

DATA AND INFORMATION ON NATIVE HAWAIIAN YOUNG CHILDREN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Although general data and information related to Native Hawaiians are available, the literature specifically on Native Hawaiian children is sparse. This report presents the results of a literature review that was undertaken to identify the available data and information on the early childhood care and education of Native Hawaiian children from birth to five years of age.

The information provided in this report is based on two previously released preliminary reports:

- 1) A survey of indicator data available from the University of Hawaii Center on the Family (COF) Data Center through July 25, 2001 (presented in Appendices A and B as updated to September, 2002). Appendix B is organized according to the four major influences on child development (Family Relationships, Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships, Child and Family Health, and Early Childhood Care and Education) and provides a list of indicators from the COF, including information for each indicator regarding the following:
 - Source of data
 - Whether data are available by ethnicity
 - Data collection methodology
 - Sample size
 - Frequency of collection
 - Whether data are available at specified geographic areas
- 2) A list of related reports and literature available from local agencies and libraries (presented in Appendices C and D)

Following the format of the previous documents, this report is organized in sections that focus on the four major influences on child development during the first five years of life:

Family. This influence includes characteristics, resource management, training, and family composition.

Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships. This influence comprises areas such as nurturance, modeling, child development, and discipline.

Child and Family Health. This includes consideration of the health of the child and parent and includes such factors as nutrition, disabilities, abuse, and mental health.

Early Childhood Care and Education. This influence includes childcare, preschools, language and motor development, social and emotional development.

Within each of the four domains are subcategories of more specific influences on child well-being and school readiness, which are further discussed in Appendix E.

The COF conducted a literature search for materials published before July 24, 2001, including book chapters, dissertations, journal articles, papers presented at meetings, and reports to Congress (see Appendix F). Agency reports and data files are available through organizations such as Alu Like, Inc., Good Beginnings Alliance, and the Kamehameha Schools, as well as government agencies such as the State of Hawai‘i Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education (DOE), Department of Human Services (DHS), and the U.S. Bureau of the Census (Census). A list of the materials available from such agencies is presented in Appendix G.

Appendix H provides a chart organized by the three types of information (publications, agency reports, and COF data) and the four major influences on child development (including subcategories). This chart indicates the sources of all the data provided in Appendices B, F and G.

Findings

This report examined the available information and data on Native Hawaiian families and children in the areas of the four major influences on child development prior to kindergarten. From academic publications, there is considerable information about parent characteristics, family harmony and supportiveness, parental health and health care practices, children’s disabilities and chronic conditions, and the quality of early care and education received. Agency reports focused on nuclear family economic and social characteristics, household composition, family harmony and supportiveness, parental health and health care practices, child injuries and disabilities, utilization of medical services for the child, child care utilization, receipt of subsidies, and the quality of early care and education. The COF data are primarily descriptive of family economic viability, family harmony and supportiveness, child care utilization, and quality of care received.

‘Ohana and the extended family play large roles in the development of Native Hawaiian children. It is therefore of concern that the largest gap in *Family Economic and Social Characteristics* appears to be in data related to the characteristics of the extended family.

More research on the non-custodial parent in the category *Family Composition and Organization* is necessary. All three sources—COF data, the review of publications, and agency reports—yielded no information on the accessibility to, responsibility toward, or commitment to the child for/by the non-custodial parent. Another area missing data from all three sources was information on “Parents’ Feelings of Well-being, Competence and Control” in *Family Functioning and Harmony*. Overall, in the area of *Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships*, data and information were sparse from all three sources. Much more research is needed in this area. In the area of *Child & Family Health*, data on child health and development between birth and kindergarten are limited, particularly data specific to Native Hawaiians. More health information regarding children’s immunization status, disabilities, injuries and illnesses, and the use of medical services for developmental screenings and dental care is needed to provide a more complete picture. Data that are available can generally only be obtained at the State and/or county levels, making it difficult for community planning and action. Although some *Early Care and Education* data are available, there is a need for research and analysis on child care issues for Native Hawaiian children. Similar to the *Child and Family Health* domain, very little information is available about the Native Hawaiian child’s education and cognitive development before the child enters kindergarten.

FAMILY FACTORS

Economic and Social Characteristics

The family unit plays a strong role in the Native Hawaiian community. In order to assess the degree to which each child receives the opportunities necessary for proper development, it is important to determine and monitor the factors that affect families. The “Family Economic and Social Characteristics” section includes data on:

- Family income
- Family literacy and education
- Parent and extended family characteristics such as age, gender, and ethnicity

Although the literature review indicated that there was a body of information on family economic and social characteristics, many of the articles were based on the research conducted on Kaua’i children born in 1955. This seminal study in the field of child resiliency focused on the biological and psychosocial risk and protective factors affecting the development of children. While initiated in the late 1950s and 1960s, the study has been continued longitudinally so that adult outcomes of the child subjects are known. However, there are certainly more media, substance abuse, and other outside influences on children today. The timeliness of the information is a consideration in understanding children and their development.

Agency report data provided a substantial amount of information on family economic viability and on parent characteristics such as family income, subsidies received, and parents' education and age. Agencies with data included Alu Like, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, DHS and DOH. Data on parents' age, education, and income level could be obtained from data collected by such programs as Alu Like's Pūlama I Nā Keiki (PINK) and the Native Hawaiian Child Care Assistance Project. Other data available from the Census 2000, DOH, and DHS focus on parents' ethnicity and gender, number of other family members within the household, and language(s) spoken in the home.

Family Economic and Social Characteristics data are available on the COF's online Data Center for Children and Families (www.uhfamily.hawaii.edu). These data cover all families, not only Native Hawaiian families, and include information regarding areas in which Native Hawaiian families are over-represented (found in greater proportion than they are in the general population, such as percentages of children who live in poverty, receive subsidies from Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are eligible for free or reduced price school lunches, or participate in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC program). The data are provided by DHS, DOE, DOH, and the Current Population Survey (CPS) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. State program data are available at the school/community level, while child poverty data are only available at the State and county levels.

The largest gap in *Family Economic and Social Characteristics* appears to be in data related to the characteristics of the extended family. This is an important omission since 'ohana and the extended family play a significant role in the development of Native Hawaiian children. No data was found on the economic and social characteristics of extended family members in the agency reports or COF data, and there was very little information in the publications reviewed. In other sub-categories, there are limited data on families' work history, retirement, and disability benefits. Current data on Native Hawaiian parental education are not available, but will be obtained from the Census 2000 data released in Fall 2002.

Family Composition and Organization

Family Composition and Organization is defined here as household composition, parents' marital status and history, composition and contact with extended family network, parents' and child's living arrangements and history, non-custodial parents, and parents' childbearing history.

Publications on *Family Composition and Organization* were very limited. The focus of the articles was on the composition of the Native Hawaiian family, the importance of family, and the value of having many children. The literature was scant or non-existent on parents' marital status, history, and cohabitation; and on children's living arrangements and relationships with extended family members and non-custodial parents.

Data on *Family Composition and Organization* are available in reports and data files from agencies and department such as Alu Like, DHS, DOH, and the Census 2000. Much of the data on household composition can be obtained from the Census 2000 when they are

released in sufficient detail. The percent of children living in out-of-home placements (foster care) are available by ethnicity from DHS. Another source of data is Alu Like's Native Hawaiian Child Care Assistance Project, which collects data on participants' household members. In 1994, the DOH Family Health Services Division produced the *Family Health Annual Numbers Report* which included data on women and children from the three branches of the Family Health Services Division: the Maternal and Child Health Branch, the Children with Special Health Needs Branch, and the School Health Services Branch. Some of the data can be updated through the Office of Health Status Monitoring. The *Family Health Annual Numbers Report* also provided Native Hawaiian data on intendedness of the mother's last pregnancy, information that has not been more recently available.

There is little research on the non-custodial parent. The search of all three sources—COF data, the review of publications, and agency reports—yielded no information on the accessibility to, responsibility toward, or commitment to the child by the non-custodial parent. Although the Child Support Enforcement Agency under the Attorney General's Office keeps data on the non-custodial parent, the information is not available by ethnicity. However, the Housing and Community Development Corporation of Hawai'i (HCDCH) has ethnicity data on participants receiving housing assistance, and the Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center (QLCC) programs collect ethnicity data relating to participants and their children, where one or more children in a household are orphans or where household members qualify to receive assistance.

Family Functioning/Harmony

Family Functioning and Harmony is defined by a family's strength and how family members work together. It includes data on family counseling, relationships among siblings, and intervention to solve family conflict and violence, as well as parents' feelings of well-being, competence, and control.

The publications reviewed yielded information related to the mental health of families and teens. An example of the *Family Functioning and Harmony* publications is Noreen Mokuau's study of effective family intervention approaches among Native Hawaiians and Samoans. However, it was difficult to find articles specifically based on families. Much of the literature was focused on either the child or the parent, but not on the family or extended family.

The agency reports and data files provided information related to Native Hawaiian cultural values and relationships with family, household members, and neighbors. The QLCC Environmental Scan participant information was a source for some of the data. The 1999 QLCC Beneficiary Survey examined family support networks and life satisfaction among Native Hawaiian households with children who receive assistance from government sources. Rich information is also available from the DOH's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) student survey completed by 25,000 public and private school students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. Through teen responses to questions such as, "my parents give me a lot of chances to do fun things with them" and "people in my family have serious arguments," information was gathered about the family climate. Although these surveys are completed by teens, some of the results can be inferred to households with children five years old or younger.

The COF data include information from the Hawai'i Community Foundation Social Capital Study, Hawaii Family Touchstones report, and the ADAD survey. In the Hawai'i Community Foundation survey, adult family members indicated whether they were involved in a religious or spiritual group, visited in person with relatives during the past year, worked on community projects, and trusted people in their neighborhood. The survey provided data about the support available for parents and other family members. Data on family harmony and supportiveness (indicated by the frequency with which they visited with relatives in the past year) was also gleaned from the Hawai'i Family Touchstones survey, which is available through the online COF Data Center. Oversampling of Native Hawaiians was conducted in the 2001 survey and, when analyzed, a special publication will detail the findings.

The publications, agency reports, and COF data were all without information on "Parents' Feelings of Well-being, Competence and Control" and offered very little information on "Sibling Relationships." As mentioned earlier, these are important areas to be considered because 'ohana and extended family relationships play large roles in the development of Native Hawaiian children.

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

As the first report indicated, experiences during infancy and toddlerhood play a key role in the development of the child. During these stages, experiences are shaped by the child's relationships with parents, siblings, and other household members. Supports related to *Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships* include parenting education programs, which provide instruction in basic parenting, health and safety, discipline, literacy, family activities, character development, and cognitive stimulation.

Data and information on *Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships* were scant in the three types of sources. Only three publications were listed. The first examined the speech of the mother and how it related to the child's cognitive skills. Another was an article on parenting with a focus on Hawaiian values such as unity, assistance without expectations, and cooperation. The last article studied the mother figure as the central role in the household.

For the *Family Functioning and Harmony* category, some information from the data gathered through the ADAD student survey was generalized to other households. Similarly, the ADAD student survey provides information on *Parent-Child Interactions and Relationships*. Responses to questions such as: "I feel very close to my father" and "the rules in my family are clear" were gathered in this survey. These responses are referred to in both the agency reports and the COF data.

Data are also available from a telephone survey conducted by the COF Learning to Grow project. Learning to Grow is an educational outreach program for families with young children who are cared for by family members or friends. The survey was conducted in the spring of 2001 with approximately 885 families, of which at least 39% were Native Hawaiian. Through this survey, data related to

nurturance, parents' attitudes and expectations, parent modeling, cognitive stimulation for the child, and parent/child activities can be drawn.

CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH

Many believe that a child's success begins with his/her health. Without good health, the child will be challenged in other areas of life, such as at school and at home. Beginning in the prenatal stage, proper health care is necessary for both the mother and child. The *Child and Family Health* domain draws from five developmental variables:

- Parental health and health care practices
- Nutrition
- Childhood injuries
- Childhood disabilities
- Utilization of medical services

In this literature search, publications were found in the areas of parental health and health care practices, child injuries, and child's disabilities. Among the articles were those related to the prenatal care of the mother and child, birth weight, and the mother's and child's mental health. Unfortunately, there were no articles on nutrition and the utilization of medical services for children ages zero to five years old. However, there was one article by L. Miike related to health and related services for Native Hawaiian teens.

In the search of information and data available from agencies and State departments, data were found in all five areas of the Child and Family Health domain. In addition to the reports mentioned earlier from Alu Like and the DOH, data are available from the DOH Hawai'i Health Survey, Office of Health Status Monitoring, the Injury Prevention and Control Program, and Healthy Start. The Hawai'i Health Survey gathers information on demographic characteristics and chronic health conditions, health insurance, health care access, and child care information. Healthy Start—a program that provides services related to child abuse and neglect prevention, family stress reduction, improvement of family functioning and parenting, and enhancement of child health and development—compiles data on its program participants. Mālama a Ho'opili Pono, a program located in Hawai'i County aimed at reducing infant mortality for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, also collects participant data. Data on birth defects is collected by both the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Hawai'i Birth Defects Program and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). OHA's biannual data book reports on information related to Native Hawaiian prenatal care, birth weight, and health risks. QLCC's "Environmental Scan for 2002 Planning Cycle" reported on low birth weight, prenatal care, maternal risk factors, and teen births.

Data on hand at the COF include data on parental health and health care practices, childhood injuries, and utilization of medical services. Indicators such as the percent of two-year-olds who are fully immunized, percent of births with early prenatal care, percent of low birth-weight babies, and child abuse rates for the general population are currently reported on the COF Website.

Data related to birth conditions are plentiful for the general population and for Native Hawaiians. However, data on child health and development between birth and kindergarten are limited, particularly those specific to Native Hawaiians. More health information regarding children's immunization status, disabilities, injuries and illnesses, and the use of medical services for developmental screenings and dental care is needed to provide a more complete picture. Much of the current information is available only at the State and/or county levels, a problem compounded by the fact that the small numbers for smaller geographic areas cannot be reported because of confidentiality concerns. Data on whether children are obtaining adequate nutrition and are of normal height and weight, and data on the percent of mothers breastfeeding, are available through the State's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, which serves more than 30,000 participants (children under age five and pregnant women). Other areas with gaps include children's disabilities and the utilization of medical services. Current information related to disabilities is very specific, primarily on hearing and vision, and is limited.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

In Hawai'i, over 65% of mothers with preschool children are in the labor force. Their children are cared for by child care providers either at centers, at family child care homes, or in kith and kin care. *Early Care & Education* data reviewed in this report include:

- Utilization of child care both past and present
- Special services for children with disabilities
- Child care subsidies
- Child development and readiness
- Parent involvement
- Quality of early care and education

The publications search yielded sparse results regarding childcare. A great deal of research is available through the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP), research started in the early 80's at the Kamehameha Schools, that incorporated the Native Hawaiian culture into teaching methods in the classrooms. Some literature relates to the special needs and problems of Native Hawaiian children in adjusting to school. One article was found on parent involvement: Sumida and Gillespie's "Language Development in the Hawai'i 'Follow Through Project'" (1985). This project involved a learning environment that included peers, adults, and learning materials for children in kindergarten to third grade. The Parent-Child Interaction Activities Program is also

described in the article. There were a few articles on school readiness. Two from the early 90's focused on early education programs for children from the prenatal stage to age five.

Agency reports provided information in all areas of early care and education, except parent involvement. Besides the Alu Like reports mentioned earlier, which provided information on families receiving financial assistance for child care costs and health data on participants' special needs, information is available from several different community groups:

- **The Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture (INPEACE)** submitted a report to OHA entitled, "An Evaluation of Early Childhood Care and Education Activities of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs" (1996). This was a report on the OHA-sponsored early childhood education and care programs in Maui County and included recommendations for Maui and the State on early childhood education and care.
- **The UHM Center on the Family's Learning to Grow** project has collected data on kith and kin child care subsidized by the DHS. Information regarding issues such as parents' choices for child care and the training needs of providers were collected. A majority of the Learning to Grow parents are Native Hawaiian.
- **The UHM College of Education**, through research conducted by Stephanie Feeney and others, surveyed parents and teachers of kindergarteners on their perceptions of school readiness. Although data is not available by ethnicity, it is available by community, at which point some inferences can be made.
- **Hawai'i's Kids Watch Children's Budget Analysis Project** also maintains data relating to funding, needs, and available programs for Hawai'i's children and families.
- **Kamehameha Schools** has provided much of the early childhood educational data for Native Hawaiian children. In the 1980's and early 1990's, the KEEP focused on the use of culturally-sensitive approaches in classroom instruction. Reports of Hawaiian student achievement in the DOE and participation in Special Education services were examined by Kamehameha Schools by schools and districts and are now included in the COF Data Center. Additionally, Kamehameha School's "Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment Reports" (1993 and 1999) analyzed the progress and needs of Native Hawaiian children.
- **'Aha Pūnana Leo (Native Hawaiian Immersion Preschools), the DOE, and the Hawai'i Community Foundation** have compiled early education data from participant surveys and reports conducted by their agencies. 'Aha Pūnana Leo gathers data on child development and readiness and the subsidies received.
- **The DOE** has data on all children receiving free and reduced lunch, as well as on the percent of children with preschool experience (data on preschool experience are currently available for the 2000-2001 school year only).

- **The Hawai‘i Community Foundation’s** Diversity Project published “A Perspective on Hawaiians” in 1995 with information on Native Hawaiians’ school readiness and academic achievement.

Information on hand at the COF include data from the DHS, DOE, DOH, and various other agencies. Data on early care and education include the number of all children receiving subsidized care in child care centers, the number of children in Head Start, and the number of all children with subsidized care in regulated family care homes. Data on other education indicators include the percent of four-year olds who are in Head Start and the number of children on Head Start waiting lists. From People Attentive to Children (PATCH) and the Hawai‘i Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC), information is available on child care centers, family child care homes, available slots in each, and accreditation.

Although child care and education data are available for the State of Hawai‘i, there is a definite need for research and analysis of child care issues for Native Hawaiian children. Similar to the *Child and Family Health* domain, little is known about the child’s education and cognitive development until the child enters kindergarten. With the additional data gathered through the Ho‘owaiwai Nā Kamali‘i provider survey and through structured sample interviews being completed by facilitators for each moku (community) and county, it is hoped that some of these gaps in information will be filled.