



CRANE CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH AND POLICY
SCHOENBAUM FAMILY CENTER



IMPACT REPORT: *reflections on 2019*



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a year-end review of our work in early childhood research, practice, and policy

As the year winds down, it offers an opportunity to reflect on what we've learned, where we've grown, and what challenges remain as it relates to children's well-being.

As we close out a year and a decade, there remain many tremendous challenges for children. Daily, we are bombarded with news about child poverty; live coverage of school shootings; and facts on the rising incidence of opioid abuse, neglect, obesity, trauma, or youth suicide. Opportunity and achievement gaps start early. They disproportionately impact children in poverty and children of color, and they persist despite best efforts to close them. We hear these facts from researchers and policy makers, teachers, and families. They inform grant proposals, campaign promises, and conversations. For some of us, these facts also touch close to home; for every number or data point, there are names and faces of children.

As mounting as these challenges may feel, it also drives our work at the Crane and Schoenbaum Centers. It inspires us to connect, build coalitions, think big, and stay grounded in the fundamental belief that a child's earliest years are absolutely most vital. Children are our most vulnerable citizens, yet they remind us that at their core, they are resilient, filled with ingenuity and joy, capable of breaking cycles and inspiring hope.

As we pause to reflect, we want to thank you for your partnership and commitment to children, in whatever capacity that means for you, and for following along with us as we share about our research and our work. We appreciate you. ■

research

CRANE CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH AND POLICY

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RESEARCH: *by the numbers*

BY THE NUMBERS



50
articles published by Crane Center faculty, staff, and students with nearly 2,000 citations to their work



\$19 million
in active grant-funded projects



11 RESEARCH PROJECTS
conducted within the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning – bridging research & practice




4,000
children and families in 232 Ohio schools participated in research projects



11
NEW PROJECTS
TOTALING OVER \$6.7 MILLION IN EXPENDITURES

TRAINING GROUND FOR OHIO STATE



45	10	6
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS	GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS	POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

Partnerships with researchers in over



15 different countries



Deeper understanding of how children learn and develop creates positive changes that carry generational impact with widespread implications. That is why the Crane Center is committed to high-quality empirical research on these topics and why these awards are so important in furthering that work.

Dr. Laura Justice, Executive Director of the Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy and Schoenbaum Family Center

federally funded research awards

In 2019, Crane researchers received 6 new major awards totaling more than \$7.4 million in federal investment, bringing the Crane Center's active grant funding total to \$19 million for the year. The new grants will allow researchers to better understand key questions around early childhood development and learning, including:

- the extent to which early childhood complex language gains predict kindergarten readiness and third-grade reading outcomes;
- how the age compositions of preschool classrooms impact learning;
- how toxic stress affects young children's language development;
- intervening early for children with hearing loss; and
- whether excessive school absences are connected to children's social behavioral development and executive functioning; and
- the optimal intensity of treatment for children with language impairment.

The awards came from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The research teams, each led by a unique principal investigator from the Crane Center, are multidisciplinary and span across The Ohio State University and beyond. To learn more about each award, [click here](#).



grant spotlights

In addition to the major awards, 2019 also brought unique and exciting opportunities for Crane researchers to continue to study pressing issues through additional grant funding to:

- implement [Sit Together and Read \(STAR\)](#), a Crane Center evidence-based reading intervention, in a group of kinship caregivers and preschool children affected by parental opioid use;
- develop a measure of early childhood teachers' knowledge of language, and document the current preparation and knowledge levels of preservice teachers at OSU; and
- participate in a grant-mentoring program between early-stage faculty with faculty mentors.

published research

It's hard to do justice in covering the wide range of work that our team authored and contributed to in 2019. Here are just a few highlights. (For the most curious readers, [here's a full list of our research](#).)

A “million word gap”

This peer-reviewed paper, [When Children are not Read to at Home](#), quantifies the word gap between children who are read to regularly and those who aren't. Graduate students Leydi Johana Chaparro Moreno and Melike Güneş and their co-authors conclude that adult-child shared book reading should be viewed as a strategy to close the word gap. The study received wide coverage in the world of online parent blogging, with posts in [Scary Mommy](#), [The Bump](#), and [Motherly](#), as well as a [feature](#) in Ohio State News.

How can preschool teachers get more in-depth responses from children during story time?

[New York Post](#), [Ohio State News](#), [EHE News](#), [Science Daily](#), [Foxman Communications](#), [Teacher Magazine](#), and the “[Positively Dad](#)” [podcast](#) covered this Crane study on [teachers’ use of questions during shared book reading](#). Crane researchers Dr. Laura Justice and Dr. Sherine Tambyraja examined the different types of questions preschool teachers ask, and importantly, the accuracy and length of children’s responses. Regarding these findings, Dr. Justice said, “When kids get 85% of questions right, that means that questions the teachers are asking are too easy. We don’t want to ask all difficult questions. But we should be coaxing children along cognitively and linguistically by occasionally offering challenging questions.”

Paying parents to read to their kids

Built over two decades with research by Dr. Laura Justice, [Sit Together and Read \(STAR\)](#) read-aloud practices develop and strengthen young children’s awareness of and knowledge about print. These practices are most effective when caregivers or teachers implement the program completely and with fidelity. A [recent study](#) from Crane found that 55% of caregivers completed the program and that a main motivator was receiving financial incentives. Dr. Justice was quoted stating that paying parents to complete this study is “a very modest investment that paid dividends with the children.”

Education in the app store

Despite the prevalence of education apps for children, there is little evidence of their effectiveness for learning, but that could be changing. This [study](#) from Crane researcher Dr. Rebecca Dore and colleagues tested vocabulary learning via an interactive mobile game. Results show that children who were classified as middle-SES (socioeconomic status) as well as low-SES learned new vocabulary from an interactive mobile game, suggesting that developmentally-appropriate mobile games show promise for vocabulary learning.

Through the eyes of a child

In a recent study on [preschool classroom linguistic environments](#), Crane researchers looked at children’s first-person experiences with language by having preschoolers wear video cameras on their heads. They used the video footage to study the frequency and duration of children’s interactions with peers and teachers as well as the overall variability of language in the classroom. Leydi Johana Chaparro-Moreno (first author and Crane graduate research associate) was [quoted](#) on the findings of the study, “We found that the duration and frequency of kids’ interactions with teachers and peers was very different among kids... Overall, children interacted more with the teacher than their peers, but for some kids their peers were an additional source of hearing language.” This study received coverage in [Science Daily](#), as well as early childhood blogs – [Early Learning Nation](#), [Baby Gaga](#), and [All and About \(Qatar\)](#).



Home literacy environments in Mayan families

In this [study](#), Dr. Jaclyn Dynia and co-authors examined the home-literacy environments (HLE) in Mayan communities in the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico, a location where Crane runs the [Solyluna Book Reading Club](#). The motivation for this study came from recent policy initiatives in Mexico that emphasize early reading in response to low literacy rates. This study surveyed Mayan caregivers on home-literacy environments and found that the highest-reported literacy activities were related to writing, and the lowest-reported literacy activities were related to book reading to the child by adults in the home.

Classroom interventions and other practitioner-relevant research

This year, Crane researchers published a number of findings of immediate relevance to teachers and practitioners. This body of research in 2019 has included:

- A look at [successful policies and practices that support successful transitions into kindergarten](#), by Dr. Kelly Purtell;
- An examination of [early educators' knowledge on language and literacy](#), by Dr. Shayne Piasta;
- A study looking at the [impacts of a language-focused intervention on primary-grade reading comprehension](#), by Dr. Hui Jiang;
- A study of [peer interactions and social networks in preschool](#), by Drs. Jing Chen and Tzu-Jung Lin; and,
- An examination of [whether teachers' instructional practices change when more students are absent](#), by Dr. Arya Ansari. ■

practice

in the community

SCHOENBAUM FAMILY CENTER: COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS: *by the numbers*

BY THE NUMBERS



\$10,000

new seed grant for research
in Early Head Start



34

providers serving 1,100 children
received professional
development through
Ready4Success



\$18M

grant funding renewed
for Ohio State's Early
Head Start program



100%

of children enrolled in
Summer Success showed
significant progress across
all four learning domains



getting children ready for kindergarten

In 2019, 45 children were served across three sites in Columbus, including the Schoenbaum Family Center and two Columbus Metropolitan Library branches, through Summer Success. This four-week, high-intensity program is designed to give children experience in a high-quality early childhood classroom setting during the summer before their kindergarten year. Ohio State’s College of Education and Human Ecology highlighted Schoenbaum’s Summer Success Camp in [Inspire Magazine](#). The [article](#) addressed the impacts of the program in the community, “They [Crane] found the enrolled children all made significant progress in each of the targeted skill areas. Most of the children attending the camp live in Columbus’ Weinland Park community, where families often lack resources.”

grant renewal

The [Ohio State University Early Head Start Partnership](#) received an \$18M five-year renewal grant to continue providing high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive services for 160 infants, toddlers, and their families. The families live in some of Columbus’ most vulnerable neighborhoods; 80% of the families earn less than \$800 per month. The program partners with 11 child care centers and eight family child care providers. In addition, they have leveraged comprehensive services through a network of 19 university and community agency partnerships.



grant spotlight

This fall, the Crane Center expanded collaboration with Ohio State's Early Head Start Partnership Program (OSU-EHS) by offering a \$10,000 seed grant to support new research activities and pilot projects within the program. Crane researchers Dr. Jaclyn Dynia (PI) and Dr. Sherine Tambyraja (Co-PI), along with A. Sophie Rogers' assistant principal Samantha Peterson (Co-PI), were awarded the grant. The team will be piloting Crane-developed Read It Again! Infant Toddler Curriculum within OSU-EHS center-based and home-based providers. This research project will provide a rich context to examine a potentially powerful book-reading intervention for low-income infants and toddlers in EHS classrooms.

professional development partnership

Supported by the City of Columbus, [Ready4Success](#) is a professional development initiative that enhances early-childhood programming within community Early Start Columbus (ESC) providers. Strategies of the program include implementing early literacy and math screenings, professional development and coaching to ESC providers. Ready4Success is a vital partner in helping the Early Start Columbus program prepare children for kindergarten in high-quality early education classrooms. For the 2018-2019 school year, R4S provided services to 34 ESC providers, including Columbus City Schools' classrooms, serving over 1,100 children. ■

practice

in the school

SCHOENBAUM FAMILY CENTER: A. SOPHIE ROGERS SCHOOL FOR EARLY LEARNING

A. SOPHIE ROGERS SCHOOL FOR EARLY LEARNING: *by the numbers*

BY THE NUMBERS



97%

of children from our school scored at age level or above on the Brigance assessment



40%

OF ENROLLED CHILDREN WERE ALSO RESIDENTS OF THE WEINLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD



31 children transitioned to kindergarten in the fall of 2019, 23 of whom attended Columbus City Schools



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

58 student placements

in our school, coming from a range of fields including education and allied professions (e.g., social work, speech-language pathology, and marriage and family therapy)



40 percent of children received a subsidy to attend our school as a part of our commitment to a mixed-income model for high-quality early childhood education



school highlights

Beyond the classroom

This year, the Research to Inform Practice fellowship paired one teacher from our partner school, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning, with a Crane researcher for a four-month program to work together on issues affecting classroom practice. In 2019, Dr. Rebecca Dore, senior research associate for Crane, and Kate Galvin, preschool lead teacher, were selected for this cohort of the fellowship and focused on media use with children. Together, they created three deliverables that could be given to families and practitioners, including:

- [5 tips for using media with your child](#)
- [Screen time as story time: Using media with your child](#)
- [Screen free routines: 3 times a day to limit media in your child's life](#) with corresponding infographic

Using music to boost children's brain development

Columbus Parent featured A. Sophie Rogers' school principal in the article [“The Benefits of Singing to Children.”](#)

publications & conferences

A. Sophie Rogers' school principal Anneliese Johnson and assistant principal Samantha Peterson were published in [ZERO TO THREE's](#) January 2019 journal. Their article “Supporting Individual and Community Identity Development in Infant-Toddlers Classrooms” discussed the development of identity and cultural belonging for infants and toddlers in early childhood.

Preschool master teachers Sara Bradley, Meredith Schilling, and Vanessa Shrontz presented at the [Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children](#) annual conference in May on “Examining Challenging Behaviors from a Trauma Lens.” The teachers discussed trauma and toxic stress in children as well as common behavior problems and self-regulation strategies. They ended with a discussion on effective training for teachers as well as the importance of teachers practicing self-care.

Video: teacher perspectives on quality

Preschool lead teachers Oliva Diaz Melgarejo and Whytnie Strain, and infant/toddler master teacher Jessica Junk, shared their views on what they think makes a quality early learning classroom environment. [Watch the video here.](#) ■

policy

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POLICY: *by the numbers*

BY THE NUMBERS



4

WHITE PAPERS PUBLISHED ON PRESSING POLICY QUESTIONS

Winter 2019

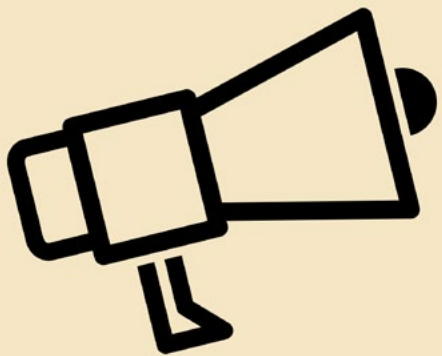
Early Child Care Provider Perspectives:

What do unrated providers plan to do before the July 2020 Step Up to Quality deadline?

Jaclyn M. Dynia, Ph.D., Abel J. Koury, Ph.D., Rebecca Dore, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Child care quality, accessibility, and affordability are critical concerns for families, especially those experiencing poverty. In Ohio, child care quality is regulated and monitored through Step Up to Quality (SUTQ), a tiered rating system that compensates providers with additional funding as they earn more stars (1-5). For those providers that accept publicly funded child care (PFCC) from the state, participation in SUTQ is required as of July 1, 2020. Yet, there are still many programs across Ohio that are not yet SUTQ rated.

To understand these unrated providers' plans as they approach this deadline, we emailed a survey



43

POLICY NEWSLETTERS



introduced workshop for researchers seeking to make their work more policy-relevant

May 2019

Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment: Does It Forecast Third-Grade Reading Success?

Laura Justice, Ph.D., Abel Koury, Ph.D., & Jessica Logan, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION
For many children, kindergarten marks their first entrance into formal schooling. Children's experiences prior to kindergarten are highly diverse, therefore the use of kindergarten-readiness screeners provides an important mechanism to determine a child's academic strengths and needs, so that teachers can provide differentiated instruction during the kindergarten year to get all children on track for longer-term academic success. In 2014, Ohio's schools implemented a new kindergarten readiness screener - the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). The KRA provides a broadened representation of children's readiness relative to the prior assessment, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L), which focused only on language and literacy skills. In this paper, we examined the predictive relations between children's KRA scores at



11

lawmaker visits



50+

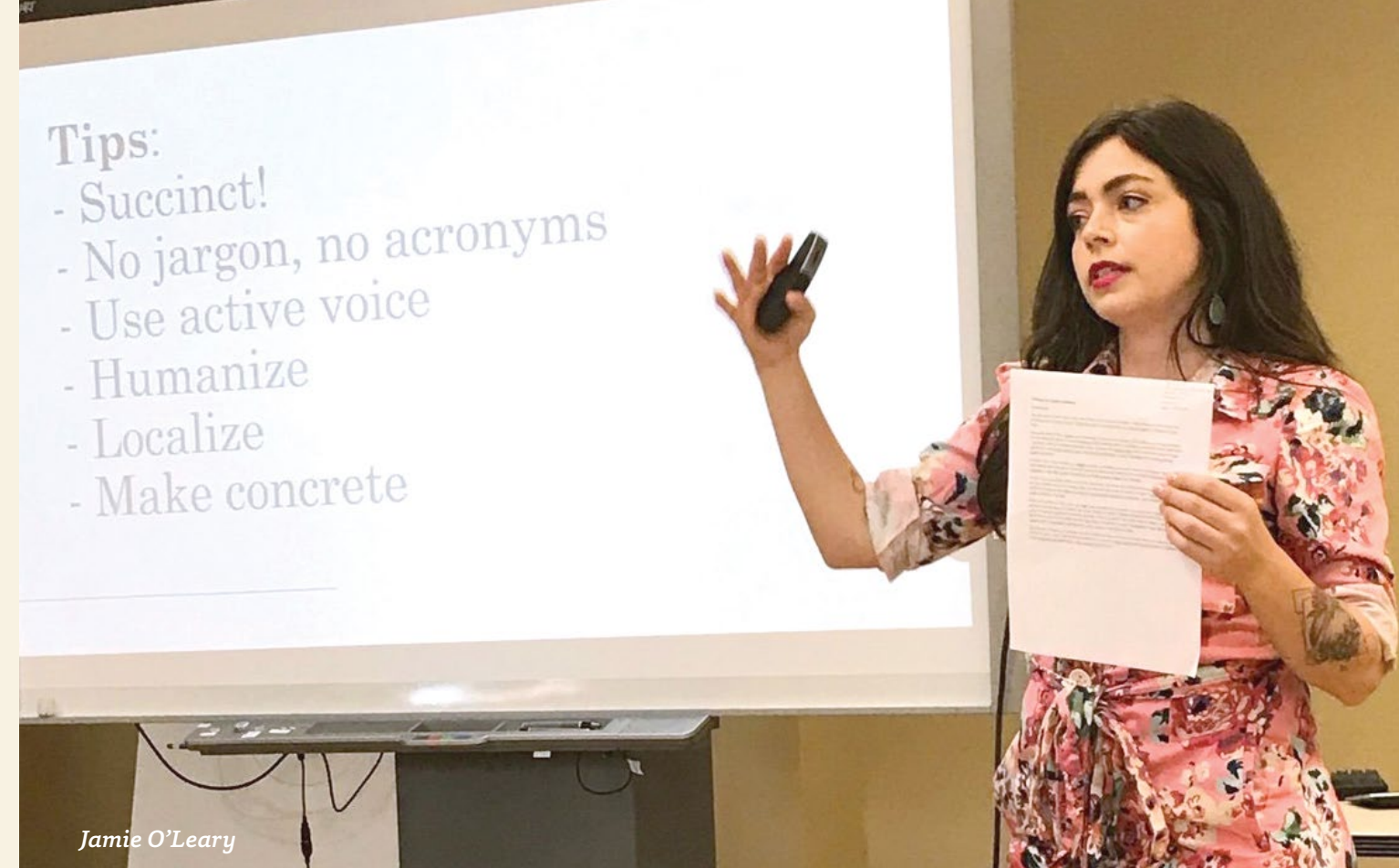
policy makers, legislative aides, researchers, and early care providers attended our first-ever policy forum

seeking policy relevance in everyday work

This year, we've ramped up efforts to engage Ohio policy leaders as well as to translate our work in ways that are more accessible to them. At the same time, we've explored ways to engage more of our researchers (and school partners) in the policy domain and to build our skills at doing so.

news & information

We launched a Friday morning e-newsletter that curates policy-relevant news from Ohio and nationally, as related to early childhood and education in general. We also analyze current issues or initiatives affecting children, as well as track state legislation (e.g., [see this recap of the biennial budget](#)).



training and translation

In May, Associate Director of Policy Jamie O'Leary held a workshop for researchers seeking to make their work more policy-relevant. Keep your eye out for a similar 2020 offering, as well as other training opportunities to write and translate researchers for various audiences.

We also published four white papers on pressing policy questions, namely about Ohio's third-grade reading guarantee, whether the state's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment predicts later reading success, and two about publicly funded childcare in Franklin County and across the state. [Check out the white papers here.](#)



Sen. Louis Blessing III (R-Cotterain Township)



Rep. Kristin Boggs (D-Columbus)



Rep. Susan Manchester (R-Waynesfield)



Sen. Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus)

engagement and outreach to policy leaders

We hosted 11 state lawmakers – Republican and Democrat and from both chambers – to tour our research center and school. We also worked on strengthening relationships with the City of Columbus, county government, Columbus City Schools, State Board of Education, state agencies including the Ohio Department of Education and Department of Jobs and Family Services, as well as the governor’s office.

In October, we co-hosted a [policy forum](#) at the Statehouse alongside Ohio’s Legislative Children’s Caucus to explore research related to quality early learning and to build bridges between research and policy communities locally.

We also featured several local policy voices in a panel discussion at our annual [Symposium on Children](#), including Ohio House Representative Allison Russo; Columbus City Council Member Elizabeth Brown; Director of Franklin County Jobs and Family Services, Joy Bivens; and CEO of Columbus Early Learning Centers, Dr. Gina Ginn.



Dr. Kelly Purtell



Policy forum speakers and organizers

a seat at the table

Dr. Laura Justice was selected to serve on the state’s clearinghouse review panel, which determines which resources make their way into Ohio’s new [Evidence-Based Clearinghouse](#) to be used by Ohio school districts. She also serves on the advisory group for [Future Ready Columbus](#).

In September, Dr. Kelly Purtell, assistant professor of human sciences at EHE and faculty associate at the Crane Center, presented to the Ohio Legislative Children’s Caucus as part of a panel discussion about the importance of early learning environments. Meanwhile, Dr. Jaclyn Dynia, senior research specialist, continues to serve on the state’s [Child Care Advisory Council](#).

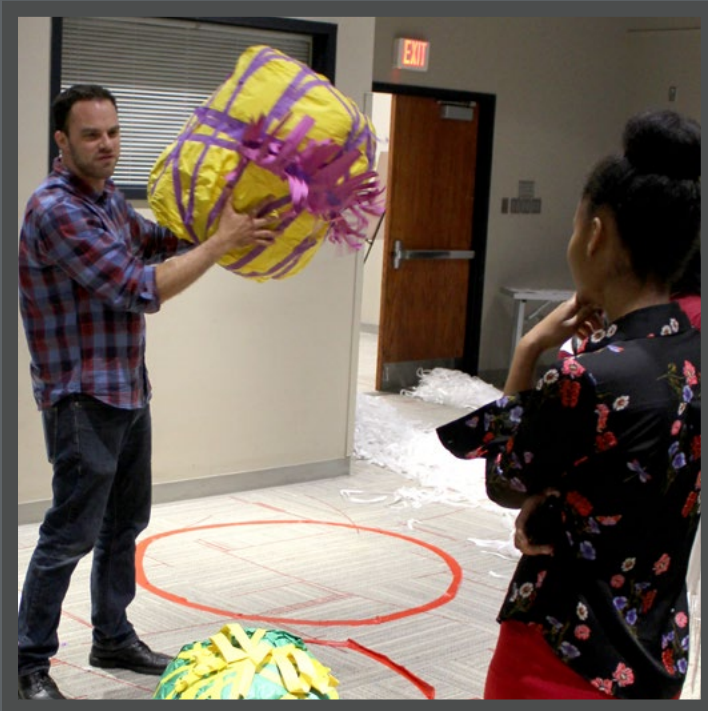
Crane staff, faculty, and scientists continue to put their heads together to find new ways to not only engage policy audiences, but also translate their research in ways that have impact on policy and practice. ■

events

CRANE CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH AND POLICY
SCHOENBAUM FAMILY CENTER

EVENTS: *by the numbers*


BY THE NUMBERS




200+
PEOPLE ATTENDED OUR SYMPOSIUM ON CHILDREN



87
highest attendance to date at a Crane Research Forum






16
events for researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and the community



Dr. Roberta Golinkoff



Dr. Scott Graves, Jr.



Dr. Iheoma Iruka

events

Events are a natural outpouring of our research and community engagement and offer a chance for us to gather together to discuss the work – and think about the future. More than 1,000 people registered for our 2019 events in order to learn and discuss a wide range of topics related to child well-being.

A major theme this year was *quality*, with the topic being central for our practitioner-focused [Summer Institute](#), sixth annual [Symposium on Children](#), and our first-ever co-hosted [policy forum](#).

In the spring, Dr. Roberta Golinkoff, Unidel H. Rodney Sharp Professor of Education, Psychological and Brain Sciences, and Linguistics and Cognitive Science at the University of Delaware, joined us as our Distinguished Speaker and spoke about [“The Magic and Mystery of Language in the First Three Years of Life.”](#)

Finally, an event which examined narratives regarding the [suspension and expulsion for Black boys](#), drew our largest Crane Research Forum crowd to date – a fact we are proud of in terms of giving stage to the great work of OSU researchers in tackling some of our community’s most pressing issues. ■



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partnering to improve children's well-being through research, practice, and policy



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COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

www.earlychildhood.ehe.osu.edu