

# Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

A partnership between the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, and the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research at the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, supported by a grant from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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## Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Bibliography

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This bibliography lists resources in the *Research Connections* collection related to the Head Start Impact Study and is intended as a reference tool for researchers and policymakers. It is divided into sections for data sets; official reports; studies using HSIS data; summaries, analyses, and commentaries; and instruments. Within each section resources are listed alphabetically by author and then by year and title.

## DATA SETS

- **United States. Department of Health and Human Services, & United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2010). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2002-2006. United States Department of Health and Human Services. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2002-2006 [United States] [Computer file]. ICPSR29462-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor].**

*The Head Start Impact Study is a national, longitudinal study that involves approximately 5,000 three and four year old preschool children across 84 nationally representative grantee/delegate agencies aimed at determining how Head Start affects the school readiness of children participating in the program as compared to children not enrolled in Head Start and under which conditions Head Start works best and for which children.*

- **United States. Department of Health and Human Services, & United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2014). Third Grade Follow-up to the Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2007-2008. Puma, Michael, Stephen Bell, Ronna Cook, and Camilla Heid. Third Grade Follow-up to the Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2007-2008, United States. ICPSR35003-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research[distributor], 2014-03-20. doi:10.3886/ICPSR35003.v1.**

*The Head Start Impact Study is a national, longitudinal study that involves approximately 5,000 three and four year old preschool children across 84 nationally representative grantee/delegate agencies aimed at determining how Head Start affects the school readiness of children participating in the program as compared to children not enrolled in Head Start and under which conditions Head Start works best and for which children. Third Grade Follow-up data was collected through parent interviews and child assessments in the spring of 2007 and spring of 2008. Data collection included child assessments, parent interviews, teacher surveys, and teacher-child ratings (similar to the original HSIS study). In addition, school principal survey data was collected. Outcome measures were developed in four domains: child cognitive development, child social-emotional development, health, and parenting practices.*

## OFFICIAL REPORTS

- **Peck, L., & Bell, S. (2014). The role of program quality in determining Head Start's impact on child development (OPRE Report 2014-10). Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.**

*The Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) has shown that having access to Head Start improves children's pre-school experiences and school readiness in certain areas, though few of those advantages persisting through third grade (Puma et al., 2012). Scholars and practitioners alike have wondered whether impacts might be larger or more persistent for children who participate in high quality Head Start as opposed to lower quality Head Start. In response, this report examines the vital policy question: To what extent does variation in the quality of children's Head Start experiences affect children's development? The HSIS experimental evaluation, which involved a nationally representative sample and included rich data at baseline, about programs and across several years of follow-up, provides an ideal source for analyzing the answer to this question. Further informed by experts in the field, this report uses measures of quality based on the ECERS, Arnett, and teacher reports to capture three distinct dimensions of the Head Start setting: (1) "resources," which are the physical characteristics available in the program; (2) the "interactions" between teacher and child; and (3) children's "exposure" to academic activities in the classroom. (author abstract)*

- **Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., & Heid, C. (2010). Head Start Impact Study final report. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.**

*This study measures the effects of Head Start enrollment on multiple school readiness outcomes of a nationally-representative sample of nearly 5,000 low-income children. This randomized and controlled trial compares the cognitive and social-emotional development, as well as select academic, literacy, health, and behavior-related outcomes of groups of children either attending Head Start or not attending Head Start. Follow-up data was collected at either kindergarten or 1st grade from of cohorts of children who experienced a year of Head Start either at either age 3 or age 4. Analysis revealed that access to Head Start has benefits for both cohorts in the cognitive, health, and behavioral areas. Social-emotional benefits occurred for 3-year-olds only. Overall, however, the benefits of access to Head Start at age four tend to fade by first grade except in select sub-groups of children.*

- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., & Heid, C. (2010). **Head Start Impact Study final report [Executive summary]**. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*The Head Start Impact Study was conducted with a nationally representative sample of 84 grantee/ delegate agencies and included nearly 5,000 newly entering, eligible 3- and 4-year-old children who were randomly assigned to either: (1) a Head Start group that had access to Head Start program services or (2) a control group that did not have access to Head Start, but could enroll in other early childhood programs or non-Head Start services selected by their parents. Data collection began in fall 2002 and continued through 2006, following children from program application through the spring of their 1st grade year. The study was designed to separately examine two cohorts of children, newly entering 3- and 4-year-olds. This design reflects the hypothesis that different program impacts may be associated with different age of entry into Head Start. (author abstract)*
- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., & Heid, C. (2010). **Head Start Impact Study technical report**. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*This Technical Report is designed to provide technical detail to support the analysis and findings presented in the Head Start Impact Study Final Report (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, January 2010). Chapter 1 provides an overview of the Head Start Impact Study and its findings. Chapter 2 provides technical information on the analytical sampling weights used in the analysis. A description of the outcome measures and their psychometric properties is provided in Chapter 3 and the description of the data collection procedures is provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 provides a description of the impact analysis methods including ITT (intent-to-treat) impact estimates, IOT (impact on the treated) impact estimates, and subgroup impact estimates. (author abstract)*
- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., Heid, C., Broene, P., Jenkins, F., Mashburn, A. J., & Downer, J. T. (2012). **Third Grade Follow-Up to the Head Start Impact Study: Final report [Executive summary]** (OPRE Report 2012-45). Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*grade very few impacts were found in either cohort in the areas of cognitive development, social-emotional development, health, or behavior.*
- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., Heid, C., Broene, P., Jenkins, F., Mashburn, A. J., & Downer, J. T. (2012). **Third Grade Follow-Up to the Head Start Impact Study: Final report [Executive summary]** (OPRE Report 2012-45b). Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*Head Start has the ambitious mandate of improving educational and developmental outcomes for children from economically disadvantaged families. Head Start's mandate requires that it meet the needs of the whole child, including the cognitive, social-emotional, and health needs of children, and positively influence the parenting practices of their parents. This study examines the impacts of Head Start on these four domains and whether earlier impacts were sustained into 3rd grade. (author abstract)*
- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., Heid, C., & Lopez, M. (2005). **Head Start Impact Study: First year findings**. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*The Congressionally-mandated Head Start Impact Study is being conducted across 84 nationally representative grantee/ delegate agencies. Approximately 5,000 newly entering 3- and 4-year-old children applying for Head Start were randomly assigned to either a Head Start group that had access to Head Start program services or to a non-Head Start group that could enroll in available community non-Head Start services, selected by their parents. Data collection began in fall 2002 and is scheduled to continue through 2006, following children through the spring of their 1st-grade year. The study quantifies the impact of Head Start separately for 3- and 4-year-old children across child cognitive, social-emotional, and health domains as well as on parenting practices. For children in the 3-year-old group, the preliminary results from the first year of data collection demonstrate small to moderate positive effects favoring the children enrolled in Head Start for some outcomes in each domain. Fewer positive impacts were found for children in the 4-year-old group. (author abstract)*
- Puma, M., Bell, S., Cook, R., Heid, C., & Lopez, M. (2005). **Head Start Impact Study: First year findings: Executive summary**. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.

*This report presents initial findings from the Congressionally mandated Head Start Impact Study. Three required reports to Congress have already been submitted. This report, while not mandated, presents preliminary findings on impacts after one year in Head Start (fall 2002 to spring 2003). A final report*

will present results of analyses following children through the end of first grade. (author abstract)

- Puma, M., Bell, S., Shapiro, G., Broene, P., Cook, R., Friedman, J., & Heid, C. (2001). *Building futures: The Head Start impact study: Research design plan*. Washington, DC: Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.  
*This report provides an overview of the research design and methodology used in the Head Start Impact Study. It outlines the planned steps for sample selection, field testing, site recruitment, and the random assignment of children. Data collection strategies, measures, and analysis plans are also presented.*
- United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2002). *National Head Start impact research: Report to Congress*. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.  
*The current Report to the Congress is being submitted to fulfill the requirements of a second mandated interim report to “describe the status of the research and preliminary findings of the research, as appropriate.” Thus, this current report will describe the background and purposes of the study, the progress made to date in implementing the study, the current activities being undertaken to conduct a field test and prepare for the full study, and the projected timeline for completing all phases of the study. (author abstract)*
- United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2003). *Building futures: The Head Start Impact Study: Interim report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.  
*This interim report provides an overview of the Head Start Impact Study and an update of the study’s progress through the spring of 2003. It discusses the research design of the study, as well as data collection procedures, measures, and data sources. Preliminary findings from an analysis of data collected in 2002 are presented.*
- United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2003). *Building futures: The Head Start Impact Study: Interim report [Executive summary]*. Washington, DC: U.S. Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation.  
*This interim report provides an overview of the Head Start Impact Study and an update of the study’s progress through the spring of 2003. It discusses the research design of the study, as well as data collection procedures, measures, and data sources. Preliminary findings from an analysis of data collected in 2002 are presented.*

## STUDIES USING HSIS DATA

- Bitler, M., Hoynes, H., & Domina, T. (2014). *Experimental evidence on distributional effects of Head Start* (NBER Working Paper No. 20434). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.  
*This study provides the first comprehensive analysis of the distributional effects of Head Start, using the first national randomized experiment of the Head Start program (the Head Start Impact Study). We examine program effects on cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes and explore the heterogeneous effects of the program through 1st grade by estimating quantile treatment effects under endogeneity (IV-QTE) as well as various types of subgroup mean treatment effects and two-stage least squares treatment effects. We find that (the experimentally manipulated) Head Start attendance leads to large and statistically significant gains in cognitive achievement during the pre-school period and that the gains are largest at the bottom of the distribution. Once the children enter elementary school, the cognitive gains fade out for the full population, but importantly, cognitive gains persist through 1st grade for some Spanish speakers. These results provide strong evidence in favor of a compensatory model of the educational process. Additionally, our findings of large effects at the bottom are consistent with an interpretation that the relatively large gains in the well-studied Perry Preschool Program are in part due to the low baseline skills in the Perry study population. We find no evidence that the counterfactual care setting plays a large role in explaining the differences between the HSIS and Perry findings. (author abstract)*
- Cooper, B., & Lanza, S. T. (2014). *Who benefits most from Head Start?: Using latent class moderation to examine differential treatment effects. Child Development. Advance online publication.* Head Start (HS) is the largest federally funded pre-school program for disadvantaged children. Research has shown relatively small impacts on cognitive and social skills; therefore, some have questioned its effectiveness. Using data from the Head Start Impact Study (3-year-old cohort; N = 2,449), latent class analysis was used to (a) identify subgroups of children defined by baseline characteristics of their home environment and caregiver and (b) test whether the effects of HS on cognitive, and behavioral and relationship skills over 2 years differed across subgroups. The results suggest that the effectiveness of HS varies quite substantially. For some children there appears to be a significant, and in some cases, long-term, positive impact. For others there is little to no effect. (author abstract)

- **Gelber, A. M., & Isen, A. (2013). Children's schooling and parents' behavior: Evidence from the Head Start Impact Study. *Journal of Public Economics*, 101, 25-38.**

*Parents may have important effects on their children, but little work in economics explores whether children's schooling opportunities crowd out or encourage parents' investment in children. We analyze data from the Head Start Impact Study, which granted randomly chosen preschool-aged children the opportunity to attend Head Start. We find that Head Start causes a substantial increase in parents' involvement with their children – such as time spent reading to children, math activities, or days spent with children by fathers who do not live with their children – both during and after the period when their children are potentially enrolled in Head Start. (author abstract)*

- **Gelber, A. M., & Isen, A. (2011). Children's schooling and parents' investment in children: Evidence from the Head Start Impact Study (NBER Working Paper Series No. 17704). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.**

*Parents may have important effects on their children, but little work in economics explores whether children's schooling opportunities crowd out or encourage parents' investment in children. We analyze data from the Head Start Impact Study, which granted randomly-chosen preschool-aged children the opportunity to attend Head Start. We find that Head Start causes a substantial increase in parents' involvement with their children – such as time spent reading to children, math activities, or days spent with children by fathers who do not live with their children – both during and after the period when their children are potentially enrolled in Head Start. We discuss a variety of mechanisms that are consistent with our findings, including a simple model we present in which Head Start impacts parent involvement in part because parents perceive their involvement to be complementary with child schooling in the production of child qualities. (author abstract)*

- **Greenfader, C., & Miller, E. B. (2014). The role of access to Head Start and quality ratings for Spanish-speaking Dual Language Learners' (DLLs) participation in early childhood education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 29(3), 378-388.**

*Data from the Head Start Impact Study (N = 4442) were used to test for differences between Spanish-speaking Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and monolingual English-speaking children in: (1) Head Start attendance rates when randomly assigned admission; and (2) quality ratings of other early childhood education (ECE) programs attended when not randomly assigned admission to Head Start. Logistic regressions showed that Spanish-speaking DLL children randomly assigned a spot in Head Start were more likely than monolingual-English learners to attend. Further,*

*Spanish-speaking DLLs not randomly assigned a spot in Head Start were more likely to attend higher-quality ECE centers than non-DLL children. Policy implications are discussed, suggesting that, if given access, Spanish-speaking DLL families will take advantage of quality ECE programs. (author abstract)*

- **Lipscomb, S., Pratt, M. E., Schmitt, S. A., Pears, K., & Kim, H. K. (2013). School readiness in children living in non-parental care: Impacts of Head Start. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 34(1), 28-37.**

*The current study examines the effects of Head Start on the development of school readiness outcomes for children living in non-parental care. Data were obtained from the Head Start Impact Study, a randomized controlled trial of Head Start conducted with a nationally representative sample of Head Start programs and families. The sample included 253 children living in non-parental care (defined as a primary caregiver who self-identified as someone other than a biological, adoptive, or step-parent), who experienced elevated rates of child and family risk factors. Results revealed modest direct short-term and indirect longer-term impacts of Head Start on school readiness outcomes (increased pre-academic skills, more positive teacher-child relationships, and reductions in behavior problems) for children living in non-parental care. Limitations of this study and directions for future research are discussed. (author abstract)*

- **Lipscomb, S., Schmitt, S. A., Pratt, M. E., Acock, A. C., & Pears, K. (2014). Living in non-parental care moderates effects of prekindergarten experiences on externalizing behavior problems in school. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 40, 41-50.**

*The current study examines the effects of prekindergarten quality and quantity on externalizing behavior problems for children living in non-parental care, compared to other children from socioeconomically at-risk backgrounds. Data were obtained from the Head Start Impact Study. Non-parental care was defined as a primary caregiver other than a biological, adoptive, or step-parent. The sample included 3029 children who attended center-based prekindergarten. Teacher-child conflict and more hours of prekindergarten predicted increased externalizing behavior problems for the full sample. Teacher-child closeness and overall process quality were only associated with externalizing behavior for children in non-parental care. Findings are discussed within a goodness-of-fit perspective in which the vulnerabilities of children in non-parental care explain how they respond to their prekindergarten experiences. (author abstract)*

- **McDermott, P., Watkins, M. W., Rovine, M. J., & Rikoon, S. H. (2013). Assessing changes in socio-emotional adjustment across early school transitions: New national scales for children at risk.**



**Journal of School Psychology, 51(1), 97-115.**

This article reports the development and evidence for validity and application of the Adjustment Scales for Early Transition in Schooling (ASETS). Based on primary analyses of data from the Head Start Impact Study, a nationally representative sample (N=3077) of randomly selected children from low-income households is configured to inform developmental-transitional stability and change in socioemotional adjustment. Longitudinal exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of the ASETS revealed behavioral dimensions of Aggression, Attention Seeking, Reticence/Withdrawal, Low Energy, and higher-order dimensions of Overactivity and Underactivity. Each dimension was vertically equated through IRT, with Bayesian scoring across 2 years of prekindergarten, kindergarten, and 1st grade. Multilevel modeling provides evidence for concurrent validity, assessment of future risk, and detection of differential growth trajectories across the 4 years of early school transition. (author abstract)

- **McDermott, P., Watkins, M. W., Rovine, M. J., & Rikoon, S. H. (2014). Informing context and change in young children's sociobehavioral development - the national Adjustment Scales for Early Transition in Schooling (ASETS). Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 29(3), 255-267.**  
This article recounts the design and validity evidence for contextually-specific measures of early childhood social and behavioral adjustment within school using the Adjustment Scales for Early Transition in Schooling (ASETS). Through primary analyses of data from the Head Start Impact Study, a representative nationwide sample (N = 3077) of randomly selected children from low-income families was used to inform developmental-transitional stability and change in adjustment across numerous school contexts. Longitudinal exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses yielded reliable and temporally continuous behavioral dimensions assessing the pervasiveness of Peer, Learning, and Teacher Context Problems. Each context dimension was equated vertically through IRT, with Bayesian scoring across two years spanning pre-kindergarten through 1st grade. Multilevel modeling provided support for the concurrent validity of ASETS contextual scales and their ability to assess future risk of academic and behavioral problems. ASETS scales are also shown to reveal differential, contextually-based, change trajectories across four years of early school transition. (author abstract)
- **Miller, E. B., Farkas, G., Vandell, D. L., & Duncan, G. (2014). Do the effects of Head Start vary by parental preacademic stimulation? Child Development, 85(4), 1385-1400.**  
Data from the Head Start Impact Study (N = 3,185, age = 3-4 years) were used to determine whether 1 year of Head Start differentially benefited children from homes with high, middle, and low levels

of parental preacademic stimulation on three academic outcome domains—early math, early literacy, and receptive vocabulary. Results from residualized growth models showed positive impacts of random assignment to Head Start on all three outcomes, and positive associations between parental preacademic stimulation and academic performance. Two moderated effects were also found. Head start boosted early math skills the most for children receiving low parental preacademic stimulation. Effects of Head Start on early literacy skills were largest for children receiving moderate levels of parental preacademic stimulation. Implications for Head Start are discussed. (author abstract)

- **Sabol, T. J., & Chase-Lansdale, P. (2014). The influence of low-income children's participation in Head Start on their parents' education and employment. Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 1-26.**  
Head Start is the oldest and largest federally funded preschool program in the United States. From its inception in 1965, Head Start not only provided early childhood education, care, and services for children, but also sought to promote parents' success. However, almost all evaluation studies of Head Start have focused solely on children's cognitive and social outcomes rather than on parents' outcomes. The present study examines whether children's participation in Head Start promotes parents' educational advancement and employment. We use data from the Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), a randomized trial of over 4,000 newly entering three- and four-year-old children. We find that parents of children in the three-year-old cohort (but not the four-year-old cohort), who were randomly assigned to and participated in Head Start, had steeper increases in their own educational attainment by child age six years compared to parents of children in the control group. This pattern is especially strong for parents who had at least some college experience at baseline, as well as for African-American parents. We do not find evidence that Head Start helped parents enter or return to the workforce over time. Results are discussed in the context of using high-quality early childhood education as a platform for improving both child and parent outcomes. (author abstract)
- **Walters, C. R. (2014). Inputs in the production of early childhood human capital: Evidence from Head Start. (NBER Working Paper No. 20639). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.**  
Studies of small-scale "model" early-childhood programs show that high-quality preschool can have transformative effects on human capital and economic outcomes. Evidence on the Head Start program is more mixed. Inputs and practices vary widely across Head Start centers, however, and little is known about variation in effectiveness within Head Start. This

paper uses data from a multi-site randomized evaluation to quantify and explain variation in effectiveness across Head Start childcare centers. I answer two questions: (1) How much do short-run effects vary across Head Start centers? and (2) To what extent do inputs, practices, and child characteristics explain this variation? To answer the first question, I use a selection model with random coefficients to quantify heterogeneity in Head Start effects, accounting for non-compliance with experimental assignments. Estimates of the model show that the cross-center standard deviation of cognitive effects is 0.18 test score standard deviations, which is larger than typical estimates of variation in teacher or school effectiveness. Next, I assess the role of observed inputs, practices and child characteristics in generating this variation, focusing on inputs commonly cited as central to the success of model programs. My results show that Head Start centers offering full-day service boost cognitive skills more than other centers, while Head Start centers offering frequent home visiting are especially effective at raising non-cognitive skills. Head Start is also more effective for children with less-educated mothers. Centers that draw more children from center-based preschool have smaller effects, suggesting that cross-center differences in effects may be partially due to differences in counterfactual preschool options. Other key inputs, including the High/Scope curriculum, teacher education, and class size, are not associated with increased effectiveness in Head Start. Together, observed inputs explain about one-third of the variation in Head Start effectiveness across experimental sites. (author abstract)

- **Zhai, F., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Waldfogel, J. (2014).** Head Start's impact is contingent on alternative type of care in comparison group. *Developmental Psychology*, 1-15.  
Using data ( $n = 3,790$  with 2,119 in the 3-year-old cohort and 1,671 in the 4-year-old cohort) from 353 Head Start centers in the Head Start Impact Study, the only large-scale randomized experiment in Head Start history, this article examined the impact of Head Start on children's cognitive and parent-reported social-behavioral outcomes through first grade contingent on the child care arrangements used by children who were randomly assigned to the control group (i.e., parental care, relative/nonrelative care, another Head Start program, or other center-based care). A principal score matching approach was adopted to identify children assigned to Head Start who were similar to children in the control group with a specific care arrangement. Overall, the results showed that the effects of Head Start varied substantially contingent on the alternative child care arrangements. Compared with children in parental care and relative/nonrelative care, Head Start participants generally had better cognitive and parent-reported behavioral development, with some benefits of Head Start persisting through first grade; in contrast, few differences

were found between Head Start and other center-based care. The results have implications regarding the children for whom Head Start is most beneficial as well as how well Head Start compares with other center-based programs. (author abstract)

## SUMMARIES, ANALYSES, AND COMMENTARIES

- **Burke, L., & Muhlhausen, D. B. (2013).** Head Start impact evaluation report finally released (Issue Brief No. 3823). Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation.  
This issue brief discusses results of the third-grade follow-up to the Head Start Impact Study, outlining impacts on: cognitive development; social-emotional development; child health outcomes; and parent practices. Recommendations to policymakers concerning federal funding and state-subsidized options for private preschool are provided.
- **Child Trends. (2011).** Research-based responses to key questions about the 2010 Head Start Impact Study (Early Childhood Highlights Vol. 2, Issue 1, Publication No. 2011-06). Washington, DC: Child Trends.  
This document provides background information on the Head Start program and discusses key findings from the Impact Study through a series of a questions and answers. It concludes with commentary on the Impact Study from a research perspective, highlighting key policy and practice considerations relating to supporting developmentally appropriate and effective early childhood interventions, specifically noting that: (1) Head Start's whole-child program model is research-based and developmentally appropriate for promoting school readiness and strengthening families; (2) Starting early with high-quality interventions makes a difference; (3) The Impact Study shows how Head Start is contributing to measurable developmental gains for certain subgroups of disadvantaged children. However, rigorous program improvement is needed to improve Head Start's overall effectiveness in supporting the developmental needs of disadvantaged children and their families; (4) In considering program improvements, decision makers would benefit from a better understanding of factors that contribute to successful transitions from early learning settings to elementary school; (5) Findings from the Impact Study should be considered alongside other research on Head Start and early childhood. (author abstract)
- **Foundation for Child Development. (2013).** Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2002-2006: Resource guide. New York: Foundation for Child Development.  
This resource guide provides a brief overview of the Head Start Impact Study (HSIS), 2002-2006 and

specific instructions for obtaining the restricted-use HSIS datasets. HSIS users should refer to the User Guide, which provides greater detail on the topics discussed.

- **Gibbs, C., Ludwig, J., & Miller, D. L. (2011).** **Does Head Start do any lasting good?** (NBER Working Paper Series No. 17452). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

*Head Start is a federal early childhood intervention designed to reduce disparities in preschool outcomes. The first randomized experimental study of Head Start, the National Head Start Impact Study (NHSIS), found impacts on academic outcomes of .15 to .3 standard deviations measured at the end of the program year, although the estimated impacts were no longer significant when measured at the end of kindergarten or first grade. Assessments that Head Start is ineffective based on the NHSIS results are in our view premature, given our currently limited understanding of how and why early childhood education improves long-term life chances. Many of the specific changes to Head Start that have been proposed could potentially wind up doing more harm than good. (author abstract)*

- **Laosa, L. M. (2006).** **Preschool program effects on Hispanic children's cognitive development: Is pre-k preparing Hispanic children to succeed in school?** New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

*This interim report provides an overview of the Head Start Impact Study and an update of the study's progress through the spring of 2003. It discusses the research design of the study, as well as data collection procedures, measures, and data sources. Preliminary findings from an analysis of data collected in 2002 are presented.*

- **Ludwig, J., & Phillips, D. A. (2008).** **Long-term effects of Head Start on low-income children.** *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1136, 257-268.

*A growing body of research suggests that the first few years of life are a particularly promising time to intervene in the lives of low-income children, although the long-term effects on children of the U.S. government's primary early childhood program – Head Start – remains the topic of debate. In this article we review what is known about Head Start and argue that the program is likely to generate benefits to participants and society as a whole that are large enough to justify the program's costs. Although in principle there could be more beneficial ways of deploying Head Start resources, the benefits of such changes remain uncertain and there is some downside risk. (author abstract)*

- **Muhlhausen, D. B., & Lips, D. (2010).** **Head Start earns an F: No lasting impact for children by first grade** (Backgrounder No. 2363). Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation.

*Recently released results from the Head Start Impact Study indicate that the benefits of participating in Head Start almost completely disappear by first grade. While other studies have previously assessed Head Start's effectiveness, this is the only study that used a rigorous experimental design. Given this strongly negative evaluation, Congress should reconsider spending more than \$9 billion per year on a program that produces few positive lasting effects. Furthermore, instead of creating yet another new federal preschool program at a cost of \$8 billion, Congress and the Obama Administration should focus on terminating, consolidating, and reforming existing preschool and child care programs to better serve children's needs and to improve efficiency for taxpayers. (author abstract)*

- **National Forum on Early Childhood Policy and Programs. (2010).** **Understanding the Head Start Impact Study.** Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child.

*The 2010 report of the Head Start Impact Study is an important follow-up evaluation of the only national investigation that attempts to answer the question: What are the program's impacts, as measured at the end of first grade, for children who received Head Start services when they were 3 or 4 years of age? The Impact Study took advantage of the fact that most Head Start centers across the nation have waiting lists of parents wishing to enroll their children in the program. Using a random, lottery-like process, 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds on the waiting list were offered the opportunity to enroll. This resulted in two groups (or experimental "conditions") – children who were offered the chance to enroll in Head Start and those who were not. Both groups were followed to the end of first grade. Overall, the study was sound scientifically, but there has been considerable debate over what its findings mean. Further analysis of the data will undoubtedly support additional conclusions, but this brief offers a research-based interpretation of the findings presented in the Impact Study itself. (author abstract)*

- **United States. Administration for Children and Families. Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation. (2001).** **Building futures Head Start Impact Study: Presentation at the National Head Start Association's 28th annual Training Conference, Orlando, Florida, May 16-19, 2001.** Paper presented at the annual National Head Start Association Training Conference, Orlando, FL. *This presentation was made at the National Head Start Association's 28th Annual Training Conference in Florida, 2001. It addresses the design of the Head*



*Start Impact Study, and provides information on data collection sources, measures, and benefits to child care centers' participation in and support of the study.*

- **Zaslow, M. (2008). An overview of the lessons of the Head Start Impact Study. *Infants and Young Children*, 21(1), 4-17.**  
*The Head Start program has a history of using research to guide its efforts. In this way, Head Start practitioners, policy makers, and researchers comprise a "learning community." The release of the first-year results of the Head Start Impact Study provides an important opportunity for reflection by the learning community, and for identification of strategies to further strengthen the program. This article begins by illustrating how Head Start has responded to previous research. It then underscores some key features of the Head Start Impact Study that set it apart from other important evaluation studies. Within this framework, the article goes on to identify a set of key issues that the first-year results of the Head Start Impact Study pose for the learning community to consider in charting the future course of the program as well as to others focusing on strengthening young children's school readiness. (author abstract)*
- **Zigler, E. F. (2010). Putting the national Head Start Impact Study into a proper perspective (NHSA Dialog Briefs Vol. 13 Issue 1). Alexandria, VA: National Head Start Association.**  
*Researchers from across the political spectrum have already analyzed and made interpretations of the National Head Start Impact Study's findings. In this Dialog Brief, Dr. Edward Zigler, one of the founders of Head Start and a child development scholar for over half a century, places the National Head Start Impact Study in proper perspective. Dr. Zigler discusses the study's methodology and the magnitudes of the findings. There are favorable impacts on parenting practices and child outcomes in the cognitive, socioemotional, and health domains. Next, he puts the study's findings within the context of decades of research on Head Start and other preschool programs. Finally, Dr. Zigler teaches us the real lessons of the National Head Start Impact Study. (author abstract)*

## INSTRUMENTS

- **Child Care & Early Education Research Connections. (2012). HSIS Instrument Matrix. New York: Child Care & Early Education Research Connections.**  
*The Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) uses many instruments to collect data. This document provides a complete list of the HSIS instruments indexed in the Research Connections' database. Every instrument is hyperlinked to its corresponding record and "X"s designate which cohorts they were used in. Other alpha characters represent the instruments' availability: OS = obtainable through the original source; RC = obtainable through Research Connections. While all instruments are listed, those instruments that are copyrighted are not available. To access a particular instrument, click on the appropriate link.*
- **Westat, Inc. (2002). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Fall 2002 Parent Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2003). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2003 Care Provider Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2003). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2003 Center Director Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2003). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2003 Parent Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2003). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2003 Teacher Survey. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Care Provider Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Center Director Interview. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Parent Interview Cohort A. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Parent Interview Cohort B. Unpublished instrument.**
- **Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Teacher Survey Cohort A. Unpublished instrument.**

Westat, Inc. (2004). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2004 Teacher Survey Cohort B. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2005). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2005 Parent Interview Data Cohort A. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2005). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2005 Parent Interview Data Cohort B. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2005). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2005 Teacher Survey First Grade. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2005). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2005 Teacher Survey Kindergarten. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2006). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2006 Parent Interview Data Cohort A. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2006). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2006 Teacher Survey Data First Grade. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2006). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2006 Teacher Survey Data Kindergarten. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2007). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2007/2008 Principal Interview Third Grade. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2007). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2007/2008 Teacher's Child Report Third Grade. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2007). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2007/2008 Teacher Survey Third Grade. Unpublished instrument.

Westat, Inc. (2007). Head Start Impact Study (HSIS) Spring 2007/2008 Parent Interview Third Grade. Unpublished instrument.