

Early Childhood Education & Workplace Conditions

New early childhood education research continues to demonstrate workplace conditions are essential to creating effective early childhood programs that can close the opportunity gap.

Existing research in early childhood has found that **organizational conditions** — the culture, climate and work routines that make up an effective early childhood program — are the most important drivers of positive child outcomes. When strong leadership, collaboration among teachers, a supportive emotional climate, engaged families and instructional rigor are in place, teachers and practitioners increase their individual and collective capacity to deliver quality early education and care to children and their families.

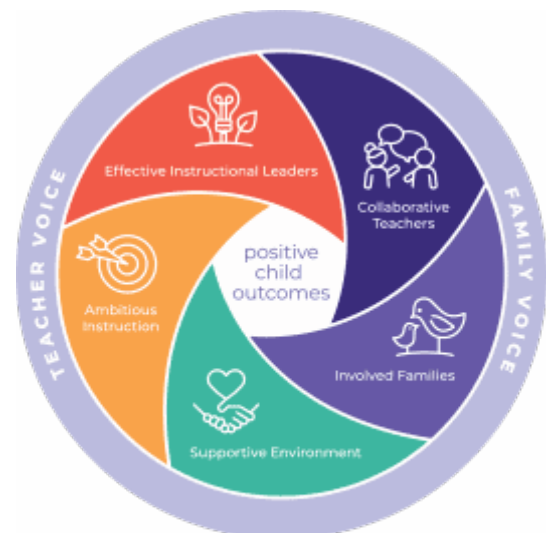
Now, new early childhood research is deepening our understanding of whether and how these conditions relate to other aspects of quality and outcomes we care about in early childhood programs. Research findings from three soon-to-be published studies explore how organizational conditions impact teacher well-being and retention and how to measure the strength of these organizational conditions within infant and toddler settings.

How Perceptions of Leadership Impact Teacher Retention and Quality in Louisiana

Researchers Anna J. Markowitz, Daphna Bassok, and Amanda Rosensky of the University of Virginia explore associations between teachers' perceptions of their leaders as effective instructional leaders and measures of teacher turnover intentions, observed turnover, teacher well-being and the quality of teacher-child interactions.

Using data from early childhood programs across Louisiana, initial findings strengthen the evidence that site leadership is important to both the quality of teachers' interactions with children and teachers' commitment to the program and decisions to remain in their position. In fact, the associations studied here suggest practical ways to improve teacher retention within early childhood settings.

Anna J. Markowitz, Daphna Bassok, & Amanda Rosensky, University of Virginia, "Leadership, Classroom Quality, & Teacher Turnover in Early Care and Education Settings," presented at the 2021 Society for Research in Child Development conference.



The **Start Early** Essentials

Organizational Conditions Shape Classroom Quality, Teacher Stress and Well-Being

Research conducted by Allison Friedman-Krauss, Milagros Nores, Charles Whitman, and W. Steven Barnett at the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), studies how differences in teachers' perceptions of organizational conditions vary by teacher/school/district characterizations and impact classroom quality and teachers' well-being. This research finds a strong association between teacher perceptions of their school organizational conditions and teacher depressive symptoms, suggesting that supporting teacher well-being is particularly important in today's pandemic context.

Allison Friedman-Krauss, Milagros Nores, Charles Whitman, & W. Steven Barnett at the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), "Preschool Teacher Perceptions of School Organizational Conditions in High-Poverty School Districts," presented at the 2021 Society for Research in Child Development conference.

Solving the Challenge of Measuring Organizational Conditions in Infant and Toddler Settings

Awareness is growing across the early childhood field about the importance of organizational conditions to teacher well-being, performance, and children's learning; However, our field lacks a reliable and valid tool to measure the strength of organizational conditions in infant and toddler settings. Start Early researchers Debra Pacchiano and Isabel Farrar, along with Marzano Research colleagues Marc Brodersen and Joshua Stewart explore whether an adapted version of **The Essential 0-5 Survey**, a validated tool for 3-to-5-year-old settings, is also effective in measuring these essentials within infant and toddler settings. Using cognitive interviews and survey data from a sample of Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees and programs in three states, initial findings suggest that the adapted surveys can reliably capture teacher, staff, and parent perceptions of these essential conditions at the infant-toddler age range, with survey scales showing high reliability and unidimensionality. Items that did not perform as well in terms of separation, fit, and difficulty are being refined and tested prior to a 2021-22 validation study of the infant-toddler surveys.

Debra Pacchiano & Isabel Farrar, Start Early and Joshua Stewart & Marc Brodersen, Marzano Research, "Adaptation & Psychometric Validation of a Measure of Organizational Conditions for Infant-Toddler Center-Based Settings," presented at the 2021 Society for Research in Child Development conference.

These research findings add to the growing body of evidence that surrounding teachers and practitioners with robust workplace supports improves their well-being, increases their collective responsibility, and builds their capacity to successfully meet the changing and diverse needs of young children and their families.

