

Para Nuestros Niños Noticiero

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National Task Force for Early Childhood Education for Hispanics

The National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics was established in May 2004 for the purpose of identifying major educational challenges facing Hispanic children throughout the United States from birth through the primary grades and making recommendations for actions. It will convene for an initial period of two years that will culminate with the release of a comprehensive report.

Mission and Goals

- Identify the most effective existing strategies for improving educational outcomes in the early childhood education years among Hispanic students, including determining the most effective approaches for promoting the development of infants and toddlers, and best practices for educating preschoolers, and kindergarten through third grade pupils.
- Determine an agenda for developing a larger set of proven early education strategies for Hispanic youngsters, because the existing body of proven strategies for educating Hispanic youngsters is relatively small.
- Develop recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, national Hispanic organizations, and other key parties that can help ensure that effective strategies are disseminated among key local, state, and national mainstream and Hispanic groups.

Release Timeline of Policy Briefs and Reports

From mid October 2006 through the end of January 2007, the Task Force will release several publications.

- **October 2006:** The Task Force will release two reports and associated policy briefs based on studies that it has commissioned. The first report and policy brief will discuss the demographic characteristics of Hispanics under age 9, looking at such factors as socioeconomic characteristics, nativity, language spoken in the home, and state/regional location in the United States. The second report and policy brief will discuss results of a study of demographic and developmental characteristics of Hispanic infants.
- **November 2006:** The Task Force will release two more reports and associated policy briefs based on two other studies that it has commissioned. The first of these will be a report and policy brief on the academic achievement patterns of Hispanic children from the start of kindergarten through fifth grade. These patterns will be presented for children from different Hispanic national origin groups, for Hispanic children from different social classes, and for Hispanic children by their generational status, e.g., those who were born in the United States to immigrant parents. The second report and policy brief will discuss K-3 school reform strategies with evidence that they help raise academic achievement of Hispanic students in the primary grades.
- **January 2007:** The Task Force will release its main report late that month at a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. The report will present the Task Force's main findings and make a number of recommendations for expanding and improving early education for Hispanic children. That month, the Task Force also will release a report and policy brief on the supply of childcare centers in Latino Communities.

Recent Reports and Papers of Interest

- **Barnett S. W., Ackerman, D. J., & Robin, K. B. (2006).** *California's Preschool for All Act (Proposition 82): A Policy Analysis.* National Institute for Early Education Research New Brunswick, NJ. This policy brief finds that Proposition 82 has the potential to significantly improve the educational achievement of California's children. While the program would cost about \$2.4 billion per year when fully implemented, it is estimated that it would yield far larger economic benefits to California over the long-run due to decreases in school failure and its attendant problems such as high crime and low productivity.



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- **Cohen, C. C., Deterding, N. & Clewell, C. B. (2005).** *Who's Left Behind? Immigrant children in high and low LEP schools.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. This report highlights that English language learners are highly segregated in American schools. It also points out that schools with high proportions of English language learners also tend to have less experienced, more uncertified teachers and principals than schools that serve less English language learners. It discusses the importance of No Child Left Behind Act in the integration of immigrant students. In addition, it focuses on immigrant geographical and linguistic characteristics.
- **Matthews, H. & Ewen, D. (2006).** *Reaching all children? Understanding early care and education participation among immigrant families,* Center for Law and Social Policy. This report summarizes evidence about the participation of young children of immigrants in early childhood education programs as well as relevant demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of immigrant families that likely influence children's participation in early childhood education programs. It also includes policy recommendations for state and local administrators of prekindergarten and other early childhood care and education programs, and proposes areas for additional research.
- **National Research Council (2006).** *Multiple origins, uncertain destinies: Hispanics and the American future.* Panel on Hispanics in the United States. Washington DC: The National Academies Press. This book is a comprehensive review of Hispanics in the United States. It addresses several important topics for Hispanics, including race, immigration, integration challenges, families, education, work, health, and socioeconomic mobility.

Future Conferences

- The Task Force's preliminary findings will be presented at the following conferences/meetings;
 - May 26th - Annual Statewide Conference of the First 5 California Commission, San Diego, CA.
 - June 4th-7th - NAEYC's 2006 National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, San Antonio, TX.
 - July 8th-11th – National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
 - August 22nd- 2006 Academic Diversity Institute, Falls Church, VA.
 - November 9th-12th – New Ways of Analyzing Variation (NWAV) Conference, Columbus, OH.
 - November 13th -14th – Equity Symposium, Teachers College, New York, NY.

Important Pre-kindergarten Initiatives

There is a continuing effort to expand pre-kindergarten opportunities for all four-year-old children:

- California; Proposition 82 if enacted would make preschool available to all four-year olds in the state by placing a 1.7 percent tax on individuals with incomes over \$400,000. This proposition will be decided by Californian voters in a June 6 ballot.
- Illinois; In May, lawmakers approved an initiative from the governor to create the nation's first universal preschool program for 3 year olds.

National Task Force Member Highlight

- **Dr. Edward F. Zigler** is the Sterling Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, at Yale University. A national leader in early childhood education and development for over four decades, Dr. Zigler was one of the original planners of Head Start, served as Chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau, and was the first Director of the Office of Child Development. While in Washington, Dr. Zigler also led efforts to conceptualize and mount such innovative programs as Home Start, Education for Parenthood, the Child Development Associate, and the Child and Family Resource Program. At Yale, Dr. Zigler currently directs a leading laboratory that conducts research on child development and family functioning.

Contact Information

Chair: Eugene Garcia, VPGarcia@asu.edu

Executive Director: Scott Miller, MillerIs@asu.edu

Director of Strategic Communications: Amara Scott Andrews, Amara.Andrews@asu.edu

Assistants: Bryant Jensen, Bryant.Jensen@asu.edu, & Delis Cuéllar, Delis@asu.edu