

# Oregon Family Impact Seminar

February 2015

## Two-Generation Approaches to Reduce Poverty Summary

In Oregon, many families are struggling with poverty-related hardship. The percentage of children living in poverty has increased by 30 percent to nearly 1 in 4. Oregon ranks 45th in the United States in parents who are unemployed (7.5% vs 6.3% nationally). The experience of poverty can disrupt healthy brain development and school readiness in children, and it can impair adults' cognitive and emotional functioning and harm their parenting practices. This seminar presents current models and the latest scientific research on evidence-based strategies to lift families out of poverty through addressing both parent and child at the same time (two-generation approaches). It discusses the use of "big data" to calculate return on investment across the lifecycle.

### Two-Generation Approaches

Two-generation approaches to reducing poverty simultaneously focus on parents and children of the same family to:

- Increase parent employment, family income, and family economic independence
- Reduce parental stress and increase parenting skills
- Improve health and development of children

Programs and policies can focus on helping parents establish stable housing, engage in workforce development training, and receive earnings subsidies. Children are enrolled in programs to promote early childhood development through education and health services. Studies have shown that simultaneous intervention programs for parents and children can have a stronger impact than providing separate programs.

### Greg Duncan, Ph.D.

Dr. Duncan is the Distinguished Professor of Education at the University of California, Irvine. He has studied the economic mobility of the U.S. population, both within and across generations, with a particular focus on low-income families. Dr. Duncan's research has highlighted the importance of early childhood as a sensitive period for the damaging influences of economic deprivation as well as for the beneficial impacts of policy-induced income increases for working families. Recently, his research has shifted to understand the relative importance of early academic skills, cognitive and emotional self-regulation, and health in promoting children's eventual success in school and the labor market.

### C. Cybele Raver, Ph.D.

Dr. Raver is the Vice Provost of Faculty and Research Affairs and Professor of Applied Psychology at New York University. Her research has focused on examining the mechanisms that support children's self-regulation in the contexts of poverty and social policy. Dr. Raver leads the Chicago School Readiness Project, a federally funded Randomized Control Trial of a classroom-based intervention in Head Start. Dr. Raver's research has identified that initial gains made by children in high quality preschool programs are eroded by chronic exposure to poverty-related adversity, suggesting that two-generation approaches offer more potential to strengthen families and support sustained childhood learning. Dr. Raver regularly advises local and federal government agencies and foundations on promoting healthy development and learning from birth to third grade.

### Oregon Family Impact Seminar

The Oregon Family Impact Seminar is a formal way to connect state policymakers with the best scientific evidence to inform decisions that affect the well-being of children and families in Oregon. The seminar aims to facilitate learning among policymakers and national experts in a nonpartisan, solution-oriented way and to promote awareness of the impact of programs and policies on families. Check out [health.oregonstate.edu/family-impact](http://health.oregonstate.edu/family-impact) for audio and video of speakers from the seminar and for a full briefing report to be prepared after the seminar's conclusion. The Oregon Family Impact Seminar is sponsored by Oregon State University's Hallie E. Ford Center for Healthy Children and Families and the OSU Extension Family and Community Health Program, both part of OSU's newly accredited College of Public Health and Human Sciences. The seminar is a member of the Policy Institute for Family Impact Seminars ([familyimpactseminars.org](http://familyimpactseminars.org)). For more information, contact [familyimpact@oregonstate.edu](mailto:familyimpact@oregonstate.edu).