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Early Childhood

1. **Changes in Childhood Culture** Nancy Carlsson-Paige, author of [Taking Back Childhood](#), discusses how much early childhood culture has recently changed. The effects on children of today's societal trends, such as "screen time, commercialism, sped-up daily life, violence and sexualization, and academic pressures," are explored in this article from Child Care Exchange: <http://www.childcareexchange.com/eed/issue.php?id=1981>

2. **New Census Data Shows Increase in Child Poverty Rate** The child poverty rate increased one percentage point between 2006 and 2007, the highest rate since 1998. More than a third of black children and over a quarter of Latino children were poor, compared with 10% of non-Hispanic white children. Household incomes increased for the third year in a row, but the overall poverty rate remained the same. Read the full report at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty07.html>, or a summary from the Population Reference Bureau at: <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2008/uschildpovertyrates.aspx>
3. **Reducing Poverty Through Preschool Interventions** This proposal for “an intensive two-year, education-focused intervention for economically disadvantaged three- and four-year-olds” could “reduce the future poverty rates of participants by between 5 percent and 15 percent.” Read the article at http://www.futureofchildren.org/information2826/information_show.htm?doc_id=522136

Early Education

4. **Early Childhood Connection with K-12** This community discussion sponsored by EdWeek explores connections between early childhood education and K-12, and funding for Pre-K programs (but it does digress!) You may have to register to read it at: <http://www.edweek.org/forums/?plickForumPage=ForumDiscussion&plickDiscussionId=Cat%3a047dba43-3f1d-45c3-831f-9125f292c0a4Forum%3a290317fa-2082-4211-8848-7f0b93aa1122Discussion%3af9ff2b62-96b2-457f-93fd-1bfede8dc125&plickCategoryCurrentPage=0>
5. **Credentials for the Infant/Toddler Child Care Workforce** This report from Zero to Three highlights states, including Montana, who have developed or are in the process of developing an infant/toddler credential for child care workers. http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/ITC_TA_Tool.pdf?docID=4245
6. **Recommended Transition Practices for Young Children** This report from the National Early Childhood Transition Center highlights 21 validated transition practices for early childhood. Read the full report at http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc/Documents/technicalreport/Validation_Survey_Final.pdf or a summary at <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc/documents/TRANSITIONALERTS/Validation%20Survey%20TA4.pdf>
7. **National School Readiness Report** This federal report presents data on the school readiness of children as reported by their parents. Information reported by the parents includes: children’s developmental progress and problems, participation in preschool or other early care, beliefs about what is needed to prepare children for school, family activities with children, and television viewing habits. Read the report at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008051.pdf>

Early Learning

8. **Talking to Children: Why Some Mothers Do It More** It has been well documented that talking with children helps them develop language skills. Other studies have shown that less educated parents talk less frequently with their children and use fewer words and simpler language. However, this study from the University of North Carolina found that mothers who had information about child development were more likely to talk frequently and in more complex ways with their children. It also found that the child’s temperament is important: mothers of children who were “more distressed” talked with their children less often and used simpler language. Read a summary of the article at: <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/snap53.pdf>
9. **Are Boys and Girls Brains Wired to Learn Differently?** Great Schools provides a short summary of the research at: <http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/3613?cpn=20080910ld>
10. **Teachers Interactions with Children Critical Ingredient for Effective Pre-K** This study from the University of Virginia found that supportive instructional and emotional interactions with preschool teachers provides the greatest benefit to children. Read a summary of the study at: <http://www.virginia.edu/uvatoday/newsRelease.php?id=5217>

Health

11. **Phthalates in Toys** Some soft plastic toys contain phthalates, which may cause hormonal changes in children. The Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act recently passed by Congress bans phthalates in children's toys. A Newsweek article about phthalates and toy safety issues can be read at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/150342/>
12. **135,000 Kindergartners Unvaccinated** Concerns about deadly diseases grow as the number of children exempt from vaccination requirements at schools increases. Read more at: <http://www.venturacountystar.com/news/2008/sep/07/special-report-growing-number-of-parents-refuse/>
13. **Public Needs to Know Vaccines are Safe** Recent measles outbreaks prompt medical groups to call for restored public confidence in vaccine safety. Read more at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/18/AR2008091802314.html>
14. **Vaccine Preservative Thimerosal Found Harmless** Thimerosal, which contains mercury and was used as a preservative in vaccines, was almost entirely removed from vaccines by 2002. This study of children ages 7-10 indicated that thimerosal is not linked with neurological and some psychological problems in children. Read more at: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/27/health/27vaccine.html?_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

Media

15. **PBS Hosts Literacy Shows** PBS has a whole line-up of literacy shows to teach low-income children various pre-reading skills, such as phonological awareness. However, the kids don't find the shows as much fun to watch as, for example, Blue's Clues and Curious George. "Super WHY" is the only literacy show rated in the top ten. Read more from NPR at: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93835717>
16. **Children's Media Use and Sleep Problems** The Kaiser Family Foundation has reviewed existing studies on the quality and quantity of children's sleep time and how media may affect it, and posed further unanswered questions. Read the brief at: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/7674.cfm>
17. **Marketing Food to Children** A new report from the Federal Trade Commission (<http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2008/07/foodmktng.shtm>) outlines the ways in which the food industry markets food to children and how self-regulation by the industry is progressing. The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood has a different "take" on the topic at <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/pressreleases/ftc-foodreport.htm>

Mental Health

18. **Autism in Girls Underdiagnosed** Autism is believed to be four times more prevalent in boys than girls but recent news indicates that autism in girls is underdiagnosed. Read more from ABC <http://www.abcnews.go.com/Nightline/story?id=4177353&page=1> and BBC <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7616555.stm>
19. **Flu during Pregnancy Linked with Schizophrenia, Autism** A bout of the flu during the second trimester of pregnancy raises the risk of the child developing schizophrenia. The culprit is not the infection itself but rather the body's response to the infection. Read about the research at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/10/071016090135.htm>

Family Strengthening/Child Abuse and Neglect

20. **Parenting Styles Linked to Bullying** This review of the research found that "parents who are demanding, directive, and unresponsive" are more likely to have children that bully than nurturing parents do. Read more at: <http://www.uc.edu/news/NR.asp?id=8699>

- 21. Violence's Greatest Impact on Children** "Research shows that the earlier a child is exposed to violence, the greater the impact that violence will have on their development," according to this study reported in the Regina (Canada) Leader-Post. Read the article at: <http://www.canada.com/reginaleaderpost/news/story.html?id=0c9239dc-c2a3-4c78-a458-06a84471c912>
- 22. What Works in Fatherhood Programs?** This brief from the National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse "identifies ten common features of 'model' fatherhood programs." Read it at: <http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/NRFC%20Promising%20Practices%20Brief%20%231.pdf>

Advocacy and Policy

- 23. The Measure of America Quiz** What do you know about the "factors that shape the quality of life for average Americans?" Find out at: <http://www.ssrc.org/ahdr-quiz/>
- 24. "Homeland Insecurity"** has been updated with state, national and international comparisons. Find it at <http://www.everychildmatters.org/National/Resources/Homeland-Insecurity-Report.html>. Every Child Matters is calling for investing \$500 billion in kids over the next ten years to improve child well-being in all states.