Meeting great expectations: Integrating early education program standards in child care

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In the past decade, expectations have been raised about early care and education programs ensuring that young children are ready for school. However, child care policy and funding is often left out of this discussion. In order to achieve improved child outcomes, policymakers must invest in improved program standards in child care. This report, part of the Foundation for Child Development's Working Paper Series, examines three strategies in seven states that have integrated program standards into child care by directly tying standards to funding: the delivery of state pre-kindergarten (Georgia, New Jersey, and New York) and Head Start (Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon) in child care settings and the use of contracts including required standards with child care providers (California). These states are requiring participating child care providers to meet early education program standards that routinely exceed those required by state child care licensing rules. They are also providing additional monitoring, technical assistance, and fiscal resources to help participating programs meet these standards.

Region: United States [4]

Tags: poverty [5]

quality [6]

child development [7]

funding [8]

pre-school [9]

legislation and regulation [10]

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1