Crosswalks Care Package

Content and instructional resources for providers of professional development related to culture, language, diversity, and responsive practices

June 2011

News and Updates

November 2-5, 2011  National Association for Multicultural Education

November 17-19, 2011  27th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs & Their Families
Participants in the Division for Early Childhood’s 2011 Conference in National Harbor, Maryland will have opportunities to explore the evidence and engage in discussions related to supporting children of diverse abilities and their families. Go to http://www.dec-spied.org/Conference for details.

Content Resources

Bilingual Education Approaches Get Higher Marks
Robert Slavin of Johns Hopkins University and Alan Cheung of the Success for All Foundation have reviewed 30 years of bilingual education studies in an effort to determine the best approach for teaching reading to English language learners. Their review concludes that while the number of high-quality studies is small, existing evidence favors bilingual approaches, especially paired bilingual strategies that teach reading in the native language and English at the same time. The report, Effective Reading Programs for English Language Learners: A Best Evidence Synthesis, reviews both comparisons of bilingual and English-only programs and specific, replicable models that have been evaluated with English language learners. Whether taught in their native language or English, Slavin and Cheung conclude English language learners benefit from instruction in school-wide reform programs that use systematic phonics and one-to-one or small group tutoring programs and that emphasize extensive reading. View the report at http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/techReports/Report66.pdf

Investing in Our Next Generation
More than one in ten preK-12 students in the U.S.—totaling over 5.3 million children—are English Language Learners (ELLs), yet common assumptions about this fast-growing population are often incorrect. The majority of young ELLs are not immigrants: over 75 percent of ELL elementary students were born in the U.S. This report contains information on the importance of investing in the education of dual language learners which may be useful for both funders and advocates. http://www.fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/Investing_in_Our_Next_Generation.pdf

The National Center on Children in Poverty has published a new report that examines racial gaps in early childhood. The main research questions addressed include:

1. What racial gaps emerge across cognitive and socio-emotional development in early childhood among African-American infant, toddler, preschooler, and kindergarten boys and white-American boys?
2. Do these gaps remain after controlling for family socio-economic status and other child, family, and home environment characteristics?
3. What factors contribute to early resilience and buffer against these risks among African-American boys?

The report is available online at http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_1014.html

How We Play – Cultural Determinants of Physical Activity in Young Children

Research supported by the National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play identified 18 studies that examined aspects of the intersection between culture and physical activity. This report highlights the findings of those analyses. Go to http://www.aahperd.org/headstart/toolbox/bestPractices/upload/HowWePlay_LitReview.pdf to access the report, or http://www.aahperd.org/headstart/toolbox/bestPractices/upload/HowWePlay_AnnotatedBibliography.pdf to access an annotated bibliography of the studies reviewed.

Young Children of Immigrants and the Path to Educational Success

The population of young children of immigrants doubled between 1990 and 2008, changing the demographic makeup of early childhood classrooms around the country. A new paper from the Urban Institute, Young Children of Immigrants and the Path to Educational Success: Key Themes from an Urban Institute Roundtable by Olivia Golden and Karina Fortuny, addresses the specific needs of young children of immigrants and looks at key questions about whether early childhood programs are doing a good job teaching these young children. It is available online at http://www.urban.org/publications/412330.html

Instructional Resources

Another Troubling Gap

Minority students are 41% of the public school population, but minority teachers are 16.5% of the teaching force. A new report from ETS and the NEA looks at achievement gaps on teacher licensure tests; what the characteristics are of people who succeed on these tests; and in what ways ETS and the NEA can intervene to narrow gaps. Researchers found significant differences in average scores between different racial/ethnic subgroups. Candidates successfully passing Praxis I tests on the first try had a much better chance of passing Praxis II tests, and test performance was generally higher in the first two years of college. African-American test-takers tended to take Praxis I later in their college careers. Available data explain neither why African-American candidates are more likely to test later in their careers nor why first-year students and...
sophomores score higher on average. National Education Association and Educational Testing Service also conducted campus-based interviews to ask faculty and students about preparation for licensure tests and intervention strategies. Faculty said they struggled with students' deficiencies in mathematics, reading comprehension, and writing; their familiarity with teacher licensure tests varied widely; close cooperation between Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education faculty is not always achieved; motivating students to use university preparation services is a challenge; and faculty members want tests to have more questions relevant to minority experience.

See the report: http://www.nea.org/home/42951.htm

*Application:* Discuss strategies that higher education programs can use to recruit and support culturally and linguistically diverse students in successfully completing teacher preparation programs. This may involve research to discover approaches that have been successful in helping all students to pass the Praxis II. Another approach would be to interview leaders of campus programs that have been successful in supporting diverse learners to learn about the strategies they have used.

*The Challenge of Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners*

The second part of the annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher looks at student differences, how teachers are addressing them, and how well students feel their needs are being met. More than 90 percent of all middle and high school teachers surveyed say strengthening programs to help diverse learners with the highest needs should be a priority, with 59 percent saying this "must be done as one of the highest priorities in education." A majority of parents (84 percent) say this should be a priority, including 57 percent who feel it to be the highest priority. Most business executives from Fortune 1000 companies agree (89 percent), but significantly fewer (31 percent) rate it highest. Given limited resources, teachers say opportunities for collaborative teaching (65 percent), access to online and technology resources (64 percent), better tools for understanding students' learning strengths and needs (63 percent), and instructional strategies for teaching English language learners (62 percent) would majorly impact their ability to address different learning needs of students.


*Application:* Divide participants into three groups. Ask the first group to make a list of effective practices for individualizing learning for young children with disabilities. Ask the second group to make a list of effective practices for individualizing learning for young dual language learners. Ask the third group to make a list of effective practices for individualizing learning for young children who are typically developing. Compare lists, noting items that are common to all groups as well as items that are unique. Debrief by discussing how to effectively individualize in classrooms where there will be children with many kinds of learning needs.
Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation

A new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds that students who don't read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma. For readers who can’t master even basic skills by third grade, the rate is six times greater. The longitudinal study of nearly 4,000 students calculates high school graduation rates for children at different reading skill levels and with different poverty rates. Overall, 22 percent of children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school, compared to 6 percent of those who have never been poor. This rises to 32 percent for students spending more than half of childhood in poverty. Even among poor children who were proficient readers in third grade, 11 percent still didn't finish high school. That compares to 9 percent of subpar third grade readers who have never been poor. Graduation rates for black and Hispanic students who were not proficient readers in third grade lagged far behind those for white students with the same reading skills. The findings in the report suggest three environments where new policies and programs could foster children's school success: schools; family; and federal, state, and local policy.

See the report: http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid={D4DBAD77-DE2E-4FAE-B443-A9AEEB6E35}

Application: After reviewing this report, backwards brainstorm with your students/participants/staff. Think about all the things that could be happening in infant, toddlers, and early childhood settings (birth through Grade 3) to reverse these trends. What roles could families play in improving the educational trajectories of their children? Educators? Specialists? Administrators?

- Find additional resources and measures related to diversity, and previous Care Packages, at the Crosswalks website http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/crosswalks/
- To learn more about resources, measures, and professional development related to increasing the emphasis on diversity in preservice coursework, practica, and program practices, please contact Camille Catlett at (919) 966-6635 or camille.catlett@unc.edu.