

DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHILD AND FAMILY POLICY

Public Policy 407

Spring 2010

Professor Ariel Kalil

Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies

Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:50: Woodlawn room

Office Hours by Appointment

Office: Harris School #110; 834-2090, a-kalil@uchicago.edu

Families and children are increasingly in the public policy spotlight. Unemployment rates have reached decade-high levels in the last year, with higher rates anticipated by the end of this year. Poverty in the United States climbed to 13.2 percent in 2008, up from 12.5 percent in 2007, the highest level since 1997; the poverty rate for children under the age of 18 rose from 18 percent in 2007 to 19 percent in 2009. Female-headed households with no husband present make up half of all families in poverty. Father absence, step-parent families, and non-marital cohabitation are increasingly common living arrangements experienced by children.

This course is designed to overview and to address current policy issues involving children and families, particularly those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, by applying the scientific perspective of developmental psychology. The following topics will be addressed: early interventions; family structure and child development; poverty and family processes; maternal employment and parental job loss; child care; immigration; children's health, and neighborhood environments. Theoretical perspectives and measurements, (e.g., the tools of the science), regarding how children develop from infancy to adulthood will be stressed. We will also consider different methodological approaches to research at the intersection of child development and public policy research.

The course will combine lecture and seminar format. Typically, Tuesday classes will cover fundamental theories and research central to an aspect of children's development at issue in a current policy debate. On Thursdays, an area expert will present cutting-edge research on the week's policy topic. Tuesday classes will be led by Professor Kalil in a lecture style, whereas Thursday classes will operate as interactive seminars. Student participation, debate, and critique are strongly encouraged for all class types, however, and represent a significant proportion of your final grade.

Class Participation. Students are expected to do all of the required reading before class. Much of the class sessions will be used to discuss and critique the assigned readings. What is the theory being advanced? What are the substantive findings? What is the methodological approach? How do they bear on public policy? The active participation

of all members of the class is essential to the course's success. Therefore, it is important that you do all the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss and debate the issues raised in them.

In addition, by **5:00 pm** on the Monday preceding each Tuesday class, students are required to submit (to the Chalk website) at least **two different** short "reflections" or questions pertaining to issues for that day's readings that they think merit detailed discussion in class. These "reflections" might take any number of forms, including, but not limited to: your assessment of the most important or innovative aspects of a study; a critique of a study's research design, methodology or conclusions; your opinion of the study's application to public policy; your assessment of how to reconcile the findings from one particular study with other, disparate findings from other assigned readings; or your thoughts on an important "puzzle" this research poses. The specific form of your "reflection" is less important than whether it demonstrates having carefully read and thought about the readings. You should be prepared to jump-start class discussion with your reflections, so make sure to bring them to class as well.

Written Assignments:

Reaction Papers. Four times throughout the quarter, students will be required to submit short papers (4-5 double-spaced pages) that reflect on the readings assigned for that week. Two of these papers should provide a critical analysis of the issues that one of the articles assigned that week raised for you. The other two papers should provide a critical analysis of the paper and presentation by one of our area-experts. The purpose of both types of reaction papers is to provide a critical analysis. Your analysis should summarize and critique the author(s)' (1) theoretical arguments; (2) empirical claims; and (3) policy and practice considerations. In addition, the two reaction papers responding to the area-expert should also relate the authors' research to the week's readings, either focusing on its contribution to the developmental literature or arguing its relevance to child development on theoretical grounds. The summary of these three elements should take 1-2 double-spaced pages and the critique of these three elements should take 2-3 double-spaced pages (i.e., aim for 4-5 double-spaced pages total for each of your papers).

Reaction papers must be submitted to the Chalk website on **Mondays by 5pm** (on the Monday after a paper is presented by area-expert, and on the Monday prior to the session in which an assigned reading will be discussed). Please use a standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins and make sure your documents are free of typos and grammatical errors. At least two of these papers must be submitted within the first 5 weeks of the course.

Policy Brief. Each student will write a 10-page, double-spaced policy brief taking a position on one of the policy issues addressed in the course. The purpose of the paper is to become an "expert" on a particular issue and argue for a particular course of policy action. Your brief should draw upon the relevant research from developmental psychology, as well as sociology, demography and economics as is relevant, to make its point. You should also demonstrate mastery of the policy options available and the research supporting strategies other than the one you propose.

This paper is due on or before **Thursday May 20**. Please use a standard 12-point font with 1-inch margins and make sure your documents are free of typos and grammatical errors.

Submitting your assignments to the Chalk Drop Box:

From within the course site, click the "Student Drop Box" link on the left side of the page, then click the "Send File" button. Next, enter the title of the file* and click "Browse" to find it on your computer. Click "Submit" at the bottom of the page to send the file to the instructor. When naming files to be sent via the Drop Box, it's best to include your name or initials to maintain a unique filename. Don't use non-alphanumeric characters (%#&@), as this can cause the file to display improperly for some users. Mac Users: be sure to add the three-letter extension (.doc, .pdf, .mp3) to your filenames before uploading them.

Grading. The grade for the course will be determined by the following: 30 points for class participation; 10 points for each of the four reaction papers (40 total), and 30 points for the policy brief. There is no additional mid-term or final exam.

Note: class participation points will be roughly allocated as follows: 3 points per week for each of the 10 weeks of class, which includes the timely posting of thorough reflections on the readings. No credit is available for students failing to post reflections for any given class meeting day. Given the weight placed on class participation, students are expected to attend each class session, except in cases of illness or extenuating circumstances, and to notify me in advance if you must miss class. Even if you must miss class, you are still expected to post your "reflections" on Chalk.

Grades will be awarded based on total points:

A	93-100;	A-	90-92;	B+	87-89;	B	83-88;	B-	80-82
C+	77-79;	C	73-78;	C-	70-72;	F	< 70		

Course Materials

Course materials are available on the Chalk website or through direct weblinks included on the syllabus. You can access the materials from any campus computer or off-campus computer as long as you have a University connection. In addition, two books are required, which are widely available for purchase online.

Mayer, S. (1997). *What money can't buy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Class Calendar

March 30	Introduction to the course
April 1	Theoretical perspectives
April 6	Parenting and child development
April 8	Ethnic group divergence in children's early cognitive development (Guest Speaker: Micere Keels)
April 13	Early intervention and child outcomes
April 15	US and international poverty reduction programs (Guest speaker: Elizabeth Gershoff)
April 20	Maternal employment and child development
April 22	Employment, job loss, and child development in low-income families (Guest Speaker: Heather Hill)
April 27	Child care quality and child development
April 29	Summer child care experiences and child development (Guest Speaker: Amy Claessens)
May 4	Immigration and child development
May 6	Child development in undocumented immigrant families (Guest Speaker: Hiro Yoshikawa)
May 11	Family influences on children's health
May 13	Neighborhood environments and child development (Guest Speaker: Stefanie DeLuca)

May 18	Family income, income supports and child development
May 20	Children's home environments and child development (Guest Speaker: Ofer Malamud)
May 25	Family structure and father involvement
May 27	Unwed fatherhood (Guest Speaker: Kevin Roy)
June 1	Putting it all together: Policy challenges for this/next generation?
June 3	Putting it all together II: (Guest speaker: Bessie Wilkerson, Harlem Children's Zone)

Calendar of Readings and Seminars

MARCH 30 **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE:**

APRIL 1 **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

- Scarr, S. (1992). Developmental theories for the 1990s: Development and individual differences. *Child Development, 63*, 1-19.
- Baumrind, D. (1993). The average expectable environment is not good enough: A response to Scarr. *Child Development, 64*, 1299-1317.
- Stiles, J. (2009). On genes, brains, and behavior: Why should developmental psychologists care about brain development? *Child Development Perspectives, 3*, 196-202.
- Turkheimer, E. et al. (2003). Socioeconomic status modifies heritability of IQ in young children. *Psychological Science, 14*(6), 623-628.

APRIL 6 **PARENTING AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

- Collins, W. A., Maccoby, E. E., Steinberg, L., Hetherington, E. M., & Bornstein, M. H. (2000). Contemporary research on parenting: The case for nature and nurture. *American Psychologist, 55*, 218-232.
- Pratt, M.W., Kerig, P., Cowan, P.A., & Cowan, C.P. (1988). Mothers and fathers teaching 3-year-olds: Authoritative parenting and adult scaffolding of young children's learning. *Developmental Psychology, 24*, 832-839.
- Olds, D. & Kitzman, H. (1993). Review of research on home visiting for pregnant women and parents of young children. *The Future of Children, 3*(3), 53-92.
- Breitenstein, S. M. Gross, D., Ordaz, I., Julion, W., Garvey, C. & Ridge, A. (2007). Promoting mental health in early childhood programs serving families from low-income neighborhoods. *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, 13*, 313-320.

APRIL 8 **ETHNIC GROUP DIVERGENCE IN CHILDREN’S EARLY COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Guest Speaker, Micere Keels, University of Chicago

APRIL 13 **EARLY INTERVENTION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Love, et al (2005). The effectiveness of Early Head Start for 3-year-old children and their parents: Lessons for policy and programs, *Developmental Psychology*, 41, 885-901.

Fernald, L. & Gunnar, M. (2009). Poverty-alleviation program participation and salivary cortisol in very low-income children. *Social Science and Medicine*, 68, 2180-2189.

Knudsen, E., Heckman, J., Cameron, J. & Shonkoff, J (2006). Economic, neurobiological, and behavioral perspectives on building America’s future workforce. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 103 (27) 10155-10162.

Zigler, E. & Styfco, S. J. (2004). *The Head Start Debates*. Chapters 1-3 (Available on Chalk).

APRIL 15 **FROM OPORTUNIDADES TO THE HARLEM CHILDREN’S ZONE: THE RESEARCH BASE FOR NOVEL US AND INTERNATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMS**

Guest Speaker, Elizabeth Gershoff, University of Texas

APRIL 20 **PARENTAL EMPLOYMENT AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Bianchi, S. (2000). Maternal employment and time with children: Dramatic change or surprising continuity? *Demography*, 37, 401-414.

Gennetian, L., Lopoo, L., & London, A. (2008). Maternal work hours and adolescents school outcomes among low-income families in four urban counties. *Demography*, 45, 31-53.

Kalil, A. & Ziol-Guest, K. (2008). Parental job loss and children's academic progress in two-parent families. *Social Science Research*, 37, 500-515.

Kalil, A. (2009). Joblessness, family relations, and children’s development. Family Matters [Australian Institute of Family Studies], 83, 15-22. [On Chalk]

APRIL 22 **MATERNAL JOB LOSS AND CHILD CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR IN LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

Guest Speaker, Heather Hill, University of Chicago

APRIL 27 CHILD CARE AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Shonkoff, J. & Phillips, D. A. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Child Development*, Chapter 11.

McCartney, K., Dearing, E., Taylor, B.A., & Bub, K. (2007). "Quality child care supports the achievement of low-income children: Direct and indirect effects through caregiving and the home environment." *J. of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 28, 411-426.

NICHD ECCRN & Duncan, G. (2003). "Modeling the Impacts of Child Care Quality on Children's Preschool Cognitive Development." *Child Development*, 74, 1454-1475.

APRIL 29 SUMMER CHILD CARE EXPERIENCES AND CHILD WELL-BEING FOR YOUNG SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Guest Speaker, Amy Claessens, University of Chicago

MAY 4 CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Hernandez, D., Denton, N., & Macartney, S. (2007). Children in immigrant families. *SRCD Social Policy Report*, 22, 3-22.

Takanishi, R. (2004). Leveling the playing field: Supporting immigrant children from birth to eight. *The Future of Children*, 14, 61-80.

Crosnoe, R. & Kalil, A. (2010). Educational progress and parenting among Mexican immigrant mothers of young children. *Journal of Marriage and Family* (On Chalk).

Kalil, A. & Crosby, D. (2010). Welfare leaving and the health of young children in immigrant and native families. *Social Science Research*, 39, 202-214.

MAY 6 CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

Guest Speaker, Hiro Yoshikawa, Harvard University

MAY 11 FAMILY INFLUENCES ON CHILD HEALTH

Flaherty, E.G. et al. (2006). Effect of early childhood adversity on child health. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 160: 1232-1238.

