

HSSCO ANNUAL STATE PROFILE REPORT

Activities for January – December 2007

Arkansas

Collaboration Director

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A. Briefly describe your accomplishments in the following areas. Where possible, indicate the goals from your work plan and the desired and actual outcomes.

- 1. Help build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services for all low-income children.**

Include a description of how you are supporting Head Start-child care-pre-kindergarten collaborations at the local level and Head Start- pre-kindergarten collaborations at the state and local levels.

Goal 1: To support a collaborative system of quality early childhood education options to include Arkansas Head Start and the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success state pre-kindergarten program for three and four year old children.

The Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) funding increased to \$100 million through state general revenue in the 2007 State Legislative Session. The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) continued to work with the Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families, Arkansas Kids Count Coalition, Arkansas Early Childhood Association, Invest Early Coalition and other early childhood advocates to support and enhance collaborative efforts. The increase in state funding provided for more than 22,000 three-and-four-year-old children from families of up to 200% of Federal Poverty being served in state-funded pre-k programs in 2007, along with 9,950 Head Start children being served throughout the state.

Participated in Governor's press conference on January 25th which released results of a preliminary report of the longitudinal study of Arkansas Better Chance for School Success. Governor Mike Beebe stressed that his long-standing commitment for quality early childhood education included quality Head Start programs and that state funding for additional pre-k slots was to supplement, not supplant, federal funding for Head Start in Arkansas.

Worked in partnership with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Invest Early in Education in sponsoring Early Education Community Collaboration roundtable discussions across the state. The forums were held throughout June in Hope, Batesville, Harrison and Fort Smith and provided an opportunity for Head Start, Community Action Agencies, ABC providers and other early childhood programs to take an objective look at the current status of early education in the community and link all stakeholders who have an interest in the success of our youngest citizens. Common needs/expectations and issues were discussed in the forums, as well as related opportunities and potential solutions. Three areas were identified as a common thread in all locations: collaboration, enrollment, and a perceived uneven playing field. The summary report was shared and discussed with various organizations, stakeholders, and public officials, as well as being available from the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office. Working on implementation of potential solutions identified through these community forums.

In preparation for the Early Education Community Collaboration Roundtables, three Head Start directors were a part of a video taping for an early education collaborative showcase of Arkansas programs involved in innovative partnerships at the local level. This video was a part of the Roundtable Forums held in June.

The HSSCO participated in NHSA, OHS, Pre-K Now, and regional conference calls and meetings focusing on pre-k partnerships including specific issues in Arkansas. Pre-K Now hosted a conference call "Leadership Matters: Governor's Pre-K Proposals" in April. The Policy Director for Governor Mike Beebe was a presenter on the conference call and talked of the collaborative efforts between Arkansas Better Chance for School Success and Head Start programs.

Participated in National Head Start State Collaboration meeting held in Washington DC in January, in conjunction with the National Forum on Pre-K and Head Start. Other participants from Arkansas included representatives from Department of Education, Department of Human Services Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families, and Arkansas Head Start Association.

2. Encourage widespread collaboration between Head Start and other appropriate programs. Describe your accomplishments and outcomes in the eight priority areas.

The following goals are cross-cutting across the eight priority areas for the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office.

Goal 2: To support a sustainable system for young children's social-emotional health to include consultation, education, and early intervention for children, families, teachers and caregivers.

Goal 3: To increase the number of Head Start and Early Head Start centers who attain and maintain State Quality Approval.

Goal 4: To assist in building early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children.

Goal 5: To promote widespread collaboration among Head Start and other programs, services and initiatives.

Goal 6: To facilitate the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes and decisions affecting the Head Start population and other low-income families.

- **Health Care**

The HSSCO Director continued to serve on Arkansas System of Care Stakeholders Planning Committee including Medicaid workgroup, Special Language task force, and committee on Cultural Competency. Recommendations presented to the newly appointed Governor's Behavioral Health Commission in August to assist in the reform of delivering appropriate services to children and families in need of mental health intervention and treatment.

HSSCO continued leadership role in collaborative effort with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Behavioral Health Services in the Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative and participated in routine conference calls and meetings with sponsoring organizations, pilot sites and evaluation team.

Served as member of the team for curricula review of proposed training for child care and early childhood educators in the area of pre-k social emotional foundations.

HSSCO Director selected to serve on ABCD (Assuring Better Child Health Development) Stakeholders Group. Arkansas selected by National Academy for State Health Policy to participate in the ABCD Screening Academy, a multi-state learning project focusing on preventive care of children whose health care is covered by Medicaid. This project supports efforts to improve early identification of young children with developmental problems.

The first Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) held in Little Rock in May provided 1,542 patients, including children, in desperate need of dental services in excess of \$630,000 in donated dental care. The event was sponsored by Arkansas State Dental Association and Delta Dental of Arkansas. The Arkansas Oral Health Coalition and the Arkansas Homeless Coalition, both of which the HSSCO is active, volunteered in this effort.

HSSCO Director completed two-year term as chair of the Arkansas Oral Health Coalition. Planning retreat held in March to discuss future direction of Oral Health Coalition. Fluoridation brochures and posters were disseminated to Arkansas Head Start programs.

The HSSCO Director served as member of ASTDD-HSSCO Planning Team and participated in various conference calls and webinars pertaining to oral health and Head Start.

Information shared with local Head Start programs about an educational initiative on "Living Well with Sickle Cell" a program through Partners for Inclusive Communities. The Head Start community has become involved in assisting with getting the message to the target population.

- **Welfare**

The HSSCO Director participated in Alliance meetings with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Children & Family Services to discuss potential partnerships and collaborative efforts between child welfare and child care organizations.

HSSCO, in coordination with the Arkansas Head Start Association, is active in Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security (ACES) and assisted with activities for economic security fact sheet that was a part of the packet of information for attendees at the Family Security Conference held in Pine Bluff in November. The ACES mission is to promote economic security of all Arkansans through public education, advocacy and collaboration.

There was a TANF transfer to the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education of \$7.5 million to support quality pre-school education and child care for low-income working families.

- **Childcare**

The Arkansas Head Start Association, in cooperation with the HSSCO, set a goal to increase the number of state quality approved child care programs, and consequently, comprise thirty percent of the quality centers in the state. Sixty-six percent of the Head Start centers in Arkansas are State Quality Approved or have NAEYC accreditation. Work continues in cooperation with the Arkansas Technical Assistance Specialists to support Head Start programs and centers who want to achieve state quality approval and several have developed plans to move in that direction.

The HSSCO Director continued involvement with Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Initiative and served as an active member of the Social Emotional/Medical Homes committee.

Active participation, in coordination with Arkansas Head Start programs, in Arkansas Children's Week activities held April 22-28, 2007 throughout the state.

HSSCO worked with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Strengthening Families Arkansas in identifying Early Head Start partners in the State Partnership for Prevention Project, a Zero to Three Initiative to strengthen states' child abuse and neglect prevention initiatives, focusing on supporting the capacity of child care providers to help prevent child maltreatment in families with very young children.

The HSSCO Director participates in the Arkansas Out of School Network; state conference held in Little Rock in September.

- **Education**

Working with Arkansas legislative representatives, Department of Education, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Head Start Association, and the early childhood community in proposing a “Birth to Five” licensure for Arkansas. This effort is in response to an Interim Study of the State Legislature.

Served on panel “Pre-K Effects on Rural Children’s Education in Arkansas” at 2007 Arkansas Rural Development Conference in Hot Springs in May. Panel members included HSSCO Director, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education Director, Early Childhood Advocate, Superintendent of Schools, State Legislative Representative, and Mark Shriver, Save the Children, Washington DC.

Assisted Arkansas Parent Education Network (APEN) and Department of Education in state conference on family involvement held in October in Hot Springs. HSSCO Director serves on Parent Education and Involvement Task Force.

- **Community Services**

HSSCO and Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence sponsored Endangered Children in Arkansas forums in Russellville in May and in Searcy in October. Topics included information on the Oklahoma Head Start Domestic Violence Initiative, new child abuse legislation and mandated reporting, and substance abuse issues, including effective and efficient identification and protection of children endangered by methamphetamines and other drugs.

Collaborating partner for Arkansas Governor’s Family Friendly Employer Awards Luncheon held in April, sponsored and funded by Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education. The Arkansas Family Friendly Initiative recognizes Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family.

HSSCO Director facilitated Mental Health Protocol Committee for Arkansas Crisis Response Team (AR-CRT). Protocol adopted by AR-CRT Board of Directors in July. HSSCO Director serves as co-chair of the Education and Training Committee. Participant in Arkansas Crisis Response Training held in December at new Arkansas Department of Emergency Management located at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock.

Assisted with Little Rock cooling station, hosted by Arkansas Homeless Coalition and other volunteer and faith-based organizations, in coordination with the cities of Little Rock and North Little Rock, to assist people who were homeless, disabled, or elderly during the summer heat wave.

- **Family Literacy Services**

Working with Department of Education and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education in developing materials showcasing quality early childhood opportunities in Arkansas for use with “Reach Out & Read,” a project of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Participant in focus group sponsored by Department of Education to discuss coordination of early childhood services, including family literacy and transition.

- **Services to Children with Disabilities**

HSSCO Director continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children’s Hospital, in coordination with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. The State ECHO team trained Region 6 TA Network personnel in May. The HSSCO Director participated in panel presentation at IPP meeting held in Washington DC in July to discuss Arkansas activities and potential expansion throughout the state and region. Through the effort of the Arkansas TA Specialists and the HSSCO, all Early Head Start programs, as well as Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs, should be involved in the ECHO project within the next year.

Arkansas was accepted as state team for Special Quest training held in August in North Carolina. HSSCO Director served as team coordinator; other members include the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Partners of Inclusive Communities, Child Care Resource & Referral, and a parent of a young child with a disability.

The HSSCO Director served as a member of Arkansas Coalition for Education of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (ACED); State Summit on Early Intervention and Education held in September.

- ***Services to Homeless Children and Families***

The HSSCO Director served on conference planning committee for state homeless conference, "Children, The Forgotten Homeless" held in Little Rock in October. HSSCO assisted with a children's art and poetry contest on "What a Home Means to Me" with recognition of children's art and poetry displayed at a reception prior to the conference at a local art gallery.

HSSCO Director serves on Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Arkansas Homeless Policy Academy. Volunteered at Thanksgiving Outreach Dinner held in November; assisted with children's activities and distribution of backpacks to children. Participation in Holiday Caravan in December; distributed gifts, clothing, blankets, and food to children, families and individuals who were homeless.

3. Facilitate Head Start's involvement in the development of state policies, plans, processes and decisions.

HSSCO Director and Arkansas Head Start Association President met and shared information with Governor's staff in the area of state pre-k and Head Start collaborative efforts, Head Start re-authorization updates, and other items pertinent to services for low-income children and families.

In coordination with Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security, a Beans & Cornbread Reception for Arkansas legislators was held in March to share information about agencies working with low-income families and children. Numerous state legislators and constitutional officers attended, including the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

The HSSCO Director serves on the Arkansas Kids Count Steering Committee. Various activities included Arkansas Kids Count Day at the Capitol in March, Post-Legislative Conference held in May, and planning retreat in November to set public policy priorities for the next two years.

Invited participant in Leadership Workshop on EPSDT: Advancing a Collaborative Action Agenda to Improve Child Health held in November. The workshop was hosted by the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Services and the Arkansas Department of Health, Family Health Branch. The Maternal & Child Health Bureau, HRSA, DHHS, was a co-sponsor of this event. The purpose of the workshop was to provide key child health leaders, including senior state officials, pediatric providers, families, and advocates, as opportunity to discuss important topics relating to child health. The structured and facilitated discussions gave participants an opportunity to advance potential strategies for improving child health services in Arkansas, as well as opportunities for collaboration.

B. Briefly discuss the following aspects of your work:

1. Describe how you have supported and collaborated with the Regional Office on national and regional priorities (e.g. Fatherhood, Faith-Based and Community, Healthy Marriage, Youth and Rural Initiatives and TA Network, professional development, Community Action Agencies, State Head Start Association, and other activities.

MOU Workgroup established annual priorities and signed updated MOU agreement among HSSCO, Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Office of Community Services and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education. The group worked in coordination with the Region 6 TA Network in hosting training on leadership, finance and governance held in Little Rock in November.

HSSCO Director served on the Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development Steering Committee; working to implement changes in professional development system, including registry process for child care and early childhood education staff.

Participation in monthly conference calls with Regional Office and Region 6 Head Start State Collaboration Directors. Routine meetings with liaison from Booz-Allen-Hamilton, contractor for Region 6 Technical Assistance Network.

Routine communication with Arkansas Head Start Association, including bi-monthly Association and Class meetings; assisted with AHSA Annual Institute held in Batesville in July. Participated in panel discussion on "Collaborative Partnerships" with representatives of Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, and Department of Education.

Reviewed proposed IM for Head Start Emergency Preparedness; submitted comments to OHS.

Participation in Region 6 training for "I Am Moving, I Am Learning" held in Dallas in November.

2. Describe additional activities and successes in the past year.

HSSCO Director served as member of Arkansas Coalition for Children of Incarcerated Parents. Linkages made with local Head Start programs to support families and children of incarcerated parents.

HSSCO Director selected to participate on Advisory Committee for Evaluation which is looking at programs in Arkansas that are addressing childhood obesity. Developed on-line survey tool to gather information on the types of groups and what they are doing to address the issues of childhood obesity. Shared information on "I Am Moving, I Am Learning" and Arkansas Head Start programs that are implementing this initiative.

Selected as board member for the Arkansas State Parent Information and Resource Center, a collaborative project of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and the Jones Center for Families.

C. Briefly describe your efforts to support the coordination of Head Start services to Hispanic children and families in your State.

Co-sponsorship of Welcome the Children "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" second annual training conference held in May. The focus of the training was to enhance understanding of cultural issues, teach strategies to support Latino children and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays.

HSSCO director serves on Advisory Committee for Welcome the Children, a project funded by the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and administered by Partners for Inclusive Communities. Using research based training materials, the primary goal is to provide training and technical assistance to help early childhood providers, including Head Start, understand various cultural issues and enhance techniques for supporting Hispanic children and families.

D. How do your responses to the questions above impact your approved work plan for the current or coming year?

The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office is pleased with progress achieved in 2007. Work continues in addressing the challenges and opportunities of local collaboration between Head Start and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success. Due to rich collaborative partnerships at the state level, tremendous positive interaction occurs routinely. Flexibility affords the Arkansas HSSCO the strength to enhance linkages and integration of policies and services, although it is a struggle to continue our current work, as well as new directions defined by Head Start reauthorization, with flat funding.

An evaluation compilation of the 2007-2008 Arkansas HSSCO is available from our office. The information in this report is utilized to plan for and focus future direction of the project.

**Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office
Addendum to State Profile Report
May 30, 2008**

Please list any state level oral health coalitions, committees, or activities along with the contact information for the person responsible for organizing/maintaining these activities.

Arkansas Oral Health Coalition
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Arkansas Department of Health
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Please list any local oral health partnerships, including contact information for the Head Start programs and the dentists involved in these partnerships.

Two Arkansas Head Start programs have Oral Health Initiative grants.

Child Development, Inc.
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Russellville, AR 72811
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jwilliams@childdevinc.org

UAMS Head Start – Early Head Start
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Little Rock, AR 72204
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The following Information was received from Lisa Miller, Oral Health Resource Specialist at Child Development, Inc., (email – lmiller@childdevinc.org)

- OHI dental partners provide classroom education to children as well as education to parents at parent meetings. Topics for children include: tooth brushing, flossing, visiting the dentist, and good food choices. Parent meeting topics include oral hygiene, early childhood caries, nutrition, HIPPA, and fluoride.
- Head Start home visitors and center-based teachers in OHI sites are utilizing “Head Start Lesson Plans: a Teachers Guide for Creating Healthy Smiles.”

I also received the following information on a dentist from Hot Springs, Dr. Russ Gorman, who was named as a Public Health Hero by the Arkansas Department of Health, and nominated by the Early Head Start program, Arkansas Human Development Corporation.

- Dr. Gorman assists the AHDC Early Head Start program by reviewing practices and policies related to the promotion of positive oral health development. Education for the children is incorporated into the daily curriculum. Dr. Gorman provides each child at the center with two free dental screenings per year by coming to the center to screen the children in their familiar environment. He also provides educational discussions and materials for parents.

Contact information:

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Please list any additional Oral Health activities that the State Collaboration is currently engaged in.

As mentioned in the Arkansas Annual Profile, the Head Start State Collaboration Office is involved in the annual Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) that was held for the second year in 2008 in Little Rock. Plans are being made for "outside" the central Arkansas area for 2009.