

**Child Care, Health, and Early Education Research Consortium:
An SSRC/AAP Collaboration**

Mission/Purpose:

The ultimate aim of the Child Care, Health, and Early Education Research (CHEER) Consortium is to facilitate and encourage health professionals, caregivers/teachers, and researchers to collaborate on research projects and utilize results to improve the quality of care for young children in early education and child care settings across the country.

Objectives/Activities:

1. Establish an infrastructure and network to facilitate research projects on health issues in early education and child care settings.
 - A. Facilitate conference calls and/or audio-conferences for:
 - 1) The Consortium Steering Committee
 - 2) Consortium members
 - 3) AAP members and other interested colleagues
 - B. Determine and implement a mechanism to involve additional representatives/disciplines in Consortium activities.
 - C. Identify and track Consortium member interests/area of expertise.
 - D. Offer a forum for “Peer Review” so Consortium members can share ideas and brainstorm with colleagues before finalizing abstracts, research project components, presentations, and publications.
 - E. Determine/implement methods to support local, state, or regional research projects, programs, and networks.
 - F. Identify and disseminate criteria or essential components/steps for model child care/health research projects.
 - G. Define models (both national and international) for linking child care programs with health resources for purposes of preventive programs, optimized communication regarding problems facing children, health education and monitoring of health-related practices within child care programs.
 - H. Evaluate Consortium activities as resources allow.
2. Engage Consortium members to foster collaborations on early education and child care research projects among health professionals, early childhood educators, child care providers, and researchers.
 - A. Provide a forum for Consortium members to discuss current research projects and brainstorm about future research efforts.

- B. Support Consortium members to conduct and/or replicate research projects already piloted by another member (e.g., providing additional sites).
- C. Work with the AAP Provisional Section on Early Education and Child Care and other key partner organizations to:
 - 1) Determine and prioritize collaborative projects.
 - 2) Support AAP members involvement and/or promotion of relevant research projects.
- 3. Develop/maintain a national database and network of early education and child care programs (center- and home-based) for periodic surveys and gauge interest of child care directors' to collaborate on research projects.
 - A. Identify early education and child care programs that are currently collecting health data or would like to participate in health-related surveys or research projects.
 - B. Collaborate on proposals among AAP/SSRC and consortium members' institutions/agencies to obtain and maintain on-going funding for research agenda
- 4. Conduct surveys and research projects on health issues in early education and child care settings and disseminate results and lessons learned through presentations, publications, and other means.
 - A. Survey caregivers/child care programs (center-based and family child care homes) regarding numerous topics to include, but not limited to:
 - 1) Perceptions, knowledge of the health issues relevant to the children and programs they serve.
 - 2) Expectations from pediatricians and health professionals about child development, early childhood education, and other aspects of early education and child care domains.
 - 3) Emergency and disaster knowledge and preparedness (including plans for pandemic influenza).
 - 4) State requirements for TB testing of staff and volunteers.
 - B. Develop white papers, research articles, and policy briefs on relevant and key topics.
 - C. Develop plans/research strategies to conduct a needs assessment of family child care providers and develop a list of resources tailored to identify needs.
 - D. Maintain existing and develop new web pages to summarize and disseminate Consortium findings, publications, activities, and other relevant efforts.

The Child Care, Health, and Early Education Research Consortium is a collaborative effort of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Social Sciences Research Center, and leaders/researchers actively involved in research projects on health issues in child care settings. For more information, contact Laura Aird, laird@aap.org or Linda Southward, PhD, linda.southward@ssrc.msstate.edu

- E. Participate in planning/coordination of an International Conference on Health and Safety in Child Care to elucidate patterns and methods of integrating health care (preventive and curative) with out-of-home child care in other developed countries.

Presentations/Papers/Publications:

Aronson S, Shope T. Improving the Health and Safety of Children in Nonparental Early Education and Child Care. *Pediatrics in Review*. 2005;26:86-95

Copeland K, Duggan A, Shope T. Knowledge and Beliefs About Guidelines for Exclusion of Ill Children From Child Care. *Ambulatory Pediatrics*. 2005;5:365-37

Gupta R, Shuman S, Taveras E, Kulldorff M, Finkelstein J. Opportunities for Health Promotion in Child Care. *Pediatrics*. 2005;116:499-505

Southward, LH, Blanchard T, Costello H, Hanna H, Buffman L. *Economic Volatility and Expulsion in U.S. Child Care Settings*. Mississippi State, MS: Family and Child Research Unit. 2006

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