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Early Childhood

1. **State-based Home Visiting: Strengthening Programs Through State Leadership** “Home visiting for families with young children is a longstanding strategy offering information, guidance, risk assessment, and parenting support interventions at home.” This report from the National Center for Children in Poverty “describes the results of...[a] survey and a roundtable discussion, each designed to increase knowledge about state-based home visiting programs. Read the report at: http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_862.html
2. **Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study--Birth Cohort** This study from Child Trends finds “disparities between poor, at-risk children and more advantaged children as early as 9 months of age... Low income and low maternal education...[are] the factors most strongly associated with poorer cognitive, social-emotional, and health outcomes among very young children... The more risk factors a child has, the more profound the disparities.” Read the executive summary at: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_07_10_ES_DisparitiesEL.pdf or the full report at: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_07_10_FR_DisparitiesEL.pdf
3. **Developmental and Economic Effects of Parenting Programs for Expectant Parents and Parents of Preschool-Age Children** “If we made sufficient investments in effective parenting education programs, what might be the economic benefits to society? This paper seeks to answer this question by: (1) identifying one or more parenting education programs that have demonstrated their effectiveness in improving parenting and/or child outcomes; and (2) extrapolating these findings to quantify the economic benefits to society from a broad investment in such programs.” Find this study from the Partnership for America’s Economic Success at <http://www.partnershipforsuccess.org/index.php?id=01>
4. **2009 Kids Count Data Book** The “20th annual KIDS COUNT Data Book provides national and state-by-state information and statistical trends on the conditions of America’s children and families. The 2009 Data Book essay calls for improvements to the nation’s ability to design and evaluate programs aimed at the needs of children and families living in poverty.” Find the Kids Count data brief at: <http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid=%7b15470866-F721-45D3-BFC6-723BC0A9AD47%7d> or the full data book at <http://www.aecf.org/KnowledgeCenter/Publications.aspx?pubguid=%7bB6A6BA6E-086D-4B48-990A-10549E23B6B9%7d>
5. **Children in Poverty: Trends, Consequences, and Policy Options** “This Research Brief draws on Census data for 2007 to present a statistical portrait of children in poverty in the United States... The brief highlights research on the consequences of poverty for children and suggests program and policy approaches that hold promise for decreasing poverty among low-income children and their families.” Read the brief from Child Trends at: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_04_07_RB_ChildreninPoverty.pdf

Early Education

6. **Report Calls For New Initiative To Improve Math Education For Preschoolers** A new report from the National Research Council says that “to ensure that all children enter elementary school with the foundation they need for success, a major national initiative is needed to improve early childhood mathematics education... Opportunities for preschoolers to learn mathematics are currently inadequate, particularly for those in low-income groups...” Preschool curriculum should include activities related to the concepts of “number” and geometry. Read a summary of the report at Science News: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/07/090702112840.htm>
7. **Relationships Improve Student Success** “When students are underachieving, school policymakers often examine class size, curriculum and funding, but University of Missouri

researchers suggest establishing relationships may be a powerful and less expensive way to improve students' success. In a review of the research they show that students with positive attachments to their teachers and schools have higher grades and higher standardized test scores." Read more at: <http://www.physorg.com/news165505877.html>

8. **All-Day Kindergarten Offers More Time for Comprehension** The Kansas State Department of Education analyzed the benefits of full-day kindergarten and found that it "allows time for in-depth exploration of experiences." The report also found that the full-day class "provides teaching and learning continuity, decreases time spent in transitions, and provides more time for one-to-one interaction and child initiated activity." Read more at the Morning Sun: <http://www.morningsun.net/news/x1528792901/All-day-kindergarten-offers-more-time-for-comprehension>

Early Learning

9. **Preschool Curriculum: What's in it for Students and Teachers?** This research summary from the Albert Shanker Institute addresses key areas of preschool curriculum: oral language, pre-literacy, mathematics, and science. Each section "indicates appropriate accomplishments for pre-K children; effective instructional practices; key components of a strong curriculum; suggestions for working with English language learners; and additional resources..." Find the publication at: <http://www.ashankerinst.org/Downloads/Early%20Childhood%2012-11-08.pdf>
10. **Small Kids, Big Words** "A growing body of research and classroom practice show that building a sophisticated vocabulary at an early age is also key to raising reading success—and narrowing the achievement gap." This article from the Harvard Education Letter discusses research-based strategies for building vocabulary from pre-K to Grade 3. It includes guidelines for choosing words to teach, a framework for teaching them, and how to help children grasp the meanings of words. Find it at: <http://www.hepg.org/hel/article/192>
11. **Teaching by Listening: The Importance of Adult-Child Conversations to Language Development** This study in the July 2009 issue of Pediatrics finds that "television exposure is not independently associated with child language development when adult-child conversations are controlled. Adult-child conversations are robustly associated with healthy language development. Parents should be encouraged not merely to provide language input to their children through reading or storytelling, but also to engage their children in two-sided conversations." Read a summary of the study at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/124/1/342>
12. **Differences in Early Gesture Explain SES Disparities in Child Vocabulary Size at School Entry** This study published in Science Magazine found that "pre-verbal communication through gestures can improve a child's vocabulary." The use of gestures can therefore explain differences in vocabulary size of children entering kindergarten. A link to the abstract can be found at: http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/search?src=hw&site_area=sci&fulltext=gestures+vocabulary&search_submit.x=21&search_submit.y=6

Health

13. **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Commission to Build a Healthier America** This Commission notes that "Brain, cognitive and behavioral development early in life are strongly linked to health later in life including risk factors for cardiovascular disease and stroke, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, smoking, drug use and depression." Their recommendation for building a healthier America starting in early childhood is to "ensure that **all** children have high-quality early developmental support (child care, education and other services)." Read more and watch the webinar on this topic at: <http://www.commissiononhealth.org/EarlyChildhood.aspx>
14. **Rise in Early Childhood Obesity Leveling Off?** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that one in seven low-income preschool children is obese. Native American children have the highest rate at 21.2%. However, the childhood obesity epidemic may

be leveling off, since rates have not changed significantly since 2003. Read more at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5828a1.htm>

15. **Stealth Health for Kids** “Forget banning junk. Try ‘X-ray vision carrots’” instead. This article from Newsweek interviews experts and reviews studies that show what works and what doesn’t when it comes to getting kids to eat more healthfully. Find the article at:
<http://www.newsweek.com/id/191430>
16. **The Family Dinner Table: Implications for Children’s Health and Well-being** This brief from the Society for Research in Child Development summarizes the research about the benefits of family dinners and makes policy recommendations. “Sharing a meal regularly... can boost children’s health and well-being, reducing the likelihood that they’ll become obese or use drugs and increase the odds that they’ll do well in school.” Find a link to the brief at:
http://www.srcd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=229&Itemid=381

Media

17. **Language Use Decreases in Young Children and Caregivers When Television is On**
A recent study, published in the [Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine](#), found that when televisions are on in households with young children, the children and their caregivers talked less often, used fewer words, and had fewer back-and-forth conversations. Read more about the study from the Seattle Children’s Research Institute and the University of Washington at:
http://www.seattlechildrens.org/home/about_childrens/press_releases/2009/06/004760.asp.
18. **Sexualizing Childhood** This is one in a series of fact sheets about marketing to children that is produced by the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. Find it at:
<http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/factsheets/sexualizing.pdf>.
19. **Generation Diva** This article from Newsweek examines how societal beauty standards are getting ever harder to achieve and how an obsession with beauty is starting earlier (as early as two years old!) Read the article at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/191247>

Social-Emotional and Mental Health

20. **Autism Science Foundation** “We still don’t know what causes autism, but we have learned what doesn’t cause it. Numerous studies have failed to show a link between autism and vaccines.” This website has links to all the “studies examining the three main vaccine/autism hypotheses: ‘Too Many Too Soon’, ‘Thimerosal’, and ‘MMR’” Find the website at:
<http://www.autismsciencefoundation.org/autismandvaccines.html>
21. **Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood: What Every Policy Maker Should Know** This brief reports on: the incidence of social-emotional problems and mental health disorders in early childhood; family, environmental and race/ethnicity risk factors; policies and practices that fail to incorporate evidence from research about effective strategies; the adverse impact on young children from unmet needs; and recommendations for policymakers. Read the brief from the National Center for Children in Poverty at:
http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_882.html

Family Strengthening/Child Abuse and Neglect

22. **Depression in Parents, Parenting, and Children: Opportunities to Improve Identification, Treatment, and Prevention** “Depression can interfere with parenting practices and, more broadly, can affect mothers’ and fathers’ caregiving, material support, and nurturance. The results can have negative effects on their children’s physical, psychological, behavioral, and social development.” Read a brief of this report at:
http://www.bocvf.org/parental_depression_brief.pdf
23. **Protecting Children in Families Affected by Substance Use Disorders** This manual from the HHS Children’s Bureau examines such topics as: the nature of substance use disorders, the

impact of parental substance abuse disorders on children, examination, screening, assessment, and treatment for substance abuse disorders, and the role of child protective services caseworkers. Find it at: <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/substanceuse/>

24. **Parent Training Programs: Insight for Practitioners** This meta-analysis of parent training programs looked at components of the programs, such as content and delivery methods, that affected two outcomes: 1) acquisition of parenting skills and behaviors... and 2) decreases in children's externalizing behavior (such as aggressive behavior). Better parent outcomes were associated with three components: "teaching parents emotional communication skills..., teaching parents positive parent-child interactions..., [and] requiring parents to practice with their child during program sessions...." Better child externalizing outcomes were related to: "teaching parents the correct use of timeout..., teaching parents to respond consistently to their child..., teaching parents to interact positively with their child..., [and] requiring parents to practice with their child during program sessions." Read more at: http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/Parent_Training_Brief-a.pdf

Advocacy and Policy

25. **Early Learning Challenge Fund** A key piece of President's Obama's education agenda is supporting comprehensive and effective early learning programs for children from birth to age 5. California Congressman George Miller has introduced a bill in the House that would provide \$1 billion a year for 10 years to help states develop systems for improving the quality of early learning settings for children from birth to 5. Read about it at: <http://edlabor.house.gov/documents/111/pdf/publications/SAFRA-EarlyLearning.pdf>.
26. **Making Children a Greater National Priority in the Federal Budget** "Over the past five years, children have lost significant ground in the federal budget. Their share of the federal non-defense budget declined from 11% in 2004 to 10% in 2008." ChildrensBudget.org is an "interactive website giving you the tools to explore how the federal government invests taxpayer resources in our children." You can customize charts to compare funding levels over time in various categories at: <http://www.childrensbudget.org/>
27. **School and the Stimulus: Follow the Stimulus Money** This constantly updated and interactive map from Education Week shows how much education-related stimulus money has been budgeted, obligated and received by each state. States' approved applications are also available. Find the map at: http://www.edweek.org/ew/section/infographics/follow_stimulus.html
28. **Baby Matters: A Gateway to State Policies and Initiatives** Zero to Three offers a searchable database with information on state policies and initiatives that impact infants, toddlers and their families. Find it at: <http://policy.db.zerotothree.org/policyp/home.aspx>

This publication was produced in part by funds from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Parental Information & Resource Center Program, under grant #84.310A. The content herein does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, any other agency of the U.S. Government, or any other source.

This publication is also funded in part under a contract with the Montana Children's Trust Fund Board. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the MT CTF Board.