

TeachME Professional Development

Exploring the Cost of High-Quality Early Care and Education

Executive Summary

1. Early Childhood Education (ECE) implementation and cost measures are needed in order to reflect what ECE centers are doing to provide high quality education for children within a program.

- A. True
 - B. False
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2. The purpose of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services project, Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High-Quality ECE (ECE-ICHQ), is to develop measures of implementation and cost for an ECE center that will:

- A. Inform research, policy, and practice
 - B. Improve understanding of variations in what centers do to support quality and their associated costs
 - C. Examine how resources for ECE may be better aligned with expectations for quality
 - D. All of above
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What are the Features of High Quality ECE?

3. Each of the following features have been shown to be associated with both teacher-child interactions and child outcomes in ECE programs EXCEPT:

- A. Group size and adult-child ratio
 - B. Staff education and credentials
 - C. Leadership and administrative practices
 - D. Environment, materials, and training and professional development
-

Practitioner, Organizational, and Contextual Implementation Factors

4. Organizational factors that support successful implementation of ECE programs

include providing employees with opportunities to be innovative, encouraging diversity of perspectives and backgrounds, and providing supervisorial encouragement.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Do Costs Vary by Contextual Factors?

5. ECE center characteristics that impact costs include enrollment level or capacity, hours of operation, staffing structure, and ages of children served.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Introduction

6. Although policymakers, administrators, and other key stakeholders need information to help them effectively target funds to increase quality in ECE, one consistent challenge is the lack of consensus about how to specifically define quality.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

7. Implementation "costs" include expenditures incurred by the center, as well as the value of in-kind contributions such as labor and:

- A. Space
 - B. Training
 - C. Upgrades
 - D. Special events/activities
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What will ECE-ICHQ measure?

8. The ultimate goal of the ECE-ICHQ is to produce measures of implementation and costs that can be used with existing observational measures of quality to examine the variation in ECE center capacities and resources that can make a difference in the early childhood experiences of children.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Table I.2. Key Dimensions Summarized From Each Study Reviewed

9. While group size, child/adult ratio, and staff education are referred to as structural quality elements, professional development and curriculum are considered:

- A. System quality elements**
 - B. Process quality elements**
 - C. Practice quality elements**
 - D. Operational quality elements**
-

What are the Features of High Quality ECE?

10. Increasing evidence indicates that children's experiences during the first years of life are fundamental for early brain development and subsequent growth in cognitive and behavioral skills that affect long-term well-being and success.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
-

Group Size and Adult-Child Ratio

11. Which of the following accurately describes recommendations/requirements for group size and adult-child ratios in early childhood education?

- A. Professional organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommend group sizes of 16 children or fewer and maximum ratios of 1:8, depending on the age of the child**
 - B. Most state pre-kindergarten programs have group sizes of 20 or lower and adult-child ratios of 1:10 or better**
 - C. The Head Start Program Performance Standards require group sizes of 15 to 25 in center-based settings, based on the ages of children served**
 - D. All Head Start classes are required to be staffed by at least three adults**
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Staff Education and Credentials

12. Although some studies have found better outcomes among children with more highly educated teachers, none of these studies has implemented a rigorous design to test whether a causal effect exists.

- A. True**

B. False

13. Increased requirements for staff education are seen as a way to improve quality, and as of September 30, 2013, federal regulations have required at least half of Head Start teachers to have either a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree in early childhood education, or a bachelor's or advanced degree in any subject, along with experience relating to early childhood education.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
-

Training and Professional Development

14. Several reviews have cited the ongoing training and professional development of teachers as a key program feature that supports quality, and significant evidence indicates that participating in training or workshops to obtain credits results in higher quality.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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Key Findings and Implications for ECE-ICHQ

15. Important implications for ECE-ICHQ include each of the following EXCEPT:

- A. Measurement needs to start within a broad scope**
 - B. Programs may be able to achieve desirable outcomes with different combinations of features**
 - C. There is likely more than one pathway to high quality ECE**
 - D. Program features should only be incorporated if they have already been empirically tested in the research literature**
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What Does it Take to Implement High-Quality ECE?

16. Practitioner, organizational, and contextual factors form the basis of an infrastructure that supports successful implementation by building an environment that is healthy, vibrant, and:

- A. Cohesive**
- B. Efficient**

- C. Fair
 - D. Balanced
-

Practitioner Factors

17. One consideration in the general capacity of an ECE center to implement program features is the extent to which practitioners feel an investment in the goals of a practice, believe that the proposed methods will help achieve the goals, and are convinced that they can make a difference.

- A. True
 - B. False
-

Table III.3. Organizational Factors in Implementation Frameworks

18. Organizational factors that have been identified as important for building the capacity to effectively implement programs or practices that support positive outcomes include self-efficacy and motivation, commitment to the system, and professional excellence.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Tools

19. In ECE settings, experts recommend using curriculum as a tool to support social and cognitive development that is strength-based and innovative.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Variations in Activities and Associated Costs, by Stages of Implementation

20. During the 'installation' stage of a new program or practice, an organization must work to secure the necessary space, technology, or equipment, and administrators should examine staffing to determine whether existing or new staff are needed to meet the qualifications to deliver the new practice.

- A. True

B. False

How are the Costs of ECE Measured, and What Contributes to Variation in Costs?- Do Costs Vary by Contextual Factors?

21. The geographic, political, and fiscal environment in which an ECE center operates may affect the costs of care, as costs may differ across regions or between rural and urban areas, and states may vary in their government policies and regulations affecting ECE centers.

A. True

B. False

Key Findings and Implications for ECE-ICHQ

22. Decisions that centers make to support what goes on in the classroom often play out in costs and quality, including decisions such as:

A. Staffing structures and the qualifications of staff

B. How staff use their time

C. Professional development opportunities the center provides for staff

D. All of the above

How is Quality Related to Costs-Lessons from the Research Base

23. Numerous studies have consistently found a positive association between cost and quality, and the estimated magnitude of the relationship remains constant across studies.

A. True

B. False

Conclusions and Implications for the Field

24. While classroom observational tools provide information about classroom practices, including teacher-child interactions, they don't necessarily capture information about the specific features of an ECE center that may help that center support or achieve high quality.

- A. True
 - B. False
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25. Little-researched features that have been endorsed by experts as important in sustaining quality in ECE include assessment and evaluation, administrative practices, and:

- A. The program's mission and objectives
 - B. Leadership
 - C. Social climate
 - D. Policy guidelines
-

Associations Between Implementation Factors, Program Features, and Quality

26. Implementation science calls for assessing the many possible combinations and interactions of organizational factors, program features, and implementation activities that play a role in attaining high quality early education.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Current Measurement of the Cost-to-Quality Relationship Provides Little Direction for Those Who Wish to Invest in Quality.

27. In the Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study (CQO), researchers suggest that it costs the average center an additional 50 cents per hour per child to achieve good quality, but it is not possible to discern whether the additional funds would be spent most wisely on increasing staff credentials or on other improvements.

- A. True
 - B. False
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A Draft Conceptual Framework for the ECE-ICHQ Project

28. The premise of the ECE-ICHQ project is that high quality early care and education should give all children the social, emotional, and cognitive skills they need before they enter school, and help close the achievement gap for low-income, disadvantaged children.

- A. True
 - B. False
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29. The way ECE centers may carry out particular functions is driven by the implementation activities that support the functions, the organizational capacity in which they operate, and the resources and characteristics of the ECE center, as well as the state and community context.

- A. True
 - B. False
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30. Which of the following were NOT included in the five core activities common to successfully implemented ECE programs?

- A. Staff selection and use of tools
 - B. Training, coaching/technical assistance
 - C. Clear standards and expectations
 - D. Quality assurance/quality improvement
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