Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
PolicyLab

Building Better Behavioral Supports in Early Childhood Education

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In Philadelphia, a 2004 survey conducted by Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY) showed 48% of early childhood programs reported having suspended or expelled at least one child over the course of a year due primarily to behavioral concerns, such as poor emotional regulation and aggression. Research has found that the likelihood of expulsion decreases significantly with access to classroom-based behavioral consultation. Childcare teachers, however, often do not have the resources necessary to support children with challenging behaviors.

In response to the high incidence of behavior challenges and the impact of poor social-emotional skills on school readiness, researchers at PolicyLab at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) are currently developing a system of services that would enable childcare centers in Philadelphia to be fully inclusive.

This pilot research project has three main goals:

1. To determine the incidence of children with behavioral challenges in childcare centers in Philadelphia in order to inform provider agencies in the city.
2. To develop a scalable and sustainable strategy model that integrates social-emotional and behavioral supports with early childhood education in select high-quality childcare settings.
3. To create a business model that leverages childcare and mental health funding streams to increase the school readiness for children in all categories of behavioral need.

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