



Policy Analysis & Research on Child and Family Issues

Institute News

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We're One Year Old!

The Institute for Child and Family Policy recently celebrated the first anniversary of our opening. It's been a very busy and successful year. Since opening in September 2006, the Institute has brought in nearly \$250,000 in grants and contracts to the University, completed research and planning projects for eight child and family-serving agencies in northwest Ohio, formed partnerships with other family research and policy centers in Ohio, provided several rounds of legislative testimony, undertaken research for Ohio First Lady Frances Strickland, met with various state legislators and members of Ohio's Congressional delegation, and established itself as a primary source of University outreach to policymakers, legislators, and child and family agencies.



Institute staff at a legislative information session at the offices of the Ohio Legislature in Columbus. Pictured are (l-r) Randy Leite, Institute Co-Director; Laura Landry Meyer, Institute Co-Director; Jennifer Sader, Graduate Assistant; Jon Bosscher, Graduate Assistant; and Leslie Straka, Program Coordinator.

What is the Institute for Child and Family Policy?

Our mission is to provide non-partisan policy support to state and federal policymakers and research and planning support to child and family-serving agencies throughout Ohio. In working toward this mission, the Institute:

- Disseminates non-partisan, research-based, policy analysis to promote the consideration of family, school, and community contexts and open communication among policy makers, service providers, and researchers
- Serves as an information and research resource for state legislators, legislative staff, and others involved in legislative and policy formation processes.
- Facilitates, supports, and implements programs and research designed to encourage child and family professionals in best practice.
- Evaluates community-based programs to inform policy, practice, and resource allocation.
- Serves as a clearinghouse for community data profiles to inform policy and practice.
- Supports effective approaches to link child and family research, practice, and policy.

*Visit the Institute for Child and Family Policy online at
www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/icfp*



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Institute Projects Assist Agencies Serving Children and Families in Northwest Ohio

During its first year, the Institute for Child and Family Policy completed various projects for area child and family organizations. Projects included:

Tween Project, Bowling Green Community Partnership Group: The BG Community Partnership Group made up of local leaders, including Mayor John Quinn, Superintendent Hugh Caumartin, decided to focus its first project on the after-school activities of Bowling Green's middle-school-aged population. The goal was to direct tweens to productive activities that would promote protective factors and minimize risk-taking behaviors. Information on the current situation was gathered through focus groups with 60 tweens, surveys from 420 tweens, and parent feedback. This baseline information was instrumental in community discussions about creating a Teen Center for local youth.



Laura Landry Meyer, Institute Co-Director, recently led a team of faculty and students exploring the needs and interests of middle school students in Bowling Green. Her work contributed to the decision to establish the new Teen Center at City Park.

Children's Resource Center (CRC) Strategic Alliance Partnership Project:

Through a contract with the Children's Resource Center (CRC) who is working in conjunction with the Wood County Family and Children First Council (FCFC), the Institute is assisting with the development of a collaborative planning process. The intent is to facilitate the development of a unified, clear process to set priorities and to establish criteria for effective decision-making within Wood County, to develop a comprehensive evaluation model to be shared and implemented across Wood county agencies, and to create a model for a shared pool of demographic data. The project will enhance planning and evaluation processes so as to better meet the needs of families and children of Wood County.

Ottawa County Juvenile Court: Examine outcomes associated with various court intervention

and diversion programs. The goal of this project is to better understand factors associated with juvenile delinquency and to assess the degree to which participation in various court programs may contribute to reduced recidivism and other positive outcomes. Institute staff will facilitate a review of intake assessment data, develop an entrance and exit survey to be completed by probationers, and make recommendations concerning data collection and storage so as to facilitate ongoing assessment of outcomes.



Members of the Wood County Family and Children First Council participate in a planning activity facilitated by Laura Landry Meyer, Co-Director of the Institute for Child and Family Policy.

Lucas County Board of Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities: The Institute is providing a demographic and client projection to be utilized by the Board of MRDD to make program and transportation service plans for the next ten years. This represents the only forward projection of its kind in Ohio and will serve as a template for projects in other counties.

Interested in child and family policy and research? Call the Institute at (419) 372-6824 to see how we can support your work.



Institute News

Policy Briefs are Now Available

We have developed a number of policy briefs for policymakers. These briefs provide overviews of demographic trends and key research findings relating to child and family topics as well as a set of non-partisan policy recommendations. Policy brief topics include:

Reducing Child Poverty
Child Custody Law
Domestic Violence
School and Family Partnerships

Adoption in Ohio
School Readiness
Ohio's Community (Charter) Schools

As we begin our second year of operation, a new set of policy briefs will be developed and distributed to policymakers throughout Ohio. Based on the interests of state legislators, policy briefs planned for 2007-08 include: attention to young, unmarried fathers, childhood obesity, child health insurance coverage, and juvenile justice programs among others. Along with these briefs, the Institute will also continue its topical outreach to legislators, legislative staff, and state agency personnel.

All Institute policy briefs are available online at the Institute's website: www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/icfp.

Legislative Support

- Statewide informational seminars for legislators, legislative aides, and state agency personnel
- Briefing reports synthesizing relevant issues, research, and policy options as well as a list of reference resources
- Policy updates summarizing child and family policies in other states, updates of Ohio policy and legislative proposals, and critical child outcomes associated with various issues
- Website access to briefing reports, research summaries, and information addressing various policy issues
- Local briefing seminars tailored to local issues and demographics
- Research support into effective approaches to link child and family-based research and policy
- Recommendations regarding best practice models that reflect key research and policy analysis findings.



Randy Leite, Institute Co-Director provided testimony to several legislative committees during the recent State Budget development process. Several programs supported by his testimony were incorporated into Ohio's biennial budget.

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Opportunities for BGSU Faculty

New Statewide Collaborative Network in the Works

Institute staff have had initial discussions about becoming part of a statewide network of family researchers and policy analysts. Over the next few months, we will be working on establishing a network and creating opportunities for statewide collaborations among faculty who are interested in child and family issues. BGSU faculty who have an interest in collaborating with researchers from other institutions should watch for more information on this exciting new opportunity in the months to come. Institute staff are also available to talk with faculty about their ideas for collaborative work.

Collaborate with ICFP

The Institute for Child and Family Policy has a strong track record of obtaining funding for research, evaluation, and planning projects. This expertise can be shared with faculty who are interested in projects that generate findings that may inform child and family policy. Institute staff are available to assist faculty in developing project ideas, developing partnerships with child and family-serving agencies, searching for funding, and developing/submitting grant applications. By partnering with the Institute, faculty and other researchers gain access to a wide range of services and support as well as the expertise of the Institute staff.

Become a Faculty Affiliate

Faculty members with an interest in child and family policy and research are invited to become an Institute affiliate. Faculty affiliates gain access to Institute resources and expertise including collaboration on research projects, grant development support, geographic mapping of data, and facilitated lines of communication with state legislators and policymakers. Status as an Institute affiliate will provide faculty with a unique opportunity to link their research to legislative and policy decisions and approaches to child and family practice in Ohio. Affiliation may be of interest to faculty who are interested in seeing the results of their research utilized in “real world” settings.

If you have a project idea and want to discuss pursuing it through the Institute or to apply to be a faculty affiliate, give us a call at (419) 372-7825 or e-mail us at icfp@bgsu.edu.



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