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early developments Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center

Spring 1997 | Volume 1, Issue 1

Inaugural issue

Celebrating 30 Years

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Research Spotlight

NCEDL News: Looking to the Future

NCEDL News: Measuring Quality in Child Care

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Spring 1997

Volume 1, No. 1

WELCOME TO THE FIRST issue of *Early Developments*, a new quarterly publication from the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The purpose of *Early Developments* is to share the activities and findings from the center's many ongoing projects. Each issue also includes a special section on the National Center for Early Development & Learning (NCEDL), a five-year project examining critical issues in early childhood practices.

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Vol. 1, No. 1

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Periodicals postage paid at
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Early Developments is published four times a year by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Early Developments is funded in part by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and in part by PR/Award Number R307A60004, administered by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. Contents of articles do not necessarily represent the positions of the U.S. Department of Education. Endorsement by the federal government should not be assumed.

WELCOME

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The Frank Porter Graham Center has more than 60 state and federally funded projects, most of which focus on early childhood development, ages birth to eight. Our researchers study such things as young children's health, services and practices for children with disabilities, family development and support, recommended practices in child care, early intervention, and policy implications. *Early Developments* contains updates on current studies, excerpts from our research and policy briefs, and articles about our research findings.

Primary recipients of *Early Developments* include researchers, policymakers, teachers, leaders in the field, and colleagues at sister institutions. We are committed to sharing our research findings with a broad audience, including families, early childhood educators, and care providers. Your ideas and suggestions about *Early Developments* are welcome. If you are not on our mailing list fill out the form below.

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Please feel free to reprint articles from our newsletter; we ask only that you give credit to *Early Developments*. If you have questions or need more information, check the FPG home page at <<http://www.fpg.unc.edu>> or contact Loyd Little, editor, at phone: 919-966-0867, fax: 919-966-0862, or email: <loyd_little@unc.edu>. Our home page includes additional information about investigators and projects at FPG.

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Celebrating 30 years

of research, development,
and public service

THE FRANK PORTER GRAHAM Child Development Center was established in 1966 as a multidisciplinary center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill dedicated to improving the lives of young children and their families through research, teaching, and service. Today, nearly 40 investigators and 250 staff and students work on more than 60 funded projects.

Traditionally, the work of center investigators has focused on children under the age of eight years, and includes child and family research, health research, policy analysis, curriculum development, personnel development, and technical assistance. Last year, the Center was selected by the U.S. Department of Education to serve as the department's National Center for Early Development and Learning.

FPG is also home to the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NEC*TAS), a clearinghouse and technical support consortium to help states and communities develop services for young children with special needs.

FPG directs one of four national projects examining quality in Head Start programs, now attended by nearly three-quarters of a million children in the U.S. Also, FPG, along with the UNC Neuroscience Center, serves as one of the nation's Mental Retardation Centers and is home to three early childhood institutes.

Researchers at FPG are often called on to help state and local governments determine the impact of their policies on children and families and to make recommendations for improving policies and practice. For example, the center was chosen as the major evaluator of North Carolina's Smart Start Project. The center's Statewide Technical Assistance for Gifted Education (STAGE) project works with selected North Carolina school systems to help identify gifted students, to challenge those youngsters and to support the teachers who teach them. And FPG's Linkages Project is working to improve early intervention for Latino families and members of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian tribe in North Carolina. Partnerships for Inclusion (PFI) provides on-site consultation to improve quality in child care programs, training, seminars, a statewide lending library and product development.

For 30 years, FPG has operated a family and child care program that serves about 60 children ranging from six weeks to five years of age. Since 1984, the center has fully integrated children with disabilities into all aspects of the child care program. Small group sizes, optimum staff-to-child ratios, the integration of therapy and

RESearch continues to be the core of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. Over the years, major research themes have included:

- Factors of early intervention that promote optimal outcomes for young children with disabilities, and those at risk for school failures
- Poverty and other risk factors affecting the development of young children
- Children's health issues, including lung function, the transmission of disease in daycare, and the relationships between nutrition and disease
- Family development and adaptation to a child with disabilities
- Child care quality and its effects on development

special services into the context of daily routines, a curriculum that promotes learning through play, and working in partnership with families all contribute to the quality environment. Over the years, the child care program has supported research projects related to children's health, development, and family involvement.

Financial support for FPG comes from a variety of public and private sources, including the state of North Carolina, the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Department of Education. 