

HSSCO QUARTERLY REPORT

Activities for March-May 2008

Arkansas

Collaboration Director

Ann Patterson
Arkansas Head Start
State Collaboration Office
1400 W. Markham, Suite 406
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-371-0740 (phone)
501-370-9109 (fax)
ann@arheadstart.org

Lead Agency Contact

Tonya Russell, Director
Division of Child Care & Early
Childhood Education
Arkansas Department of
Human Services
501-682-0494 (phone)
501-683-6060 (fax)
tonya.russell@arkansas.gov

ACF Regional Contact

Shannon Hills
Region VI ACF
DHHS
1301 Young Street, Room 937
Dallas, TX 75202
214-767-2976 (phone)
214 767-2038 (fax)
shannon.hills@acf.hhs.gov

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.

Continuing work in collaboration with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Invest Early in Education (coalition of early childhood professionals, parents and others who led the campaign to make high quality preschool an important part of education reform in Arkansas). Working toward implementation of potential solutions identified through community forums held in 2007 to enhance collaborative efforts between Head Start and state-funded pre-k programs.

Ongoing communication with Governor's staff to ensure that Head Start continues as an important component of the comprehensive system for early education options within our state.

Participation in pre-k and early childhood education discussions with Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, and Invest Early Coalition to propose enhanced collaboration for early childhood efforts during the 2009 state legislative session.

Met to discuss proposed effort in collaborative development of parent handbook for Arkansas Better Chance for School Success; presented to Head Start Association with representatives assigned to assist in this collaborative effort.

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

- *Health Care***

Selected as member of the Arkansas Finish Line Coalition, a newly formed group of advocates and experts in children's health across Arkansas, which will lead a three-year effort to ensure every child in Arkansas with health insurance. The Finish Line Coalition will work to reduce the number of eligible, un-enrolled children in ARKids First, expand ARKids eligibility from 200 to 300 percent of poverty, and develop a buy-in program for families at and above 300 percent of the poverty line. This project is supported by a grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

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. Participation in pilot sites meeting and routine conference calls. Working with DCCECE and DBHS on potential options for expansion of consultative behavioral health services offered to a wider range of early childhood education programs.

Attended monthly CASSP Coordinating Council meetings and quarterly Arkansas Children's Behavioral Health Care Commission meeting. Continued active participation on Services, Supports & Standards workgroup.

Participation in monthly meetings of Arkansas Oral Health Coalition and Second Annual Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) held on May 2nd-3rd in Little Rock. ArMOM treated 1,569 patients in desperate need and provided in excess of \$643,859 in donated dental care. There were 1,711 fillings and 2,816 teeth extracted, supported by 790 volunteers that included 143 dentists, 58 dental hygienists, 237 dental assistants, 19 pharmacists, 32 nurses, and 301 support staff. Arkansas HSSCO assisted with sponsorship of the pediatric area at ArMOM.

Assisted with and co-sponsored educational effort of Arkansas Oral Health Coalition in coordination with Arkansas Travelers Baseball by sponsoring Spit Tobacco Prevention night during ballgame on May 17th.

Meeting with Delta Dental Plan of Arkansas in examining opportunities for partnership activities between Delta Dental and Arkansas Head Start Association, HSSCO, and local Head Start, Early Head Start and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs in Arkansas.

Serving on Advisory Committee for Evaluation through Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families that is collecting information and evaluating programs that are involved in addressing childhood obesity in Arkansas. Assisted in development of online survey tool to gather information on types of groups and what they are doing to address the issues of childhood obesity. Survey results shared at Arkansas Obesity Policy Summit held on May 22nd in Little Rock.

- **Welfare**

Participation in Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security (ACES) activities, to promote economic security of all Arkansans through public education, advocacy and collaboration.

Various meetings with Arkansas Voices for Children Left Behind and co-sponsorship of Fourth Annual Southern Summit for Children of the Incarcerated and Their Families on April 7th-8th in North Little Rock. This conference was held in cooperation with The National Advocacy Partnership for the Bill of Rights for Children & Families Impacted by Incarceration.

A new program, Benefit Bank, which expands the locations where low-income people may apply for public assistance is being piloted in Hempstead, Izard, Mississippi, Montgomery, Phillips, Pulaski and Washington counties. Steve Copley, of the Arkansas Interfaith Conference, presented information to Head Start directors and staff at their March class meetings. Currently, a lack of transportation and limited hours of operation and locations of county offices pose hurdles for some who sought public benefit programs. Several Head Start programs in the pilot counties expressed an interest in being trained to offer services at local sites convenient to and serving Head Start children & families.

- **Childcare**

Continued work with Arkansas Children's Week planning committee and local programs for Arkansas Children's Week activities held April 13th- 19th. Head Start State Collaboration Office and Arkansas Head Start Association, in cooperation with the Region 6 Technical Assistance Network hosted a workshop for early childhood providers, including Head Start, on "Teaching & Enhancing Learning through Music & Movement" with Al Stewart, Language & Literacy Specialist, on April 16th & 17th.

Attended Governor's Task Force on Best Practices for After School and Summer Programs meeting on May 27th at the State Capitol. Routine participation in Arkansas Out-Of-School Network meetings.

Attended Arkansas Early Childhood Commission meeting on April 15th.

Participation in Trainer Competency Workgroup for Arkansas Professional Development on April 25th. Also participated in NAECY Early Childhood Workforce System Initiative Focus Group.

- **Education**

Working with Arkansas legislative representatives, Department of Education, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, and the early childhood community in proposing a "Birth to Five" licensure program for Arkansas. This effort is in response to an Interim Study of the State Legislature. Meeting held on March 5th at the State Capitol. Presented to full Education Committee on May 5th and accepted as interim study.

Working in partnership with Southern Good Faith Fund in distribution of material and information about the Aspiring Scholars Matching Grant Program as an outreach effort to Arkansas Head Start programs. The Aspiring Scholars program offers matching funds for eligible families who save money for college in the State's GIFT College Investing Plan.

Participated in Arkansas Early Childhood Higher Education workgroup meeting at Pulaski Tech on May 31st to discuss issues including birth to five licensure, professional development, articulation, and other areas of concern for early childhood professional development.

- **Community Services**

Participated in Arkansas Crisis Response training on May 2nd. Also participated in Group Crisis Intervention simulation during training for Arkansas State Police in crisis response training on May 20th.

Serving as Board Member for Arkansas Supportive Housing Network. Participated in board planning retreat on April 19th and various committee and board meetings.

- **Family Literacy Services**

Continuing work 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.

- **Services to Children with Disabilities**

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. Invited participant to meeting on May 12th-14th in Boulder, Colorado, sponsored by N-CHAM, to discuss enhanced and continued Head Start involvement with ECHO; also present at the meeting were Region VI T/TA Network representatives.

Attended Arkansas Coalition for Education of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing meeting held on May 28th.

Part C MOU agreement updated with participation from representatives of Part C, HSSCO and Arkansas TA Network. Finalized draft shared with Early Head and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs. MOU expected to be signed in Summer 2008.

- **Services to Homeless Children and Families**

Serving on Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Arkansas Homeless Policy Academy. Attend monthly meetings of Homeless Coalition and quarterly meetings of Homeless Policy Academy. Member of Action Task Force and Legislative Committee for Arkansas Homeless Coalition.

Served on panel presentation for "The Culture of Homelessness," on May 1st at Welcome the Children conference held in North Little Rock.

Assisted with 'city-wide read' event of "Same Kind of Different As Me," with authors to benefit homeless advocacy organizations in central Arkansas on April 17th.

Participated in OHS webinar on homelessness on April 17th.

Working with Arkansas Homeless Coalition and other groups to plan for Homeless Outreach Event scheduled for September 13th in Little Rock. HSSCO is serving on children & families committee.

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

Participated in Arkansas Obesity Policy Summit held in Little Rock on May 22nd. Workgroups for school (including pre-school), health, government, industry & media, and worksite discussed and proposed policy recommendations for the 2009 Arkansas legislative session.

Continued involvement with Arkansas System of Care reform initiative, focusing on children's mental health reform in Arkansas.

Participation in Integrating Behavioral Health into Early Childhood Summit held on April 29th.

Participated in several Kids Count Steering Committee meetings.

Routine meetings with ABCD (Assuring Better Child Health Development) stakeholders group, a multi-state learning project focusing on preventive care of children whose health care is covered by Medicaid. The project supports efforts to improve early identification of young children with developmental problems.

Attended and participated as a member of legislative Task Force on Substance Abuse Prevention; serving on subcommittee to identify community prevention providers and organizations throughout the state.

Participation on Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems state team; attended national meeting for state partners in Baltimore on March 13th-14th.

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.

Participated in Region VI Head Start State Collaboration Directors conference calls with Regional Office.

Participated in meetings with Arkansas Head Start Association Board of Directors, Head Start directors and staff, and AHSA Annual Institute Planning Committee in preparation for AHSA Annual Institute held in Eureka Springs on May 5th – 7th. Luncheon held on May 6th to honor recent Head Start teachers and staff who recently received Associates, Bachelors and Masters degrees.

Routine meetings with Jan Cox, liaison from Booz-Allen-Hamilton, contractor for Region VI ACF Head Start to Arkansas HSSCO. Also participated in cluster training with Arkansas Head Start programs, Arkansas TA specialists and Region VI TA Network on May 29th which focused on Challenging Behaviors.

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

Co-sponsorship/partner of Governor's Work-Life Balance Awards and luncheon held on May 7th at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock. The 2008 Governor's luncheon recognized Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family. Major funding provided from Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

Participated in training held at the Museum of Discovery on April 2nd & 3rd, and sponsored by The Respect for All Project, a program of GroundSpark, which focused on a series of documentary films and educational material that helps to create and support safe schools, hate-free communities and a better understanding of human difference. The two training events included "Let's Get Real," on name-calling and bullying, and "That's a Family," about family diversity and focusing on family friendly practices.

Served as a Region VI representative to Office of Head Start State Collaboration workgroup for development of needs assessment tool for Head Start State Collaboration Offices.

The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office and the Arkansas Commission on Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence co-sponsored two forums on Endangered Children in Arkansas on March 24th in Monticello and on April 22nd in Newport. The forums included topics on indicators of child abuse, children's cognitive and social/emotional development, working with children of incarcerated parents, child maltreatment and mandated reporting and drug endangered children.

Dissemination of evaluation report for 2007-2008 Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office to Head Start programs and state and local partner agencies.

Preparation and submission of 2007 Annual State Profile for Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office to Office of Head Start and Pal-Tech.

Assisted Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care in linking with local Head Start program for preparation of grant proposal for Health Literacy.

Participated in HIPPIY Advisory Committee meeting on May 21st.

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

Continued service on Welcome the Children Advisory Committee and conference planning committee; the primary goal of this project is to provide training and technical assistance for early childhood providers, including Head Start, and other educators in understanding cultural issues, learning strategies to support Latino children, and making appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible delays. The annual Welcome the Children conference was held in North Little Rock on April 30th – May 2nd.

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 of the first quarter of the current grant period. The HSSCO works in cooperation with the Arkansas Head Start Association and other early childhood education partners in identifying opportunities for enhancing collaborative efforts between pre-k in Arkansas and Head Start. Work also continues in the other priority areas with state and local partners.