



## Welcome to ICF *Education Connections*

The September 2016 issue of *Education Connections* reports on ICF Head Start, which provides technical assistance in 48 states across five federal regions of the United States, enabling Head Start organizations and staff to build their capacity to provide high quality services to children and families. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is another long-term client: ICF has helped the agency develop studies, strategies, and materials to ensure consumers have the information to make smart financial decisions. The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Mid-Atlantic is sponsoring an exciting workshop series this fall. And ICF continues to seek a senior research methodologist to contribute to our rigorous research agenda.

ICF's expertise extends from early education to K-12 schooling, to postsecondary education and workforce development. The solutions we devise with our clients enhance their capacity to achieve the outcomes they seek. Visit our [website](#) for more information about ICF in education

### ICF Head Start Develops Organizational Capacity



ICF's Head Start technical assistance staff help develop the capacity of Head Start organizations to provide continuous, high quality services to children and families. We use "process consultation" to build the capacity of their staff to learn from each other and problem solve on their own. As one Head Start grantee commented, "It would be much easier if they would just tell us how to do it. But their process of facilitating by asking questions really helps us find our own answers." The TA provider's role is to pass on skills that enable staff to diagnose and prescribe the right treatment to fix their problems and continue the self-improvement process independently.

*"Process Consultation is... all about implied and explicit needs, and using our investigating skills with all of our clients."* – Nancy

*Schwachter, Senior Program Director, ICF*

Using this approach yields a greater chance of success in identifying exactly what the challenge is and designing a remedy, because it calls on what clients know about their resources, communities, families, and staff, making successful implementation more likely. We have received very positive feedback from Head Start programs on the work we do and the results they achieve. For additional information about ICF's Head Start portfolio, visit the ICF website [at this link](#).

## ICF Contributes to Consumer Financial Protection



Consumer Financial  
Protection Bureau

ICF has worked closely with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) since 2011, to study the financial literacy of youth and adults and help the agency develop strategies and materials to ensure that consumers have the information they need to make smart financial decisions. The CFPB is a federal agency created to help protect consumers from unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices by financial institutions such as credit card and mortgage companies. ICF is currently working with the CFPB to update and improve a resource guide for policymakers, educators, and nonprofit organizations to support state and local financial education in K-12 schools. In a 2015 report to Congress, the CFPB proposed regulations that would prohibit certain credit card terms, in part because ICF's national telephone survey showed that consumers did not understand them. Findings from

other ICF studies of consumer understanding of financial information have directly informed CFPB's activities—including changes to rules about the disclosure of prepaid card costs and a 2015 warning to consumers about potential misconceptions from reverse mortgage advertising.

Through this work ICF has developed and refined strategies for how to most effectively talk to adults and children about their financial lives and other sensitive topics, as well as approaches for how to use plain language and graphic design principles to present complex information in a way that people can easily understand and use in their decision making. ICF has applied these strategies in other projects, such as REL Mid-Atlantic, Drug Free Communities, and the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, which issue research reports in plain language and translate findings into usable formats, such as fact sheets, infographics, and webinars.

## REL Mid-Atlantic Sponsors 2016 Educator Effectiveness Series

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Mid-Atlantic supports the research-related needs of educational stakeholders throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania with research, technical assistance, training, and dissemination. Its *2016 Educator Effectiveness Series* offers webinars that feature expert presenters and high-quality resources concerning recent developments in education: Enhancing the Instructional Program with Creative Arts (September 22), Overcoming the Achievement Gap (October 22), Supporting Successful Transitions from Middle School to High School (November 10), and How Diverse Institutions of Higher Education Prepare Culturally Responsive Educators (on December 8).



## ICF Seeks Senior Researcher



If you want to work on the leading issues of the day, if you want your work to reflect your passion in life, if you truly want to make the world a better place, then work at ICF International.

We seek a Senior Research Methodologist to provide technical leadership on designing and implementing rigorous research and evaluation studies on a wide range of education policies and programs for federal, state, and local and nonprofit clients. You will play an active role in business development and mentoring staff. Basic qualifications include a doctoral degree in education, psychology, sociology, public policy, and related fields; 10 years of post-graduate experience in applied research; and excellent oral and written communication skills. Visit [here](#) for more details.