Center will advance theory and will lead to the improvement of reading instruction and related practices. It will contribute to improving reading instruction and lifelong reading for all individuals over their life course.

NOTE: The Center is monitored by OERI's National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment, with support from ECI.

National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment

Contact: Anne P. Sweet, (202) 219-2043

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R305R70004

Project Period: 10/01/97-09/30/01

Field-Initiated Studies (FIS)

Research Program

This program provides assistance to institutions of higher education, state and local education agencies, public and private organizations, institutions, agencies, and individuals for educational research and demonstration projects related to the mission of the Early Childhood Institute.

FIS grantees are working to solve ongoing problems that face educators, policymakers, communities, and families as they strive to improve education theory, practice, and policies in the United States.

Relationship-Based Practice in Early Intervention Settings: An Experimental Investigation of Impact and Effectiveness

**Contact: Jeanne Wilcox
Infant-Child Communication Research Programs
Arizona State University
P.O. Box 871908
Tempe, Arizona 85287-1908
Phone: (602) 965-9397
Fax: (602) 965-0965
E-mail: mjwilcox@asu.edu
Web site: www.asu.edu/clas/shs/wilcox**

Research Questions and Methodology:

Early childhood practitioners in the United States use different models and approaches when providing services and supports to young children and their families. A family-centered approach is frequently used where the supports and services are custom-designed to meet the individual strengths and needs of the children and their families. Under this family-centered model, the needs of the child and family determine what services are provided, as opposed to the traditional model where families receive whatever practitioners happen to offer. Under the family-centered approach, relationships between and among the children, their families, and practitioners are a key feature. However, few studies have investigated the effectiveness of this approach to serving young children and their families.

This study will evaluate the effectiveness of family-centered early intervention practices that have a relationship-based perspective. Research activities will focus on documenting outcomes for the children, the families, and the practitioners themselves compared to control groups' outcomes. Study participants will include 200 early intervention professionals, 400 children and families served by the practitioners, and the program administrators. Practitioners will be recruited from programs that are currently using child- focused interventions. Programs such as Early Head Start, Healthy Families, and other early intervention programs for

infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who have disabilities or are at high risk of developing disabilities will be targeted.

Practitioners will be randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group. There will be a total of 4 groups, with 50 practitioners in each, 25 in the control group, and 25 in the experimental group. Practitioners in the experimental groups will receive 12 months of training that will focus on creating and implementing early intervention services that are reflective and relationship based.

It is anticipated that practitioners who have received training in a relationship-based approach to early intervention will exhibit significantly more family-centered behaviors compared to a control group. It is also expected that children receiving such family-centered services will have enhanced developmental outcomes when compared to children in the control group.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This research will help early childhood educators and health and related service providers understand the importance of relationships and responsiveness to young children and their families.

ECI Contact: Sarah Grissom, (202) 208-3491

Award No: R305T00049

Project Period: 08/01/00-07/31/03

Promoting Children's Language Development in Head Start Classrooms: Explorations with Collaborative Research Teams

Contact: Jeanne Wilcox
Infant-Child Communication Research Programs
Arizona State University
P.O. Box 871908
Tempe, Arizona 85287-1908
Phone: (602) 965-9397
Fax: (602) 965-0965
E-mail: mjwilcox@asu.edu
Web site: www.asu.edu/clas/shs/wilcox

Research Questions and Methodology:

This study is a collaborative effort between Arizona State University's Infant-Child Communication Research Programs and Southwest Human Development (SHD). The latter is a private, nonprofit agency that provides comprehensive services, including Head Start, to young children and their families.

The overall purpose of the project is to develop and test a new approach designed to bring specific language skill-building activities into preschool children's everyday lives. In addition, the study is documenting if partnerships among the children's parents, Head Start teachers and aides, and university researchers make a difference in the children's language development. Specific research questions to be investigated include: how best might language skill-building activities be incorporated into everyday Head Start classroom activities? How might these activities be linked with the children's homes and family activities? How effective are collaborative research teams? and Can these language activities be replicated in other preschool classrooms?

All research activities take place in Head Start classrooms operated by SHD. Sixty children will be selected from SHD's 28 classrooms serving 520 children. The study has four phases: identification of key issues and desired outcomes; research action plan; analysis and review of results; and replication and product development.

In this study, Head Start teachers are trained to be researchers and to participate in all phases of the study, including how to document changes in the children's

language behavior. Later in the study, the classroom activities will be replicated in other Head Start classrooms. In this phase, children will be randomly assigned to either the replication or to control conditions. The participants will be recruited from among the 126 classrooms and 2,500 children served in Head Start classrooms operated by the city of Phoenix, Arizona.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The goal of the research is to provide information on how teachers and parents can effectively use language skill-building activities with young children. The results have implications for improving the ways in which early childhood educators and families talk to young children in order to improve overall language usage and understanding. Both of these are skills that children need in order to do well in school. In addition, this study will add information on how to effectively use teachers as researchers so that they can document how new classroom practices actually affect children's learning and teachers' behaviors.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R307F0081

Project Period: 10/01/97-09/30/00; No cost extension ends 09/30/01

Assessing Low-Income Children's Changing Environments and Effects on School Readiness

Contact: Bruce Fuller
Regents of the University of California
PACE, School of Education
3653 Tolman Hall
Berkeley, California 94720-1670
Phone: (510) 642-7223
Fax: (510) 642-9148
E-mail: b_fuller@uclink4.berkeley.edu
Web site: <http://pace.berkeley.edu/earlyed.html>

Research Questions and Methodology:

This project will describe children's home and childcare environments during welfare reform, and track the children's development related to school readiness. Since welfare reform applies to all families who receive case assistance, a comparison group is not possible.

The research will take place in two low-income neighborhoods in Tampa, Florida. Approximately 250 unmarried mothers who have at least one preschool-age child, and meet eligibility requirements for welfare will take part in the study. Researchers will conduct two home visits when the children are 3 and 4 years old. Using standardized checklists, rating scales, and interview formats, the researchers will determine if and how home environments and mothers' time and activities with the children change over a 30-month time period, due to new federal and state requirements for welfare recipients to work, and maximum lifetime limits for receiving welfare assistance.

In order to get a picture of what the children's childcare settings are like, the researchers will interview the children's childcare providers by telephone. They then are going to observe in the childcare settings, using standardized checklists and rating scales in order to evaluate the quality of the childcare. They will compare childcare providers' answers about the quality of the childcare with project staff's observations in the childcare settings. From these comparisons, they are going to determine which interview questions are most strongly related to the standardized checklists and rating scales.

The researchers will measure children's preliteracy, social, and language development, which are related to school readiness, over the 30-month period, and relate their development with their home and child care environments.

Researchers will compare study results in two communities each in Florida, California, and Connecticut. Welfare policies in these three states are different. Along with the Early Childhood Institute, the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Children's Forum, and the Spencer Foundation are providing funds for this project in Tampa. The Packard and Hewlett Foundations are funding the same project in California, and the federal Child Care Bureau (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) is funding the project in Connecticut.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The first national education goal—by the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn—is backed by specific objectives: All children will have access to high quality preschool programs, and every parent will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day helping his or her preschool child learn. In reality, children's access to high quality preschool programs depends on where they live. As single mothers who receive welfare assistance are required to work, they may spend less time helping their preschool age children learn, and children's learning may become more dependent on childcare providers. By determining if home and child care changes occur that affect school readiness, the research will provide information that may lead to improved policies and practices for serving low-income children who are at high risk of school failure.

The project will also help researchers develop telephone interview questions for child care providers that more accurately measure the quality of child care settings, which is important to the school readiness goal.

ECI Contact: Sarah Grissom, (202) 208-3491

Award No: R307F70073

Project Period: 10/01/97-09/30/00; No cost extension ends 09/30/01

Assessing the Effectiveness of Early Parenting Education and Support Through Home Visiting for Families With Young Children

**Contact: Mary Wagner
Center for Education and Human Services
SRI International
333 Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo Park, California 94025
Phone: (415) 359-2867
E-mail: mary.wagner@sri.com**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This study supports the measurement and analysis of the impact of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting program on children and families in the program in two urban sites. The research is following children from PAT enrollment in infancy through the children's second birthdays.

Some of the outcomes being investigated include: parent knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors; parent-child interactions; early child development; and later school readiness, attendance, and performance. This study is the first step in a larger national program of research to evaluate the short- and long-term impacts of PAT using a multisite randomized experimental design. Fundraising activities are under way with other potential sponsors to support research in additional sites and for the extended study period desired.

Educational Significance of the Study:

At the end of the study, we will have information on the effectiveness of the PAT program in supporting families in low-income and urban areas to promote the

development and well-being of their children. Knowledge will be gained regarding how the results of the program vary for families with different experiences of PAT (e.g., varied levels or lengths of service, changes in parent educators vs. a stable relationship, attendance at group meetings vs. home visits).

ECI Contact: Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R307F60074

Project Period: 09/01/96-08/31/99; No cost extension ends 08/31/01

Home Activity and Play Intervention

Contact: Cordelia Robinson
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center
4200 E. 9th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80262-0234
Phone: (303) 864-5261
Fax: (303) 864-5270
E-mail: Robinson.Cordelia@TCHDEM.org
Web site: <http://www.jfkpartners.org>

Research Questions and Methodology:

The University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, in collaboration with the University of Denver, will develop, implement, and evaluate a new way of providing early intervention services to young children with developmental disabilities. This study will investigate how best to coordinate and provide intervention services that are transdisciplinary, functionally oriented, and parent-directed.

Traditionally, early intervention services are provided by professionals, in clinical settings, with excessive focus on specific treatment techniques. Moreover, there has been an emphasis on professionals' own intervention goals and strategies. In this study, at least 54 children and families will receive intervention through the Home Activity and Play Intervention (HAPI) model. Interventions, which are based on the children's individually determined functional goals, will be integrated into the child's and family's typical daily routines. There will be an emphasis on integrating interventions through play activities.

Entry and exit data will be collected and compared to a contrast group of 54 children who will receive intervention through more traditional, currently existing services.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The HAPI group will demonstrate a more effective way to incorporate interventions into the family's daily routines. Providing early intervention services in this way could promote increased developmental gains and functioning as well as increased satisfaction on the part of families.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R307F70045

Project Period: 10/01/97-09/30/00; No cost extension ended 03/31/01

A Longitudinal Evaluation of the School of the 21st Century

**Contact: Matia Finn-Stevenson
Yale University
Yale Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy
310 Prospect Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06511-2188
Phone: (203) 432-9944
Fax: (203) 432-9945
E-mail: matia.finn-stevenson@yale.edu
Web site: <http://www.yale.edu/21C>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This study is an evaluation of a school-based, school-linked childcare and family support model, the School of the 21st Century (21C). The 21C model offers year-round preschool care and education, before and after school child care programs, and family support services. The study will take place in five school districts nationwide. The districts have geographic, income, and ethnic variations.

The research will follow a group of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old students for 3 years, using literacy and numeracy measures to assess the impact of the program on school readiness and achievement. It will compare groups who participate in the model at different times and at different levels of intensity. A variety of measures will determine how parents assess school climate, preschool experiences, and their child's social and behavioral skills. Parent involvement in the 21C classes will also be measured.

Teacher measures will examine school climate, parental involvement, curriculum, students' social and behavioral skills, and academic competence. A cost-benefit analysis will explore the cost and benefits associated with the model. The development of the model, practices, and conditions, which facilitated its development will also be documented.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The study will provide information about one of the largest school-based early care and family support initiatives in the nation, yielding data on schools' roles in the implementation and operation of preschool and after school programs, the quality of

the programs, as well as the costs and benefits. The study will also increase knowledge pertaining to: the impact of universally accessible pre-K and after school programs on students, parents, the schools, and the community; and the methodological issues associated with the evaluation of such programs.

ECI Contact: Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R305T990015

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

Improving Early Identification of Young Children At-Risk for Language and Reading Difficulties

**Contact: Amy Wetherby
Florida State University
107 Regional Rehabilitation Center
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-1201
Phone: (850) 644-4367
Fax: (850) 644-3644
E-mail: awetherb@garnett.acns.fsu.edu**

Research Questions and Methodology:

Many children with limited vocabulary development at age 3 continue to experience delays in learning language, fail to develop preliteracy skills, and have difficulty learning to read. Identifying children who are at risk for language and reading difficulties before children reach 3 years of age is a first step toward developing early interventions that can support language development, reduce later reading difficulties, and improve performance in school.

The goal of this project, therefore, is to identify delays in prelinguistic communication (ways children communicate before using words) that predict which children will have language delays and later reading difficulty. Prelinguistic communication (for example, children's gestures, speech-like sounds, and attempts to encourage others to share their focus of attention) will be evaluated for a sample of 240 12-month-olds. Language and preliteracy skills for 120 children with delayed prelinguistic communication will be compared to 120 children without communication delays. Language and preliteracy skills will be assessed when children are 3 and 5 years old. Because children from families with less education and financial resources have language and reading difficulties more than other children do, half of the children in each group will be recruited from agencies that offer assistance to families with low income. The study will specify other aspects of children's environments (such as family stress, general family functioning, characteristics of primary caregivers) that could increase risk of language and reading difficulty.

Educational Significance of the Study:

When children enter kindergarten, many enter without the vocabulary, communication skills, and prereading skills that allow them to develop reading competency and participate fully in the classroom. The results of this study will identify very early precursors to language and reading difficulties, which is necessary for developing targeted interventions that can reduce or prevent the severe negative effects of early communication and language delays on later reading and school performance.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935; Seresa Simpson (202) 219-1591

Award No. R305T010262

Project Period: 02/01/01-1/31/04

From Cortex to Classroom: Supporting Earliest Brain Development for Improved Learning

**Contact: Heidelise Als
The Children's Hospital
Neurobehavioral Infant and Child Studies
Enders Pediatric Research Building, EN-29
320 Longwood Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts 02115
Phone: (617) 355-8249
Fax: (617) 355-7230
E-mail: als@al.tch.harvard.edu**

Research Questions and Methodology:

Research indicates that over 50 percent of premature babies who weigh between 1,000 and 1,500 grams at birth, usually have later school and learning problems due to deficits that occur early in the baby's brain development. These deficits result in language and reading disorders, diminished problem-solving skills, poorly developed mathematics and spatial reasoning abilities, and inappropriate social-emotional development. This longitudinal, experimental study is based on the assumption that traditional neonatal intensive care nursery interventions and surroundings (i.e., bright lights, loud noises, continuous turning and handling of the baby) over-stimulate a "preemie's" already fragile central nervous system, further jeopardizing healthy brain development. The research will determine if a new package of interventions that alter the traditional intensive care nursery environment will improve the brain development, brain structure, and developmental outcomes (i.e., cognitive, language, and social-emotional development) of very low birthweight babies.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This project will make a significant contribution to the understanding of the neurobiological and neurofunctional bases of central processing that are associated with learning and other disabilities. The approach has far reaching implications for educational theory and practice well beyond the newborn period. Enhanced

understanding of the dynamic interaction of brain structure and function with experience is the key to furthering the educational process. The investigation will provide for the first time innovative, behavioral, electrophysiological, and brain anatomical newborn data, which will allow the documentation of earliest integrative development, and its relevance for learning and school achievement.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R305T990294

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

LEEP: Creating Literacy Environments in Preschool Programs

**Contact: David Dickinson
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02458-1060
Phone: (617) 969-7100
Fax: (617) 969-3440
E-mail: Ddickinson@edc.org
Web site: <http://www.edc.org>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This study will examine the impact that the Language Environment Enrichment Program (LEEP) has on teaching and the development of language and literacy in young children. LEEP is a Head Start intervention designed to do two things: to increase preschool teachers' and supervisors' understanding of how young children develop language and literacy; and to promote the adoption of effective classroom and supervisory practices. Head Start teachers and their supervisors will be randomly assigned to receive either the LEEP model or existing in-service training opportunities. The model's effectiveness will be examined at the end of 1 and 2 years using classroom observation measures, teacher surveys, and a teacher curriculum planning task. LEEP's impact on children will be examined by assessing children's language and literacy growth at the end of their first and second years in Head Start. One-third of the children will be from Spanish-speaking homes, so their assessments will be conducted in English and Spanish.

Educational Significance of the Study:

LEEP responds to national concerns about the early literacy development of children placed at disadvantage due to poverty and language status. It will address

the need for empirical evidence on the effectiveness of models that attempt to enhance the ability of preschool staff to support children's language and early literacy development. This project will also provide basic research data on the early literacy development of bilingual children.

ECI Contact: James Griffin, (202) 219-2168

Award No: R305T990312

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

Optimal Educational Contexts for Young Children Living in Poverty

Contacts: Samuel Meisels and Valerie E. Lee
University of Michigan
610 E. University, Room 3210 SEB
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1259
Phone: (734) 763-7306
Fax: (734) 647-1082
E-mail: smeisels@umich.edu or velee@umich.edu

Research Questions and Methodology:

This 3-year study focuses on how young children who are living in poverty move from preschool to formal schooling, and how school and classroom practices are linked to the children's optimal social and academic achievement. Phase I of the study will use the first four waves of data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten (ECLS-K). The ECLS-K, which has information on 23,000 children at the beginning and end of kindergarten and first grade, will be used to examine the relationship between conditions such as class size and teachers' qualifications and poor children's performance on standardized measures of social, cognitive, and motor development.

The results of Phase I will guide the selection of 8-10 high poverty schools and kindergarten classrooms that will constitute the Phase II observational sample. Phase II schools and classrooms will be studied in depth to discover how teachers and schools "beat the odds" by providing poor young children with learning environments that successfully promote learning and development.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This multimethod, in-depth study of educational contexts where poor children thrive should yield findings that will guide decisions about how educational practices in kindergarten and first grade can be changed to benefit more children living in poverty.

ECI Contact: James Griffin, (202) 219-2168

Award No: R305T990362

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

Validation of an Alternative Language Screening Procedure for African-American Children

**Contact: Ida J. Stockman
Michigan State University
Department of Audiology and Speech Science
Michigan State University
E. Lansing, Michigan 48824-12112
Phone: (517) 353-6764
Fax: (517) 432-2370
E-mail: stockma1@pilot.msu.edu**

Research Questions and Methodology:

Too frequently young African-American children are inaccurately diagnosed as having learning disabilities because oral language screening tests are not culturally and developmentally appropriate. The inaccurate diagnoses result in inappropriate special education placements and pose a risk factor for later academic achievement.

In this 2-year study, 100 African American 3- and 4-year-olds attending Head Start centers in Lansing, Michigan, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, will be screened for language delays, using a standardized measure and an experimental measure, the Minimal Competence Core (MCC). The research will determine if the MCC is more accurate than the standardized test in identifying young children who have language delays that require special services. To determine accuracy, the children will be examined by an independent speech clinician and followed for 1 year. Classroom teachers' and families' observations and judgments also will be included in the overall determination of the MCC's accuracy in predicting language problems. Furthermore, the study will investigate the performance and demographic differences between the children who pass both tests, fail both tests, or pass the MCC but not the other test.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The results will provide research-based guidelines for language screening procedures and policies. Furthermore, the results will shed light on the utility of

language sampling for assessment purposes, and will contribute to the data needed to determine whether elicitation contexts and sample analysis can be standardized well enough to serve as a workable alternative to standardized procedures across different examiners and children.

ECI Contact: Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R305T990013

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/01; No cost extension ends 03/31/02

Implementation and Outcomes of Universal Preschool Education

**Contact: Steven W. Barnett
Rutgers University
Graduate School of Education
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
10 Seminary Place
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901
Phone: (732) 932-7496
Fax: (732) 932-1957
E-mail: wbarnet@rci.rutgers.edu**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This evaluation will examine the implementation and effectiveness of a court-ordered statewide preschool program. New Jersey is under a court order to provide universal, high quality, intensive preschool education in 28 high poverty urban areas for nearly 50,000 3- and 4-year-olds beginning in fall of 1999. State administrative data will be supplemented by district surveys and parent interviews to examine how these 28 school districts and their community partners implement these preschool programs. Within three of these school districts, children will be randomly assigned to either the state preschool program or to the home or center-based childcare program typically available to the children in the districts. The effects of the program on the children's development and learning will be determined through teacher ratings, parent reports, and standardized assessments. The children in the new preschool programs and the children in the typical community programs will be followed through the end of kindergarten in order to assess how the program affects their school readiness. The results of this evaluation will address how well a state can implement high quality, intensive preschool education on a universal basis, and determine if such programs can prevent children in poverty from falling behind in academic and social abilities.

Educational Significance of the Study:

This project will provide information regarding the size and persistence of effects, and the capacity of public schools in low-income communities to provide high quality universal programs in today's world. It will greatly increase what is known about what is required to successfully implement universal preschool programs and the practical advantages and disadvantages of different approaches (including costs and

effects). The results will shed light on what transpires in the classrooms, how effects are produced during the preschool years and beyond, and the links between teacher qualifications and training and student learning, providing guidance for policymakers about the professional development of educators who can work successfully with diverse student populations.

OERI/ECI Contact: James Griffin, (202) 219-2168

Award No: R305T990324

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

Prevention of Behavioral and Social Problems: Steps to Achievement Resilience (Project START)

**Contacts: Ruth Kaminsky and Beth Stormshak
University of Oregon
School Psychology Program, 5208
Eugene, Oregon 97403-5208
Phone: (541) 346-2142
Fax: (541) 346-2897
E-mail: rkamin@oregon.uoregon.edu**

Research Questions and Methodology:

A growing number of preschool children are being identified by early childhood educators as having behavior problems that usually carry over into the early elementary school years. Both their parents and teachers are at a loss for what to do. This research study will develop and test a set of interventions designed to identify and treat behaviors in young children that are predictive of later social and behavior problems. The study will assign 200 preschoolers and their families into 1 of 3 intervention groups. One group will receive a classroom-based intervention provided by a trained teacher. The second intervention will be provided in a small parent education and support group. The third intervention will be a home-based, individualized family support and training program.

The goals of the study are to eliminate behavior problems in young children, and to produce classroom and home-based interventions that will support young children's social development and school performance. The research results also will provide families with the skills needed to maintain the children's progress.

Educational Significance of the Study:

Development and implementation of these training programs can prevent the development of future social/behavioral problems, and increase positive adult and peer interactions and academic achievement for children in the intervention conditions. Teachers and the preschool programs can benefit with improved

training and ongoing consultation from Project Coaches. The results will contribute to the development and advancement of theory and practice in prevention science, and early intervention by providing important directions for the effective utilization of early intervention to promote resilience in young children and families and reduce the risk factors associated with social/behavioral problems.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R305T990474

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/02

The Institute's Sponsored Research Projects

Each of the five National Research Institutes with OERI have developed a set of strategies for sponsoring research that will improve American education. One strategy is to fund research and development activities that are prescribed in the legislation. This includes the support of National Research and Development Centers and Field-Initiated Studies programs, as described earlier in this document.

A second strategy is for each of the five Institutes to fund collaborative research activities that cut across their individual areas of work. The High Performance Learning Communities project is an example.

The Early Childhood Institute uses additional strategies to broaden the scope of its research portfolio. These strategies allow us to give more direction to the types of research studies we would like to have conducted. The Interagency Agreement is the most commonly used strategy for these activities.

Through the use of Interagency Agreements, the ECI has the flexibility to address research areas that are stated in the legislation, but are not covered through the National Research Center or Field-Initiated Studies programs. In addition, this mechanism allows ECI to address timely topics, usually within a short period of time.

Furthermore, ECI can buy into large-scale, ongoing longitudinal studies sponsored by other agencies. For example, ECI recently completed a partnership in an ongoing study that was investigating the effects of comprehensive services on young children's social-emotional development. With ECI funds, we will publish two monographs detailing the findings of the study. One publication will focus on community-based early childhood mental health interventions and collaborations.

The second will provide program evaluators with suggestions and strategies for conducting evaluations of community-based collaborative services.

Complete descriptions of Directed Research Activities are on the following pages.

The Relationship Between Early Nonparental Child Care Quality and Later School Readiness: The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods

**Contact: Felton Earls
Harvard School of Public Health
Department of Maternal and Child Health
College House-Fourth Floor
1430 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
Phone: (617) 495-5381
Fax: (617) 495-5633
E-mail: felton_earls@hms.harvard.edu
Web site: <http://www.phdcn.harvard.edu>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods is a major, interdisciplinary study aimed at deepening society's understanding of the causes and pathways of juvenile delinquency, adult crime, substance abuse, and violence. Based in Chicago and directed from the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, the Project brings together scientists from a wide range of disciplines and institutions across the country. It is funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Institute of Justice, the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education in the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Institute of Mental Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. From 1994 until the year 2002, the project will follow 6,000 individuals and 80 communities in a coordinated effort to study the intricate pathways of social competence and antisocial behavior. The Project is unique in both size and scope, combining two studies into a single, comprehensive design. The first is an intensive study of Chicago's neighborhoods. The study is looking not only at how individuals shape their environments but how their changing social and physical environments shape the individuals. Therefore, the second part looks at the changing circumstances of people's lives, as well as the personal

characteristics, that may lead them toward or away from a variety of antisocial behaviors. By looking at individuals and their communities—and individuals in their communities—as both change over time, the Project seeks to unravel the complex influences of community, family, and individual factors on human development.

ECI is supplementing this larger project in order to examine the relationship between quality of early nonparental childcare and later readiness for school. This supplement supports the following additional long-term data collection tasks: information on child care quality from parent ratings and researcher observation (for the birth, 3- and 5-year-old age groups); measurements of children's emerging reading abilities (for the birth and 3-year-old age groups); and measurements of children's language development (for the birth age group).

Educational Significance of the Study:

This community-based sample of children and families from diverse Chicago neighborhoods will provide in-depth information on how child, family, and community characteristics affect the relationship between the quality of nonparental care in early childhood and later school readiness and adjustment.

ECI Contact: James Griffin, (202) 219-2168

Interagency Agreement No: IAD-97-0980

Project Period: 09/30/97-08/14/01

High Performance Learning Communities

Contact: Lauren Resnick
Learning Research and Development Center
University of Pittsburgh
3939 O'Hara Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260
Phone: (412) 624-7485
Fax (412) 624-3051
E-mail: resnick@vms.cis.pitt.edu
Web site: <http://lrdc.pitt.edu/research/pr99.htm>

Research Questions and Methodology:

This project brings together three diverse perspectives on education reform: a district superintendent; a scholar of education policy, institutional organization, and change; and a cognitive scientist. Each brings to the collaboration a team of colleagues who will test, through collaborative design and systematic monitoring of results, a theory-based set of principles and tools for creating and sustaining high-performance learning environments.

This project builds on the work of Anthony Alvarado, former Superintendent of Community School District 2 in New York City. Alvarado brought to his superintendency a distinct theory of school improvement that places professional development at the heart of a system-wide administrative strategy calling for continuous upgrading of teaching practice and learning results. The focus is on improving instruction, making every principal and every teacher responsible for instructional improvement. The goal is continuous improvement in every school, eventually reaching every classroom.

This project is a multilevel, multiyear, multistage process of extending District 2's current professional development and instructional improvement strategy from a primary focus on content-driven improvement to a broader, standards-based effort organized around a coherent theory of learning; explicit performance standards; and new assessments of student learning calibrated to the standards.

The study combines systematic research at the district, school, and classroom levels, with attention to interaction across levels; monitors the progress and emerging problems of introducing a standards-based strategy into the school district; and feeds back systematic research to serve as the basis for improving the

strategy. This combination of research and improvement requires knowledge of systemic change at both theoretical and practical levels. It requires daily involvement at the classroom, school, and district level with knowledge about teaching and administrative practice. And it requires continuous discussion among researchers and practitioners on their observations and interpretations of what is happening with the system.

Educational Significance of the Study:

By bringing together educators with varied backgrounds and specialties, this study will establish in one urban school district an institutional structure and professional standard that results in substantially improved learning by all the children in all the district's schools; develop tools to support continuous professional development at all levels of the system; carefully document and analyze the work and its effects on student achievement; and begin a systematic process of helping other districts use the principles and tools developed in the course of the project.

National Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking, and Management Contact: Ron Anson, (202) 219-2214

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: RC96137002

Project Period: 10/01/96-09/30/01

Interagency Education Research Initiative (IERI)

The goal of the IERI is to improve prekindergarten through grade 12 student learning and achievement in reading, mathematics, and science. This is accomplished by supporting rigorous, interdisciplinary research on large-scale implementations of promising educational practices and technologies in complex and varied learning environments.

The research studies address the urgent challenges of educational reform. IERI aims to integrate education research into classroom practice by encouraging collaborations among educators and researchers.

IERI has two areas of focus:

- Early Learning of Foundational Skills; and
- Transition to Increasingly Complex Science and Mathematics Learning.

IERI is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). It was developed and is managed by a team of representatives from the three funding agencies.

The Early Development of Mathematical Cognition in Socioeconomic and Cultural Contexts

**Contact: Prentice Starkey
University of California-Berkeley
4311 Tolman Hall
Berkeley, California 94720-5940
Phone: (510) 642-3376
E-mail: pstarkey@uclink4.berkeley.edu
Web site: <http://ihd.berkeley.edu:80/mathcultural.htm>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This is a cross-cultural study, comparing the development of informal mathematical cognition in 3- to 6-year-old Chinese, Japanese, and American children. The purpose of the work is to determine how these cultures support children's early mathematical development in multiple learning environments. The cultural studies will include the home environment, the customs of child rearing and care, and the knowledge and belief systems of parents, teachers, and other caregivers.

Educational Significance of the Study:

An expected outcome will be a mapping between the child's mathematical learning environments and the child's mathematical development. The ultimate goal is to identify pathways to success, and pathways that place children at risk for failure in mathematics. This research will provide needed insights into a child's learning processes and the influence of their environments on their learning.

ECI Contact: James Griffin (202) 219-2168

Award No: NSF 9979974

Project Period: 09/15/99-09/15/01

What are the "Developmental Needs" of Young Children in Science?: Revision of Developmental Constraints on K-3 Science Education

Contact: Kathleen Metz
School of Education
University of California-Riverside
Riverside, California 92521
Phone: (909) 659-3332
E-mail: kathleen.metz@ucr.edu

Research Questions and Methodology:

The purpose of this study is to examine different forms of scientific inquiry in children and their teachers. The research will determine the forms of scientific inquiry within reach of children from kindergarten through third grade. In addition, the research will identify the form of scientific inquiry that teachers need to teach for K-3 children. Finally, the study will tell us the forms of instructional scaffolding that empower K-3 children's scientific inquiry.

Specifically, the study will investigate theory/evidence, the logic of research design and control of variables, and hypothetical-deductive reasoning. This is a 4-phase project. Phase 1 is a design experiment using expert teachers with substantial technology support. Phase 2 is the development of test curricula and pedagogy based on phase 1 results. Phase 3 is testing the model and scaling. Phase 4 will be national recommendations, based on the research, for changes in how K-3 children are taught science.

Educational Significance of the Study:

Results of this research will help to guide the revision of science curriculum for children in grades K-3.

ECI Contact: James Griffin (202) 219-2168

Award No: NSF 9979772

Project Period: 09/30/99-09/29/01

Using Technology to Support Preschool Teachers' Professional Development

**Contact: David Dickinson
Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, Massachusetts 02458-1060
Phone: (617) 969-7100
Fax: (617) 969-3440
E-mail: Ddickninson@edc.org
Web site: <http://www.edc.org>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This study will examine preschool teachers' and their supervisors' use of professional development that is delivered by means of technology. Specifically, the research will study technology's effects on supervisors' and teachers' practices, and how these changes impact children's language and literacy growth. Multiple methods will be used to analyze short (fall to spring) and long-term effects (1 to 3 years) on Head Start students' literacy development and supervisors' and teachers' literacy beliefs, interactions with children, planning, and teaching practice.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The study will contribute information about the usefulness of technology for scaling-up professional development that makes a difference for preschool teachers' and their supervisors' effective practice and children's language and literacy development, the foundation for success in school.

ECI Contact: James Griffin (202) 219-2168

Award No: NSF 9979948

Project Period: 09/15/99-09/14/01

Dick, Jane, and Spot Meet the Information Age: Diversifying Genres Used in Early Literacy Instruction

Contact: Nell Duke
Michigan State University
College of Education
360 Erickson Hall
East Lansing, Michigan 48824
Phone: (517) 432-4865
Fax: (517) 432-5092
E-mail: nkduke@msu.edu

Research Questions and Methodology:

In recent years, a number of scholars have suggested diversifying the genres, or types, of text used in early literacy instruction. In particular, many have called for greater attention to informational text genres. They argue that greater attention to informational text in the early grades might reduce the substantial difficulty many American students have with such text in the later grades. Moreover, this may have immediate benefits for students' achievement in both literacy and information-based subjects such as science. Although there is some indirect evidence to support this hypothesis, it remains largely untested. Current research does not sufficiently assess the impact of diversifying genres of texts used in early literacy instruction.

The purpose of this longitudinal, experimental study is to examine the impact of diversifying genres used in early literacy instruction. Low-SES students in 30 classes will be followed for a 2-year period, from first through second grade. At random, 10 classes will be involved in an intervention designed to diversify the genres of text used in their literacy instruction. Another 10 classes will be involved in an intervention that similarly increases overall experience with text, but does not diversify the genres of texts used, thus providing a targeted comparison group. The final 10 classes will comprise a traditional control group. Students' performances on norm-referenced tests of reading achievement, reading inventories, and prompted writing samples will be compared for the three groups using growth modeling methods and inferential statistics.

Educational Significance of the Study:

Analysis of these data will indicate whether diversifying the genres used in early literacy instruction does indeed impact students' reading and writing achievement and if so, in what ways. Individual classroom teachers, curriculum developers, school publishers, and others who make decisions about the types of texts used in early literacy instruction could look to the study for guidance about the genres of text to employ in early literacy programs. Researchers and theorists could look to this study for basic descriptive knowledge about the role of genre in learning to read and write.

ECI Contact: James Griffin (202) 219-2168

Award No: NSF 9979864

Project Period: 09/15/99-09/14/01

Cognitively Based, Multimedia Support for a Balanced Approach to the Development of Early Reading in School and Home Contexts

**Contacts: Diana L. Sharp, John D. Bransford, and Susan R. Goldman
Vanderbilt University
512 Kirkland Hall
Nashville, Tennessee 37240
Phone: (615) 322-6253
E-mail: diana.sharp@vanderbilt.edu**

**Web sites: <http://canvas.ltc.vanderbilt.edu/kmine/adBoard/propose.htm>
<http://canvas.ltc.vanderbilt.edu/kmine/adBoard/software.htm>**

Research Questions and Methodology:

This project will develop and test multimedia software for use in literacy instruction with low-income children in kindergarten through second grade. The software will be integrated into the curriculum to establish a comprehensive and balanced approach to instruction. This approach combines the teaching of decoding skills with the use of literature-based instructional techniques, including both school and home components. Different prototypes of the software will be developed in order to compare systematically the effectiveness of different theory-based approaches to the teaching decoding skills. Within-subjects designs will be used to look at the impact of the software on children's word recognition fluency and decoding skills.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The project will improve our understanding of how to teach decoding skills, while also providing tested multimedia software that others can use. It also will improve

our understanding of how to integrate technology into the curriculum so that children from low-income families are able to acquire a broad range of literacy skills.

ECI Contact: James Griffin (202) 219-2168

Award No: NSF 9979881

Project Period: 09/30/99-09/29/02

21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program supports projects in rural and inner-city local education agencies (LEAs). The funds allow the LEAs to plan, implement, and expand community learning centers that benefit the health, education, cultural, recreational, and after school learning needs of the community.

The first grants under this program were awarded in Fiscal Year 1995. Since that time, the scope and focus of the program have changed so that the focus is entirely on after school learning programs.

The new program is administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education.

Oakland 2000 Ready-to-Learn

Contact: Kate Dowling
Oakland 2000 Ready to Learn
1515 Webster Street
Oakland, California 94612
Phone: (510) 444-8651
Fax: (510) 444-5364
E-mail: K8ling@sirius.com
Web site: <http://www.oakland2000.com>

Research Questions and Methodology:

The Oakland 2000 Ready-to-Learn project is an innovative collaborative of over 175 partners from local, state, and federal governments, businesses, service providers, educational institutions, and individuals through the community committed to helping the children of Oakland.

The Oakland Unified School District, in collaboration with the Oakland 2000 Ready-to-Learn Coalition will develop, expand, and strengthen the 21st Century Community Learning Centers that exist throughout Oakland. The Oakland 2000 project is expanding and maintaining established parenting labs at agencies that have adopted Oakland 2000 objectives. The project works closely with parents, tutors, and service providers designed as Oakland 2000 Ready-to-Learn Centers to carry out the Centers' vision. The project empowers all people involved with Oakland 2000 to learn activities through peer-to-peer tutoring, linkages with students of higher education, information sharing, access to information, and the skills to utilize it. Oakland 2000 has launched, and is maintaining activities that allow for dissemination of information. In addition, they are conducting activities that will develop new resources to expand the scope and reach of the project.

The design and effectiveness of information regarding the project will be disseminated nationally through Healthy Cities and the "I Am Your Child Campaign" of the Families and Work Institute in New York.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The activities are aimed at improving levels of literacy for young children (birth-5 years of age) so that they can enter kindergarten healthy and ready to learn the information and skills required to meet the challenges of the next century.

ECI Contact: Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R287U70001

Project Period: 10/01/97-09/30/00; No cost extension ends 09/30/01

Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE)

The Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE) supports a variety of activities aimed at stimulating education reform, and improving teaching and learning. FIE also supports studies that will improve young children's learning and development.

Development of Reading and Mathematical Skills in Early Childhood: The Roles of Cognitive Development and Educational and Social Environmental Variables

Contact: Victoria Molfese

University of Louisville Research Foundation

Jouett Hall

Louisville, Kentucky 40292

Phone: (502) 852-0582

Fax: (502) 852-2408

E-mail: tori@louisville.edu

Web site: <http://www.louisville.edu>

Research Questions and Methodology:

This research investigates the development of reading and mathematical skills in a diverse sample of 500 3- to 6-year-olds enrolled in a Head Start program. The specific focus is on measuring the early development of information processing skills that in previous research predicted later reading and mathematical abilities.

In the area of reading, the skills assessed include distinguishing between basic speech sounds (such as between "p" and "b" in the words "pat" and "bat"), identifying the sounds of letters, detecting words that rhyme, recalling the details of short stories, and remembering spoken words and sentences. In addition, the study measures the development of language skills known to predict later reading ability, including vocabulary, basic grammar (e.g., plural and past tense word forms), and sentence comprehension. In the area of math, the skills assessed include adding and subtracting (both with and without counting); understanding numerical relationships, such as the concepts more and less, and the connection between adding and subtracting. The homes of children will be assessed to determine which aspects of the social and physical environment support the development of these early skills. Findings will be compared with results obtained from two additional samples: children receiving health services from a university-based project serving a low-income population, and children born to teenage mothers. The purpose of this comparison is to explore how the development of skills predictive of later reading and math achievement might proceed differently among the three groups in order to target intervention efforts to a child's specific needs.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The results of this study will provide information useful for designing school-based and home-based interventions meant to ensure that children from diverse backgrounds are prepared to succeed in school in the areas of reading and math. Therefore, this research aids local and national efforts to improve reading and basic math skills, which are fundamental to overall academic achievement and learning.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935; Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R215R990011

Project Period: 07/01/99-06/30/03

Interdisciplinary Center for Research in Early Childhood Issues and Initiatives

Contact: Victoria Molfese

University of Louisville Research Foundation

Jouett Hall

Louisville, Kentucky 40292

Phone: (502) 852-0582

Fax: (502) 852-2408

E-mail: tori@louisville.edu

Web site: <http://www.louisville.edu>

Research Question and Methodology:

The Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Early Childhood Issues and Initiatives was established by the School of Education at the University of Louisville to conduct and disseminate interdisciplinary research about the education and development of young children. The Interdisciplinary Center's two major objectives are to (1) fund projects addressing empirical questions in core areas, and (2) disseminate information to researchers, educators, agency personnel, parents, and students. Two projects will be undertaken that build from nationally known research at the University of Louisville on brain-behavior relations in early childhood focusing on cognitive and language development. Project 1 focuses on early predictors of academic readiness skills in children 3 through 5 years of age. Assessments of general cognitive abilities, specific language abilities, short-term memory, and speech perception will be administered to the children. Project 2 will complement Project 1 with the initiation of an intervention program for subsamples of children participating in the first project. A National Advisory Panel will be convened and will shape short-term and long-term objectives, provide assistance in information dissemination, and help organize the Biennial Interdisciplinary Research Conference participating in the first project. Objectives also include development of a Web page about the Interdisciplinary Center and its work; planning for the Research Conference; and establishment of the database, reporting infrastructure, and Interdisciplinary Center procedures needed to support the projects.

Educational Significance of Study:

The Interdisciplinary Center's research will provide a scientifically valid basis upon which meaningful information on child issues and initiatives can be discovered and disseminated.

ECI Contact: Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R215R990011

Project Period: 09/01/99-08/31/03

Steps to Success

Contact: Gail Kelso
7920 E-Wrenwood Boulevard, Suite E
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809
Phone: (225) 216-3100
Fax: (225) 216-3104
E-mail: Info@stepstosuccess.org
Web site: <http://www.stepstosuccess.org>

Research Questions and Methodology:

This project will identify and create links between young children and their families and service providers in community-based comprehensive health, education, and social service models. Strategies used include an information and referral service, development of parent support and mentoring programs, and community networking of service providers.

Community-based projects have begun in Alexandria, Houma, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and Monroe. A Shreveport office opened in fall 2000. These projects reflect involvement by community nonprofit agencies, such as Volunteers of America, United Way, and Prevent Child Abuse; public programs, such as child care resource and referral, CHIP, and ChildNet; and volunteers from the Junior League. Advocacy and awareness organizations, such as Louisiana's Promise coalitions, Agenda for Children, and ChildWatch, have also been involved.

Educational Significance of the Study:

Evaluation of the project began in January 2000. This year-long process will examine the three phases of the Steps to Success project: Partnership/Network Development, Documentation of Services and Activities by Steps to Success and

our partners, and Impact of Steps to Success on the population (infants and toddlers and their families). The Louisiana State University School of Social Work, Office of Social Service Research and Development, is conducting the research under the supervision of Cecile C. Guin.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935

Award No: R215R980012-99

Project Period: 06/01/98-05/31/01

ParentCorps

Contact: Laurie Miller
NYU Child Development Center
550 First Avenue
New York, New York 10016
Phone: (212) 263-8673
Fax: (212) 263-8662
E-mail: laurie.miller.2@med.nyu.edu

Research Questions and Methodology:

ParentCorps is a service program that will train parents of 2- to 5-year-old children from disadvantaged communities in specific parenting skills aimed at fostering children's academic, socioemotional, and behavioral development. ParentCorps will work with selected organizations in disadvantaged communities to identify, train, and support a team of highly accessible and visible parent leaders. These natural parent leaders, or Parent REPS, will be trained to serve as Resources, Educators, and Partners for parents of preschool-aged children in their own neighborhoods. The Parent REPS will work with parents: to enhance their child rearing skills; to promote parent-teacher communication and parent involvement within the schools; and to access resources for children. Parent REPS will be trained and employed by ParentCorps to conduct parenting skills groups, coordinate workshops on community-identified topics, staff parenting help lines, facilitate referrals to community resources, and promote awareness and use of the ParentCorps Web Site.

Educational Significance of the Study:

The ParentCorps project will allow for the economical and systematic translation of important evidence-based parenting programs into the community to reach

underserved parents and children who are in greatest need of this information and support. The skills that parents will acquire from this project are essential for fostering productive and successful families, school and communities, and preventing academic and behavior problems in youth.

ECI Contact: Naomi Karp, (202) 219-1935; Seresa Simpson, (202) 219-1591

Award No: R215R990005

Project Period: 10/01/99-09/30/01

Ready-to-Learn Television

The Ready-to-Learn Television program supports the development of educational television programming for preschool and early elementary grade children and their families. The popular public television shows, "Dragon Tales" and "Between the Lions" are two examples of how Ready-to-Learn funds have been used.

Ready-to-Learn Television Program funds also support educational television programming and materials to increase school readiness for young children in families who do not speak English as their primary language.

Another purpose of Ready-to-Learn Television funding is to produce television programming and materials that will improve family literacy. Ready-to-Learn funds also are used to develop materials and services that promote the effective use of educational programs.

Ready-to-Learn Television programming funds are awarded on a competitive basis for a 5-year period. A new grant award was made in August 2000. No funds are currently available for additional awards.

Ready-to-Learn Television

Contact: Charlotte Brantley
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Phone: (703) 739-5140
Fax: (703) 739-8945
E-mail: jgoldstein@pbs.org
Web: www.pbs.org/kids

Research Questions and Methodology:

Ready-To-Learn (RTL) television integrates high quality children's educational programs shown on free, noncommercial public television with outreach activities through local public television affiliates and the Internet. The premise underlying RTL is that stimulating, high quality television shows for young children could have a direct effect on children's viewing tastes, literacy skills, and readiness to succeed in school.

RTL TV funds will provide at least two new high quality educational programs designed to improve the learning and development of young children, with particular emphases on those who have limited-English-proficiency, live in rural areas, and/or have disabilities. New programs will be based on current research findings related to the development of second language learning, language and literacy development, and the acquisition of mathematics and other concepts that will help young children succeed in school. A 5-year evaluation of how RTL activities affect, children, their families, RTL coordinators, and educators will begin at the outset of the grant period.

Improving the training of local station coordinators will be a high priority for RTL over the next 5 years. A national training and technical assistance center will provide ongoing face-to-face and online educational opportunities for the coordinators. These activities will strengthen the existing network of Ready-to-Learn Television affiliates, and increase the quality and types of parenting education materials, programs, and services offered to families of young children.

In order to most effectively reach as many families with young children as possible, RTL station coordinators in local communities will form partnerships with a variety of community-based organizations. Head Start, Even Start, 21st Century Schools, family- and center-based childcare organizations, and similar groups will be some of

the partners. They will work with RTL station coordinators to deliver workshops and "train the trainer" modules on how to use RTL television programs effectively for children, and deliver mailings of educational materials to the general community. The workshops and mailings, will be designed to have three effects.

First, they will increase the ability of teachers, parents, and caregivers to direct children toward educational programming and away from viewing programs that may be harmful to healthy development and learning. Second, they will expand parents' and other caregivers' capacity to use reading and other learning activities with children in order to extend and reinforce the lessons of the programs. Third, the overall effect will be that the time that parents and teachers spend reading to children will increase.

Educational Significance of the Study:

RTL will help strengthen family literacy, move to close the digital gap, and leverage the power that television has as the nation's largest classroom for families and children. The rigorous evaluation of the RTL activities will provide new information about the impact that public television has on young children's learning and development, particularly those children who have limited English, live in rural areas, and/or have disabilities.

ECI Contact: Joe Caliguro, (202) 219-1596

Award No: R295A00002

Project Period: 09/01/00-08/31/05

Early Childhood Institute

Staff Directory

National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education/Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Naomi Karp, Director.....(202) 219-1935
E-mail: naomi.karp@ed.gov

Staci Boykin.....(202) 219-1935
E-mail: staci.boykin@ed.gov

Joe Caliguro.....(202) 219-1596
E-mail: joseph.caliguro@ed.gov

James Griffin.....(202) 219-2168
E-mail: james.griffin@ed.gov

Sarah Grissom.....(202) 208-3491
E-mail: sarah.grissom@ed.gov

Allison Hester.....(202) 219-1935
E-mail: allison.hester@ed.gov

Tamara Knowles.....(202) 208-3380

E-mail: tamara.knowles@ed.gov

Paula Shipp.....(202) 219-2105

E-mail: paula.shipp@ed.gov

Seresia Simpson.....(202) 219-1591

E-mail: seresa.simpson@ed.gov

PROJECTS BY STATE

Arizona

Promoting Children's Language Development in Head Start: Explorations with Collaborative Research Teams (FIS), p. 18

Relationship-Based Practice in Early Intervention Settings: An Experimental Investigation of Impact and Effectiveness (FIS), p. 16

California

Assessing Low-Income Children's Changing Environments and Effects on School Readiness (FIS), p. 20

Assessing the Effectiveness of Early Parenting Education and Support Through Home Visiting for Families with Young Children (FIS), p. 22

The Early Development of Mathematical Cognition in Socioeconomic and Cultural Contexts (IERI), p. 48

Oakland 2000 Ready-to-Learn (21st Century), p. 55

What are the "Developmental Needs" of Young Children in Science?: Revision of Developmental Constraints on K-3 Science Education (IERI), p. 49

Colorado

Home Activity and Play Intervention (FIS), p. 24

Connecticut

A Longitudinal Evaluation of the School of the 21st Century (FIS), p. 26

Florida

Improving Early Identification of Young Children At Risk for Language and Reading Difficulties (FIS), p. 28

Kentucky

Development of Reading and Mathematical Skills in Early Childhood: The Roles of Cognitive Development and Educational and Social Environmental

Variables (FIE), p. 58

Interdisciplinary Center for Research on Early Childhood Issues and Initiatives (FIE), p. 60

Louisiana

Steps to Success (FIE), p. 62

Massachusetts

From Cortex to Classroom: Supporting Earliest Brain Development for Improved Learning (FIS), p. 30

LEEP: Creating Literacy Environments in Preschool Programs (FIS), p. 32

The Relationship Between Early Nonparental Child Care Quality and Later School Readiness: The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (Institute Sponsored Research Projects), p. 43

Using Technology to Support Preschool Teachers' Professional Development (IERI), p. 50

Michigan

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)

(Research and Development Center), p. 12

Dick, Jane, and Spot Meet the Information Age: Diversifying Genres Used in Early Literacy Instruction (IERI), p. 51

Optimal Educational Contexts for Young Children Living in Poverty (FIS), p. 34

Validation of an Alternative Language Screening Procedure for African-American Children (FIS), p. 35

New Jersey

Implementation and Outcomes of Universal Preschool Education (FIS), p. 37

New York

ParentCorps (FIE), p. 63

North Carolina

National Center for Early Development and Learning (Research and Development Center), p. 7

Oregon

Prevention of Behavioral and Social Problems: Steps to Achievement Resilience (Project START) (FIS), p. 39

Pennsylvania

High Performance Learning Communities (Institute Sponsored Research Projects), p. 45

Tennessee

Cognitively-Based, Multimedia Support for a Balanced Approach to the Development of Early Reading in School and Home Contexts (IERI), p. 53

Virginia

Ready-to-Learn Television (RTLTV), p. 65-66