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Evaluation of the Collaborative Child Care Demonstration Project

FINAL REPORT

December 1994

Prepared by:

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Rose Greene
Rebecca King
Anne Mitchell

Center for Human Services Research and Evaluation
Nelson A. Rockefeller College
of Public Affairs and Policy
Albany, New York

Prepared for:

Permanent Interagency Committee on Early Childhood Programs
and the
Advisory Committee to the Permanent Interagency Committee
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This report was prepared by researchers from the Center for Human Services Research and Evaluation at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany on behalf of the Advisory Committee of the Permanent Interagency Committee on Early Childhood Programs. It was supported by funding from the Aaron Diamond Foundation, the American Express Foundation, the A.L. Mailman Family Foundation, the Primerica Foundation, and the New York State Department of Social Services.

Oversight and guidance for the study was provided by staff from the New York State Council on Children and Families (CCF), the State Department of Social Services (DSS), and the State Education Department (SED). Staff from agencies in each of the seven participating communities were also generous with their time and ideas. However, all opinions expressed in this report represent the conclusions of its authors and do not necessarily reflect any positions taken either by the funding or the overseeing organizations.

Lawrence Neil Bailis
Rose Greene
Anne Mitchell
Rebecca King

December 1994

EVALUATION OF THE COLLABORATIVE CHILD CARE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The Collaborative Child Care Demonstration Project (CCCDP) is a New York State initiative designed to increase the availability of quality, full-day, full-year early childhood programs by developing linkages among local service providers. The project was conceptualized and planned by the Permanent Interagency Committee on Early Childhood Programs (PICECP) and its advisory committee. PICECP comprises the directors and commissioners of a number of New York State agencies. Its advisory committee comprises representatives from academe, business, foundations, service providers, advocacy organizations, and parents and was established to review and comment on PICECP's work.

In May 1992, a request for applications (RFA) was issued to 89 programs at targeted sites in New York State to develop "a collaborative approach to extend the day and year of existing part-day programs, such as the New York State pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) and Head Start, and provide comprehensive early childhood services in child day care settings." In August 1992, seven grant awards were made under this demonstration project to support programs in New York City and in Chemung, Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Oswego, and Steuben counties.

RESEARCH APPROACHES

Rockefeller College, through its Center for Human Services Research and Evaluation, has been responsible for conducting an independent evaluation of the first two years of the demonstration project. This report summarizes the results of that evaluation and analyzes community-level planning and implementation and state-level efforts to design and oversee the effort.

The data for this evaluation were obtained through:

- Review of relevant documents
- Review of early childhood program literature
- On-site, structured interviews conducted with program planners, administrators, and others involved in the demonstration project
- Observation and analysis of at least one child throughout the extended day
- Interviews with state-level administrators

PROGRAM DESIGN

As displayed in Exhibit A, the seven funded sites designed programs that fit into one or two of the following three models:

Extended Day Programs: Four sites designed programs that provided full-day care to children enrolled in partial-day Head Start or Pre-K programs. Typically, the day was extended through linkages with center-based or home-based day care programs. In most of the extended-day programs children traveled from one site to another. However, at one site children did not travel between providers, but the Head Start staff were paid extra to work a longer day.

Enhanced Service Programs: Programs at three sites were designed to provide enriched services to children attending full-day, center-based, or home-based day care programs through linkages with Head Start or Pre-K. Day care programs often lack the necessary resources to offer the level of services supported by Pre-K or Head Start programs. In most enhanced service programs it was the staff, not the children, who traveled between child care settings.

System Integration Program: CCCDP system integration activities typically were designed to supplement extended-day or enhanced service programs. However, one site gave primary emphasis to this approach. A variety of steps were taken to promote collaboration among providers, families, and children associated with day care, Pre-K, Head Start, and others. Some of these included inviting family day care providers to Head Start and Pre-K training programs, providing opportunities for staff to observe the programs of their collaborative partners, and conducting community-wide events that included children and staff from the different early childhood program sectors.

**Exhibit A
Overview of Program Models and Approaches**

PRIMARY GOAL	METHOD	SITE
EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAMS		
Extend Head Start Day	Linking Head Start with center-based day care	Rochester
	Increasing Head Start staff hours in the classroom	Fulton
	Linking Head Start with family day care	Buffalo
Extend Pre-K Day	Linking Pre-K with center-based day care	Rochester
	Linking Pre-K with family day care	Buffalo Bronx
ENHANCED SERVICE PROGRAMS		
Enhance Services of Home-based Day Care	Bringing specialized staff (including Head Start service staff) to family day care provider homes	Elmira
	Linking family providers with Pre-K programs	Syracuse
Enhance Services of Center-Based Day Care	Bringing Head Start staff to day care programs	Fulton
SYSTEM INTEGRATION PROGRAMS		
Promote System Integration and Upgrading	Planning joint training and program activities for family day care, Pre-K, and private nursery schools	Addison

HIGHLIGHTS OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the fundamental findings of our study was that the demonstration sites differed widely in their primary goals and the methods adopted to achieve them. As shown in Exhibit A, there were at least five different broad goals adopted across the seven sites, yielding a total of nine distinct approaches.

The first two years of the CCCDP implementation have yielded a wide range of innovative programming involving collaboration among agencies serving young children. Specifically, we found that collaborative efforts require substantial planning time, the clear commitment of all partners throughout the project, dedication to working out difficult problems such as complex logistics of transitions between program sites, and ongoing communication among providers. Project participants also raised issues concerning the demand for full-year extended day programming and the kinds of outreach that would be most effective.

While the study primarily focused on community-level efforts to plan and implement collaborative projects, the first two years of the demonstration also resulted in findings and lessons related to the state-level administration and oversight of the project. In particular, the experience of CCCDP has made it clear that collaboration using multi-layered transfers of funds from one state agency to another can create severe administrative challenges that can threaten the viability of the entire project, despite the hard work of dedicated and committed state staff.

Finally, our analyses of more than two years of planning and implementation of the seven projects have yielded several basic conclusions that address the feasibility and desirability of similar efforts in the future, both in New York State and elsewhere in the country. These conclusions include the following:

- It is possible to create high quality extended day programs *if* sufficient resources are available. In many sites, well-planned and well-implemented efforts to link two or more early childhood programs provided an enriched experience for participating children, yielding benefits that neither component could provide on its own. Contrary to popular belief, we found that if transitions between program sites are handled satisfactorily, there is no reason to assume that care provided in different settings is substandard.
- While extended day programs clearly support efforts to encourage welfare recipients to enter training programs and jobs, they are not sufficient by themselves to ensure that these outcomes will occur. The track record of extended day programs in promoting work and training would probably improve if they were integrated more directly into welfare reform efforts such as New York State's Jobs First initiative.
- Despite a common commitment by early childhood programs to providing quality programs to young children, severe gaps separate the programs that have been implemented under the Head Start, Pre-K, and child care funding streams. The CCCDP has shown that it is possible to make modest progress in bridging these gaps,

but fuller integration of these programs requires initiatives beyond the scope of community-level service providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If New York State is to engage in future programs similar to the CCCDP, the following steps should be taken to increase their effectiveness:

Design of the Child Care Collaborative Model

- Develop a two-phase process in which a time-limited planning grant is followed by an operational grant *if* the former results in an acceptable plan. This would allow local agency staff to develop a common vision and mutual respect so that clear benefits for each party are articulated and to explore and resolve fundamental problems such as finding adequate licensable space and providing transportation.
- Extend the project timelines to allow state officials to orient local agencies to funding procedures and requirements before implementation begins.
- Involve front-line staff (Head Start and Pre-K teachers, family day care providers, and day care center staff) as key participants in the local planning process.

Implementation of the Child Care Collaborative Model

- Develop formal procedures for front-line staff of collaborating community agencies to share information about individual children who move from one setting to another.
- Promote opportunities, such as statewide grantee meetings for grantees, to share information and learn from each other.
- Provide additional training and technical assistance to share the lessons of this and other efforts to promote collaborative planning and service delivery, focusing on effective techniques that can be duplicated in other settings. These techniques include:
 - Reciprocal on-site observation of other programs by managers and front-line staff
 - Involving partners in joint activities such as search and hiring committees and training for some or all front-line staff
 - Replication of planning and training methods that have been adopted in other communities.
- Increase attention to promoting formalized communications among providers who serve the same children to convey information about policies and about individual

children; promote ways to overcome confidentiality barriers to sharing information about individual children; and adopt unified intake systems, forms, and procedures.

State Level Action to Promote Collaboration

The first two years of the CCCDP have highlighted actions that state-level agencies responsible for early childhood programs can use to remove barriers to collaboration. These should include ongoing meetings in which the affected agencies devote considerable attention to finding ways to overcome or avoid barriers to smooth interagency transfer of funds through standard memoranda of agreements.

Given the importance of sharing different perspectives and expertise, staff from different state agencies should find ways to collaborate in providing training and technical assistance for projects such as the CCCDP. The most important step that state officials can take to promote collaboration among themselves and with federal officials is to simplify the framework in which collaboration can take place.

Finally, the CCCDP fits nicely with a number of broader state efforts to reform welfare and promote local-level collaboration. State-level officials should take steps to promote linkages between the demonstration and broader collaboration efforts.

If the State is to maintain whatever economic momentum it is able to develop, it must recognize that its highest long-term priority is to help its children -- *all* of its children, not just a lucky few -- to get a good start on a secure and productive life.

--David Shaffer and Robert Ward (1994)
The Comeback State

It is clear from our study that the need for affordable full day early childhood services is not being met.

--Gail Garfield (1991)
"Early Childhood Collaborative Project: A Dictionary of Public Funding Programs"

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

This report summarizes the results of an independent evaluation of the first two years of the Collaborative Child Care Demonstration Project (CCCDP), a New York State initiative designed to increase the availability of quality, full-day, full-year early childhood programs through the cooperative efforts of existing local service providers. The evaluation analyzes community-level planning and implementation and state-level efforts to jointly design and oversee the effort.

1.2 PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The project was conceptualized and planned by the Permanent Interagency Committee on Early Childhood Programs (PICECP) and its Advisory Committee¹. The basic program design was developed by PICECP's Collaborative Structures Subcommittee in a process that involved input from a wide range of representatives from the public and private sector and a review of similar models in Pittsburgh, Vermont, and several sites in New York State, including the Collaborative Prekindergarten/Head Start Programs jointly funded by the SED and Head Start since the 1989-90 school year.

¹ PICECP was established by Governor Cuomo in his 1990 State of the State Address to "ensure coordinated delivery of early childhood services by overseeing the planned and orderly development of early childhood programs and serving as a mechanism for sharing information." It is chaired by the Governor's Director of Health and Human Services and comprises the directors and/or commissioners of the Department of Economic Development, Department of Social Services, State Education Department, Division of the Budget, Division for Women, Governor's Office of Employee Relations, and the Council on Children and Families. The Council on Children and Families provided staff for the various committees of the PICECP and worked with foundations to obtain funding for this evaluation.

The advisory committee to PICECP is an independent entity comprising representatives from academe, business, foundations, service providers, advocacy organizations, and parents, and was established to assist the committee and to review and comment on its work.

A previous early childhood collaborative demonstration project administered by Child Care, Inc. (CCI), New York City's largest non-profit child care resource and referral agency, also guided the design of the CCCDP. Excerpts from a March 1992 report of the CCI demonstration are contained in Exhibit B below.² As noted in the exhibit, the report observed that while collaboration was desirable, there were powerful barriers to local implementation and that incentive grants were instrumental in beginning to overcome these barriers.

Exhibit B

Excerpts from a March 1992 Summary Report on the Child Care Inc.'s Early Childhood Collaborative Project

Child Care Inc. has selected and implemented five collaborative models, bringing them into action gradually throughout the school year as particular obstacles for each program were identified and resolved. The five models are now serving a total of 60 children, and they are gradually increasing enrollment, projected to serve a total of 100 children by September 1992. Grant awards totaling \$ 60,000 have been committed.

A principal finding of our original study has been strongly confirmed by our experience this year. At the level of the local schools and day care centers, there is a clear understanding of the need for collaborative programs, and a commitment to establishing them where possible. But we have also learned why so few programs are started, and why until now none have succeeded. The obstacles to local initiatives are nearly overwhelming...

The success of the project depended on three factors. First, the availability of the incentive grants: the grants would not have been sufficient by themselves to foster the new programs, but they served to get the attention of local leadership, and to persuade them to at least consider participating in the project. Second, the advisory committee functioned as we had hoped it would; to give the project a reliable liaison to the operating agencies and unions.

But the third factor was the most important: Child Care Inc.'s ability to give intensive, hands-on technical assistance to each program, that enabled them to resolve each local obstacle as it arose. Without this hands-on help, we doubt that more than one or two of the programs would have been established.

² No subsequent report on the project has yet been released.

In July 1991, the chair of the Advisory Committee wrote to the chair of the Permanent Interagency Committee, expressing support for "collaborative projects that provide full-day, full-year child care services to meet the needs of working parents or parents participating in educational or job training programs." In particular, the Advisory Committee's Subcommittee on Collaborative Structures recommended that "incentive grants, in addition to the use of subsidies, be made available through the Child Care and Development Block Grant to support the development of collaborative projects." The memorandum went on to state that "as a condition of receiving funding, collaboration projects should demonstrate the ability to provide comprehensive early childhood services and, if children attend two part-day programs, address issues regarding continuity of care."

In May 1992, a request for applications (RFA) to participate in a child care collaborative demonstration project was sent out to 89 programs at targeted sites in New York State to develop projects that would "increase the availability of quality full-day child care programs for children of parents who work, participate in a training program, or attend school." Applications were sent to the directors of New York State Prekindergarten Programs (Pre-Ks), Neighborhood-Based Initiatives (NBIs), Economic Development Zones (EDZs), Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), Head Start programs, and community-based organizations in the target areas. The RFA noted that:

The primary purpose of the Collaborative Child Care Demonstration Program is to increase the availability of quality, full-day child care programs in high need communities such as those communities which have been identified as Neighborhood-Based Initiative (NBI) sites or Community Schools Program (CSP) sites. New York State is committed to providing alternative strategies in developing innovative programs designed to further expand quality services to children and families.

Applicants were required to use a "collaborative approach" that would "extend the day and year of existing part-day programs, such as the New York State prekindergarten and Head Start" and "provide comprehensive early childhood services in child day care settings," according to the RFA.

Since other efforts have been made to fund prekindergarten programs to work with day care providers, it was thought that the best way to explore more innovative ideas was to restrict funding to center-based child care, group family child care, or consortia of family child care providers -- not prekindergarten or Head Start programs. There was considerable flexibility among program models, but the following guidelines were provided:

The applicant must use a collaborative approach to (1) extend the day and year of existing part-day programs, such as NYS prekindergarten and Head Start, and (2) provide comprehensive early childhood services in child day care settings. While part-day NYS prekindergarten and part-day Head Start Programs are encouraged to collaborate with full-day child care programs in the provision of these services, they are not eligible to apply directly for funding ...

We encourage the submission of innovative program designs for our consideration. However, grants will be awarded to community-based, full-day child care providers which

can demonstrate need and provide developmentally appropriate services in collaboration with a part-day NYS prekindergarten program, or Head Start program.

Applicants also were required to provide "a creative plan for development of a collaborative child care program which responds to the unique needs of the local community" and to document that they were able to "provide quality, developmentally appropriate services for three- and four-year-olds."

In August 1992, seven awards were made under this demonstration project:

Chemung County: The Economic Opportunity Program in Elmira brought together the Elmira Child Care Connections, the city school district's Pre-K program, and the Chemung County Head Start.

Erie County: The Buffalo Coalition of Home Day Care Providers led an effort involving the Bethel Head Start Program, the Buffalo school district's Pre-K program, and a coalition of family day care providers.

Monroe County: Action for a Better Community (ABC) in Rochester organized a collaborative demonstration project between the Rochester Central School District's Pre-K program and ABC's Head Start and day care programs.

New York City: St. Peter's Child Care Network in the Bronx planned a joint venture with Super Start, New York City's version of the Pre-K program.

Onondaga County: The Consortium for Children's Service in Syracuse planned to work with the Onondaga County Child Care Council and the Syracuse City Schools' Pre-K program.

Oswego County: Oswego County Opportunities Inc. in Fulton was to lead a joint effort of the Oswego County Child Care Council, Head Start, and the Fulton Day Care Center.

Steuben County: The Economic Opportunity Program in Bath planned to bring its own Head Start program together with the Addison School District's Pre-K program, the Steuben Child Care Project, the Jennie Mose Community Child and Parent Center, and a private for-profit nursery school.

As shown in Exhibit C, the demonstration was just one element of a broader strategy to promote collaboration among child care and early childhood education providers that sought reforms at the state and federal levels to support coordination/collaboration at the community level.

Exhibit C
Excerpts from the "Findings of the
Collaborative Structures Subcommittee"

As the need for early childhood services grows, policy makers and service providers are increasingly considering collaborative approaches as a cost-effective way to improve the quality, comprehensiveness, and availability of services to children. In March 1991, the Advisory Committee to the Permanent Interagency Committee on Early Childhood Programs formed a Subcommittee on Collaborative Structures ...The subcommittee ... was charged with investigating the potential role of collaborative projects in improving the coordination and delivery of early childhood services in New York State. Of special interest to the subcommittee was the impact of collaborative projects on enhancing parental choice, extending part-day to full-day, full year programs, and providing comprehensive services to children in child day care settings...

Although the need for early childhood services is indisputable, funding to develop and expand these services has not grown in proportion to the need ... this lack of resources has promoted many funding sources and service providers to support the development of collaborative projects.

Collaboration is also being supported in an effort to establish a more integrated early childhood delivery system. Currently, there are three major providers of child care; these providers include Head Start, prekindergarten, and child day care programs. Each of these systems has developed independently over the years, resulting in a fragmented system of care ... As these programs expand to meet the growing demand for child care, it is essential that programs coordinate and collaborate to avoid duplication and gaps in services, competition for staff and space, and cost-inefficiency ...

The major benefits resulting from the development of collaborative projects include increasing parental choice, extending the day and year of part-day programs, and enhancing programs' capacity to provide comprehensive services. As programs begin to collaborate, the services they offer to families begin to look more alike than different from each other...

Through collaboration, more programs are able to provide high quality, comprehensive full-day, full-year services to meet a variety of parents' needs. This increased availability of quality child care programs simplifies "child care shopping" for parents. Additional benefits of collaborative projects include strengthening communication and coordination among child care programs, increasing opportunities of joint staff training, and enhancing resources for training, supplies, and equipment.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This study was carried out according to a research plan developed by Rockefeller College staff. The plan was based upon a review of relevant documents, discussions with the Collaborative Structures Subcommittee, and feedback from staff of CCF, DSS, and SED.

The analyses contained in this report come from six sources:

- Review of project proposals and progress reports
- Review of key sources of early childhood program and Head Start literature³
- On-site structured interviews with administrators, program planners, and other staff at all seven demonstration sites
- Observation and analysis of at least one child throughout the extended-day programs at each of the seven sites
- Interviews with key state-level participants of CCF, DSS, and SED who were involved in the planning and oversight of the seven projects
- Feedback on the contents of the draft final report submitted in June 1994

Each site was visited at least once by a member of the Rockefeller College research team who conducted interviews with the project coordinator, administrators and staff of the participating programs. A topic guide, developed by the Rockefeller College research team and reviewed by staff from CCF, DSS, and SED, was used to conduct the interviews. It dealt primarily with implementation issues including proposal development, program start-up, program operations, recruitment, transition concerns, service provision, relationships among agencies, staffing, legal and regulatory issues, costs and financing, the participants' assessment of progress to date, and future prospects.⁴

Additional visits were made to each site by an early childhood specialist on the project team to assess programs from the perspective of quality of care. Two widely-used and well-regarded instruments for measuring quality in early childhood programs were administered -- the Harms and Clifford Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale and the Family Day Care Rating Scale.

³ The most useful reports included "Collaboration: Cornerstone of an Early Childhood System," a 1992 report by Sharon L. Kagan and associates, and "The Challenges of Collaboration: The Head Start Issue for the '90s," a 1991 paper prepared by Marce Verzaro-O'Brien.

⁴ Copies of the topic guides and other instruments used in the study are available from the research team.

While the rating scales provide a comprehensive assessment of the early childhood environment, they are designed for a single, continuous daily program. Therefore, a special "transition scale" was developed to measure continuity between different early childhood program settings. The data collected by the three rating scales was supplemented with information gathered from interviews with teachers and parents.

The evaluation project observer generally arrived at each program early in the day, prior to the children arriving at the site. The rating scales were administered and teachers were interviewed during the morning. The rater accompanied the children throughout the entire extended day, taking the bus or other transportation used to move the children between sites. The observer spent the afternoon rating the second setting and, if feasible, met with the children's parents at the end of the day.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THIS REPORT

The report consists of five sections. Section 2 describes the goals and objectives of the CCCDP and the basic program design across the seven sites. Section 3 presents findings pertinent to local-level implementation, including the planning process, recruitment methods, transitions between programs, and efforts to institutionalize collaborative methods. Section 4 describes the state-level experience with CCCDP, with a focus on the funding mechanisms used to support local-level projects. Finally, a summary of the major findings and recommendations is presented in Section 5.

2.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAM DESIGN

2.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

While collaboration among early childhood education programs has received widespread support as a means to increase the quality of services and their cost-effectiveness, early childhood program staff sometimes view collaboration as a threat to their own standard approaches and values, and thus approach it with great caution.⁵

As a result, those who seek to evaluate efforts to promote collaboration must recognize the differences in perspective from which state- and community-level staff with different program backgrounds sometimes view the term. In general, however, the meaning of the term is clear, and there is consensus that the well-being of children and parents would improve if the agencies that serve them work more closely together.

As illustrated in Exhibit D, the seven demonstration sites adopted a range of formal goals, objectives, approaches, and rhetoric. However, over the course of the study, it became evident that state and community-level participants were reacting to at least three conceptually distinct but not mutually exclusive sets of goals:

A working parent/welfare reform objective -- providing full-day, quality programs to meet the needs of low-income working parents or parents enrolled in training/education programs as part of welfare reform efforts.

A child-centered objective -- increasing the level and quality of services offered to children and their families.

⁵ As noted by Verzaro-O'Brien (1991):

It is clear that collaboration as a strategy to maximize and extend Head Start services needs careful thought... The Head Start community needs to ponder its own role in the myriad of intervention options which are scattered throughout the national early childhood scene. Can we be all things to all low-income families?...

If we adopt Kagan's analysis, it becomes clear that collaboration indeed *is* only one of several options for program interrelations. It may often not be the best "fit" when goals, resources, and barriers are considered... In our effort to employ collaboration as a strategy for meeting our agenda, are we giving away those qualities which have caused our success? Do we reduce our level of comprehensive services, even for part of the day, in order to fund an extended-day? Do we reduce the options for parent empowerment, so as to co-exist with a partner who cannot or does not allow for parent decision-making ... While there may not be "one right" answer to these questions, it is imperative that they be asked ... Collaboration is a powerful, two-edged sword, to be used with caution, thought, and awareness.

Kagan et al (1991) make this same point more succinctly when they write that "Despite mounting attention, scholars and practitioners continue to debate the meaning and functional utility of collaboration."

A program/system-oriented objective -- increasing collaboration among early childhood program providers as a way to accomplish a wide range of broader program/systems improvement goals. In this objective collaboration is viewed as both a means and an end result. The assumption here is that any collaborative endeavor would presumably lead to improvements in services to children and their families.⁶

Both the working parent/welfare reform and the child-centered objectives were spelled out in the RFA for project funding.⁷ Over time, some state- and community-level participants came to accept and to support a wide variety of collaborative activities. However, there was not universal agreement among the participants on the legitimacy of all these objectives. In particular, some state-level administrators expressed concern about programs that did not explicitly meet the "working parent/welfare reform" goal by failing to provide increased opportunities for welfare recipients to work or enter training/education programs.

Given this situation, we did not feel that there was any basis for designating a single set of objectives as the "official" ones, and we chose to evaluate the demonstration in the light of all three objectives.

⁶ In the words of one state official, the CCCDP was being promoted as a way to "get Head Start, day care, and the school system talking about children in the same way ... [and] to bring early childhood stakeholders to the table in a cooperative fashion."

⁷ The cover memo to the request noted that the \$500,000 was to be spent "to increase the availability of quality full-day child care programs for children of parents who work, participate in a training program, or attend school." On the other hand, as noted earlier in this report, the text of the request did not address this objective, instead, merely noting that the primary purpose of the [demonstration program] is to increase the availability of quality, full-day child care programs in high need communities ... New York State is committed to providing alternative strategies in developing innovative programs designed to further expand quality services to children and families.

Exhibit D

Excerpts of Program Goals/ Objectives from Proposals Submitted by CCCDP First Year Grantees

This program is based on the philosophy that if a community wants to encourage families to be self-supporting, reduce their dependency, and encourage their positive self-image, it needs to provide access to full day, quality day care services. No parent can work, attend school or participate in training programs if their children do not have appropriate care. Furthermore, for children to prosper in a child care program, they need comprehensive services which will provide not only educational enrichment, but also to promote their health, social, mental, and emotional development.

Our goal is to make a difference to an under-served population -- children. We hope to meet with Head Start and Pre-K at a table of negotiation to begin fully addressing the needs of our children.

[Our goals and objectives are to]

*Enable children of low-income working parents to attend pre-k programs and take advantage of comprehensive child development, health and social services programming offered there. [This will include efforts to] facilitate dual enrollment of 40 low-income children of working parents in pre-k and family day care during the school year. Family day care will provide child care during the hours and days that pre-k is not in operation.

*Increase the number of registered family day care providers able to provide wrap-around care to targeted children.

*Increase the skills and resources available for family day care providers clustered around the targeted sites.

*Build system-level collaboration to meet needs of existing family day care providers, potential providers, and targeted children and their families.

The Collaborative will provide wrap around services to existing part day programs that are consistent with the quality of the preschool classroom.

[Our agency proposes to]:

*Extend the days and weeks of the existing Head Start classroom to allow participants to participate in work or job training; or to assist families who are in crisis.

*Provide camaraderie in the forms of training and resources to a consortium of family day care providers in the area.

2.2 PROGRAM DESIGN

Given the vast differences among the communities, it is not surprising that a demonstration project allowing latitude in program design yielded a wide variation in methods to fulfill the project goals. As shown in Exhibit E, however, most of the projects fit into one of two basic categories -- *extended-day programs and enhanced service programs*. (One site designed a program with two distinct components, each fitting into one of the two categories.)

A third category of programming -- *system integration activities* -- was also performed by many of the sites. While the system improvement activities were primarily designed to supplement extended-day or enhanced service programs, the major program emphasis at one site (Addison) was in this area.

Exhibit E
Overview of Program Models and Approaches

PRIMARY GOAL	METHOD	SITE
EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAMS		
Extend Head Start Day	Linking Head Start with center-based day care	Rochester
	Increasing Head Start staff hours in the classroom	Fulton
	Linking Head Start with family day care	Buffalo
Extend Pre-K Day	Linking Pre-K with center-based day care	Rochester
	Linking Pre-K with family day care	Buffalo
		Bronx
ENHANCED SERVICE PROGRAMS		
Enhance Services of Home-based Day Care	Bringing specialized staff (including Head Start service staff) to family day care provider homes	Elmira
	Linking family providers with Pre-K programs	Syracuse
Enhance Services of Center-Based Day Care	Bringing Head Start staff to day care programs	Fulton
SYSTEM INTEGRATION PROGRAMS		
Promote System Integration and Upgrading	Planning joint training and program activities for family day care, Pre-K, and private nursery schools	Addison

Efforts to Extend the Day of Early Childhood Programs

The increasing need for full-day programs has raised the question whether the various agencies and funding sources, now operating for the most part in isolation from each other, can develop "collaborative" programs, blending funds from different sources to produce a full day (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.) of early childhood programming.

--Anthony Ward et al (1991)

At an early point in the planning process, it was anticipated that the funding for the CCCDP would go primarily to day care centers and family day care providers to enhance their ability to provide full-day, full-year care for children enrolled in New York State Pre-K programs. This approach was later broadened to include collaboration with Head Start programs.

Four demonstration sites adopted six different methods to extend the daily and yearly coverage of existing part-day, comprehensive service programs:

Extending the Head Start Day

Linking Head Start with center-based day care (Rochester): A day care center provided morning and/or afternoon wrap-around care to children who attended a Head Start program. The children were transported between sites by Head Start buses. Because the Head Start program ran in three different sessions, children arrived at and left the day care center throughout the day. Despite this arrangement, the program was well-managed and the transition between sites operated smoothly.

Linking Head Start with family day care (Buffalo): Family day care providers offered morning and/or afternoon wrap-around care to children who attended a Head Start program that ran in two (2) three-hour sessions. Most children commuted between sites on Head Start buses that made pick-ups and drop-offs on street corners only (not in front of homes). This arrangement was very difficult for some of the participating home-based providers who cared for other children and could not leave them unattended inside the house.

Increasing Head Start staff hours in the classroom (Fulton): This approach to expand the day of an existing part-day Head Start program did not involve transporting children between sites or collaboration with another provider. Instead, Head Start staff were paid extra to work a longer day. The extended program served one group of children for seven hours, five days a week.

Extending the Pre-K Day

Linking Pre-K with center-based day care (Rochester): Children attending a Pre-K program from 11:30 to 2:30 were provided morning and afternoon wrap-around care at a day care center. Children commuted between the day care center and Pre-K program by bus. This was another component of the Rochester program that linked day care with Head Start, described above.

Linking Pre-K with family day care (Buffalo, Bronx): Children attending a part-day Pre-K program were provided extended-day care through linkages with family day care providers. Although two sites utilized this approach, there were extreme differences in the quality of transitions between programs. The Buffalo program experienced significant transportation problems. The Bronx site, however, had a highly coordinated and organized transportation system. It hired senior citizens who used their own cars to pick up and drop off children and a family worker who accompanied the children and facilitated communication between the caregivers at the various settings.

Efforts to Enhance Program Services

As a condition for participation [in an expanded funding program], new and expanding prekindergarten providers should adopt a plan for collaboration with day care and other early childhood service providers to provide children with a seamless web of support services.

-- *Putting Children First; The Report of the New York State Special Commission on Educational Structure, Policies and Practices*
(December 1993)

While one of the CCCDP's primary goals was to promote extended-day programs, the demonstration sites also engaged in other collaborative activities to enrich existing full-day programs by providing comprehensive services and resources where they were lacking. Generally, the services staff employed in Pre-K or Head Start programs would offer the typical array of services that children received in each of their respective programs.

Most of the enhanced service efforts involved moving staff between child care settings while the children remained at one site throughout the day. Only one of the enhanced service programs moved children between child care sites.

Three different service variations were adopted:

Enhancing the services offered in home-based family day care

Linking Head Start staff with family day care providers (Elmira): Head Start staff traveled to the homes of family day care providers to offer services including health assessments and referrals for children and parental

support. In-home educational enrichment training was also delivered to the providers.

Linking family day care with Pre-K programs (Syracuse): Children attending full-day, family day care programs were co-enrolled in partial day Pre-K programs. This approach allowed children who were already receiving full-day care to experience an educational program conducted in a structured group setting and to benefit from Pre-K's enriched support services. While this approach did not permit more mothers to work or enter education/training programs, it did enhance the experience for children.⁸ Family day care providers were required to offer transportation to and from the Pre-K site, which was difficult for some. Recruiting additional family day care providers was also difficult because of the lack of available transportation.

Enhancing the services offered in center-based day care

Bringing Head Start services staff to day care programs (Fulton): All services available to Head Start children and families were provided to children attending a full-day, center-based day care program. This did not involve moving children between settings. Instead, the Head Start staff -- family worker, health coordinator, nutritionist, and disability services coordinator -- provided services at the center.

Efforts to Promote Integrated Early Childhood Program Systems

The primary benefits of the [CCCDP] Collaborative are the unexpected opportunities created when multiple constituencies begin to collaborate in one or two initial areas. The collaborative is the connecting vehicle for seemingly diverse agencies/groups to discover common areas and move toward more flexible, comprehensive, and accessible models of service delivery.

--Second Year CCCDP proposal from one of the sites

Efforts to establish extended-day programs and other initiatives to promote collaboration often reinforced the belief that the early childhood program "system" is a fragmented one in which different programs often do not view themselves as part of the same arena and do not automatically realize that they can mutually benefit and enhance each other's efforts. A number of sites performed "system integration" activities to break down these barriers among early childhood programs.

⁸ This approach might be labeled "backward enrollment," since it deviates from the standard practice of using the demonstration to draw children into day care programs after (or before) they take part in partial day Head Start or Pre-K programming.

CCCDP system integration activities typically were designed to supplement extended-day or enhanced service programs. The primary emphasis at the Addison site, however, was to promote system integration across three early childhood program sectors -- Pre-K, Head Start, and private nursery school.⁹ These activities included community-wide events for children and staff across the three sectors, joint training, and a collaborative summer program.

Several other sites conducted activities to promote collaboration, particularly professional development, providing opportunities for staff to observe the programs of their collaborative partners and inviting family day care providers to Head Start and Pre-K training programs. These activities appear to have both short- and long-term impacts. Many appear to have been successful in their short-term objectives of achieving joint programming and training across different programs. They also lay the foundation for even more significant long-term achievements such as developing a sense of shared destiny.

⁹ Addison also had a small extended-day component linking Head Start and family day care providers.

3.0 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO LOCAL LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CCCDP

3.1 THE PLANNING PROCESS

In most communities, planning groups were comprised primarily of top-level administrators from the involved agencies who were not always aware of all the issues that would emerge when the projects were fully implemented. So, it seems reasonable to conclude that planning for similar future efforts should involve front-line staff such as Head Start teachers, family day care providers, and others who are more aware of the daily operations and the potential barriers to implementation.

Typically, planners relied on existing data or general knowledge of their communities rather than conducting specific needs assessment activities. In a number of cases, this led to overestimating the degree to which parents would utilize full-day quality services if they became available and/or an inability to devise effective marketing strategies to reach these potential users.¹⁰

Project start-up tended to be most efficient in those communities where all the partners had been jointly involved in the planning and proposal development; more problems arose in programs where the partners first met after the program was approved for funding. Broadly-based planning groups appeared to be the most effective in building a solid foundation for future collaborative work. Front-end planning is important but not sufficient to insure effective collaborative programming. Even in communities where planning appeared to be most inclusive, relationships between agencies were not as strong as one would have hoped.

The second year of planning involved considerable changes in emphasis and/or approach in most communities, reflecting lessons learned about local needs and the feasibility of specific approaches developed to meet these needs. For example:

- One site changed its approach from serving its target population of children with special needs in a self-contained classroom to serving children of varying needs in a more integrated setting.
- Another site changed its recruitment procedures.
- A third site eliminated the extended-day component of its program because of lack of licensable space.
- A few tried different approaches to involve family day care providers after experiencing several failed attempts to work with this group.

¹⁰In one community, the number of young children registered for the program never exceeded six, and remained close to three or four for most of the second year of the demonstration.

The evolution of the projects in many communities made it clear that staff conducting the planning had misjudged either program need and/or institutional capacity to deal with those needs. This may indicate that an insufficient amount of planning time was allotted to the communities to adequately assess needs, design the program, and involve all the key players. As a principal planner in one of the seven communities told us: "Ideally, there would have been more time to plan, to pull things together before an operational plan had to be developed. It would have been much better to have had a planning grant, but there was no planning grant. Ideally, there would be a two- or three-month planning grant."

Program planning and implementation were facilitated by maintaining staff continuity in several sites and were hampered by staff turnover in several others. In one site, staff turnover and changes in program design in the parent agency led to a delay of nearly a year before the first children were served by the demonstration project.

3.2 THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Several CCCDP programs indicated that the demand for full-day early childhood programs in their communities was considerably lower than had been expected, countering the assumption that there is great demand for full-day programming, a major principle of the CCCDP. Therefore, it is critical to understand the phenomenon of lower demand to sufficiently analyze the experience to date.

There are at least four possible non-mutually exclusive explanations for the difficulties that these projects faced in reaching the target population -- children whose parents need to enter the work force or training programs:

- Recruitment efforts need to be better planned, coordinated, and focused.
- Steps need to be taken to promote demand.
- Steps need to be taken to make it easier for parents to learn about and enroll their children in extended-day programs.
- It takes time to make parents aware of the full-year, extended-day option and to make plans to change their lives to take advantage of it.
- Parents may prefer a program that offers care in one setting over a program that involves transporting children between settings.

Focusing Recruitment

Recruitment efforts in many communities focused on children who were already registered or whose parents were considering registering them in part-day Head Start or Pre-K programs. There were several problems with this approach. First, waiting lists for Head Start reduced the incentives to engage in any outreach to potential Head Start families.

Second, working parents or those thinking about work or training may not have considered Head Start or Pre-K options simply because they have traditionally been viewed as part-day programs. If this were true, it would be necessary to more carefully develop targeted recruitment efforts, perhaps linking them more closely to ongoing efforts by child care resource and referral agencies. In addition, the "backward enrollment" approach adopted in one site -- focusing recruitment to enroll children attending full-day family day care into part-day enriched programs -- provided the opportunity for more children to receive enhanced services and is a model that can be considered for replication in other places.

Promoting Demand

Although the CCCDP programs were designed to complement New York State "welfare-to work" initiatives, they were not integrated with them in any systematic fashion. Thus, the low "demand" for the program merely shows that availability of full-day, full-year programming is not by itself sufficient to change the training and work behavior of welfare mothers -- assuming that they were well informed about the programs in the first place. However, the availability of this kind of programming may be a valuable adjunct to these welfare-to-work programs if efforts were made to link them.

In one of the communities, virtually all participants felt that the inability to recruit and serve siblings lessened the attractiveness of the program to potential working parents because parents can not work unless there is adequate provision for *all* of their children. To test this possibility, the program could be modified to include an after-school component for older children and/or day care for younger siblings of the Pre-K and Head Start children.

Easing Enrollment

Recruitment for extended-day programs involving two agencies was complicated by the fact that registration typically required separate applications with different documentation requirements. The unified early childhood program recruitment approaches in two of the counties -- which alert families to all child care and early childhood education opportunities in the community -- appear to be a promising way to get around this problem.¹¹ However, they often run into regulatory barriers which may require waivers of federal and/or state requirements.

The Need for Patience

Some participants in the CCCDP argue that it takes time for potential participants to hear about the program no matter how effective the recruitment process; and it takes additional time for mothers to make decisions about changing their work and training behavior. The third year of the demonstration should shed more light on this factor.

¹¹ These accomplishments are not going unnoticed. As noted in Mitchell (1993), "Joint recruitment procedures and single point-of-access systems for families such as those practiced by the CCR&Rs in Chemung and Steuben Counties across Head Start, child care, and the NYS Prekindergarten program should be supported and adapted to other counties."

A Preference for One Setting

Early childhood program specialists sometimes argue that parents tend to prefer a program that offers care in one setting over a program that involves transporting children between settings. This is undoubtedly true in some cases. However, during the course of the study, we gathered much evidence that suggests that this preference is far from universally held. For example, in Syracuse, many parents who had already enrolled their children in a full-day, single setting program chose to co-enroll their children in Pre-K programs offered in another locality, thereby moving from a single setting to a multiple setting arrangement. In addition to this, none of the parents that we spoke with at the multiple setting sites expressed concern over their situation. We did not have the opportunity to discuss this issue with parents in communities who found the idea so troublesome that they did not enroll their children in the dual-setting programs.

3.3 TRANSITIONS BETWEEN CHILD CARE SETTINGS

Continuity

The Collaborative Structures Subcommittee "white paper" indicated that full-day, full-year projects should be encouraged to "address continuity of care for children and families, preferably though the concept of 'same setting, same staff.' " While the logic behind this statement remains clear, the experience of the demonstration, in our opinion, shows that if the transportation and other continuity problems can be overcome satisfactorily, there is no reason to assume that care provided in different settings is second-rate.

However, many -- if not most -- early childhood program professionals feel that the burden of doubt is on those who propose full-day programs in which children move from one setting to another. Ward (1991) included eleven general principles for a viable system based upon the CCI study, including one that appears to endorse this idea: "Children need continuity. Continuity requires that a child be in a stable group with the same staff team throughout the day and that there be compatibility of philosophical approaches over time."

Information Sharing

The level of information sharing among front-line staff of CCCDP partners was disappointing. Communication was often informal, tended to be primarily among administrators rather than front-line staff, and usually dealt with program operation rather than the experiences and needs of individual children. Most programs did not include any formal procedures to facilitate communication across front-line caregiver staff on a daily basis. There was little joint decision-making or joint programming, although staff indicated that they planned to develop closer collaborative ties in the future.

Some providers expressed a concern about the liability involved in sharing information with other providers about children and their families. Related to this was a

concern about the liability of making referrals to other programs. This usually involved Head Start and Pre-K providers who felt they would be held responsible for advertising a family provider network that might include inadequate caregivers.

The demonstration project pointed to the crucial value of existing intra- and interorganizational relationships. Collaboration appeared to work best in instances where the programs were either part of the same umbrella agency (as was the case in several community action programs) or between agencies whose leaders had already established working relationships in the past. The ability of the CCCDP to get off to a good start at several of the sites was, in large part, the result of a long history of collaborative programming at those sites. In one of them, a single agency was responsible for Head Start and child care resource and referral. In another, the same agency has been running Head Start and not-for-profit day care since 1971.

Transportation

The difficulties inherent in safely transporting young children from one setting to another are obvious. The challenges of insuring that afternoon providers are aware of any problems or experiences the children had in the morning can be daunting. However, the experience of the CCCDP is that these barriers can be overcome. At one of the sites, a CCCDP staff person spends some time with children and teachers in the Pre-K program during the school day, accompanies the children in a car (with a separate driver) and walks them to their family day care afternoon setting, discussing anything of relevance with the provider before she leaves. While this is an expensive, staff-intensive model, it clearly works.

On the other hand, problems with transportation and transitions can cripple a program regardless of its other virtues. The fact that Head Start buses in one community will not drop children off in front of their homes presented major problems for family day care providers who were unable to leave other children in the house unattended. In another community, a Pre-K program required family day care providers to provide for their own transportation, an obvious constraint on program expansion.

Transportation varied in quality both tangibly and intangibly. As an example of the former, we sometimes observed variations in the extent to which seat belts were used. The latter point is illustrated by the variations in the extent to which our consultant observed caring interactions during transportation. At one extreme, she described one child being transported in an overly "efficient and strict" manner, at the other extreme the environment was described as "loving."

Both direct observation and use of a quantitative scale suggest that the quality of the transitions also varied considerably in sites where children moved from one setting to

another.¹² In short, one of the programs scored as high as possible on all four items in the transition scale and was observed to be "an excellent, loving, solid system." However, it involved the smallest number of children of any program, raising the issue of whether quality in transition is related to program size and the attention that staff can give to each child. The lowest score was at the midway point on the scales, and the remaining sites were in between.

3.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The experience of the CCCDP has confirmed the well-known fact that the schedules of both home-based and center-based day care providers do not allow them to take advantage of training opportunities. This problem is not experienced to the same degree by Head Start and Pre-K staff, who have training built into their weekly schedules.

Development of creative strategies to overcome this problem -- such as bringing professionals into family day care homes and providing opportunities for staff to observe the programs of their collaborative partners -- may hold the key to promoting the kinds of professional development that would be vital for effective collaboration.

3.5 SUPPORTING COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Government agencies have long been caught in the middle of a struggle to fund truly community-based organizations and ensure fiscal accountability and quality service delivery. Smaller, community-based organizations in the demonstration project experienced more difficulties in waiting for reimbursement from the state than larger organizations that can typically "front" the necessary funds until they are reimbursed. The use of Child Care Inc., New York City's largest non-profit child care resource and referral agency, as a fiscal intermediary for the St. Peter's project appears to have worked; it may represent a model for transcending the problem in other instances.

3.6 INSTITUTIONALIZING COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Because of the delays in receiving state funds, the sites were more concerned with supporting ongoing activities than in considering ways to institutionalize the collaborative program.

State-funded demonstration projects are typically based upon an assumption that the funding is time-limited and that communities will pick up the costs of demonstration project activities that have been proven to be successful once financial support from the state is no longer available. The severe and growing financial pressures faced by many early childhood programs throughout the state suggest that it is unrealistic to expect that

¹²The quantitative analyses were based on a four item ECCERS-like scale that addressed departure, supervision, tone, and arrival, each on a scale of one to seven. Scores ranged from a perfect score to a rating mid-way between minimal and good.

communities will be able to assume the costs of ongoing program operations. There are two major implications of this finding:

- Beginning in the initial year of operation, state officials should assign high priority to working with communities to explore future funding options during the third year of the demonstration.
- State officials should explore ways of identifying new resources or shifting resources that are already available to continue to support these efforts.

Furthermore, because of the multiple demands of early childhood staff, collaboration seemed to be most effective when an agency hired a coordinator who is dedicated to the collaborative effort. Ongoing sources of funding are necessary to support such a position.

3.7 PROGRAM QUALITY

This study did not systematically assess the relative quality of different types of early childhood program settings. However, two or more settings at each site were visited and analyzed using the well-regarded Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) for center-based programs and the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) for family day care settings. The items on the two scales were fairly comparable with one exception.¹³ While center-based programs tended to get slightly higher ratings, it is noteworthy that the program that received the highest overall rating among all 12 programs was a family day care program in a county where center-based providers expressed the strongest concerns about the quality of care of family day care providers.

¹³ The FDCRS has one item to measure learning activities; the ECERS has separate items to measure learning along two dimension -- motor activities and creative activities.

4.0 SUPPORTING THE DEMONSTRATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

4.1 ROLES OF THE STATE AGENCIES

At the state-level, the CCCDP has involved collaboration among three different agencies: the New York State Department of Social Services, which has a range of responsibilities for child care; the State Education Department, which is responsible for Pre-K and community schools; and the Council on Children and Families, which has taken the lead in several efforts to promote collaboration and systems change. Staff from all three agencies have worked in a mutually supportive manner, but efforts to insure that the demonstration project meets rules, regulations, and practices of both DSS and SED have led to many long meetings involving large numbers of staff and exorbitant amounts of staff time from both agencies.

Collaboration was exemplary in planning for the project and in developing the request for applications, and representatives of all affected agencies developed smooth working relationships. Once the CCCDP projects were funded, the remaining role for DSS central office staff was primarily as block grant administrator, while SED assumed the responsibility for monitoring and providing technical assistance.

At another level, the CCCDP experience is providing an initial test for the regional team models at both DSS and SED. The demonstration project raises the issue of the extent to which regional office staff can become familiar enough with relatively small-scale demonstrations to provide effective monitoring and clear guidance. This issue has not been resolved during the first two years of the CCCDP and should be addressed in the coming year.¹⁴

4.2 FUNDING MECHANISMS

The basic idea behind the plans for funding the CCCDP was simple: \$500,000 from the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) would be transferred from DSS to SED through a series of annual memoranda of understanding (MOUs). However, in many ways the administrative and fiscal challenges of implementing this approach were at least as daunting as the programmatic challenges. In retrospect, the problems involved in negotiating, renegotiating, and implementing fiscal arrangements based upon the MOU led

¹⁴ For example, the SED switched from centralized monitoring and technical assistance during the first year to a regional approach involving five different staff people during the second year. Interviews with these regional staff were beyond the scope of this study, but efforts should be made to capture and analyze their experiences in the light of so many other community-based collaborative activities that are being undertaken in the state.

to major delays in funding grantees throughout the project.¹⁵

None of the parties would again choose to use this mechanism. Thus, it would appear imperative that new ways be identified to fund similar efforts in the future, ways that would permit programmatic collaboration but maintain the possibility of using a relatively simple mechanism for getting funds to grantees and monitoring the results.

Given this situation, there are two broad alternatives to be considered: (a) reforming the MOU process or (b) replacing it with one that does not involve transferring funds between agencies. Some officials believe that the CCCDP funding problems could be overcome by developing a single MOU covering the length of the program and/or taking steps to streamline the process by reducing details that require amendments.

However, others argue that it would be impossible to adopt either of these approaches. Three-year MOUs would be difficult, they say, because of changes in federal and state funding regulations that occur from year to year.¹⁶ These observers believe streamlining is virtually impossible because the MOUs must impose the standards of *both* participating agencies. Given this conclusion, they argue that the MOU route should be avoided entirely and that funds for programs like this should remain with the agency originally funded to avoid the burdens associated with transfer of funds.¹⁷

State-level funding issues were not the primary focus of this study, and the research that we have conducted has not been sufficient to resolve the issue. But it is clear that the issue requires attention from high-level DSS, SED, and other agency administrators before similar collaborative programs are undertaken in the future.

4.3 MONITORING, TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The State Education Department (SED) had primary responsibility for monitoring the child care sites and for providing training and technical assistance.¹⁸ SED staff made one

¹⁵ The second year memorandum of understanding was not completed until late February 1994. As a result of this and other factors, the communities did not receive second-year funding until the spring for programs that were operating since the previous fall. Efforts to overcome the delays by developing means to "front the money" appear to have exacerbated the problems by diverting staff from working on reimbursing programs for previous expenses once the MOU was signed.

¹⁶ For example, fiscal requirements and procedures such as "upfront reimbursement" had to be altered when the source of CCCDP funding shifted from state to federal and the mechanisms used shifted from contracts to grants.

¹⁷ As one of them put it, "The current environment is not good for one state agency to fund another. We left some providers out there with no money while we were correcting our structural problems. This was an embarrassment and a terrible waste of our resources."

¹⁸ During the first year of the project, responsibility for these functions was assigned to a central office staff person; during the second year, responsibility was shifted to five field service team members who are based in Albany. The study does not enable us to make any judgments about which of the two approaches was most effective.

or more visits to each of the communities, where they were briefed and, in turn, responded to questions. Local community personnel generally found the one meeting when all grantees were brought together to be helpful; however, there was a wide difference of opinion about the degree to which SED training and technical assistance were judged to be helpful. Some providers and planners indicated that SED support was valuable, while others indicated that they had received little or no useful support.¹⁹

In a number of cases, early childhood program personnel said that they felt that SED staff were not used to dealing with local agencies other than school districts and needed to learn how to work with them.²⁰ In one instance, community personnel felt that the messages that came from SED were inconsistent. In several others, lack of feedback was seen as a problem.²¹

Generally, the SED technical assistance was regulatory, not programmatic, and was aimed at facilitating the flow of paper and funds, rather than helping community agency personnel to plan and implement specific service delivery models.²² However, there are examples of well-received efforts to support community-level program development, such as identifying relevant training for staff.

In several instances, local participants were unclear about key elements of the CCCDP regulations. For example, there were differences of opinion among sites about the ability to expand programs to take in siblings and concern about the period of time that funding would be available. These were the types of issues that could be resolved through an effective monitoring, training, and technical assistance system.

It is not obvious that the current arrangement of assigning the monitoring and technical assistance roles to one agency is the best possible means for insuring that the accumulated expertise of all three agencies is transmitted to local child care and early childhood education providers. Day care provided within centers and by family providers is regulated by DSS. It may have been helpful to SED and the local providers if DSS were jointly involved throughout the project in monitoring and providing technical assistance to day care operators. Other arrangements such as the Task Force on Integrated Services

¹⁹ For example, an early childhood program administrator at one of the communities told us that "SED made a hard job palatable and they have made valuable suggestions that have really enhanced the program." Another indicated that, "We don't feel that they know who we are or what we are doing."

²⁰ Given the "New Compact for Learning" emphasis on community outreach, the importance of this issue could extend far beyond the specifics of the collaborative child care demonstration.

²¹ In the words of one person, "We don't know what happens to our paperwork when it is submitted to SED."

²² For example, SED staff assisted a grantee in filling out budget forms and advised another on potential consultants.

should be reviewed to see if there are any lessons to be learned.²³

4.4 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

It would be misleading to evaluate the CCCDP as an isolated effort to improve services to children and their families. In order to fully understand how CCCDP is working, it needs to be viewed within the context of a wide range of other New York State initiatives that serve children and/or their families, including the Anti-Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council (ADAC), Gaining Access to the Emerging Workforce for Adults and Youth program (GATEWAY), Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services program (APPS), community schools, youth planning, the Office of Mental Health Coordinated Children's Services Initiative, the Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS) initiative, and the Neighborhood-Based Alliance program, which is expected to meld most of these efforts together.

With the exception of community schools at a number of sites, the CCCDP was planned and run fairly independently of these other efforts. Given a growing recognition of the need to "coordinate the coordinators," efforts should be made to promote linkages with these kinds of collaborative activities in the future.

²³ Under this project, the Department of Mental Health, SED, and OASAS would issue a joint budget request, issue a joint RFP, perform a joint proposal review, and jointly provide technical assistance. No staff are dedicated to the effort, but each agency commissioner is expected to provide needed staff support.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"[Collaboration is like] dancing with an octopus."
Dunkle and Nash, as cited in Kagan et. al. (1991)

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The Viability and Utility of the Overall Strategy

The first two years of CCCDP operations have already provided numerous lessons that should prove useful in planning and implementing similar efforts in the future.

The availability of Child Care and Development Block Grant funding *did* promote useful program innovations at the local level, giving more children the opportunity to receive full-day care and enhanced services. The limited number of parents with whom we spoke expressed satisfaction with the collaborative arrangements.

In many places, well-planned and well-implemented efforts to link two or more early childhood programs provided an enriched experience for the children and yielded benefits that neither component could have provided on its own.²⁴ A full-day experience involving two providers can, for example, provide fresh air, a welcome change in environment, and an opportunity to experience the comparative advantages of the two different program models.²⁵ The CCCDP experience has validated the belief that there are strengths in each of the major existing forms of early childhood programs. While day care programs typically do not have the educational, health, and/or social service support enrichments that characterize Head Start and Pre-K programs, our field visits documented that they do have a wide range of benefits. These include a high level of interaction between caregivers and parents (since parents tend to drop their children off and pick them up);²⁶ an opportunity for siblings to be in one setting, often in one room in family day care; an opportunity for mixing children from a range of family incomes; and an ability to attract certain minority groups for whom center-based day care is not a part of their tradition.

In some instances, the CCCDP also brought about a range of benefits for the participating providers. Family day care administrators have been able to recruit, register, and train minority, low-income residents of the inner city, a task with which others have

²⁴ As one participant noted: "[This project] allows children to be in a group setting with a licensed teacher and to be in a low-key, relaxed loving environment with fewer numbers of children. I do not see it as pulling a child out of one program to another, but that the programs complement each other."

²⁵ As Kagan et. al. (1991) suggest, there is probably no single "best" model for collaboration. Our study suggests that there is a range of models that appear to be relevant in a variety of settings.

²⁶ Head Start and Pre-K programs often have designated staff who specialize in interaction with the parents of the enrolled children.

been less successful. This led to an increase in the pool of registered day care providers, which contributed to economic development in some low income communities.

The overall experience of the demonstration suggests that simply increasing the availability of full-day, quality early childhood program services is not sufficient to have a quick and powerful impact on the number of welfare recipients entering the workforce or a training program. It is too soon to say whether such effects will occur over time.

Each of the barriers to effective collaborative programming was overcome in one or more communities, showing that this *can* be done. The CCCDP did not, however, provide definitive answers to the true costs of developing and implementing these interagency relationships and their benefits.

The Dynamics of Collaboration on the Local Level

Further research is not needed to document the fragmentation of the system(s) that serve young children in New York State.²⁷

The CCCDP experience suggests that the collaborative process would be strengthened if all providers viewed each other as partners, recognized the values and strengths of their counterparts, and avoided perspectives in which they "look down on" providers in other systems.

The most critical challenge may be the lack of respect and understanding among different components of the early childhood program system. In particular, we often encountered a prejudice by center-based program staff who do not perceive the unique contributions of family day care. Although our study was not designed to assess the quality of different types of early childhood programs, it is noteworthy that the data that we collected do *not* support the belief that quality varies systematically by type of setting and philosophy.²⁸

²⁷ As noted in Mitchell (1993):

"Child care and Head Start are two of four systems that are present in New York and that operate for the most part independently of each other, the others are the state kindergarten program ...and services for children with disabilities. The fact that these systems are inadequate to support today's families is not the result of bad state policy or inaction or ignorance in the past. It is the result primarily of the times in which they were conceived. The challenge is to weave them into a coherent system that will work for families today."

Hayes et al (1990) make the same point more succinctly when they describe the "different yet interrelated purposes of relevant policies and programs.

²⁸ Rockefeller College staff, using an instrument designed to assess quality, found that the highest overall rating was given to a family day care program in a county where center-based providers expressed the strongest concerns about the quality of care offered by home-based providers.

Several other technical issues came up during the demonstration. First, it would be helpful to resolve concerns about the liability of one program that makes referrals to another and the extent to which information can be shared without violating confidentiality. This would be a helpful step in promoting collaboration.

Visits to seven communities have confirmed many of the bits of conventional wisdom about the factors that promote and retard development of collaborative ventures among child-serving agencies. For example:

- Collaboration appeared to be most successful in situations in which all partners were willing to participate, did not feel coerced, and exhibited mutual respect.²⁹ Problems arose when prospective partners had not been a part of the planning process.
- Often-discussed collaborative techniques usually achieve their results. These techniques include: (a) periodic meetings of all partners throughout the planning and implementation process, (b) joint service of committees such as the search committees for the CCCDP coordinator position, and (c) allowing front-line staff to observe and provide feedback on other programs and projects.³⁰
- A funded coordinator who can devote the majority of her/his time to the project is needed to get complex coordination/collaboration initiatives off the ground in a timely manner. Managers and staff of existing programs are so hard-pressed for time that they have little opportunity to engage in long-range planning, no matter what its ultimate benefits. The need for a funded coordinator remains high for ambitious projects that plan to continue to innovate.

The Need for Smoother Funding Mechanisms

In retrospect, it is surprising how well the CCCDP projects were able to function in the face of an extremely complicated set of funding procedures at the state level. In some instances, large agencies were able to "front" money for CCCDP activities from other funding streams. However, this option was not a viable one for smaller, grassroots agencies. While this study did not address the issue, either a simplified MOU or an alternative to the current MOU interagency transfer of funds system would seem necessary to ensure smooth funding of efforts to promote collaboration. This issue requires priority attention by high-level state officials in all affected agencies.

²⁹ In the words of one state-level official, "If we were to do this again, whomever is the implementing agency needs to bring all the players in the community, DSS (state and local), SED field offices, pre-k, Head Start, community-based child care providers together *before* the grant starts."

³⁰ The third technique (c) works best when it is approached on a basis of equality and mutual respect, i.e., situations in which it does *not* appear that the staff of any one agency knows more than others and is visiting to share its wisdom with less aware colleagues.

The state's ability to plan and oversee the CCCDP was complicated by reorganization efforts in several agencies and changes in federal funding requirements. But neither of these circumstances is unique to state government in the 1990s. Therefore, smoother mechanisms need to be developed to promote these kinds of projects so that they can continue to prosper in the face of future organizational and funding changes.

The Need for Upgraded Training and Technical Assistance

More attention needs to be paid to the role of training and technical assistance and the best mechanisms for its delivery. As noted earlier in this report, the 1992 study of Child Care Inc.'s collaborative projects suggested that the most important factor in the success of projects to date was the "intensive, hands-on technical assistance to each program that enabled them to resolve each local obstacle as it arose." This level of technical assistance was not available for the CCCDP, which raises the issue of whether outcomes could have been achieved had additional training and technical assistance been available.³¹

For the most part, the seven CCCDP communities planned and implemented their projects independently. Interviews with key participants at each site made it clear that program effectiveness could be increased through greater programmatic and informational technical assistance from state agencies and more opportunities for the communities to meet and learn from each other.³²

Although the current system gave primary training and technical assistance responsibility to SED, it seems clear that all three agency partners had expertise to offer. Therefore, attention should be given to finding ways to develop training and technical assistance strategies that utilize the strengths of all participating agencies. In particular, each participating agency should be able to take the lead in overcoming local-level problems in programs that are funded by their state agency.³³

Finally, the generally accepted success of NBA efforts to facilitate shared vision and collaborative decision-making suggest that there may be opportunities for using these techniques for CCCDP and similar enterprises in the future.

³¹ The technical assistance provided to one of the grantees by Child Care Inc. in the CCCDP stands as an exception to this rule and appears to have helped a grassroots organization plan and implement a complex collaborative program.

³² During the first two years of the demonstration, the SED shifted responsibility for training and technical assistance from a single centralized staff person to staff with regional responsibilities. It is too soon to say whether this shift will improve technical assistance.

³³ Thus, for example, SED would appear to be in a unique position to step in and help the family day care providers at one site who have been trying to get the school district to revise the policies for where its buses may and may not stop.

The Need for Changes in Program Regulations

The CCCDP experience has reinforced the basic assumption that there are limits to the kinds of coordination and collaboration that can be undertaken under the current legislative and regulatory frameworks.³⁴ For example, efforts by agencies to mix day care and Head Start programs were thwarted by federal regulations and eventually had to be abandoned. Attempts to create unified intake systems for Head Start, Pre-K, and/or center-based and family day care were said to be hampered by a variety of federal and state barriers. More broadly, national efforts to expand Head Start, Pre-K, and child care programs have adopted different emphases, making it more -- rather than less -- difficult for their local counterparts to work together.

Given this situation, it would appear useful to harmonize programs at the federal and state levels and expand authority to institute waivers as part of the demonstration process.

Generalizing the Results

The sites in the CCCDP were not chosen randomly. However, the problems with the policy and regulatory frameworks they work within and the traditional relationships among different kinds of providers they encounter are not unique to the seven communities. They exist in a wide range of settings throughout the state. Therefore, if sufficient resources were available and agency commitments obtainable, most of the activities that have been undertaken in this demonstration project could be replicated at other sites in New York.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

If New York State is to engage in future efforts similar to the CCCDP, the following steps should be taken to increase their effectiveness:

Design of the Child Care Collaborative

- Develop a two-phase process in which a time-limited planning grant is followed by an operational grant, *if* the former results in an acceptable plan. This would: (a) allow local agency staff to develop a common vision and mutual respect in which clear benefits for each party are articulated; and (b) help agencies explore and resolve fundamental issues such as finding adequate licensable space and resolving transportation problems.
- Extend the project timelines to allow state officials to orient locals to funding procedures and requirements before implementation begins.

³⁴ As Mitchell (1993) notes, "Existing state and federal regulations and practices create barriers to collaboration between Head Start and child care providers and to multiple funding of programs. For example, extending the Head Start day and bringing comprehensive services into child care settings are difficult to accomplish."

- Involve front-line staff (Head Start and Pre-K teachers, family day care providers, day care center staff) as key participants in the local planning process.

Implementation of the Child Care Collaborative

- Develop formal procedures for front-line staff of collaborating community agencies to share information about individual children who move from one setting to another.
- Promote opportunities, such as statewide meetings, for grantees to share information and learn from each other.
- Provide additional training and technical assistance to share the lessons of this and other efforts to promote collaborative planning and service delivery, focusing on techniques that appear to have been successful and generalizable to other settings. These techniques should include:
 - Reciprocal on-site observation of each others' programs on the part of program managers and front-line staff, conducted in a spirit that says each has lessons to learn from the other;
 - Involving partners in joint activities, such as search and hiring committees and training for all or parts of the front-line staff; and
 - Replication of approaches to planning and training that have been adopted at other communities.
- Devote increased attention to promoting formalized communications among providers who serve the same children (including information about policies and information about individual children); promote ways to overcome confidentiality barriers to sharing information about individual children; and adopt unified intake systems, forms, and procedures.

State Level Action to Promote Collaboration

The first two years of the CCCDP have highlighted actions that agencies responsible for early childhood programs at the state-level can take to remove barriers to collaboration. These efforts should include ongoing meetings in which the affected agencies develop considerable attention to finding ways to overcome or circumvent barriers to smooth interagency transfer of funds through a memorandum of understanding. The topics for these kinds of meetings might include:

- Continuing efforts to share information on the legislative or regulatory constraints that each agency experiences in administering its programs and the steps that might be taken to overcome them.

- Develop comprehensive lists of all barriers communities face in trying to devise integrated intake systems and common forms and how to overcome them.
- Document and disseminate information about effective models and techniques to promote collaboration that emerge from demonstration programs.

Given the importance of sharing different perspectives, different agencies should collaborate on providing training and technical assistance for projects such as the CCCDP. But, it is important to reiterate that the most important step that New York State officials can take to promote collaboration with each other and with federal officials is to simplify the framework in which collaborative efforts can take place. A 1991 "dear colleague" letter from Child Care Inc. summarized the results of the organization's extended research on the topic:

We are depressed to find that despite the strong interest, there were no existing programs that combined different public funding streams into a single full-day program in a way that can be continued and replicated. Such collaborative efforts were impeded by a maze of laws, regulations and contract provisions that make collaboration extraordinarily difficult.

We have no illusions that systems change at the broadest level is easy. But it seems obvious that efforts to simplify the playing field need to occur while early childhood program administrators are being taught how to play the game.

The "systemic change" perspective of the Council on Children and Families was a valuable complement to the more programmatic and client-oriented foci of DSS and SED. CCF staff also brought to the CCCDP valuable experience and perspectives on other collaborative efforts and a direct link with the Permanent Interagency Committee. Thus, their role should be maintained or even strengthened, while both SED and DSS are also involved in these kinds of collaborative efforts. However, in all cases, attempts should be made to clarify the roles and expectations of each member of the collaborative partnership.

Finally, the CCCDP fits nicely with a number of broader state efforts to reform welfare and promote local-level collaboration. It directly complements the work of the Head Start and Child Care Project that was initiated by DSS in the summer of 1993 to bring providers from both sectors together and to find common ground to work together.³⁵ Site selection for the demonstration was explicitly linked to the Neighborhood-Based Alliance (NBA) program. However, the linkages between the demonstration and broader collaboration efforts were minimal at best.³⁶ This may be a result of the newness of the demonstration; it is widely accepted that a program must be functioning before administrators worry about linkages. However, state-level officials should continue to investigate why these linkages are not appearing and what kinds of steps can be taken to promote them.

³⁵ See, for example, Mitchell (1993).

³⁶ Only one of the seven communities highlighted its efforts to "insure coordination/integration with the NBA grant recently awarded to [our community]."

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