

Georgia Child Care Licensing Study: Validating the Core Rule Differential Monitoring System

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Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
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Current Use of Validation Methodology



- **Commissioned study to examine validity of licensing compliance determination.**
 - All licensed child care centers and family child care homes are given an annual compliance determination.
 - Compliance determination is used for eligibility purposes in many of the state's early care and education initiatives.
- Zellman and Fiene's methodology is used to guide Georgia's Quality Rated validation model.
- All validation activities are paired with interrater reliability activities.

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2

Current Compliance Determination System



- Compliance determination is based on “core rules.”
 - Subset of licensing rules that are “theoretical” determinants.
 - Observed multiple times during the year
 - When a core rule is cited, a severity level (low, medium, high, extreme) is assigned.

Current Compliance Determination System



- A program compliance status is computed by counting the number of core rule **categories** cited and weighting the level of risk.
 - An annual compliance determination worksheet is used to compute a program’s compliance status.
 - The formula is complex and not always easy to communicate.
 - All programs receive their compliance determination on July 1 and the determination remains in effect for the next fiscal year.
- In FY13, approximately 8% of programs were determined to be non-compliant.

Compliance Determination Validity Study



- Examined a subset of programs' licensing history data for a four-year period.
- Extracted key indicators from licensing history data. Correlated to Georgia Core Rules and to program quality data.
 - From 2007-2009, Georgia commissioned an independent study to measure quality among a representative statewide sample.
 - This data was correlated with the licensing data for validity study.

Key Definitions



- **Core Rules** = The rules determined to be of greatest importance and that place children at greatest risk if not complied with. This approach is defined in the licensing literature as a risk assessment approach.
- **ACDW** = Annual Compliance Determination Worksheet, the compliance decision-making system based on the Core Rules.
- **Key Indicators** = A differential monitoring approach that uses only rules that statistically predict overall compliance with all the rules.
- **Rule Violations or Citations** = Occur when a program does not meet a specific rule and is cited as being out of compliance with that rule.

Key Definitions



- **Differential Monitoring** = A relatively new approach to determining the number of licensing visits made to programs and to what rules are reviewed during these visits. Two measurement tools drive differential monitoring: one is a Weighted Risk Assessment and the other is a Key Indicator checklist.
- **Licensing Study** = A comprehensive review of a program where all child care rules are reviewed.
- **Monitoring Visit** = An abbreviated form of a visit and review in which only a select group (Core Rules) of child care rules are reviewed.
- **Program Quality** = For the purposes of this study, quality was measured in child care centers by the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) and the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) and in family child care homes by the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R).

Specific Research Questions



- Do the core rules for child care centers and family child care homes serve as overall key indicators of compliance?
- Does the annual compliance determination worksheet appropriately designate programs as compliant or non-compliant related to health and safety?
- Are the core rules for child care centers and family child care homes related to program quality?

Research Questions Not Addressed in Study



- Does “compliance” truly indicate the overall health and safety of programs?
 - Since most programs are “compliant,” data set is skewed.
 - Need a large sample of programs with injury/fatality data. This requires many years of longitudinal licensing data.
- Should core rules or core rule categories be used in determining compliance?
 - Study did not test out different models of compliance determination.
- How should multiple visits be computed in a compliance determination system?

Key Indicator Development



| | Providers In Compliance on Rule | Programs Out of Compliance on Rule | Row Total |
|--------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| High Group** | A | B | Y |
| Low Group*** | C | D | Z |
| Column Total | W | X | Grand Total |

A = High Group + Programs in Compliance on Specific Rule.
 B = High Group + Programs out of Compliance on Specific Rule.
 C = Low Group + Programs in Compliance on Specific Rule.
 D = Low Group + Programs out of Compliance on Specific Rule.
 W = Total Number of Programs in Compliance on Specific Rule.
 X = Total Number of Programs out of Compliance on Specific Rule.

Y = Total Number of Programs in High Group.
 Z = Total Number of Programs in Low Group
 **High Group = Top 25% of Programs in Compliance with all Rules.
 ***Low Group = Bottom 25% of Programs in Compliance with all Rules.

General Conclusions of Compliance Validity Study



- “Statistical” key indicators correlate with “theoretical” core rules.
- “Statistical” key indicators correlate with compliance determination.
- Some correlations were found with quality data. Like much good research, this raised as many questions as answers.

Recommendations



- Use key indicators with core rules.
 - “Using both risk assessment and key indicator rules together is an ideal differential monitoring approach. Most states use one or the other but generally not together.” (Fiene, 2014, p. 10)
- Simplify the annual compliance determination worksheet.
- Utilize recent quality data for family child care homes to re-analyze the relationship between compliance and quality.

Next Steps



- Review core rules.
- Review compliance determination formula.
- Continue interrater reliability.
- Streamline compliance determination validity with Quality Rated validity.
 - Is “compliance” an appropriate entry point?
 - Combine licensing data with portfolio and observation data from Quality Rated.
 - Connect both compliance and Quality Rated data with Pre-K data.



Richard Fiene. (2014). *Georgia Child Care Licensing Study: Validating the Core Rule Differential Monitoring System*. Middletown, PA: Research Institute for Key Indicators.