Office of Child Development

Looking Toward the Future

Annual Report
2011 – 2012

Year Twenty-Six
Supporting families and professionals through research, education, practice, and policy
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Co-Director’s Report

We are pleased to report a few highlights from the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development’s (OCD) past year of operation.

Program Highlights

- **OCD’s actions for succession**
  Many of OCD’s leaders will retire in the next 5-10 years, similar to other organizations locally and nationally. Thus, OCD is involving younger staff to a greater extent in the operation and administration of various programs to prepare them for leadership roles in the future. Much of this annual report describes this process.

- **OCD launches communications division and comprehensive plan**
  OCD created and staffed a communications division and developed a comprehensive communication plan in response to urgings from its Local Advisory Board. The Division Director, Kerry Ishizaki, and communications specialist, Reem Hobeldin, are responsible for promoting internal communications (e.g., an internal website, project-specific brochures) and external communications (e.g., OCD’s website, Developments newsletter, Annual Report, information pieces sent to targeted groups and outside media). They work closely with interns from Carnegie Mellon University.

- **OCD appoints new Director of Division of Applied Research and Evaluation (DARE)**
  Milena Nigam is the new director of DARE. She previously was a research project manager in DARE. Recently, Kalani Palmer was hired as an Evaluation Manager, adding to OCD’s data collection, management, and analysis skills as well as bringing content expertise about young children, home literacy, parenting, and youth-serving programs. DARE’s former director, Junlei Li, is now a Fellow of OCD, working independently but in collaboration with OCD and community groups.

- **OCD coordinates United Way’s needs assessment**
  OCD coordinated a needs assessment and action plan for United Way of Allegheny County. The three-year plan identified persistent and emerging needs facing Allegheny County’s children and youth. A broad-based committee of community leaders then created action strategies for several focal areas of community interest.

- **OCD encourages screenings and referrals of young children**
  OCD interviewed parents and professionals and then created video and print materials designed to encourage parents and professionals to cooperate in getting children screened when parents have concerns about their development. Parent materials were aimed at communicating the value of screening and allaying apprehensions about the screening process and its outcomes, and materials for professionals sensitized them to parents’ needs.

- **Transition to kindergarten (“Ready Freddy”) expands locally and nationally**
  OCD’s School Transition Project, symbolized by a green frog named Ready Freddy, encourages parents and children to enroll promptly in kindergarten, prepares them for this experience, and urges attendance beginning the first day of school. This program is expanding to a total of six schools in the Pittsburgh area and to schools in seven other Pennsylvania counties. After some national publicity, schools in four other states have expressed interest, and five schools in
Buffalo, NY, will pilot the program in preparation for using it in the entire district of 40 schools.

- **OCD successfully develops and evaluates Head Start teacher effectiveness**
  Early Childhood Partnerships, a component of OCD, developed an individualized, relationship-oriented, mentor-protégé model for enhancing Head Start teacher effectiveness. A randomized-group evaluation demonstrated that Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET) significantly improved teaching practices and child progress.

- **Program to improve teachers’ performance with children with disabilities shows promise**
  After a two-year pilot project, a mentoring/coaching program (Include Me from the Start) to improve regular teacher effectiveness in accommodating children with severe disabilities, was successfully implemented in K-1 classrooms in 60 school districts and an OCD evaluation showed significant promise for the program.

- **OCD conducts research to improve the development of institutionalized children on four continents**
  In collaboration with partners in each country, OCD is conducting numerous projects on institutionalized children around the world. Specifically: 1) Children who were in the previous intervention project in St. Petersburg (Russian Federation) and who have transitioned to families in St. Petersburg and the USA are being followed to determine the long-term consequences of early rearing in an improved institution; 2) OCD is advising the evaluation of special supplementary care provided by Half the Sky Foundation in institutions in two Chinese cities as well as an innovative “collective fostering program” conducted in Chongqing, China; 3) OCD is evaluating an intervention conducted by Whole Child International in five institutions for young children, including those with disabilities, in Managua, Nicaragua; and 4) OCD is working with colleagues to develop similar programs in Bogotá, Colombia, and San Salvador, El Salvador.

- **OCD works to improve outcomes for infants and toddlers in homeless families**
  Working with the Education Law Center, Department of Human Services, and the early childhood community, OCD has led a collaboration to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who experience homelessness. Practice and policy often emphasizes serving homeless adults, but young children have needs too. The team is now working to meet these issues through a variety of channels and strategies.

- **OCD’s Early Head Start program receives outstanding reviews**
  After the retirement of Director Vivian Herman, OCD’s Early Head Start program, now under the guidance of Chris Dunkerley, received another outstanding federal review of all aspects of its program and fiscal systems. OCD coordinates several EHS sites that support 310 pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families.

- **Family Support system completes strategic plan**
  OCD coordinated a strategic planning process for Family Support programs in Allegheny County that involved more than 150 stakeholders, half of whom were parents, from across Allegheny County plus two external consultants. An action plan was created urging reinvigoration of the Family Support Policy Board with new members and
increasing collaborations among Family Support centers and local agencies.

- **OCD assists nonprofits to communicate their messages**
  OCD’s Something Worth Giving project attempts to help child- and youth-serving nonprofits communicate more effectively to donors, volunteers, potential participants, and the broader community. The team works one-on-one with a variety of nonprofit organizations to communicate their mission, new programs, and financial and other challenges. New initiatives pertain to mentoring, effective teaching, and homeless children.

- **OCD expands and broadens its professional publications**
  OCD’s list of academic and professional publications has expanded in both the number of such reports as well as the diversity of their authors. The international projects have produced a variety of scientific publications, many of which have been authored by graduate students. In addition, the recent addition of Early Childhood Partnerships has produced a variety of reports on innovative practices, and some of OCD’s intervention projects (e.g., Ready Freddy School Transition) have published articles describing their implementation process.

**Financial Highlights**

The total budget available to OCD rose again this year, in part as a result of the first full year of integration of Early Childhood Partnerships into OCD. However, the effects of the recession have progressively trickled down to states and localities, and policymakers have targeted health, education, and welfare services for low-income families for some of the largest relative reductions. These are precisely the areas in which OCD operates, and we have not been immune to these retrenchments. Although OCD’s total budget remains substantial despite the large proportion contributed by government and foundation grants, regrettably several projects have ended, some budgets have been cut, some OCD-funded services have been reduced or terminated, and funding new projects is increasingly challenging.

**Conclusion**

OCD continues to operate in a constantly changing social and fiscal environment to improve outcomes for low-resource children and families by providing information, services, evaluations, research, policy initiatives, and other supports to the agencies that serve them in Pittsburgh, the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world. Although OCD is a bit leaner as a result of the recession, it remains vibrant, dedicated, and innovative in its quest to bring knowledge and expertise to the health, education, and welfare of children and families everywhere.

Sincerely,

Christina J. Groark, Ph.D., Co-Director
Robert B. McCall, Ph.D., Co-Director
Left and center, Codirectors Robert McCall & Christina Groark. Right, Assistant Director, Kenneth Smythe-Leistico.

Doris Dick, Assistant Director of Administrative Operations.

Junlei Li, Senior Fellow

Left, Stephanie McCarthy, Director of Applied Initiatives. Right, Milena Nigam, Director of Applied Research and Evaluation.

Left, Kerry Ishizaki, Director of Communications. Right, Reem Hobeldin, Communications Specialist.
Left, Laurie Mulvey, Director of Service Demonstrations. Right, Colleen Young, Projects Manager.

Chris Dunkerley, Director of Family Foundations Early Head Start.

Left, Raymond Firth, Director of Policy Initiatives. Right, Joan Eichner, Children’s Policy Director.

Left, Stephen Bagnato, Director of Early Childhood Partnerships. Right, Joyce D’Antonio, Associate Director of Early Childhood Partnerships.
University Provost  
Patricia E. Beeson

School of Education  
Alan Lesgold, Dean

Robert McCall, Co-Director  
Office of Child Development (OCD)  
Christina Groark, Co-Director

Local and National Advisory Boards

Division of Applied Research and Evaluation  
Milena Nigam  
Director of Applied Initiatives  
Stephanie McCarthy  
Evaluation Managers  
Janell Smith-Jones  
Kalani Palmer  

International Projects  
Joan Eichner  
Christina Groark  
Junlei Li  
Robert McCall  
Stephanie McCarthy  
Janell Smith-Jones  
Ken Smythe-Leistico

Division of Service Demonstrations  
Laurie Mulvey  
Project Manager  
Colleen Young  
Early Head Start  
Chris Dunkerley  
Partnerships for Family Support  
Sheila Beasley  
Lucas Musewe  
Laura Townsend  
STARS Programs  
Bernadette Binnemeron  
School Age Care  
Pamela Lang  
Early Childhood Mental Health  
Sharon Geibel  
Pathways to School Success  
vacant

Division of Policy Initiatives  
Ray Firth  
Children’s Policy Director  
Joan Eichner

Division of Early Childhood Partnerships  
Stephen Bagnato  
Associate Director, ECP  
CIVIC  
Joyce D'Antonio  
SPECs & COMET  
Jennifer Salaway  
HealthyCHILD  
Candace Hawthorne  
TRACE & ECRS  
Stephen Bagnato

Division of Administrative Operations  
Roger Fustich  
Assistant Director  
Doris Dick  

Division of Service Demonstrations  
Laurie Mulvey  
Project Manager  
Colleen Young  
Early Head Start  
Chris Dunkerley  
Partnerships for Family Support  
Sheila Beasley  
Lucas Musewe  
Laura Townsend  
STARS Programs  
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Children’s Policy Director  
Joan Eichner

Division of Early Childhood Partnerships  
Stephen Bagnato

Division of Administrative Operations  
Roger Fustich

Division of Communications  
Kerry Ishizaki

Senior Fellow  
Junlei Li

* senior and manager level personnel and faculty are included
Looking Toward the Future

Since its birth in 1986, under the leadership of Drs. Robert McCall and Christina Groark, the Office of Child Development has grown from a staff of 3 to a department that employs 53 and guides the futures of 22 students through the formation of mutually beneficial partnerships with other organizations, as well as through the application of scientific research into best practices to support children and families. Now, building upon its quarter century of successful operation, the Office of Child Development is ready to write the history of the next 25 years.

As we prepare for the future, a greater emphasis is being placed on including younger staff members in learning broader organizational knowledge and breaking our internal silos to create a more vibrant engaged team that fosters new energy into the creation of projects and the organization’s goals for the future. Senior staff leaders have made a conscious effort to make new opportunities for staff members to share and discuss ideas and develop their own leadership skills and to put staff members in the driver’s seat of their own professional development as well as implementing our strategic plan action items. We believe these actions will bring the organization to the next level in the future—responding to the needs of the ever-changing social environment, and embracing the emerging technologies of the twenty first century.

Ever mindful of those who have been here before us, we are a team of dedicated people who are truly committed to collaborating with community leaders and organizations to ensure that the lives of children and their families are improved. Our goals are the same as our founders—to be responsive and move quickly to address the needs of the community and the families whose lives we seek to improve.

In the following section, our division reports illustrate our continued commitment to our mission through the accomplishments of the past year. But, you will also find the renewed energy in our organization that foreshadows the success of our next phase of operation.
General Purpose
The Service Demonstrations Division works with partners to develop and implement quality service models that improve the lives of children and families using best practices based on research. We especially promote programs designed and governed by participants and communities. We work with the program participants to ensure that services and evaluations are integrated into their programs. The lessons that we learn are identified and disseminated to a broad audience; assistance is made available to providers and community groups to build their capacity to improve outcomes for children.

Illustrative Activities
The Early Childhood Mental Health Project provides on-site support to early care and education practitioners in Allegheny, Greene, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties. An early childhood mental health specialist at the invitation of the facility’s director and with the parents’ permission observes children in the classroom ranging in age from infancy through the start of kindergarten. After observation, the specialist develops an individual plan to support the child’s social/emotional development in the classroom, communicates concerns to parents, and provides referral information to families with children who may need specialized services. Feedback from both parents and ECE staff members has been overwhelmingly positive.

Current Projects
Ready Freddy: Pathways to Kindergarten Success works with multiple Pittsburgh Public Schools and their communities to help all children arrive on their first day of kindergarten feeling competent, excited, supported, and ready to learn. A large part of this effort is helping parents and communities understand the importance of kindergarten as a foundational year that can set the tone for a child’s future school success. In fact, regular kindergarten attendance is a predictor of 3rd grade reading levels and by extension of high school completion rates. In addition to the direct work in Pittsburgh, a national expansion project is underway through consultation with several school districts including Buffalo, NY and Youngstown, OH.

Early Head Start (EHS) is a 15-year project that provides intense, individualized, comprehensive services to pregnant women, infants/toddlers (up to age three), and their parents to promote positive child outcomes. EHS serves 310 families throughout much of Allegheny County with offices in Clairton, McKees Rocks, Tidboro/Braddock, and city locations in the Hill District, East Liberty, and the North Side. They provide services in collaboration with four host community-based agencies and several other specialty agencies.

Partnerships for Family Support (PFS) provides professional development and support to the 26 Family Support centers of Allegheny County and the infrastructure of the Family Support system. This includes the Family Support Policy Board and its committees (Executive, Quality Assurance, and Advocacy), the Roundtable, Site Directors Network, and Community Voices. More than 3000 families are enrolled in family support centers, and over 100 staff receive opportunities for professional growth through this program.
The School Age Care (SAC) Project is part of the Keystone STARS quality enhancement programs. Through this program, practitioners caring for school-age children can access professional development advice and hands-on technical assistance. These practitioners are usually seeking to enhance their program quality and improve outcomes for the children in their care. This program delivers and coordinates these services to practitioners in Allegheny, Greene, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.

STARS TA is part of the Keystone STARS quality enhancement programs. Hands-on technical assistance is made available to early care and education practitioners seeking to enhance their program quality and to improve outcomes for the children in their care. This program delivers and coordinates these services to practitioners in Allegheny, Greene, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.

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Laurie Mulvey, Division Director

Early Childhood Partnerships Report

General Purpose
Early Childhood Partnerships (ECP) is a community-based consultation, mentoring, direct service, and applied research collaborative. We work within and among The University of Pittsburgh (Departments of Pediatrics & Psychology-in-Education, Applied Developmental Psychology), and we are affiliated with the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC and The LEND Center at the University of Pittsburgh. We have been collaborating with a diverse array of community partners since 1994.

We are dedicated to working with early childhood professionals and preschoolers. We strive to provide innovative and effective prevention, intervention, and resources, which are delivered on-site and in natural community settings, and backed with an undercurrent of research. We support our professional colleagues to implement “best practices” to help young children and families, particularly those at developmental risk and with delays/disabilities during the early childhood period, from birth to eight years of age.

ECP Core Partnership Programs and Initiatives

Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings (SPECS)
Our Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings (SPECS) Program focuses on young children at developmental risk or with existing developmental delays/disabilities. We
strive to operationalize the authentic measurement strategies and participatory action research methods we use to forge the evidence-base for effective early childhood intervention programs. Our longitudinal research focuses on the complex interrelationships between child, family, program, community, and the several health factors, which can help us predict early school success outcomes. Our team then uses functional indicators to document the impact and success of high-quality early childhood intervention programs to identify areas for improvement, and establish tried and tested methodology.

SPECS has had several partners and partnerships throughout its lifetime. Since 1997, Dr. Bagnato and his ECP program has been funded by the Heinz Endowments and state and federal grants and interagency contracts to conduct longitudinal research on the impact and outcomes of high-quality early childhood intervention programs on nearly 15,000 high-risk children in 30 school districts and regions across Pennsylvania (e.g. Early Childhood Initiative; Pre-K Counts).

HealthyCHILD—School-Linked Developmental Healthcare Partnership

HealthyCHILD is our program for Collaborative Health Interventions for Learners with Differences. It is a school-linked developmental healthcare partnership that provides support through a mobile multidisciplinary team. This team, consisting of nurses, psychologists, physicians, early interventionists and teachers, provides on-site, in-vivo consultation, modeling, mentoring, and support within early childhood intervention classrooms, and settings for teachers and parents. This expertise can also be applied to support preschoolers with medical conditions, challenging or atypical behaviors, and developmental difficulties.

TRACE Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Assessment

TRACE promotes excellence in early childhood assessment. Here, we do research on the evidence-base for early childhood assessment practices applied to early intervention purposes for newborns to children up to the age of five. We focus upon the most effective and efficient methods to detect developmental delays for quicker access to early intervention services. From the research, we synthesize models on clinical judgement, authentic vs. conventional methods, team models, presumptive eligibility, and social-emotional indicators.

Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET)

Our Center On Mentoring for Effective Teaching (COMET) conducts experimental-control group research on the efficacy of the COMET mentoring model. We look at the impact of structured mentoring on improving teachers’ instructional and management practices from one angle, and at the progress of children in acquiring early literacy and social behavioral competencies essential for early school success. We design materials, provide web options and continuing education credit for ongoing mentoring, and the professional development of early childhood professionals in their community settings.
Center to Investigate Violence and Injury in Communities (CIVIC)

Our Center to Investigate Violence and Injury in Communities (CIVIC) conducts research on the effects of violence and injury, and prevention initiatives, on community-level and school-based outcomes in high-risk populations. We analyze and monitor epidemiologic trends with a focus on youth in disadvantaged communities. From there, we seek to develop prevention strategies and bolster policy initiatives.

Early Childhood Research Systems

Early Childhood Research Systems develops authentic assessments for systems and for creating benchmark measures. We design and do field-validation of portable, computerized observational assessment methods of children and contexts. We also develop integrated web-based data systems to implement authentic program evaluation research, which we then use to map the content of diverse observational assessment tools to state (PAELS), national (OSEP), and international (WHO-ICF) functional outcome indicators.

Steve Bagnato, Division Director

Applied Research and Evaluation Report

General Purpose

The Division of Applied Research and Evaluation continues to serve its partners in the areas of program evaluation and applied research. Our interdisciplinary team collaborates with community program providers, academic researchers, policymakers, intermediary organizations, practitioners, funding agencies, and families to produce relevant, useful, evidence-based, and applied work. In most instances, we focus on process and the quality of implementation, and we always emphasize appropriate outcomes so that programs can best understand the true and important impact of their work. When possible, we combine qualitative and quantitative data analysis to best understand complex systems, community needs and resources, service delivery, and service recipients. Our work is strongest when we listen to families, staff, teachers, and others who most closely experience the programs or interventions. We aim to serve children and families by engaging our partners in an iterative cycle of understanding, improving, and evaluating their work.

Current Projects

Our current portfolio of projects includes local program evaluations, development and communication work, international orphanage research, and serving as an independent evaluator for a federally-funded intervention. Our projects include:

- Developing, disseminating, and evaluating video and print materials designed for parents and professionals to improve communication around the importance of developmental screenings and early intervention.
- Evaluating a multi-district initiative to increase student perceptions of personalization in high schools in order to support academic achievement and plans for the future.
• Understanding how parents, teachers, and family-based providers of preschool-age children use technology to teach early literacy skills.
• Assessing the impact of a video-based pregnancy prevention intervention for teenage girls in health and family planning clinics in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia.
• Conducting a needs assessment for United Way of Allegheny County to guide their 2013-2016 Children and Youth action plan.
• Evaluating the academic impact of afterschool participation in several programs in the Hill District of Pittsburgh.

Case Example: Complementary Learning, Youth-Driven Programming in Afterschool

In a project funded by The Heinz Endowments to support complementary learning efforts in the local community, the Division of Applied Research and Evaluation identified youth-driven programming as a key element to quality afterschool programming. Interviews with afterschool providers and observations at local programs revealed an overwhelming affinity for incorporating child and youth voice in afterschool yet a lack of knowledge and skill in how to involve youth voice in programming, including how to support children and youth in taking more ownership in their afterschool experiences.

In response to these findings, the Division hosted a series of three workshops designed to increase afterschool providers’ skills in promoting youth-driven programming at their centers. Experts from Washington State, Temple University, and the Innovation Center came to Pittsburgh to teach local providers concrete skills to promote child and youth voice in afterschool, to listen to that voice, and to make that voice matter in their programs. Fifty providers attended three workshops hosted by the Office of Child Development during the fall of 2011.

Finally, to reinforce the information shared during the workshops, DARE developed resource materials to house on www.afterschoolpgh.org (bit.ly/ydpmaterials).

These materials were created to be useful and concrete, taking into consideration the limited time and capacity that most afterschool providers have to be working on skill development. Illustrative cartoons were included to communicate the many dimensions of youth-driven programming, for example, the informal information sharing that can occur during snack time when adults and children sit and relax together.

Milena Nigam, Division Director
Policy Initiatives Report

General Purpose
Our Policy Initiatives Division focuses on improving outcomes for children and families by informing policy makers of relevant research, best practices, and evaluation results. The goal is to effect change in public policy and professional practices. Partners in these initiatives include families, related organizations, interested professionals, educators, and public officials.

Current Projects
Our Policy Initiatives Division is continuing prior work in policy development, systems reform, public engagement, program improvement, and public/private partnerships.

Policy Initiatives currently works in three areas:

Maternal Depression and Healthy Child Development
In partnership with The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute, Community Care Behavioral Health, Highmark Foundation, Allegheny County Office of Behavioral Health, and many more local care providers, we are working to increase instances of maternal depression identification and improve access to care via a unique collaboration of Early Intervention and Mental Health.

Young Children Experiencing Homelessness
Building on the findings of the Early Childhood Mental Consultation team (ECMC), our Policy Initiatives team has joined with numerous collaborators to identify and address the needs of young children and their families who are homeless. The collaborators are addressing practice and policy issues to maximize the protective factors and provide quality supports to address the many risk factors the children experience.

Campaign for What Works
Policy Initiatives provides the research on effective services for the Campaign for What Works. The Campaign for What Works is an initiative of the United Way of Allegheny County and the Pittsburgh Foundation that supports publicly funded, human and social service programs that work for the consumers.

In each of our projects, we collaborate with primary partners, work to develop intermediaries, form policy collaboratives, conduct work with other OCD divisions, use data to establish best practices, work to develop close relationships with funders, and collect and disseminate information for policy makers. Through these processes, we are constantly evolving, learning and evaluating our efforts to improve and better our society.

Ray Firth, Division Director
Communications Division

As a new division created in early 2012, we began our first year by creating a strategic communications plan for the next 5 years – focusing on making the office’s activities more visible to external stakeholders and promoting more communication among staff members. Our particular emphasis was to incorporate electronic communication and social media into the office’s repertoire.

General Purpose
The Communications Division was created for two primary purposes:

(1) External Communication
We plan, develop and create a broad range of communication materials that inform the office’s external stakeholders about our activities.

(2) Dissemination of Knowledge from Research to Practice
We support projects by planning and creating the communication tools, artifacts and activities they need to transfer knowledge from research to practice.

Illustrative Activities
Some examples of our 2011-2012 projects are listed below. These examples are shown to illustrate just a few projects we have done and do not show the full extent of our activities for the year:

• We develop communication artifacts and activities for service demonstration projects.
• We develop external communication presentations and reports for all divisions.
The following images show communication work we developed for DARE. Reports and Conference Posters are used to communicate our findings and what we do to specific external audiences.

• We develop external communication materials for projects and the office as a whole.
Project Brochures, Annual Reports, Developments (the office’s newsletter) and the website are all means we use to report our activities and projects descriptions to external audiences.

• We enhance internal communication and organizational knowledge management.
This year, we have created an internal social networking website to engage OCD members to exchange ideas and discuss relevant topics online. This site is intended to give everyone an environment to work on moving the organization forward.

We look forward to the creative discussions and new projects that will come from it in the future.

Current Projects
We continue to implement OCD’s existing communication activities, and serve all the projects in OCD to help them develop communication strategies or implement communication tools, artifacts and activities. We are also working on some exciting new initiatives:

a. New initiatives in External Communication
We are extending and enhancing OCD’s external communication as well. For example, we are currently expanding the OCD website with more dynamic content and timely updates and creating electronic mailing lists of external stakeholders for electronic newsletters and just-in-time announcements.

b. New initiatives in Knowledge Dissemination
We have begun to use webinars as a means of disseminating knowledge to targeted audiences online. We are currently developing internal workflows and training materials that will allow many OCD projects to integrate webinars into their repertoires.

Kerry Ishizaki, Division Director
Administrative Operations

**General Purpose**
Administrative Operations is responsible for providing administrative support for all divisions of the Office of Child Development.

**Illustrative Activities**
The Division supports all phases of grant management including budget development, expenditure processing, and budget monitoring. It provides financial information and reports both internally and to funders. Administrative Operations facilitates computer services, facilities management, policy and procedural issues, and telecommunications. Additionally, it coordinates all aspects of human resources, including the writing and revising of job descriptions, the hiring process, orientation of new employees, and benefit information. The division links OCD with other University administrative departments, such as the Office of Research, Payment Processing, Research/Cost Accounting, and Human Resources.

*Roger Fustich, Division Director*
Vision, Mission and Purpose

Vision, Mission and Purpose
All children, youth, and families will develop in safe and supportive environments and achieve their life potentials.

Who We Are
The University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development is a university-community public-private informational resource and management facility that contributes to the welfare of children, youth, families, and communities in greater Pittsburgh, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the nation, and around the world.

Our Constituents
We are an intermediate organization serving those who work to improve the lives of children, families, and communities. These constituents include faculty and administrators of the University, service professionals, and agencies, policy makers, and public and private funders.

Our Mission
Through mutually beneficial partnerships with our constituents, we facilitate and develop new knowledge, services, and policies to improve the lives of children and families. We do this work in five domains:

- Interdisciplinary education and training.
- Interdisciplinary research and scholarship.
- Human service demonstration programs, networking, and strategic planning.
- Program monitoring and evaluation.
- Needs assessments and policy studies.

Specific Purposes

- Creating and maintaining a supportive and facilitative atmosphere for its constituencies so that interdisciplinary and collaborative activities may be conceived, nurtured, implemented, and managed.
- Providing guidance, assistance, and management for the planning, funding, development, implementation, and operation of innovative collaborative systems, projects, and programs in its domains of activities.
- Providing and clearly communicating balanced, non-partisan, research-based information on service needs and program effectiveness to our constituencies.
- Providing information, technical assistance, and interdisciplinary and management services to collaborative projects pertaining to university-community partnerships; collaborative demonstration service and policy projects; strategic planning and systems analysis; program monitoring, evaluation, and needs assessments; interdisciplinary and applied scholarship, education, and training; and other activities that promote the welfare of children, youth, families and the communities in which they live.
- Disseminating research and professional information about children, youth, and families through publications, presentations, the popular media, and having personal contact with those individuals who can use this information, including academics, service professionals, policy makers, parents, and citizens.
- Exemplifying a university-community partnership and exploring, demonstrating, and communicating to other universities and communities how such a venture can be beneficial to all partners.
Principles of Operation

Collaboration and Partnership
We work in collaboration with organizations or members of the community in a partnership manner. We partner with them on mutually beneficial projects funded by external agencies. Our partners share the rights, responsibilities, and credit as we select a topic, plan and implement a project, operate it, and report its results.

We construct interdisciplinary groups to work in and with. We support educational, scholarly, service, evaluation, and policy projects on any topic pertaining to children, youth, and families. We do not focus exclusively on one or two problems, issues, or content themes.

We facilitate, coordinate, and help others meet their goals and objectives. As a result, we do not necessarily play a lead or continuing role in projects. While we do operate numerous projects when collaborators request that we play a continuing role, we also enhance capacity in other organizations and individuals so that they, not OCD, can operate the project. We plan an appropriate role consistent with a project’s mission and principles, regardless of whether the project’s funding comes to OCD or to another organization. We spin off or transfer projects when they no longer need us or do not fit our project criteria.

As long as core funding permits, we do not charge or extract quid pro quo benefits from participating groups or projects. We want to preserve trust and confidence in OCD as a fair and independent manager of collaborations. However, funded projects that ask us to perform a continuing administrative or technical service typically pay us for that service.

Responsiveness and Flexibility
We are responsive and flexible in selecting special projects. Because of our partnership style, new projects are typically selected when a need is recognized, agencies and personnel are available, and funding for the project is possible. We often collaborate with our partners to set project agendas.

We are prepared to operate in a timely, often rapid, manner. We try to maintain the capability and flexibility to meet our partner’s needs.

Neutrality and Openness
Our services and assistance are available to any of our constituencies, and anyone is eligible to be a partner in our collaborative projects.

We do not operate direct services. Since we try not to compete with our constituencies, we do not deliver routine professional or human services. We may coordinate existing services and supervise case-management functions in situations in which it is necessary or desirable to do so.

We promote the welfare of children, youth, and families, but we are not a partisan political advocate. Instead of advocating for specific pieces of legislation or partisan issues, we operate as an independent, credible, unbiased, and balanced source of information and as an administrative manager of service demonstrations, program evaluations, needs assessments, and policy projects on behalf of children, youth, and families.
Project Criteria

We consider the following criteria before taking on a project:

• The project pertains to children, youth, families, or the communities in which they live.
• The project contains an innovative demonstration of new knowledge, techniques, best practices, and state-of-the-art activities intended to create new information about the project, its feasibility, and its effectiveness.
• Some appropriate evaluation will be conducted to assess the project’s process and outcome effectiveness.
• The project has implications for education, research, services, policy, or the welfare of children, youth, and families beyond the specific project itself, and some provision is made to communicate the results of the project.
• The project is a collaboration of stakeholders operating in a partnership mode.

National Advisory Board

The National Advisory Board meets biennially and provides the Provost of the University, OCD’s Local Advisory Board, and OCD’s Co-Directors with a review and evaluation of OCD’s programmatic activities and internal administration. It places OCD in national perspective with respect to the purpose, nature, and relevance of its projects; successes and challenges; prospects for funding; stature relevant to other such units in the country; role in the University and local and national communities; and future directions.

Dr. J. Lawrence Aber, Former Director, National Center for Children in Poverty, Professor of Applied Psychology and Public Policy, NYU/The Steinhardt School of Education, 246 Greene Street, New York, NY 10003.

Aber is a prominent specialist in child development, especially low-income children and families, and social policy.

Dr. Frances Degen Horowitz, President Emerita, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016-4309.

Horowitz is a past president of the Society for Research in Child Development and scientific advisor to the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Michael S. Wald, Jackson Eli Reynolds Professor of Law (Emeritus), Stanford University, Stanford Law School, 559 Nathan Abbott Way, Stanford, California 94305.

Wald has held the position of Senior Advisor to the President on Evaluation, Policy, and Children and Youth, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; Executive Director, Department of Human Services for the City and County of San Francisco; and Deputy General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
The Local Advisory Board is comprised of leaders from OCD’s constituencies of University administrators, community service professionals, private enterprise representatives, funders, and policy makers. The Board meets four times a year to advise OCD on broad programmatic and administrative matters, and OCD works with individual Board members on more specific issues as needed throughout the year.

**Chair**

*Mr. Thomas Michlovic*, Commissioner, PA Securities Commission, Commonwealth of PA, 1010 N. Seventh Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-1410
Phone: 717-783-4389; Fax: 717-783-5125

**University of Pittsburgh**

*Dr. Clifford Brubaker*, Dean, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, 4029 Forbes Tower, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-647-1261; Fax: 412-647-1255

*Dr. N. John Cooper*, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, University of Pittsburgh, 917 Cathedral of Learning, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-624-6090; Fax: 412-624-6089

*Dr. Jean Ferketish*, Assistant Chancellor and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, University of Pittsburgh, PA 15260.
Phone: 412-624-6623; Fax: 412-624-9147

*Dr. Kevin Kearns*, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh, 3E17 Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-648-7621; Fax: 412-648-2605

*Ms. Madelyn A. Ross*, Associate Vice Chancellor, National Media Relations and University Marketing Communications, University of Pittsburgh. Phone: 412-624-4379

**Community and Human Services**

*Ms. Barbara Chait*, 605 Whispering Pines Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15238
Phone: 412-963-1614; Fax: 412-967-9376

*Mr. Marc Cherna*, Director, Allegheny County Department of Human Services, One Smithfield Street, Suite 400, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2225
Phone: 412-350-5705; Fax: 412-350-3414

*Dr. Heather B. Weiss*, Director, Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, 3 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Weiss’s project provides information about the development, implementation, and evaluation of family support and education programs for policy makers, program directors, and evaluation researchers. She is a consultant to numerous organizations dealing with family programs and their evaluation.

**Local Advisory Board**
Mr. Ronald R. Cowell, President, Education, Policy, & Leadership Center, 800 North Third Street, Suite 408, Harrisburg, PA 17102
Phone: 717-260-9900; Fax: 717-260-9903

Mr. James L. DiCostanzo, PNC Bank, 249 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2707
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Dr. Karen W. Feinstein, President, Jewish Healthcare Foundation of Pittsburgh, Centre City Tower, Suite 2330, 650 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Phone: 412-594-2550; Fax: 412-232-6240

Dr. Heidi Feldman, Professor of Pediatrics and Neonatology, Stanford University, 750 Welsh Road, Suite 314, Palo Alto, CA 94304
Phone: 412-594-2555; Fax: 412-394-5464

Mr. Leon Haynes, Executive Director, Hosanna House, 807 Wallace Avenue, Suite 101, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
Phone: 412-243-7711; Fax: 412-243-7733

Mr. Mike Hepler, President and CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of Western PA, 5432 Butler Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15201
Phone: 412-782-5710; Fax: 412-782-5720

The Honorable Timothy F. Murphy, Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives, 504 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228
Phone: 412-344-5583; Fax: 412-429-5092

Mr. Robert Nelkin, President and Chief Professional Officer, United Way of Allegheny County, 1250 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Phone: 412-456-6800; Fax: 412-394-5376

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Phone: 412-338-2615; Fax: 412-281-5788

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Phone: 412-350-6570; Fax 412-350-6499

Mr. Frederick W. Thieman, President, the Buhl Foundation, Centre City Tower, Suite 2300, 650 Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
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Ex-Officio
Dr. Alan M. Lesgold, Dean, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, 5605 Wesley Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
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Dr. Carl N. Johnson, Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, 5941 Wesley Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Phone: 412-624-6942; Fax: 412-624-7231
Collaborative Model

The mission of the Office of Child Development (OCD) is to improve the lives of children and families.

Most of OCD’s projects involve four basic functions:

- **Analyze** information from research and professional practice.
- **Innovate** with service demonstrations and applied research.
- **Learn** and improve through monitoring and evaluation.
- **Change** practice and policy based on knowledge.

Although these functions often occur in this sequence, they can interact and overlap with each other throughout the process of developing, implementing, and evaluating projects.
Collaborators

Service Demonstrations Collaborators

Partnerships for Family Support
Adagio Health
Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Carnegie Science Center
Center for Victims of Violence and Crime–EVE Project
Chatham University
Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC
Family Resources
Focus on Renewal Sto-Rox Neighborhood Corporation
Gateway to the Arts
Hosanna House
Jubilee Association
Kingsley Association
Penn State Cooperative Extension
Phipps Conservatory
Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children
Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse
Primary Care Health Services, Inc.
Providence Connections, Inc.
Rankin Christian Center
Second United Presbyterian Church
South Hills Interfaith Ministries
The Outdoor Classroom
Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh
Women for a Healthy Environment
YMCA of Homewood-Brushton

Early Head Start
Allegheny County Children, Youth and Families
Allegheny County Health Department
Alliance for Infants and Toddlers
Chatham University
Children’s Hospital Dental Program
Community Human Services Corporation
Family Services of Western Pennsylvania
Focus On Renewal Sto-Rox Neighborhood Corporation
Head Start Collaborative (COTRAIC, AI, and Pittsburgh Public Schools)
Mercy Behavioral Health
The Consortium for Public Education
Turtle Creek Valley MH/MR

Ready Freddy
A+ Schools
Buffalo NY Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
City of Pittsburgh Housing Authority
City of Pittsburgh Parks and Recreation
Family Resources of PA
Fred Rogers Company
Hill District Education Council
Homewood Children’s Village
Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children
Pittsburgh Promise
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Reading Is Fundamental - Pittsburgh
United Way of Allegheny County
UPMC
Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh
YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh, Hill District location
Youngstown City Schools
Keystone STARS TA, School Age Care, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services – SAFE START Grief Support
Allegheny County Intermediate Unit
Branagh Information Systems
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Homewood Branch
The Children’s Museum – Sense of Place Learning
Community Play Things
Department of Public Welfare – Bureau of Child Care Certification
Early Head Start
Early Intervention Technical Assistance
Great Lakes Behavioral Research Institute – Safe Start
Head Start
Lakeshore Learning Materials
Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning
Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Pre-K Counts
Shady Lane School
Sojourner House
Southwest Regional Key
United Way of Allegheny County
United Way of Westmoreland County
Westmoreland County School Readiness Group
YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh

Early Child Partnerships (ECP) Collaborators

SPECS
SPECS for the Early Childhood Congress (ECC) – Montgomery County Public Schools and Department of Health and Human Services; (2006-2008)
SPECS for South Side – South Side School District, Beaver County; (2009).
SPECS for Include Me From the Star – ARC of PA, PA DOE; (2009-2012)
SPECS for Barber National Institute – Barber National Institute, Erie, PA; (2010-2012)

HealthyCHILD
Pittsburgh Public Schools Board of Education, Early Intervention Program; (1994-present)
Pittsburgh Public Schools Board of Education, Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten Programs; (2001-present)
Beaver County Head Start and Aliquippa School District; (2004-present)
Northern Panhandle WVA Head Start--; (2005-present)

TRACE
European Union-US Department of Education joint grant for:
Atlantis – A Transatlantic Consortium for International Education In Early Childhood Intervention; Collaboration with University of North Carolina, University of Colorado, University of Pittsburgh, and European universities (Germany, Sweden, Portugal, Finland); (2006-2010)
Federico II University Medical School, Campania Public Health Region, and Down Syndrome Congress, Naples, Italy: (2003-2009)
Early Childhood Intervention Councils, Ministries of Education in Australia and New Zealand; (2009)
Minnesota Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood; (2009-2010)
COMET
Northern Panhandle of West Virginia Head Start
Beaver County Head Start
Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Childhood Education Programs
Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), Keystone Stars, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Departments of Education and Public Welfare
Philadelphia field office of ACF

CIVIC
Allegheny County Injury Surveillance System (ACISS) – Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Allegheny County Health Department, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, West Penn Allegheny Health System; (1994-present)
Large Scale Natural Experiment of Community Economic Development: Effect on Violence Patterns – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, University of Pittsburgh; (2009-2014).
Impact of Housing Relocation Initiatives on Community-Level Violence – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Pittsburgh; (2005-2010)

Early Childhood Research Systems
Kent State University
Paul Brookes Publishers
University of North Carolina

Applied Research and Evaluation Collaborators
Consortium for Public Education
School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh
Carnegie Mellon University Department of Social and Decision Sciences
Fred Rogers Center at St. Vincent College
YouthWorks
Partnerships for Family Support
Allegheny Partners for Out of School Time
Greater Pittsburgh Afterschool Peer Network
Pittsburgh Public Schools
McAuley Ministries
Carnegie Mellon University School of Design
The Boys and Girls Club of Western PA
The Pittsburgh Project
Pittsburgh Cares
Whole Child International

International Collaborators

Russia
Oleg Palmov, St. Petersburg State University
Natalia Nikiforova, Baby Home #13, St. Petersburg
Rifkat Muhamedrahimov, St. Petersburg State University

China
Half the Sky Foundation
Dr. Zeng Fanlin, East China Normal University
Dr. Wang Zhenyao, Beijing Normal University

Nicaragua
Karen Gordon, Whole Child International
Meghan Lopez, Whole Child International Nicaragua In-Country Director
Policy Initiatives Collaborators
Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Homeless Children’s Initiative
Autism Speaks
Bridges
Campaign for What Works
Community Care Behavioral Health
Consumer Health Coalition
Early Childhood Mental Health Advisory Committee
Early Intervention Coalition of Advocates
Education Law Center
Homeless Childrens Education Fund
Maternal and Child Health, Allegheny County Health Department
Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children
RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute
The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers
United Way of Allegheny County


Presentations


Hawthorne, C. (2012, August 21). *Professionalism, basic mental health guidance and resources.* Community College of Beaver County, Beaver County, PA.


Smythe-Leistico, K. J. (2012, June 8). *Pathways to School Success*. Presentation for Youngstown City School District and Community, Youngstown, OH.

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**Workshops and Training**


Lang, P. (2012, April-May). *Communication with School Age Parents to Improve Program Quality*. Four part training series for school age providers, Greensburg, PA.


Lehnhardt, P. (2011, October 24). *Child Observation Level 2*. Training presented to staff of Keystone STARS Southwest Regional Key child care centers and sponsored by PAEYC, Latrobe, PA.


Grants

New Grants Awarded


Firth, R. “Bridging the Early Childhood and Homeless Systems to Reach Young Children at Risk,” Howard Heinz Endowments, (January 2012 – December 2013), $300,000.


Continuing Grants in Force

Bagnato, S. “Include Me From the Start,” Arc of Pennsylvania, (October 2010 – September 2012), $60,000.


Li, J. “CPE Design Planning and Evaluation,” CPE, (May 2011 – April 2012), $50,000.
Mulvey, L. “School Age Care,” YWCA of Pittsburgh, (July 2011 – June 2012), $75,800.
## Grant History Summary

All amounts are in US Dollars.

<table>
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</tbody>
</table>
Office of Child Development Staff

Co-Directors
Christina J. Groark
Robert B. McCall

Associate Director
Carl N. Johnson

Assistant Director
Kenneth Smythe-Leistico

Division Directors
Stephen J. Bagnato Early Childhood Partnerships
Ray Firth Policy Initiatives
Roger Fustich Administrative Operations
Kerry Ishizaki Communications
Laurie Mulvey Service Demonstrations
Milena Nigam Applied Research and Evaluation

Project Directors
Sheila Beasley Family Support Outreach
Bernadette Bennermon STARS TA
Joyce D’Antonio Associate Director of ECP
Doris Dick Assistant Director, Administrative Operations
Joan Eichner Children’s Policy Director
Sharon Geibel Early Childhood Mental Health
Sharon Harper Partnerships for Family Support, Training and Technical Assistant
Chris Dunkerley Early Head Start

Graduate Students and Interns
Laura Arabeck
Brandi Hawk
Paul Hooper
Megan Julian
Sumeyye Esra Koten-Guclu
Madison Kraus
Maggie Leathers
Madeline MacMurdo
Krista McManus
Emily Merz
Julie Messick
Kevin Minehan
Johana Rosas
Tarin Santamaria
Jai Wha Seo
Ashley Stuck
Robin Sweitzer
Annie Wang
Brooke Watterson
Scotty Wright-Ahsam
Laura Townsend Family Support Policy Director
Lucas Musewe Family Support Database
Janell Smith-Jones System of Care Evaluation
Ken Smythe-Leistico Ready Freddy

Staff
Suzanne Ashman
Ann Bisceglia
Chris Chavlick
Ernie Dettore
Maura Falchetti
Larry Fish
Stacy Flowers
Barbara French
Amy Gee
Sharon Harper
Annette Harris
Jennifer Harris Tepe
Gordon Hodnett
Candace Hawthorne
Mariam Hobeldin
Reem Hobeldin
Cheryl Huggins
Medina Jackson
Regina Jones
Pamela Lang
Jessica Langan
Tracy Larson
Pat Lehnhardt
Junlei Li
Margaret Matesa
Stephanie McCarthy
Eileen McKeating-Esterle
Miriam Messick
Kaitlin Moore
Kalani Palmer
Audra Redick
Gloria Rodriguez-Ransom
Andrea Rudek
Jennifer Salaway
Donna Sarneso
Maria Stangrecki
Gina Tagliaferri
Emie Tittnich
Margaret Toliver-Washington
Carol Whitacre
Iris Winter
Amanda Wright
Colleen Young