Innovation in Early Childhood Practice and Policy

Ashley Beckner, Omidyar Network
Steffanie Clothier, Gary Community Investments
Louise Stoney, Opportunities Exchange
Helene Stebbins, moderator
MANY things have changed since my first ECE job in 1985....
But Despite Changes, Many of the Same Challenges Remain…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major concerns in 1985:</th>
<th>Major concerns TODAY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages for child care staff are too low</td>
<td>Wages for child care staff are too low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of child care is too high</td>
<td>Cost of child care is too high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost no government support for child care; families pay the lion’s share</td>
<td>Despite increases in government support, money is still insufficient; families pay the lion’s share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough child care available</td>
<td>Field still believes that there is not enough child care in many places</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Hasn’t the Needle Moved in 30+ Years?

If you do what you’ve always done; you get what you’ve always gotten!
The Traditional ECE Business Model Doesn’t Work

To meet NAEYC standards and break even must have:

- At least 100 children
- Full enrollment (every day, every slot)
- Full fee collection (every dime)
- Tuition price close to cost of service delivery

The Iron Triangle of ECE Finance

1. Full Enrollment
2. Full Fee Collection
3. Revenues Cover Per-Child Cost
“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”

Albert Einstein
To accelerate the sourcing, testing and funding of new ideas to tackle challenges in early childhood.

To spark innovation and support scaling by bridging the early childhood sector with new actors from the private sector, finance, and technology.

To spur investment opportunities and catalyze private sector activity that will lead to improved child outcomes.

AN INVESTOR APPROACH

INNOVATION PRIZE

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

SEED FUNDING
$1M awarded to the top 15 ideas.

The Early Childhood Innovation Prize

- **Submissions**: The Early Childhood Innovation Prize received 570 submissions from 108 countries.

- **Mentors**: 120 mentors offered advice and support to 217 Prize innovators.

- **Evaluators**: 124 expert evaluators from across the early childhood, business and design thinking fields reviewed all submissions.

- **Community**: 1,637 individuals engaged with the Early Childhood Innovation Prize.

- **Reach**: The Prize website received more than 9,901 page views, demonstrating the reach of the Early Childhood Innovation Prize.
New Ideas and Innovations
Top Idea

EARLY INNOVATOR

City of Boston
Early Educator Space

Addressing the shortage of infant toddler care by leveraging city housing solutions to retain and expand family child care.
Early Experiences Matter

Top Idea

EARLY INNOVATOR

Pie for Providers

Pie for Providers

Providing back office support for family child care providers to reduce the administrative and regulatory burden of running the business.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decentralized, teacher-led Montessori micro-schools</td>
<td>Significant evidence base for Montessori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomically diverse</td>
<td>Faster scale through micro model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connected through the Wildflower network</td>
<td>Cost efficiency through reduction of layers = increased teacher income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing observational technology in partnership with MIT Media Lab</td>
<td>Community of practice and professional development for teacher leaders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT

Platform for in-home care providers for program setup, licensing, marketing, and everything in between

A marketplace for parents to search Wonderschool programs, schedule visits, enroll their children, and make payments

Community of practice for educators

Growing rapidly across the US

WHY

Increase in provider income and job sustainability (providers making 2-4x more)

More efficient matching between providers and parents

Community of practice and professional development for caregivers

All of the above = better outcomes for children and families
**WHAT**

In-home or in-school early learning readiness program focused on literacy, math and science

15 minutes per day, 5 days per week

Parent coach provides support on program and other areas of child development

Technology and internet provided for those who don’t have access

**WHY**

Outstanding outcomes – on average children enter kindergarten at the level their peers exit, and these gains persist through 4th grade

Cost effective

Blended approach that involves the parent in the learning

Scalable and reaching the hardest to reach including rural populations and refugees
“UPSTART IS A GAMECHANGER FOR ANY SCHOOL, DISTRICT OR STATE TRYING TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OUTCOMES AND CLOSE EARLY LEARNING GAPS... WHILE KEEPING COSTS LOW AND REACHING CHILDREN MOST IN NEED”

- SENATOR HOWARD STEPHENSON, UTAH STATE SENATE
WHAT

Text messages 3 times per week to parents of children birth to age 8, customized by age

Literacy, math, socio-emotional, health content

Distributed through partnerships with schools, counties, libraries, states and media platforms

WHY

Outstanding outcomes – RCT evidence demonstrated children gained 2 to 3 months of additional learning and parents reported more engagement in learning

Highly scalable – already reaching over 150,000 families
Innovation Implications for Policy and Advocacy
IF YOU WANT SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER HAD, YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER DONE.