Building a system of support for young children and their families

Moving to the Next Level

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Partnership Meeting on Strengthening State Systems to Promote Early Childhood Development

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Today is an extraordinary day in the history of early childhood!
Change is a process…..

- Why are we here?

- Where have we been and why did we need to create a better system?

- Where are we today?

- What steps to the next level?

- Lessons to remember along the way

Why are we here?
Very young children are more likely to live in low income families......

![Bar chart showing percentages of children living in low income families by age group.](image)


An uneven start

![Bar chart showing SES differences at start of K by income quintile.](image)

Household income quintile ranges, U.S. Census Bureau, 2000: lowest: 0-$18,000; second: $18,000 – $33,000; third: $33,000 – $52,000; fourth: $52,000 – $82,000; fifth: $82,000 and over

Percentage of First-time Kindergartners Demonstrating Positive Indicators of School Readiness by Mother’s Education Level,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother’s Education Level</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma/GED</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, including vocational/technical</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree or more</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Rate of Total and LEP Enrollment Growth: Between 1992/93 and 2002/03

Source: Office of English Language Acquisition
Primary Care Arrangements of Children Younger than 3 with Working Mothers by Income, 2002

- **Center-based Care**: Low-Income 16%*, Higher-Income 21%
- **Family Child Care**: Low-Income 11%, Higher-Income 15%
- **Nanny/Babysitter**: Low-Income 3%*, Higher-Income 7%
- **Relative**: Low-Income 32%*, Higher-Income 26%
- **Parent/Other**: Low-Income 38%*, Higher-Income 32%

*Estimate for low-income children is significantly different from estimate for higher-income children.

Source: Urban Institute calculations from the National Survey of America’s Families.

Primary Child Care Arrangements of 3- and 4-year olds with Working Mothers by Income, 2002

- **Center-based Care**: Low-Income 36%*, Higher-Income 46%
- **Family Child Care**: Low-Income 10%, Higher-Income 14%
- **Nanny/Babysitter**: Low-Income 4%, Higher-Income 4%
- **Relative**: Low-Income 27%*, Higher-Income 21%
- **Parent/Other**: Low-Income 23%*, Higher-Income 16%

*Estimate for low-income children is significantly different from estimate for higher-income children.

Source: Urban Institute calculations from the National Survey of America’s Families.
At-Risk children less likely to receive preventive and developmental services, even from health providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child at risk</th>
<th>Child NOT at risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Health Care</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician to parent advice and education</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family centered approach to health care</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Schor, Commonwealth Fund. Data from PHDS

What brings us to the need for a more systemic approach

- Early childhood services are grounded in a developmental approach- integrating physical, social and emotional, cognitive, language and approaches to learning.

- Children learn in a range of settings including at home and in programs

- Services must focus on parents as well as children

- Historically care **versus** education
  - Head Start
  - Child Care
  - State Prek
Strengthening State Early Childhood Development Systems: Shared goals

State Early Childhood Development System

- Comprehensive health services that meet children’s vision, hearing, nutrition, behavioral, and oral health as well as medical health needs.
- Early care and education opportunities in nurturing environments where children can learn what they need to succeed in school and life.
- Early identification, assessment and appropriate services for children with special health care needs, disabilities, or developmental delays.
- Economic and parenting supports to ensure children have nurturing and stable relationships with caring adults.

Early Learning

Health, Mental Health and Nutrition

Family Support

Special Needs/ Early Intervention
Model for an Early Childhood Development System

Children Ready for Success

Coordinated Governance
Across ECE components and connected to other support systems

Standards
Program standards (Education, health, and family involvement and support)
Early Learning Guidelines

Monitoring and Improvement
Monitoring and compliance with standards, evaluation, data collection and technical assistance

Financing
To assure comprehensive quality services based on standards

Engagement & Outreach
To consumers, programs and practitioners

Workforce Development And Support
Competencies, access to higher education, credentialing, and adequate compensation

We have made progress in creating “unifiers” across systems- bringing the pieces together

- New governance structures
- Child care quality rating systems
- Early learning guidelines
- Health and mental health consultation for early care and learning settings
- Funding across settings
  - Pre-K in a diverse settings
  - Public Private partnerships 0-5
  - Special 0-3 funding
Early Learning Guidelines
Number of states with ages covered

Source: CCSSO

Partnership Meeting on Strengthening State Systems to Promote Early Childhood Development, January 18, 2007
State Pre-K Programs

Source: National Institute for Early Education Research

Funding that includes 0-3

- Public Private Partnerships Birth to Five
  North Carolina and at least 12 other states

- Illinois Early Learning Block Grant-Pre-K with 0-3 set aside

- Infant and toddler initiatives
  - Kansas Early Head Start
  - Missouri Parents as Teachers
  - Tennessee It's- It Starts with Babies
  - Nebraska Endowment

and growing.....
Moving to the next level…..

- **Continue to need federal leadership**
  - Federal Interagency leadership with input from the states
  - Coordinated data collection
  - Incentives for workforce development
  - Additional funding for quality and equity

- **Foundation commitment to nationwide efforts**
  - BUILD Systems development
  - Infant and toddler initiatives
  - Pre-K expansion
  - PK- 3
  - The Birth to Five Policy Alliance

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The Buffett Early Childhood Fund: Knowledge, Program, and Policy

**Expanding and Using the Knowledge Base**

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, Partnership for America’s Economic Success

**Creating Model 0-5 Programs**

Educare Centers and the Bounce Network

**Informing Policy**

Birth to 5 Policy Alliance
Birth to Five Policy Alliance: Shifting the Odds for At Risk Children

- National Governor’s Association
- National Conference of State Legislators
- National Scientific Council on the Developing Child
- Council of Chief State School officers
- National Center for Children in Poverty
- Center for Law and Social Policy
- Zero to Three
- Ounce of Prevention
- Fight Crime Invest In Kids
- Committee for Economic Development
- United Way of America

Ten steps to move to the next level in the States....

1. Step up efforts to map funding and promote coordinated governance

2. Ensure that programs have funding to meet higher levels in QRS system and articulation with Pre-K standards

3. Put early learning guidelines to work through training which focuses on a child responsive approach
Ten steps to move to the next level

4. Launch new efforts to create and implement state workforce development plans
   - Build the capacity of the higher education system to train all types of people working in the field
   - Develop an articulated set of state credentials
   - Expand compensation initiatives

5. Develop a statewide leadership program to nurture new leaders that reflect the languages and cultures of today’s children

Ten steps to move to the next level

6. Recognize that family policies promote early childhood education
   - Integrate family strengthening into standards
   - Link families to social networks of support and family literacy
   - Promote family economic security and paid leave

7. Improve early health, nutrition and mental health policies-assure developmental screening and follow up for every child
Ten steps to move to the next level

8. Use accountability mechanisms that focus on continuous improvement and appropriate assessment

- Continuous improvement
  - Program monitoring of standards and improvement
  - Evaluation that includes an assessment of program standards implementation as well as child outcomes

- Appropriate use of assessment
  - Child assessment for curriculum planning, NOT high stakes decisions for program or children
  - School readiness assessment at the community and state level to guide planning and resources, NOT high stakes decisions for programs or children
  - Coordination of assessment across funding streams- children should NOT be subjected to multiple assessments due to varied funding requirements

Ten steps to move to the next level in the States....

9. Advocate for ready schools K-3
   - Smaller classes,
   - Teachers trained in child development,
   - Parent involvement,
   - Standards aligned with early childhood practices P-5

10. Create a network of neighborhood early learning and development programs
Neighborhood Early Learning and Development Centers

Why early development centers?

- Research and evaluations behavior, education, and health all point to the importance of starting early
- Research tells us the quality of infant care is inadequate and of lower than care for preschoolers.
- State policies put little funding into “education and development” into 0-3 programs.
- For 0-3, few identifiable hubs of service delivery in neighborhoods which provide:
  - Direct center based services
  - Offer support for parenting, family child care, and family, friends and neighbors.
Why now?

- Quality rating systems emerging in the states which include standards for 0-3
- Early learning guidelines growing in the states
- Interest in state credentials for infant and toddler providers
- Family strengthening principles gaining momentum
- Continued demand for quality infant toddler care

Characteristics of Neighborhood Early Learning and Development Programs

- Open to all children in a community, with a priority to communities with concentration of low-income families
  - Serve children prenatal to age five
- Hub of support for parents, family, friends and neighbors
  - Family strengthening approach
  - Connections to school in the neighborhood
- Accredited or highest quality rating
- Staff trained in child development, early learning guidelines, cultural responsiveness and dual language acquisition
  - At least one master teacher with BA and infant development training
  - Pre-K teachers meet state Pre-K standards,
  - Infant and toddler teachers/caregivers with CDA’s or state 0-3 credential, moving towards higher degrees
- Developmental approach
  - Continuity of care
  - Developmental screening and follow up
  - Linkages to health, mental health supports and family literacy
The most important outcomes for children

- Joy
- Curiosity
- Persistence
- Kindness
- Order
- Language

What I have learned along the way...

- All ages and stages matter
- Good health is the cornerstone to development
- We need to be intentional with children, but not overlook the incidental
- Child care and other early education programs can provide an opportunity to support families….we just have to take it
- Leadership is about letting go
- Team work is better than me work
- Friendship is central to life
- Children are about love
"We abandon all and travel the world, as did those in former times who would sow seeds and go on their way. This is our destiny to sow! To sow everywhere, without ceasing, never to harvest."

Dr. Maria Montessori in a letter from India in 1940 to her two granddaughters.

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**Early Childhood Systems Working Group**

- Alliance for Early Childhood Finance
  - [http://www.earlychildhoodfinance.org](http://www.earlychildhoodfinance.org)
- The Build Initiative
  - [http://www.buildinitiative.org](http://www.buildinitiative.org)
- The Children’s Project
  - [http://www.thechildrensproject.org](http://www.thechildrensproject.org)
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
- Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
  - [http://www.ccsso.org/earlychildhood](http://www.ccsso.org/earlychildhood)
- National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)
  - [http://www.nccp.org](http://www.nccp.org)
- National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC)
  - [http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov](http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov)
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)
  - [http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/cc.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/cc.htm)
- National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
  - [http://www.nga.org/center](http://www.nga.org/center)
- Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center
- State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network (SECPTAN)
  - [http://www.finebynine.org](http://www.finebynine.org)
- **ZERO TO THREE**
  - [http://www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)