Building University Research-Public Policy Connections & Collaborations

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Connecting Policy & Research Central to Schubert Center’s Mission

- We “bridge research, practice, policy, and education for the well-being of children and adolescents.”
  
  • value **multidisciplinary** approach (faculty & staff associates from all CWRU schools)
  
  • committed to **collaborations** among researchers, policymakers, practitioners and impacted communities
  
  • promote **linkages and effective policy** through research, communication, and education strategies among those who **play a role in the well-being of children**
Elevating Child Research with Policy & Practice Impacts

- Promote the identification of policy implications in child research to be featured in Center publications and to inform Center policy collaborations and activities
- Convene public research forums with policymaker and community engagement to highlight policy opportunities
- Host faculty showcase to inform and build connections among child researchers, policymakers, practitioners, advocates and other community members & influencers
- Support professional growth of CWRU Center Associates
Bridging Research-Policy Fellowship Cohort PILOT

- Vision: Fostering Value of Researcher-Policy Engagement
- Learning Objectives
- Avoid “How-Tos” or “Toolkits” – Exploratory Material & Discussion
- Perspective Taking Key with Players
- 4 Focus Areas:
  - Policy Context & Potential Researcher Roles
  - Policymakers Perspective & Impactful Research
  - Policy Intermediary/Influencers & Collaborations
  - Research Translation & Strategic Communications

Equipping Researchers with Tools to Demystify Policy & See Research-Policy Connections
Challenges for Researchers Interested in Policy Engagement & Impact

3 Overarching Questions for Academic Researchers:

1. *Should* I try to impact policy?  
   [Consider value-added, downsides & pitfalls...]

2. If so, *how* should I seek to impact policy?  
   [Range of more passive to active engagement]

3. What is my *motivation* for engaging in policymaking?  
   [Professional, Personal or Both?]

Exploring How the State Budget Matters for Researchers

- Understanding resources available for programming, technical assistance & research evaluation
- Identifying potential research questions/data needs related to programming serving children & families
- Appreciating responsibilities and priorities (and pressures) of state policymakers (administrative and legislative) as partners
- Appreciating some of the challenges and opportunities for children and families who may be research participants
- Informs researcher’s ability to identify current social issues where research can contribute to policy opportunity
Research Activities: a Flipped Hierarchy of Influence

Publish journal article
Professional conference presentation
Release technical report
Release research brief
Nonresearch report (e.g., *The Conversation*)
Press release/media contacts/public
Hearing testimony
Briefings for policy makers/staff

Source: Fischer, R. (2021)

Value by academia but less by policymakers
Often done jointly with other Influencers/stakeholders
### An Evolving CWRU Research Local Policy Collaboration

**Taking the Long View**

Source: Fischer, R. (2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>CWRU Research</th>
<th>Policy Context Developments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>CWRU retained for evaluation</td>
<td>Launch of public/private Early Childhood Initiative (ECI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>Study of child care capacity</td>
<td>ECI becomes Invest in Children Launch universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) pilot</td>
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<td>2006-08</td>
<td>Study of child care quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>Study of UPK pilot</td>
<td>[2010 new County Charter]</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Study linking UPK to Kindergarten readiness</td>
<td>Modest UPK expansion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>Study of UPK effects on lead exposed children</td>
<td>Launch of Pre4CLE with CMSD County Executive Elected – Major UPK expansion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>MacArthur study of role of housing in Kindergarten readiness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>Study of “Pay For Success” application to UPK</td>
<td>Launch of “Lead Safe Cleveland” &amp; New Lead Safe Ordinance</td>
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Spotlight on CWRU Research Examples with Policy Implications for Child Well-Being

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Research Data Types</th>
<th>CWRU Study Headliners</th>
<th>Potential Policy Implications</th>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptive [Needs assessment]</td>
<td>1 in 4 CMSD kindergarteners have been exposed to lead</td>
<td>Cleveland schools should be equipped to manage likely increased student learning and behavioral challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationships (causal/association)</td>
<td>Lead poisoning can impact children well into adulthood</td>
<td>Future public system costs (public assistance benefits, justice system homelessness) outpace cost of lead hazard removal where kids live &amp; learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention effectiveness</td>
<td>High-quality pre-K doesn’t get most lead-poisoned children ready for kindergarten</td>
<td>Policy efforts should focus on preventing lead exposure in childhood vs. using child lead testing results to target lead remediation efforts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Fischer, R. (2021)
Making Data Relevant: Outcomes Data in Context for Policy

Comparing UPK children entering CMSD

Mean Kindergarten Readiness (KRA-L) Score
Children Entering Kindergarten, Fall 2008-2012

KRA-L has a value of 0-29 and has three score bands: Band 1 (0-13, assess broadly for intense instruction), Band 2 (14-23, assess for targeted instruction), Band 3 (24-29, assess for enriched instruction). Children scoring Band 1 may be at serious risk of being unprepared for kindergarten.

Source: Fischer, R. (2021)
Making Data Relevant: Descriptive Data in Context for Policy

Cleveland Rental Properties & Landlords: Lead Safe Housing Implications

Source: Coulton, C. et al (2020)
Making Data Relevant: Mapping Tools

CMSD kindergarteners with EBLL (elevated blood lead level) by School and Neighborhood

Making Data Accessible:

Research Data Infographics & Mapping

Source: Kretschmar, J. (2020)
Making Data Accessible: Interactive Data Tools Storymaps

Child Care Study Partnership between Starting Point & CWRU Center on Urban Poverty & Community Development (2021)

https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8f7284470c6d4add93265ff30795b482
Some Future Considerations in Bridging Research & Policy

- Fostering value in university setting
- Growing professional development supports
- Connecting researchers to potential influencers in policy ecology
- Identifying structural and systemic racism in research design
- Educating policymakers on value of credible data and research-informed policy
- Convening policy forums with policymakers
- Developing rapid response capabilities