

School Readiness Connections

Child Care Assistance Program
Pilot Project

Evaluation Results

March 4, 2010



School Readiness Connections (SRC)...

- A Child Care Assistance Program pilot project initially funded for two years - SFY 2007-2009
- Served 364 children ages 0-5 over a 19 month period
- \$ 1 million appropriated as a capped allocation

SRC Goals

1. Create incentives for child care programs to provide services to CCAP children that support school readiness
2. Create incentives for families receiving CCAP to choose these programs for their children

Key features

- Pay selected programs up to 25 % higher than current CCAP statute allows
- Suspend some CCAP policies that interrupt continuity of care
- Children attend at least 25 hours per week, if parent remains eligible for CCAP
- Full day, full year services

SRC Participating Families

- Approximately 270 families eligible for CCAP participated
- Average household income =\$18,138
- Most parents were working (83%) and about 21% were in school or other employment related activities
- Children averaged 36 weeks in SRC programs over a 19 month period

How SRC programs were selected

- Application basis – 41 programs submitted complete applications. First priority went to those serving more than 25 % CCAP children.
- Committee members ranked applications on criteria similar to Parent Aware – Licensing records, staff credentials, group size & use of curricula and assessment

SRC Participating child care programs

14 programs in nine counties include:

- 9 centers
- 5 family childcare

Located in:

- 5 metro locations
- 9 non-metro locations

SRC Providers

- 2 Head Start grantees and 4 Head Start partnerships offering full day services
- 1 center is NAEYC accredited
- All 5 family child care providers have at least Child Development Associate credential
- Required to be rated by Parent Aware – 4 have a rating, other 10 in process

Costs of SRC

- An average of \$2870 per child for one full time year of SRC services; this is the amount above the regular CCAP costs.
- The cost represents 25 % higher CCAP maximum rates, plus more continuous care reimbursed for 13% of the SRC eligible children.

SRC funds - Used to support on-going quality

- Promoting family partnerships
- Improving teaching materials and strategies
- Teacher training and education
- Monitor and assess children's learning
- Providing referrals, including referrals to preschool screening

Use of Work Sampling for child assessment

- All programs received Work Sampling System© training and used assessments through out the project for participating 3 and 4 year olds
- 50 of the 364 children were assessed with the P4 version of Work Sampling for the purposes of the evaluation

SRC Work Sampling Results- 4 year olds

Percent rated as proficient in:

- 92 % physical development and health domain
- 82% personal and social development
- 78 % language and literacy
- 72 % mathematical thinking

Benefits of Work Sampling

- Observe children more effectively
- Communicate information with parents about their child's progress
- Create customized goals for children
- Integrate results into daily activities

SRC Administration

- Utilizes existing infrastructure. Counties authorize higher rate after DHS approval on a per child basis-provider bills on the CCAP voucher
- Parents – no separate application needed to have access to high quality school readiness programs

Recap of SRC Goals and Results

- Some children were able to continue attending , providing continuity of care
- Parents were highly satisfied with the quality of their child's learning and the project
- Programs engaged in many quality improvement activities
- Parents and programs viewed project as well managed

Future implications of SRC

- Links to other recent early care and education efforts
- Choosing SRC programs based on Parent Aware or another QRIS essential
- SRC is unique because it serves at-risk children, focuses on school readiness while using existing CCAP infrastructure
