COVID-19 and Child Care:

Lessons Learned for Moving Forward

A joint virtual convening presented by the Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health & Schubert Center for Child Studies

February 24, 2021

Case Western Reserve University

Welcome

In the chat, please share your name and what brings you here today

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As a reminder:

- *All attendees are muted*
- *Please share your questions in the chat or Q&A*
- *The chat is being monitored and we will leave time for Q&A following the discussion*

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The Schubert Center for Child Studies bridges research, practice, policy, and education for the well-being of children and adolescents

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Special thanks to:

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Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

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HOPE TOLEDO

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Southwest Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children

OCCRRA
Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association

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preschool PROMISE

STARTING POINT

Cincinnati preschool promise
Expanding Access to Quality Preschool

EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCE CENTER

child care RESOURCE CENTER

Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study

A study funded by the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation in partnership with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

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Swetland Professor of Environmental Health Sciences
Director, Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health
Principal Investigator, Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study

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Study Overview

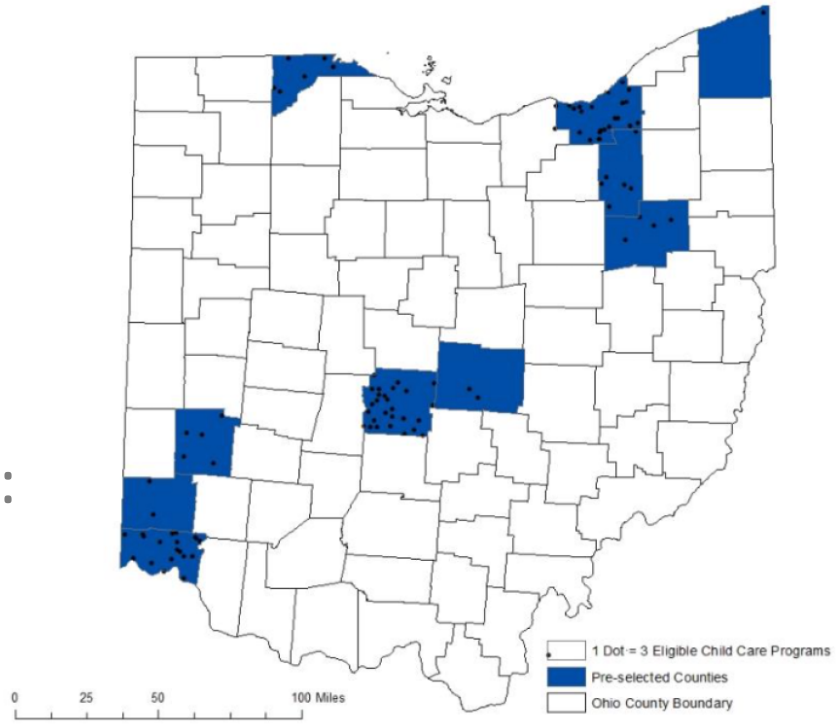
PART ONE

Statewide examination of COVID-19 cases among child care staff and children attending child care

PART TWO

In-depth mixed-methods analysis in:

Ashtabula	Licking
Butler	Lucas
Cuyahoga	Montgomery
Franklin	Stark
Hamilton	Summit



Ten selected counties had variability in COVID-19 severity, number of child care programs, geographic location, and socio-demographics. These counties have two-thirds of all licensed child care programs in Ohio.

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Research Focus

- COVID-19 transmission trends in child care settings
- Perceptions of risk and safety among parents, caregivers and workers
- Levels of stress and coping in response to COVID-19

PART ONE – STATEWIDE EXAMINATION
Serious Incident Reporting System Data

- Self-reported COVID-19 cases among staff and children affiliated with child care programs
- Weekly aggregated county-level data provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

PART TWO
Mixed Methods Study Activities in 10 Counties

August-November 2020

- Surveys
- Interviews by Zoom
- Focus Groups by Zoom

August-December 2020

- Weekly Health Attestation
- COVID-19 Testing

Study Participation

To be eligible to participate in the study, child care programs had to be:

1. Licensed by JFS
2. Operational in August 2020
3. Located in a selected county
4. Have five or more people in total
5. Email outreach to all staff and families

Eligible	Invited	Enrolled
291	157	46

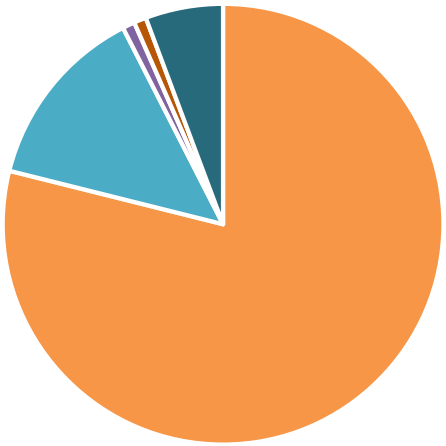
Program Enrollment

- Of the 46 child care programs enrolled in the mixed-methods data collection, most self-reported they had less than 20 staff and served less than 100 children.
- A total of 17.4% of the programs self-reported they predominantly served African American families

Staff Enrollment

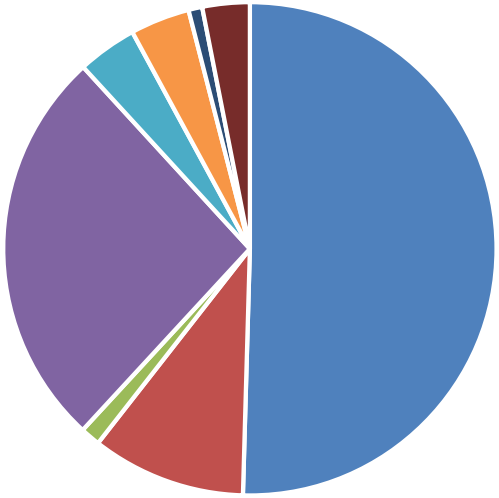
~40% of eligible staff enrolled in the study

Racial Demographics



- White
- Black/African American
- Asian
- More than two races
- Chose not to disclose

Job Classification

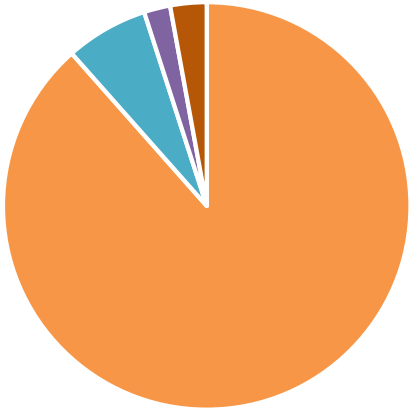


- Classroom Teacher
- Teacher's Aide
- Substitute Teacher
- Administrator
- Food Service
- Office Staff
- Custodian
- Other

Parent Enrollment

15% of eligible parents enrolled in the study

Racial Demographics



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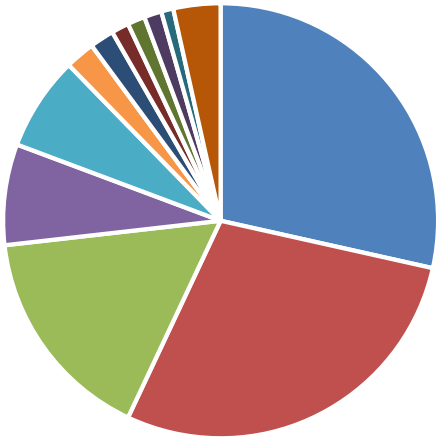

- Business Office
- Healthcare
- Education
- Government
- Non-Profit
- Long-term Care/Nursing Care
- Transportation
- Retail Store
- Library/Sales
- Child Care/Day Care
- Salon
- Other

KEY FINDINGS

Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study

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Key Finding #1

Child Care Programs Can Be Safe

% of Cumulative Ohio COVID-19 Cases Affiliated with Child Care Programs			
	Total	**Staff**	**Children**
Cumulative Cases (1/1/2020-1/1/2021)	0.52%	0.37%	0.15%
Statewide COVID-19 Test Positivity Rate ≤5% (8/15/2020-10/23/2020)	0.54%	0.37%	0.17%
Statewide COVID-19 Test Positivity Rate >5% (10/24/2020-1/1/2021)	0.52%	0.38%	0.14%

Notes: Data based on JFS Incident Reporting System and ODH COVID-19 Dashboard as of January 19, 2021.

Key Finding #2

Child Care Programs are Ready to Respond

Low transmission of COVID-19 in child care during periods of relatively low community transmission was fostered by:

1. Clear and comprehensive state guidelines for mitigating transmission within child care settings;
2. Streamlined reporting of cases to monitor trends;
3. Provision of resources to support adherence to state guidelines;
4. High compliance with these guidelines by child care workers and families.

Key Finding #3

Child Care is Essential for Families and our Economy

Findings revealed child care staff enable parents and caregivers to remain in the workforce while providing opportunities for children to thrive. ***When parents and caregivers were asked 'What would happen if your child care program closed due to COVID-19 transmission?'***

74%

reported someone in their household would need to reduce work hours

54%

stated it would result in loss of income for the household

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study

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Recommendation #1

Maintain child care capacity to fully comply with COVID-19 mitigation strategies.

- Incentivize staffing for lower classroom sizes to facilitate physical distancing.
- Augment costs directly related to reducing spread of COVID-19.
- Provide technical assistance and streamline resources to address new needs (i.e., food insecurity, remote learning).

Recommendation #2

Develop a supply chain for affordable personal protective equipment and cleaning materials allowing child care programs to uphold rigorous hygiene and sanitizing procedures.

- Expand collective procurement and discounted purchasing capacity for PPE (i.e., gloves, masks, paper towels, cleaning supplies).
- Explore linkages for extending this supply chain to other small business sectors.

Recommendation #3

Standardize communication about COVID-19 disseminated through child care programs.

- Establish regular cadence of information sharing about COVID-19 risk and mitigation from the state to child care programs.
- Detail methods for transferring state-level information to child care staff and parents and caregivers.
- Expand communication methods for managing COVID-19 cases within child care.

Recommendation #4

Expand workforce pipeline for child care staffing during the pandemic.

- Centralize a pool of workers qualified to work in child care including temporary staffing.
- Incentivize jobs in the child care workforce.
- Effectively mobilize Ohio Means Jobs to expand child care workforce including jobs related to COVID-19 risk mitigation (i.e., janitorial, symptom screening).

Today's Discussants

Lynanne Gutierrez, Esq.

Assistant Director and Legal Counsel

Groundwork Ohio

Carol Haynes, RN, MS

Executive Director, President and Owner

Kiddie Academy®

Kristie Ross, MD, MS

Chief, Division of Pediatric Pulmonology and Sleep Medicine

University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital

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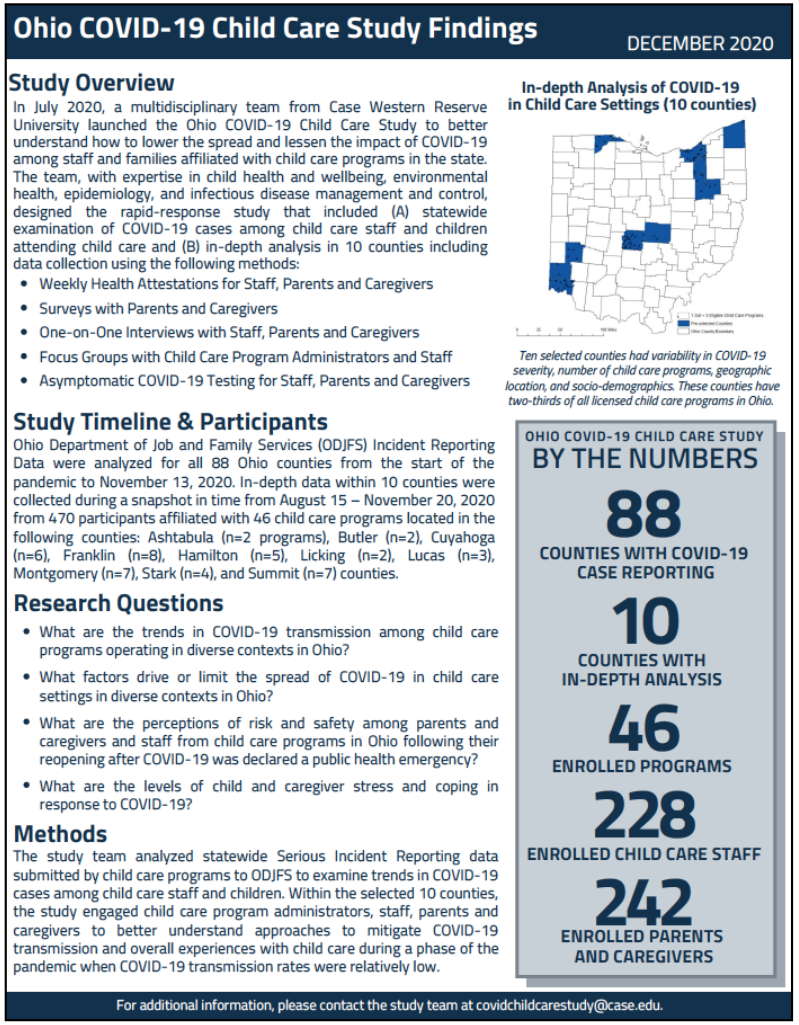
What's Next?

- Review the Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study Findings
- Connected with Groundwork Ohio to stay informed
- Speak up to help make change



Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study Findings

DECEMBER 2020

Study Overview

In July 2020, a multidisciplinary team from Case Western Reserve University launched the Ohio COVID-19 Child Care Study to better understand how to lower the spread and lessen the impact of COVID-19 among staff and families affiliated with child care programs in the state. The team, with expertise in child health and wellbeing, environmental health, epidemiology, and infectious disease management and control, designed the rapid-response study that included (A) statewide examination of COVID-19 cases among child care staff and children attending child care and (B) in-depth analysis in 10 counties including data collection using the following methods:

- Weekly Health Attestations for Staff, Parents and Caregivers
- Surveys with Parents and Caregivers
- One-on-One Interviews with Staff, Parents and Caregivers
- Focus Groups with Child Care Program Administrators and Staff
- Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing for Staff, Parents and Caregivers

Study Timeline & Participants

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Incident Reporting Data were analyzed for all 88 Ohio counties from the start of the pandemic to November 13, 2020. In-depth data within 10 counties were collected during a snapshot in time from August 15 – November 20, 2020 from 470 participants affiliated with 46 child care programs located in the following counties: Ashtabula (n=2 programs), Butler (n=2), Cuyahoga (n=6), Franklin (n=8), Hamilton (n=5), Licking (n=2), Lucas (n=3), Montgomery (n=7), Stark (n=4), and Summit (n=7) counties.

Research Questions

- What are the trends in COVID-19 transmission among child care programs operating in diverse contexts in Ohio?
- What factors drive or limit the spread of COVID-19 in child care settings in diverse contexts in Ohio?
- What are the perceptions of risk and safety among parents and caregivers and staff from child care programs in Ohio following their reopening after COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency?
- What are the levels of child and caregiver stress and coping in response to COVID-19?

Methods

The study team analyzed statewide Serious Incident Reporting data submitted by child care programs to ODJFS to examine trends in COVID-19 cases among child care staff and children. Within the selected 10 counties, the study engaged child care program administrators, staff, parents and caregivers to better understand approaches to mitigate COVID-19 transmission and overall experiences with child care during a phase of the pandemic when COVID-19 transmission rates were relatively low.

In-depth Analysis of COVID-19 in Child Care Settings (10 counties)

Ten selected counties had variability in COVID-19 severity, number of child care programs, geographic location, and socio-demographics. These counties have two-thirds of all licensed child care programs in Ohio.

OHIO COVID-19 CHILD CARE STUDY
BY THE NUMBERS

88 COUNTIES WITH COVID-19 CASE REPORTING

10 COUNTIES WITH IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

46 ENROLLED PROGRAMS

228 ENROLLED CHILD CARE STAFF

242 ENROLLED PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

For additional information, please contact the study team at covidchildcarestudy@case.edu.

Learn More at https://case.edu/swetland/

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Key Implications

1. The “Essential Workers for Essential Workers”
2. Level of transmission risk in child care settings
3. Importance of sustained support for long term changes and the economic impact
4. Humanity of child care professionals
5. Ongoing protocols, advocacy and next steps