



Introducing the NYC Early Childhood Research Network: Establishing a Model for Integrating Research, Policy, and Practice

New York, NY (February 27, 2018) – While plenty of attention has been paid to the effectiveness of early care and education programs, little research guides implementing these programs and informing their operation. Seeking to close this gap, the Foundation for Child Development (the Foundation) has released its latest [report](#) “New York City Early Childhood Research Network: A Model for Integrating Research, Policy, and Practice,” highlighting the New York City (NYC) Early Childhood Research Network (the Network). With NYC’s implementation of universal full-day prekindergarten, the Foundation saw an opportunity to create the Network and convene researchers and policymakers around a mission to focus on the early care and education workforce in the context of continuous quality improvement efforts, program implementation, and the scale-up of high-quality early childhood education programs across the city.

Since the initiative’s launch in 2014, the Network has gathered NYC agencies, researchers, and policymakers to set mutual goals, define metrics and protocols, and share their perspectives and experiences.

“Until now, educators, researchers, and policymakers have operated in silos. The Network aims to bring them together on the same page and offer a model for jointly identifying priorities to produce better outcomes for our youngest learners,” said Jacqueline Jones, President and CEO of the Foundation. “This level of collaboration has fostered the critical knowledge necessary for innovation, implementation, and continuous improvement.”

The report details the Network’s research-to-impact approach to align efforts and voices around implementing high-quality early childhood education, with four key insights emerging:

- Cooperation across sectors makes a real difference
- Coordination in research agendas and policy priorities
- Early collaboration naturally extends into the future
- Research networks build enhanced capacity for impact

“While the Network’s outcomes are still evolving, the collaboration and cohesion of this effort stand as a success story in and of itself,” added Jones. “The Network has transformed the way different institutions and cultures across the city work together to better serve the needs of young children.”

Former and current members of the Network agree that this model provides value to those who have and continue to participate in it.

“Research is an essential part of our ongoing work to support and improve quality in Pre-K for All and 3-K for All programs,” said Josh Wallack, NYC Department of Education Deputy Chancellor of Early Education and Student Enrollment. “By working together with researchers, we can better inform our quality-building efforts and continue to strengthen early care and education services for New York City’s children and families.”

“Hearing from the NYC Department of Education, the NYC Administration for Children’s Services, and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene affected my thinking about what they are trying to do. It’s pulling back the curtain a little,” said Jeanne Reid, Research Scientist at the National Center for Children and Families at Teachers College at Columbia University. “Normally, we would be on the outside and looking in; now we see what they are trying to do, and it feels like we are working together with a better understanding.”

Kelvin Chan, former Director of Early Childhood Development of Bureau of Child Care at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, agrees, “The Network gives me a chance to communicate to researchers who provide the evidence base that I depend on.”

“I truly value the opportunity to bring talented scientists together with dedicated public policy professionals to strengthen the collective as well as to help shape individual research agendas, and learn from the findings together. Each of us, regardless of our role within the Network, has grown professionally and has had a profound impact on each other,” added Sherry M. Cleary, Executive Director of New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute.

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To learn more about the Network or to schedule an interview, please contact Zachary Hastings Hooper, 202.531.2512 or zh@caliboguecomms.com.

The Foundation for Child Development helps advocates and policymakers build high-quality, evidence-based early childhood systems that serve the needs of all children. The Foundation identifies needs and fill gaps by connecting research to changes that continuously improve policy and practice to build better lives for young children. <http://www.fcd-us.org>.