



Innovation in Early Education

SXSW EDU Proposal Slidedeck

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It's amazing what they absorb before they're five.





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Innovation in Early Education Panel Summary

Continued evidence supports the fact that the first five years of a child's life are critical for setting the foundations for lifelong academic, personal and professional success, especially for low-income children and families. But where should we focus our efforts for the greatest impact? Which needs must be addressed most urgently? The Ounce of Prevention fund, a leader in research, program development and policy/advocacy in the field of early childhood education since 1982, will lead a panel discussion of the key macro-trends and urgent needs in the early learning space to address to impact our youngest learners, especially our most vulnerable



Panelists

Diana Rauner

President, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Sam Yagan

CEO, ShopRunner

Ashley Beckner

Venture Partner, Investments,
Omidyar Network

Cassie Walker Burke

Panel Moderator
Bureau Chief, Chalkbeat Chicago



#Realities - Key truths that will influence all of our innovation efforts

- 1. Poverty Persists:** mobility is stagnant; face of poverty remains young, black/brown women, urban, single¹
 - Result of institutional racism, poverty impacts practitioners, parents, and children's development²
 - 5.3MM children under five living in poverty; half of the 2MM early educators qualify for public aid²
- 2. Minority-Majority:** more than half of babies born today are children of color; trend will continue¹,
- 3. Racial, Generational and Instructional Equity:** gaining recognition as necessary to provide equitable education
 - Quality Matters: 50% of programs low quality overall; disadvantaged kids more likely to be in low quality programs
- 4. Responsive Practice:** to address changing demographics, cultural and linguistic diversity & specialized learning needs
- 5. Digital Age:** babies today are raised by digital-native Gen Y and Z parents and educators⁵
 - Social emotional skills critical in the yet-to-be-defined tech jobs of the future⁵
 - Antiquated and/or limited access for some families
- 6. Privacy/ Security concerns:** must be aware of this when asking families to share personal info (GDPR*)
- 7. ECE Growing Support:** increasing public & political awareness of importance of Early childhood Education (ECE)⁶
 - However, lack of awareness/ understanding of importance of ECE persists²
 - Societal stigmas, negative perceptions of people living in poverty may inhibit support²
- 8. Move Toward Universal Pre-K:** means gap in access to early learning programs for our youngest learners (<4 yrs. old)
- 9. Increased ECE Investment:** Gov't, parents (who can afford), and employers investing more in ECE^{2, 5}
 - Growing number of governors and mayors making ECE funding a priority⁶
 - New funding opportunities for high quality ECE have begun to expand beyond traditional sources⁵



Macro Trends in Early Childhood Education 2019

Systems & Policy

Political Backing, But...
Strong bi-partisan support continues – more advocacy needed⁶

Increased ECE Investment Needed:
Growing understanding of government support needed by policy makers²⁰; lack of coherence to meet the needs (e.g. eligibility cliff)

Most programs are developed for a very small segment of the population- Must be both accessible & acceptable to families

Need Gap

Support equitable access to high quality teaching and early learning

Family & Community Engagement

Evolving Community & Family Structures

Disconnected communities, diverse household structures (single moms, dual workers) mean ECE sorely needed⁴
2-Gen approaches accepted

Under Pressure: Increased understanding of stress & trauma's prevalence and connection to physical & behavioral health, learning + well-being⁸

Insta-Generation:
digital natives' high use of and expectations of tech^{5,9}
- May contribute to increased isolation

Need Gap

Meet needs of 21st century families

Workforce Development

Early Childhood Workforce U⁵

Undervalued, Underprepared, Underpaid,² Understaffed, Under-supported

ECE Stigmas, Challenges
negative perceptions, testing issues to enter the field, etc., present barrier to entry and high turnover²

Field Fragmentation:
Many labels & roles; no alignment in preparation, esp. mixed service delivery responsibilities, & pay²

Need Gap

Create a strong, diverse, competent workforce to deliver outcomes

EC Teaching & Learning

Fragmentation in ECE learning standards, curriculum and instruction, and weak prof learning environments & opportunities that nurture, develop & retain teachers & practitioners

Data sources, standards & systems & Assessment Void:
Teaching and HV conditions, practice assessments, formative and kindergarten readiness assessments – no clear alignment²

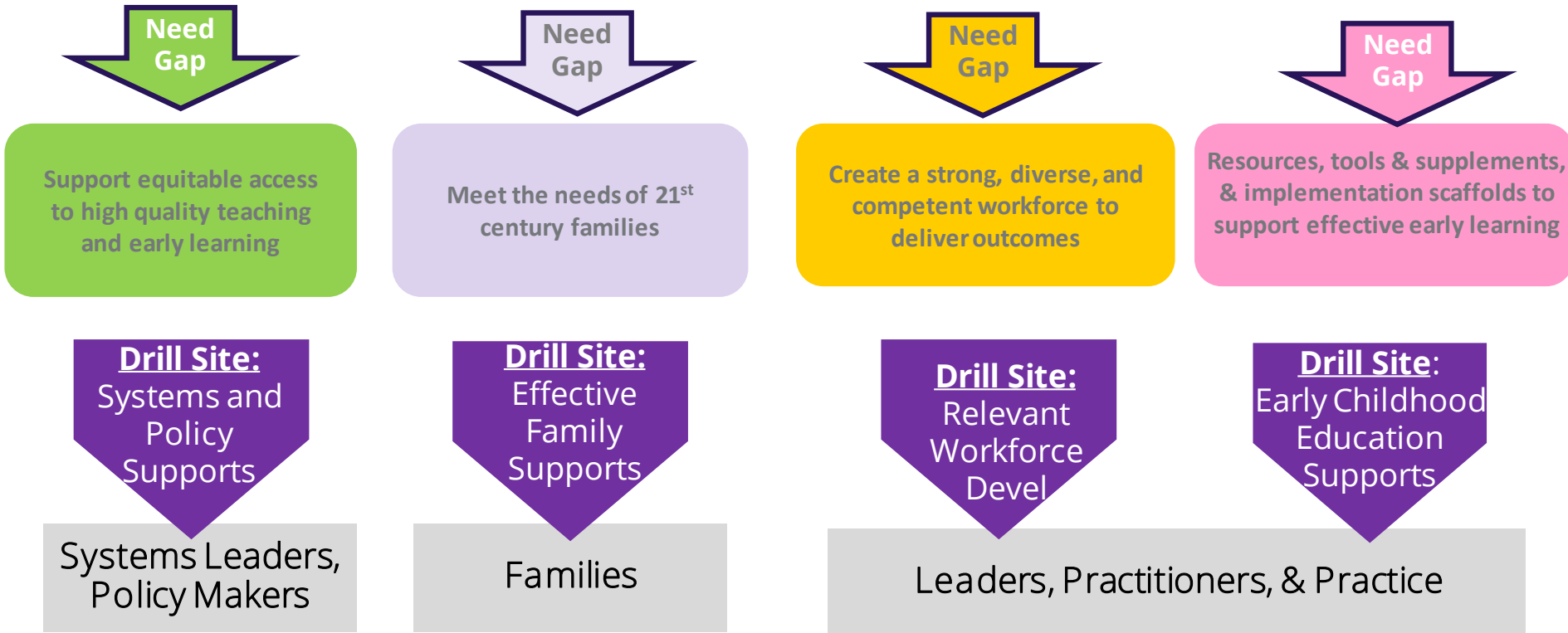
Support needed: for practitioners, kids, and parents experiencing biases, secondary trauma⁷ must all be family & child centered

Need Gap

Resources, tools, supplements, implementation scaffolds to support effective early learning

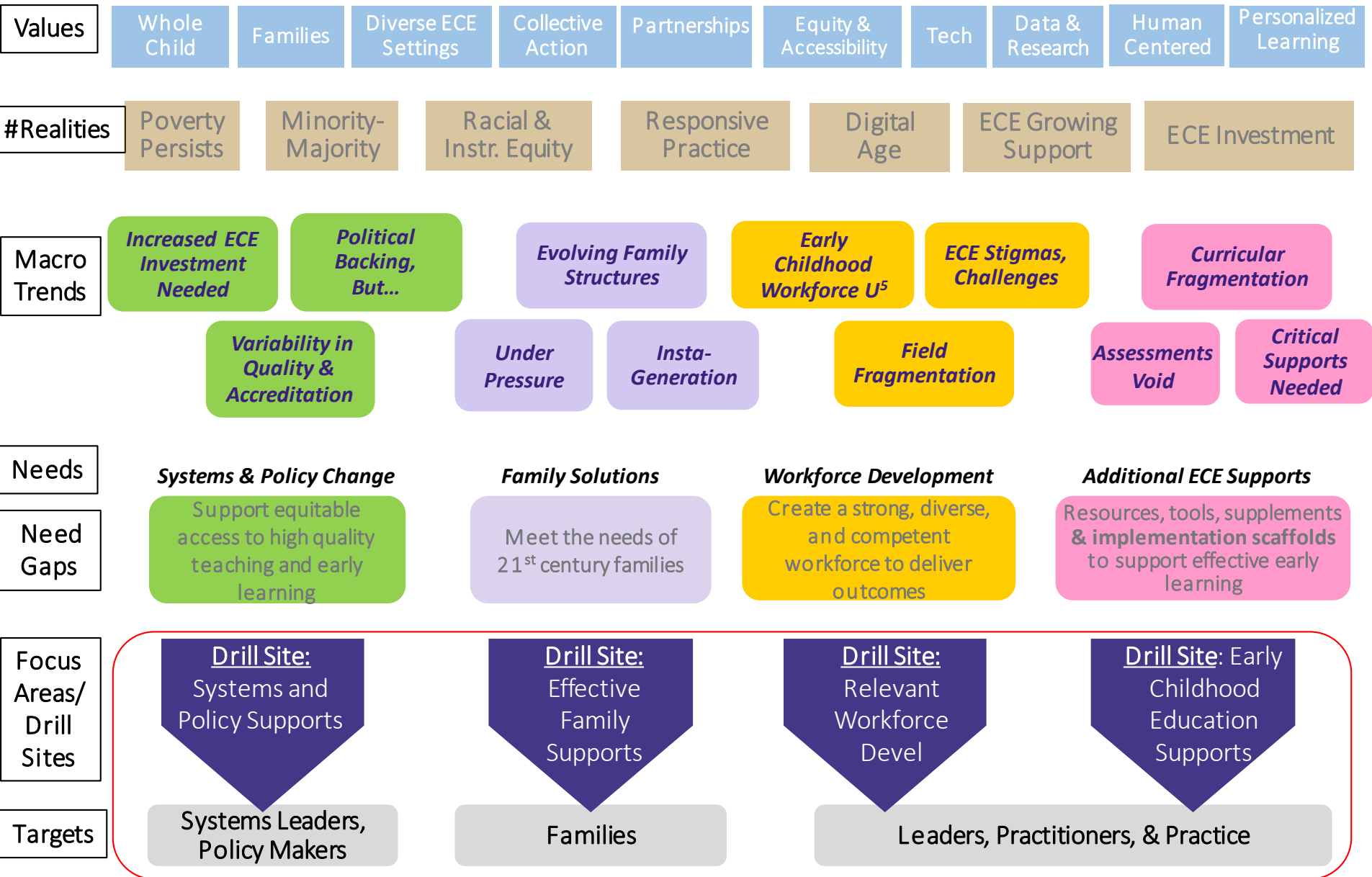


Key Needs/Gaps, Audiences and Drill Sites





Innovation Framework Summary





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APPENDIX



Innovation Framework Definitions

- **Early Learning:** prenatal care and education for families and children birth through age five
- **Values:** What we believe that will guide innovation efforts
- **Realities (#Facts):** Foundational themes/truths that all of our ideas & innovation efforts will embody
- **Macro-trends:** Habits, beliefs, or behaviors currently prevalent among constituents that inform innovation
 - Macro trends have a long life; they are the result of many forces that cannot be manipulated
 - A large-scale, sustained shift in consumer interest, habits, belief, or behavior
 - Macro trends have the potential to become a long-term influence on the future (people/markets)
- **Areas of Need:** Needs and gaps in the field that are currently unfilled or inadequately filled that we (Ounce) is uniquely positioned to address
- **Drill Sites:** Key focus areas for innovation ideation, driven out of the areas of needs
- **Audiences:** Beneficiaries of the interventions we will develop
- **Human-Centered Design:** places the people we seek to serve and other key stakeholders at the center of the innovation and Stage Gate process, and delivers value by actively engaging end users, buyers and other constituencies throughout the process to ensure their needs and expectations inform intervention design
- **Rapid cycle iteration:** leveraging insights to develop an initial program draft, or prototype, and quickly testing, then amending the prototype based on learnings. This process continues until feedback confirms the model/prototype meets the need most effectively



Emerging/ Other Trends...

Key areas worth keeping an eye on

- Gap in birth – two solutions (many more focused on Pre-K)
- DEI – Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (continued focus)
- Tech: AI – Voice & sound analysis to inform teacher PD
 - Leveraging AI to overcome human biases that hinder diversity
- Technology negatives - repercussions of increasing usage of technology
 - Especially with young children and on quality relationships and care?
 - Who is this cutting-edge innovation reaching and who is it leaving out?
- Gamification (continued focus)



Macro Trends Impacting Early Childhood Education 2019

Political Backing
Growing number of governors making ECE funding a priority;

Growing understanding of government support needed: significant investment necessary to close the ECE wage gap, to solve current no-win situation: parents can't pay more and educators can't make less

Accreditation standards: extreme credentialing variability between states

Revised Standards/Req'mts: shifting from compliance-based to continuous improvem't approaches

Support equitable access to high quality teaching & early learning

Evolving family structures
more single-parent households and two-working-parent families fueling increased demand for affordable, quality child care

Under Pressure: Increased understanding of trauma's prevalence and connection to physical & behavioral health + well-being

Insta-Generation: Mobile is universal; 98% of HHs own mobile device: smart phones/tablets growth; lap/desk tops flat

Text Me! Today's families expect tech communication & social engagement

Google It: families actively seeking resources to improve parenting skills online

Family solutions needed to meet needs of 21st century families

ECE Workforce Undervalued, Underpaid:
Lowest paid of all educators, esp. I/T workers; nearly 1/2 depend on public assistance

Workforce underprepared:
ECE workforce is lowest educated Lack of uniformity in minimum educational requirements and funding across programs and settings

Growing barriers to entry in ECE from practitioners:
low wages, education requirement, etc.

Role clarity/ consistency:
Many labels & roles, but no alignment with preparation, responsibilities, & pay

Lack family training: Lack of teacher preparedness in how to effectively engage families

Create a strong, diverse, and competent workforce to deliver outcomes

Void - Effective Curricula Supporting Instructional Excellence : lack of/ non existence of effective curricula/ e.g. curricula to found to positively impact outcomes)

Curricular Fragmentation:
lack of consistent use of effective curricula (two existing curricula used in 72% of HS classrooms, but fragmentation in & outside of Head Start):

Void: Kindergarten readiness assessment – no clear alignment on one assessment for the field!

Growing importance of SEL:
heightened appreciation of SEL to tomorrow'' not yet defined jobs

Support needed: for practitioners experiencing biases, secondary trauma

Resources, tools & supplements to support effective early learning