

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

A partnership of the National Center for Children in Poverty, the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, the Child Care Bureau, and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation

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Child Care Licensing and Regulation A Key Topic Resource List

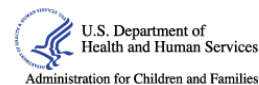
**Second Edition
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Research Connections conducted a comprehensive search of its collection for resources focused on child care licensing and regulation. This search produced results grouped in three broad areas:

- Regulatory policies and practices,
- Relationship of licensing to quality of care and child outcomes, and
- Relationship of licensing to child care and labor markets.

From the many results in each area, *Research Connections* selected a limited number of resources of various types, including reports and papers, fact sheets and briefs, summaries, and reviews. Selection criteria included policy relevance and relatively recent publication.

Resources are organized according to publisher type and publication date. *Research Connections'* one-sentence description is included for each resource on the following list. For complete citations, which include abstracts and full text for some resources, click on the titles.



Overview:

Throughout the last decade, a growing body of research has demonstrated the importance of quality within early care and education settings. State child care licensing regulations support quality by establishing and enforcing baseline health and safety and program standards for child care centers and homes. Licensing regulations, for example, typically cover child:staff ratios, group size, and staff credentials, all aspects of care that research has linked to quality. State regulations, vary widely, as do state decisions on which early care and education providers must be licensed or regulated, particularly among home-based providers. Strong licensing policies and practices contribute to maintaining children's health and safety, enhancing their general well-being, and ensuring that child care programs have the foundation to support quality. Researchers continue to study child care regulation in an effort to understand the policies and practices that have the most impact on quality in centers and homes, and in turn lead to more positive outcomes for young children.

Research questions include:

- How do regulatory policies and practices affect early care and education quality?
- How do licensing policies and practices affect child outcomes?
- What is the relationship between child care licensing and labor markets?
- How do licensing and regulation policies and practices vary across states?
- How do licensing policies and regulations vary across child care settings (i.e. center-based care, home-based care, Head Start, State Pre-Kindergarten)?

Acknowledgements:

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REGULATORY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Government

Colbert, Judith A. (2005) [Minimizing risks to children in licensed child care settings: A literature review and state survey](#). Olympia: Washington State, Division of Child Care and Early Learning.

A multistate study of the relationship between child care licensing requirements and risks of care-related injuries to children, with recommendations for strengthening licensing rules in Washington State.

Washington (State). Department of Social and Health Services. (2005) [Report on effective legal proceedings to ensure provider compliance](#). Newark, DE: Koch Consulting.

A comparison of the child care licensing system in Washington state to systems in ten other states, with an analysis of effective licensing system components, and recommendations for improvements in enforcement capability.

United States. Government Accountability Office. (2004) [Child care: State efforts to enforce safety and health requirements](#). (GAO-04-786) Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office.

A report by the Government Accountability Office to House Representative Sander M. Levin regarding the regulation of child care health and safety requirements in states supported by the Child Care and Development Fund.

Journals

Benjamin, Sara E., Copeland, Kristen A., Cradock, Angie, Neelon, Brian, Walker, Elizabeth M., Slining, Meghan, Gillman, Matthew (2009). [Menus in child care: A comparison of state regulations with national standards](#) Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 109(1), 109-115

A comparison of state and national regulations for menu options in child care centers and family child care homes

Benjamin, Sara E., Cradock, Angie, Walker, Elizabeth M., Slining, Meghan, Gillman, Matthew (2008). [Obesity prevention in child care: A review of U.S. state regulations](#) BMC Public Health, 8.

An investigation of state regulations on nutrition guidelines and physical activity requirements for child care centers and family child care homes, and a discussion of the influence of these policies on childhood obesity rates.

Ceglowski, Deborah A., Davis, Elizabeth E. (2004) [Where child care is above average?: Licensing, legislation, and indicators of quality care in Minnesota](#). Early Education and Development, 153, 343-360.

An overview of Minnesota's current child care system, examining indicators of quality, and comparing Minnesota's policies and standards to other states to assess strategies that states could use to support child care.

McGaha, Cindy, Snow, Charles, Teleki, Jane. (2001) [Family child care in the United States: A comparative analysis of 1981 and 1998 state regulations](#). Early Childhood Education Journal, 28(4), 251-255

A survey of regulations for family child care homes in the 50 States and the District of Columbia in 1981 and 1998, with an analysis of the relationship between state regulations and compliance and major indicators of family child care quality.

Gormley, Jr., William. (2000) [Early childhood education and care regulation: A comparative perspective](#). International Journal of Educational Research, 33(1), 55-74.

A comparative analysis of early education and care regulatory systems in France, Germany, Sweden, and the United States designed to help increase understanding of regulatory practices, innovations, and issues from a cross-national perspective.

Gallagher, James J., Rooney, Robin, Campbell, Susan. (1999) [Child care licensing regulations and child care quality in four states](#). Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 14(3), 285-312.

An analysis of child care regulations in four states, comparing regulations aimed at child welfare and safety versus those aimed at child development.

Universities and Research Organizations

LeMoine, Sarah, Morgan, Gwen. (2004) [Do states require child care programs to educate children?: Infant/toddler rules to assure early education and strong relationships](#). (Report No.3) Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting.

An analysis of states' licensing standards for infant/toddler child care centers, examining if regulations mandate an educational program.

LeMoine, Sarah, Morgan, Gwen. (2004) [Do states require child care programs to educate children?: Qualifications for teachers and directors in child care centers](#). (Preview of Report No. 4) Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting.

A review of states' minimum and maximum education qualification requirements for child care center staff and directors and developmental training requirements for child care professionals.

Morgan, Gwen, LeMoine, Sarah. (2004) [Do states require child care programs to educate children?: State center licensing requirements for child development and early education](#). (Report No. 1) Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting.

A review of states' licensing regulations for child care centers and analysis of states' requirements and intentions to include educational programs as a component of licensed child care.

Morgan, Gwen, LeMoine Sarah. (2004) [Do states require child care programs to educate children?: Preschool and child care center rules](#). (Report No. 2) Champaign: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting.

A review of whether states mandate educational programs as part of their licensing regulations for full-time child care and preschool centers.

Kagan, Sharon Lynn, Rigby, Elizabeth. (2003) [Policy matters: Setting and measuring benchmarks for state policies: Improving the readiness of children for school: Recommendations for state policy](#). Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Social Policy.

A presentation of a school readiness policy logic model, with recommendations and benchmarks for state policymakers in critical areas such as child care subsidies, licensing, accreditation, standards, assessment, professional development, systems development, facilities, capital investments, and kindergarten quality.

Azer, Sheri; Morgan, Gwen; Crawford, Gisele M.; LeMoine, Sarah; Clifford, Richard M. (2002) [Regulation of child care](#) (Early Childhood Research and Policy Briefs, 2(1)). Chapel Hill, NC: National Center for Early Development and Learning.

A discussion of the state of knowledge of child care regulation in the United States, including the way licensing involves a set of trade-offs to influence desirable outcomes such as child care quality, affordability, and supply

Other

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2009). [We can do better: 2009 update: NACCRRRA's ranking of state child care center regulations and oversight](#). Arlington, VA: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

A ranking of state regulation and oversight of child care centers, based on an analysis of state child care licensing regulations

The National Child Care Information Center, & the National Association for Regulatory Administration. (2009). [The 2007 child care licensing study](#). Lexington, KY: National Association for Regulatory Administration.

A compilation of survey data on state licensing programs and policies for child care centers and small and large family child care homes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2007

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2008). [Leaving children to chance: NACCRRRA's ranking of state standards and oversight of small family child care homes](#). Arlington, VA: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

A ranking of state standards and oversight of small family child care homes in which up to six children are cared for, based on an analysis of state child care regulations

Gasko, J. (2008) [A regional audit of Williamson County's early childhood education and development infrastructure](#). Austin, TX: Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition.

An examination of available early childhood education and care services in Williamson County, Texas, including program descriptions, accessibility, and cost of services

The National Association for Regulatory Administration & the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center. (2006). [The 2005 child care licensing study: Executive Summary](#). Conyers, GA: National Association for Regulatory Administration.

A summary of a compilation of data on state child care licensing programs and policies, including staffing, monitoring, and enforcement, and child care center licensing regulations, for all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2005.

Drake, Pamela M.; Neville-Morgan, Sarah; Greenspoon, Bayla. (2005) [Licensing family, friend and neighbor caregivers: Paradoxes and possibilities](#) In R. Rice (Ed.), *Perspectives on family, friend and neighbor child care: Research, programs and policy* (Occasional Paper Series No. 15, pp. 26-32). New York: Bank Street College of Education.

A discussion of licensing and regulation for family child care providers and the relationship between licensing and child care quality

Citizens Committee for Children of New York. (2004) [Child care oversight: Assuring safety, health and learning in early care and education services](#). New York: Citizens' Committee for Children of New York.

A study of the monitoring and oversight of center based and family child care in New York City, focusing on licensing, staffing, facilities, health, and safety, with quality enhancement recommendations for city and state agencies.

Morgan, Gwen. (2003) [Regulatory policy](#). In: Early Childhood Education and Care in the USA, 65-85. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

An overview of current regulatory and licensing policies for early childhood education and care programs in the United States.

Isler, Martha W., 2002 [Home-based and family child care: Characteristics and issues of home and family child care](#) In C. J. Groark, K. E. Mehaffie, R. B. McCall, M. T. Greenberg, & Universities Children's Policy Collaborative (Eds.), From science to policy: Research on issues, programs and policies in early care and education. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Education.

A description of family and home-based child care financing, regulation and licensing issues in Pennsylvania

Blank, Helen, Behr, Andrea, Schulman, Karen. (2001) [State developments in child care, early education, and school-age care: 2000](#). Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

A compendium of state actions regarding child care, early education, and school age child care issues in the year 2000, including comparative state tables for areas such as subsidies and standards.

**For 50-state information on child care licensing regulations, go to our [50 State Databases on the Internet](#), and scroll down to National Child Care Information Center. Search NCCIC's database for information by geographic region on child care licensing.*

RELATIONSHIP OF LICENSING TO QUALITY OF CARE AND CHILD OUTCOMES

Government

Task Force on Early Childhood Quality Standards. (2008). [Final report of the South Carolina Task Force on Early Childhood Quality Standards](#). Columbia, SC: Task Force on Early Childhood Quality Standards.

An examination of the content standards for early childhood curricula and quality regulations for early childhood programs in South Carolina

Fiene, Richard. (2002) [13 Indicators of quality child care: Research update](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

An annotated bibliography of research conducted since 1992 on thirteen key child care quality indicators used in developing child care licensing regulations.

Journals

Kaphingst, Karen M., Story, Mary (January 2009). [Child care as an untapped setting for obesity prevention: State child care licensing regulations related to nutrition, physical activity, and media use for preschool-aged children in the United States](#) Preventing Chronic Diseases, 6(1).

A categorical study of state obesity prevention-related child care licensing regulations in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and electronic media usage for center-based and family-based child care settings

Rigby, D. Elizabeth, Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne; Ryan, Rebecca (2007). [Child care quality in different state policy contexts](#) Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 26(4), 887-907

An examination of the influence of differing state regulations and subsidies on child care quality in the for-profit, nonprofit, family, and family, friend, and neighbor child care markets in 14 U.S. cities

Moon, Rachel Y., Kotch, Lauren, Aird, Laura (2006) [State child care regulations regarding infant sleep environment since the Healthy Child Care America-Back to Sleep campaign](#). Pediatrics, 118(1), 73-83

An examination of the effectiveness of the Healthy Child Care America-Back to Sleep campaign in terms of how licensed child care centers and family child care homes have adapted state regulations for the infant sleep environments.

Raikes, H. Abigail, Raikes, Helen, Wilcox, Brian. (2005) [Regulation, subsidy receipt and provider characteristics: What predicts quality in child care homes?](#) Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 20(2), 164-184

A study of the influence of family child care regulations, the concentration of children cared for who received public child care subsidies (i.e., subsidy density), providers' level of education, and reported annual training hours on global quality and caregiver sensitivity in four Midwestern states.

Wrigley, Julia, & Dreby, Joanna. (2005). [Fatalities and the organization of child care in the United States, 1985-2003](#) American Sociological Review, 70(5), 729-757

An examination of fatality rates in family child care, in-home child care, and child care centers, using data from media reports, legal cases, and ethnographic studies from seven states.

Clarke-Stewart, K. Alison, Vandell, Deborah L., Burchinal, Margaret, O'Brien, Marion, McCartney, Kathleen. (2002) [Do regulable features of child-care homes affect children's development?](#) Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 17(1), 52-86

An analysis comparing the effects of the regulable and nonregulable features of family child care homes on infants' and toddlers' cognitive development using data from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care.

Campbell, Nancy. (2001) [Applying the military model to improve child care in every state, for every child care](#). Policy & Practice of Public Human Services, 59(3), 8-10.

A review of the steps taken by the military to improve its child care system after the enactment of the Military Child Care Act of 1989.

Phillips, Deborah A., Mekos, Debra, Scarr, Sandra, McCartney, Kathleen, Abbott-Shim, Martha. (2001) [Within and beyond the classroom door: Assessing quality in child care centers](#). Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15(4), 475-496.

A study of the relationship among process indicators and structural features of quality and regulatory compliance in child care centers.

Azer, Sheri, LeMoine, Sarah, Morgan, Gwen, Clifford, Richard M., Crawford, Gisele M. (2000) [Regulation of child care](#). Early Childhood Research and Policy Briefs, 2(1).

This policy brief reviews the current status of child care licensing in the U.S. and makes recommendations for improved licensing standards to increase quality of care. The report also addresses the question of what dimensions of quality can be regulated.

Universities and Research Organizations

Ochshorn, Susan, Kagan, Sharon Lynn, Carroll, Jude, Lowenstein, A. E. (2004) [Child care and early education: The effects of regulation on the quality of early care and education.](#) Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures.
A review of recent research and policy on child care and early education program regulation, including information on current state regulatory strategies and processes in areas such as staff child ratios, staff training, safety, and physical environments.

Witte, Ann D., Queralt, Magaly. (2004) [What happens when child care inspections and complaints are made available on the internet?](#) (NBER Working Paper Series No. 10227). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.
An assessment of how making child care provider inspection reports available on the internet affected the quality of care received by children using child care subsidies in Broward County, Florida, between 1999 and 2002.

Currie, Janet, Hotz, V. Joseph. (2001) [Accidents will happen?: Unintentional injury, maternal employment, and child care policy.](#) (JCPR Working Paper No. 268). Chicago: Joint Center for Poverty Research.
A paper on the impact of selected child care regulations on the risk of injury for children in formal child care settings using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) and the Vital Statistics Detail Mortality (VSDM).

Other Organizations

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2009). [Unequal opportunities for preschoolers: Differing standards for licensed child care centers and state-funded prekindergarten programs.](#) Arlington, VA: National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.
A comparison of state licensing regulations for center-based child care and early education programs to state prekindergarten program standards, as well as to Head Start standards and military child care regulations, using a quality standards checklist

Mitchell, Anne W., Stoney, Louise. (2003) [Early care and education system reform: Key elements.](#) Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center.
A paper identifying the key elements of an effective early care and education system and offering a model that can be used to identify and compare the ways that each sub-system addresses the key elements.

Colbert, Judith A. (2002) [Regulating dimensions of quality in early care and education: A review of the research \[Seminar edition\].](#) St. Paul, MN: National Association for Regulatory Administration.
A review of research on regulatable variables of child care program quality, and effects of regulatory activities, in the areas of staff qualifications, staff child ratios, group size, facilities, curricula, parental involvement, safety, health and nutrition.

National Women's Law Center. (2002). [Key lessons from the military for improving our nation's child care system](#) Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center
A discussion of the child care system reforms undertaken by the military that systematically overhauled its child care system; it is meant to be used as a checklist for assessing the quality of states' child care systems

RELATIONSHIP OF LICENSING TO CHILD CARE AND LABOR MARKETS

Journals

Fenech, Marianne, Sumsion, Jennifer, Goodfellow, Joy. (2006). [The regulatory environment in long day care: A 'double-edged sword' for early childhood professional practice](#) Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 31(3), 49-58

An examination of how Australian child care professionals working in long day care centers perceive government regulations and their feelings on how the regulations impact their practice

Blau, David M. (2003) [Do child care regulations affect the child care and labor markets?](#) Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 22(3), 443-465.

An analysis of the estimated effects of child care regulations on the labor market for mothers of young children and outcomes in the child care market, including type of care, child care hours, costs, and expenditures per hour and per week.

Universities and Research Organizations

Hotz, V. Joseph, Xiao, Mo. (2009). [The impact of regulations on the supply and quality of care in child care markets](#). Unpublished manuscript, Department of Economics, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.

An analysis of the impact of state child care regulations on the supply and quality of child care services in high and low income markets, addressing questions of accreditation, labor intensiveness, supply of and access to formal and informal child care, and benefits to center workers and owners, based on data from the United States Census of Services Industries for 1987, 1992, and 1997, state regulation data, and child care center accreditation data for 1987 through 1997 from the National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC)

Hotz, V. Joseph, Xiao, Mo. (2005) [The impact of minimum quality standards on firm entry, exit and product quality: The case of the child care market](#). (NBER Working Paper Series No. 11873). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

A study of the impact of minimum standards, in the areas of staff child ratios and staff education, on the supply and quality of child care in geographical markets within the United States between 1987 and 1997.

Paskin, Laura, Stokley, Daniel, Vandergrift, Nathan (2005) [Achieving high-quality early learning and care in Washington State: An analysis of workforce and systemic components that influence quality](#). Seattle, WA: Economic Opportunity Institute.

A discussion of strategies utilized by Washington State to improve child care and early education, focusing on issues of public funding, workforce indicators, and federal, state, and local programs.

Heeb, Randal, Kilburn, M. Rebecca. (2004) [The effects of state regulations on childcare prices and choices](#). (WR-137-NICHD). Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

An analysis of the effects of child care regulations on the price of child care, the type of care chosen, and the mothers' decisions to work.

Cryer, Debby, Clifford, Richard M. (2003) [Early childhood education and care in the USA](#). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

A research-based investigation of key areas in early childhood care and education, including the definition of program quality, program content and curriculum, regulatory policy, financing issues, and staff training and compensation.

To view and sort the full search results from which these resources were selected, you may use the [Recreate Complete Search](#) function. To suggest additions to this Key Topic Resource List, please email us at contact@researchconnections.org.

The full results came from a search on: “child care licensing regulation”.