

# Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

*A partnership of the National Center for Children in Poverty, the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, the Child Care Bureau, and the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation*

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## Linking Health and Child Care and Early Education Services A Key Topic Resource List

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*Research Connections* conducted a comprehensive search of its collection for resources focused on linking child care and health services. This Key Topic Resource List includes an overview of issues addressed in the literature on health and child care and early education services, as well as a listing of selected resources on the topic.

Based on the search results, resources were grouped into the following three categories:

- Overview of health services in child care and early education
- Health care consultants in child care and early education
- Health services in Head Start/Early Head Start

From the many results, *Research Connections* selected a limited number of resources of various types- including reports and papers, fact sheets and briefs, summaries, and reviews. Selection criteria included policy relevance and relatively recent publication. The full results came from a basic search on the exact phrase "health care services"; from a basic search on the exact phrase "pediatric care"; from a basic search on the exact phrase "health care consultants;" from an advanced search of "health\*" in titles; and from a basic search of the exact phrase "medical home."

Within each category, resources are organized according to publisher type and publication date. *Research Connection's* one-sentence description is included for each resource on the following list. For complete citations, which include abstracts and full text for some resources, click on the titles.

## Overview:

Good health is an essential foundation for a child's healthy cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. Linking to health services therefore is an important consideration for early care and education programs interested in creating high quality environments that support children's healthy development. Early care and education programs, including federal programs such as Head Start and Early Head Start, have become sources for linking families to health care and information through some of the following strategies: providing on-site screenings for developmental delays and other preventative health care services through health care staff or health care consultants; offering parent education on child health and development; offering provider education on health and safety; and acting as an access point for enrolling children in health insurance.

The research on the links between health care and child care includes questions such as the following:

- What are the patterns of health care utilization and costs associated with different types of child care?
- Is use of health care and health resources (i.e. vaccines, antibiotics, etc.) more common for children attending child care?
- Does health care consultation increase child care staff's knowledge and awareness of child and staff health issues, and does child care center compliance with health standards improve for centers with health consultation interventions?
- Does participation in early childhood health interventions lead to better outcomes for children such as higher levels of educational attainment, higher incomes, and more positive health behaviors, mental health, and health efficacy during young adulthood?
- How does Early Head Start impact the health status of children? What is the health status of children in Early Head Start? What are the most frequent health and safety problems? Do Early Head Start children have health insurance and access to care? Are some groups of Early Head Start children at greater risk for health concerns than others?
- How is the Health Component of Head Start delivered? What methods do Head Start grantees use to provide or obtain health screenings, examinations, immunizations, referrals, and treatment services for enrolled children? What are the range, promptness, and follow-up mechanisms of these health services? What are the major health problems and risk factors for children enrolled in Head Start? What barriers do families face in attempting to access community and State health services? Are there specific cultural factors, such as language, that serve as barriers to health care utilization? What health education efforts are directed towards children and parents?

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## Overview of Health Services in Child Care and Early Education

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### *Government*

- **California. Legislature. Assembly. Select Committee on California Children's School Readiness and Health. (2002).** [Preparing our children to learn: Report of the Select Committee on California Children's School Readiness and Health.](#) Sacramento, CA: Select Committee on California Children's School Readiness and Health.  
*A study of the impact of children's health on school readiness and academic achievement, including testimonies of teachers, parents, and pediatricians on the importance of access to health care and early attention to children's physical and mental health needs.*

### *Journals*

- **Gupta, Ruchi S.; Shuman, Steve; Taveras, Elsie M.; Kulldorff, Martin; & Finkelstein, Jonathan A. (2005).** [Opportunities for health promotion education in child care](#) *Pediatrics*, 116(4), 499-505  
*A study exploring the attitudes toward, barriers to, and strategies for incorporating health promotion activities in child care settings, using surveys of directors, health consultants, and parents from licensed child care centers in Boston.*
- **Palfrey, Judith S.; Hauser-Cram, Penny; Bronson, Martha B.; Warfield, Marji E.; Sirin, Selcuk; & Chan, Eugenia. (2005).** [The Brookline Early Education project: A 25-year follow-up study of a family-centered early health and development intervention](#) *Pediatrics*, 116(1), 144-152  
*A quasi-experimental 25-year follow-up study examining the long term effects of the Brookline Early Education Project (BEEP; 1972/1979), a community-based, child health and development program*
- **Bruder, Mary Beth; & Fink, Dale Borman. (2004).** [State policy as an influence on the participation of young children with medical needs in childcare](#) *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 24(2), 68-75  
*An examination of state policies that affect the participation of children with complex medical needs in licensed child care, based on interviews with informants from a wide range of state departments and agencies*
- **Gaines, Sherry K.; Wold, Judith Lupo; Bean, Margaret R.; Brannon, Cynthia Gayle; & Leary, Janie M. (2004).** [Partnership to build sustainable public health nurse child care health support](#) *Family and Community Health*, 27(4), 346-354  
*A discussion of the formation of a partnership between faculty from Georgia State University's Childcare Advantage Network (CAN), and public health nurses in one of Georgia's 19 health districts, for the purpose of building an infrastructure that will support a sustainable child care health support system*
- **Halfon, Neal; & Inkelas, Moira. (2003).** [Optimizing the health and development of children](#) *JAMA: the Journal of the American Medical Association*, 290(23), 3136-3138  
*A discussion of the need for optimizing the health care of young children through programs such as Healthy Steps.*

- **Silverstein, Michael; Sales, Anne E.; & Koepsell, Thomas. (2003).** [Health care utilization and expenditures associated with child care attendance: A nationally representative sample](#) *Pediatrics*, 111(4), 371-375  
*A study using nationally representative data from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, 1997 Cohort to examine the patterns of health care use and costs among preschool children attending different types of child care*
- **Lu, Ning; & Samuels, Michael E. (2001).** [Increased health care utilization associated with child day care among health maintenance organization and Medicaid enrollees](#), *Ambulatory Child Health*, 7(3-4), 219-230  
*A study examining the association between out-of-home child care use and the utilization of health care resources among children aged 5 years or younger in Columbia, South Carolina.*
- **Lucarelli, Patti. (2002).** [Raising the bar for health and safety in child care](#) *Pediatric Nursing*, 28(3), 239-241, 291  
*A discussion of how health care professionals can help improve child care quality by acting as child care health consultants and offering expert advice in child development, disease prevention, and infection control*
- **Caufield, Rick; & Kataoka-Yahiro, Merle. (2001).** [Health training needs of child care professionals](#) *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 29(2), 119-123  
*A survey-based study exploring the health care training needs of child care professionals in Hawaii.*
- **Alkon, Abbey; & Boyce, Jill Chamberlain. (1999).** [Health assessment in child care centers: Parent and staff perceptions](#) *Pediatric Nursing*, 25(4), 439-442  
*A study examining the health care needs of children in child care settings, using a Health Care Services Assessment completed by 55 parents and 13 staff members in four urban child care centers.*

#### ***Universities and Research Organizations***

- **Duncan, Greg; & Magnuson, Katherine A. (2003).** [Promoting the healthy development of young children](#) *In One percent for the kids: New policies, brighter futures for America's children* (pp. 16-39). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.  
*A discussion of policies promoting healthy development among at risk children by decreasing their economic hardship, providing them with decent health care, and enrolling them in universal prekindergarten programs.*
- **Brown, Jen. (2002).** [The link between early childhood education and health](#) *Seattle, WA: Economic Opportunity Institute*  
*A brief overview of the benefits of focusing on prevention and protective factors in early childhood education*
- **Ross, Donna C. (1999).** [How early childhood programs can link children to free and low-cost health insurance programs](#) *Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*  
*An outline of suggested actions that early childhood programs can take to help families access free or low-cost health insurance for children.*

- **Bell, Karen N. (1995).** [Strategies for promoting health and assuring access to health care in child care settings](#) New York: Columbia University, National Center for Children in Poverty  
*A discussion of state and community strategies for promoting collaboration between child care providers and health care providers.*

#### *Other*

- **Walker, Karen E.; & Bowie, Angela. (2004).** [Linking the child care and health care systems: A consideration of options](#) Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures  
*A review of federal family policies as potential funding sources for interventions linking children's health services with community-based early childhood education and care services, in order to improve access to, and quality of, health care for young children living in poverty.*
- **100% Campaign: Health Insurance for Every California Child. (2003)** [Go where they are: Working with child care programs to reach California's uninsured children](#) Oakland, CA: 100% Campaign: Health Insurance for Every California Child  
*A guide to strategic partnerships between child care providers and health care professionals for the purpose of improving health coverage among uninsured children in child care programs in California.*
- **State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network. (2003)** [Health care and school readiness: The health community's role in supporting child development: New approaches and model legislation](#) Des Moines, IA: State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network  
*An introduction to the topic of incorporating child health practitioners and the health system into school readiness strategies, with suggestions for policy actions, and highlights of promising practices.*

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### Health Care Consultation in Child Care and Early Education

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#### *Journals*

- **Gaines, Sherry K.; Wold, Judith Lupo; Spencer, Lorine; & Leary, Janie M. (2005).** [Assessing the need for child-care health consultants](#) *Public Health Nursing, 22(1), 8-16*  
*Findings from a survey of center-based, home-based, and Head Start child care program directors concerning their perceptions of health consultation, health and safety needs, and affordability of consultative services.*
- **Alkon, Abbey. (2002).** [Child care health consultation improves health knowledge and compliance](#) *Pediatric Nursing, 28(1), 61-65*  
*An evaluation of the effect of health consultative services on child care staff's knowledge of child health-related issues, and child care centers' compliance with national health and safety performance standards.*
- **Evers, Deborah B. (2002).** [The pediatric nurse's role as health consultant to a child care center](#) *Pediatric Nursing, 28(3), 231-237*  
*An overview of the role of the child care health consultant and a description of a particular case in which a child care center director sought the help of a pediatric nurse to address problems with infection control and illness transmission*

- **Crowley, Angela A. (2001).** [Child care health consultation: An ecological model](#) *Journal of the Society of Pediatric Nurses*, 6(4), 170-181  
*A presentation of a conceptual ecological model of child care health consultation, examining the consultant's role as advocate, resource, and link within the child care and healthcare systems, with implications for nursing practice*
- **Williams, L. Alison; & DeVries, Susan M. (2000).** [Creating sustainable nursing interventions: An innovative health promotion strategy for handwashing in child care centers](#) *Neonatal, Pediatric and Child Health Nursing*, 3(4), 17-20  
*A description of an evidence-based, cost effective pilot program using community child health nursing interventions to promote handwashing among child care center staff.*

### **Universities and Research Organizations**

- **Cole, Patricia. (2001).** [Child Care Health Consultant Project: Child care provider survey](#) **Bloomington: Indiana. Institute on Disability and Community**  
*Findings from a survey of Indiana child care providers, in registered ministries and licensed child care centers and homes, on the current sources of their health and safety training and the importance of child care health consultant services*

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## **Health Services in Head Start & Early Head Start**

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### **Government**

- **United States. Administration for Children and Families. (2004).** [Health and disabilities services in Early Head Start: Are families getting needed health care services?](#) **Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families**  
*A descriptive analysis of data collected for the national Early Head Start Research and Evaluation study on the health status, health insurance coverage, receipt of health services, and differences in health and health care among key subgroups of children and families enrolled in Early Head Start*
- **United States. Administration for Children and Families. (2003).** [Research to practice: Health and health care among Early Head Start children](#) **Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families**  
*An overview of findings from the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project on the impact of Early Head Start on children's health status and access to health care services, and parents' awareness of health and safety practices*
- **United States. Administration on Children, Youth, and Families. (1996).** [A descriptive study of the Head Start Health Component: Vol. II. Technical report](#) **Washington, DC: U.S. Administration on Children, Youth, and Families**  
*Descriptive findings from a study of the Head Start Health Component, using child health records and standard data from the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR), plus observations and interviews with parents and staff, collected during the Spring of 1994 from a sample of 80 Head Start centers.*

### *Journals*

- Fleischhacker, Sheila; & Achterberg, Cheryl. (2003). [Ensuring a healthy start is part of Head Start](#) *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 103(12), 1583-1586  
*A discussion of the role of dietetics professionals in promoting healthy dietary guidelines and practices through Head Start programs*

### *Universities and Research Organizations*

- Schumacher, Rachel. (2003). [Promoting the health of poor preschool children: What do federal Head Start performance standards require?](#) Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy  
*A review of specific federal requirements for individual Head Start programs' provision of health screenings and services for participating low income preschool children*

To suggest additions to this Key Topic Resource List, please email us at [contact@researchconnections.org](mailto:contact@researchconnections.org).

To view and sort the full search results from which these resources were selected, you may use the [Recreate Complete Search](#) function.

This selected Key Topic Resource List was developed by staff of Child Care & Early Education *Research Connections*. Special thanks to Laura Aird, Manager Early Education and Child Care Initiatives American Academy of Pediatrics & Patti Banghart, *Research Connections*.