Speaker Biography

Sheila Smith, Ph.D., is director of early childhood at the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University. Smith is a psychologist and early childhood researcher whose research has focused on interventions and policies that promote young children’s early learning and social-emotional growth.

Recent projects she has led at NCCP include profiling state policies affecting young children birth to eight and their families; an investigation of young children’s well-being among families experiencing extreme poverty, a project to develop a model of continuous quality improvement in New York City preschool programs; an investigation of how preschool education directors help teachers use evidence-based practices; and technical assistance activities to help states’ strengthen parent engagement and supports for young children’s mental health. Her numerous publications aim to help policymakers and practitioners use research to strengthen supports for young children and families experiencing economic hardship and other challenging circumstances.

Before joining NCCP, Smith was a research scientist at New York University’s Child and Family Policy Center where she directed two Early Reading First initiatives and the Forum on Children and Families, a project that engaged New York City and State policymakers in an examination of research and policy. Smith was a Congressional Science Fellow after completing a post-doctoral fellowship in Child Development and Social Policy at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and her doctorate at the University of Chicago.

Sheila Smith
Director, Early Childhood
National Center for Children in Poverty
Mailman School of Public Health
Columbia University
215 West 125th Street, 3rd floor
New York, NY 10027-4426
Phone: 646-284-9643
Email: Sheila.Smith@nccp.org