



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INSTITUTE

*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA - TULSA



**The ECEI is an applied research group focused on early childhood, specifically research on young children birth to age 8. Our team of researchers and data collectors specializes in longitudinal studies, understanding early childhood workforce characteristics, and piloting measures to examine early childhood practice leading to improved child outcomes. We work in partnership with community agencies and researchers from affiliated fields to infuse multiple and interdisciplinary perspectives.**

## **Vision**

To understand and advance equity in early childhood

## **Mission**

Our mission is to advance and support equity in early childhood by generating and disseminating high-quality meaningful research.



## Our Research Priorities

A child's zip code, skin color, or home language should not determine his or her likelihood of academic and life success. Through 2024, the ECEI plans a research agenda devoted to four priorities:

- **Early childhood services and quality of care** The ECEI will continue our long-standing commitment to high-quality assessments of the nature, intensity, and quality of early care and education experiences available to Oklahoma's children.
- **Early childhood workforce characteristics and well-being** Working with young children is both rewarding and challenging, and early childhood professionals are compensated at rates far less than similarly qualified professionals in other fields.
- **The intersection of early childhood care and health** The markers of child well-being and equity extend beyond school performance and behavior to include physical and mental health.
- **Expanding and developing measurement tools in early childhood research:** Research in early childhood development and care requires an expanded set of measurement approaches to better disentangle the complexities of development.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EQUITY DEFINED

Early Childhood Equity means that all children have opportunities to realize their developmental potential. In our applied research, we aim to document and understand four mechanisms underlying inequity in early childhood: prevention of adverse childhood experiences; buffering of consequences resulting from experienced adversity; promotion of opportunities that support resilience, growth, and healthy development; and presence of inequitable educational experiences.



# 1

STRATEGY ONE

## Enhance Reputation and Visibility

- Attract nationally-recognized research and community partners
- Expand scholarly impact in focal research areas by increasing the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and presentations at national and international conferences
- Develop and disseminate research-to-practice briefs and engage with local and national partners to reach policy and program audiences
- Enhance our digital strategies and dissemination channels to reach a larger and more varied audience with strategic messages

## 2 STRATEGY TWO

### Increase and Diversify Funding

- Cultivate a strong network of collaborators by expanding productive partnerships and developing new connections
- Launch landmark projects that garner funding from federal agencies and national foundations
- Secure endowment to ensure strength of organization and invest in key positions and people
- Continue prudent stewardship of resources; deploy discretionary funds to seed or build new research activities



## STRATEGY THREE

### Build Organizational Capacity and Capabilities

- Recruit and retain a diverse, high-quality team including research faculty, research staff, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate research assistants
- Build a strong infrastructure; focusing on data systems and management, communications, work environments and fiscal responsibility
- Plan for leadership succession and continued growth of our organization and staff
- Develop our team with targeted professional development including project management skills; technical competencies in research, statistics and measurement; budget development and management; diversity and inclusion



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