

HSSCO QUARTERLY REPORT

Activities for September - November 2007

Arkansas

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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.

Continuing work in collaboration with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Invest Early in Education (a coalition of early childhood professionals, parents and other individuals who led the campaign to make high quality preschool an important part of education in Arkansas and secured additional funding for the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success programs). Working on possible implementation of potential solutions identified through community forums held in the summer.

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

Conference call with Susan Johnston, Region 6 Office, and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education on September 26th regarding collaborative efforts and enrollment in Head Start programs. Meeting with Leon McCowan, Region 6 Office, and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education on November 9th to discuss collaborative efforts in Arkansas between Head Start and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success, as well as to offer potential options for enhancing collaborative efforts between Head Start and state pre-kindergarten programs.

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

- Health Care**

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 routine conference calls with sponsoring organizations, pilot sites and evaluation team.

Attended monthly CASSP Coordinating Council meetings.

Participation in monthly meetings of Arkansas Oral Health Coalition, as well as ASTDD and HSSCO conference call on September 20th and Oral Health Planning Team conference call with OHS on November 13th.

Selected to participate on Advisory Committee for Evaluation which is looking at programs in Arkansas that are addressing childhood obesity. Developing an online survey tool to gather information on the types of groups and what they are doing to address the issue of childhood obesity.

- ***Welfare***

Participation in Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security (ACES) activities, as well as worked on development of economic security fact sheet which was a part of the packet for attendees at the Family Economic Security Conference held in Pine Bluff on November 5th-6th. ACES' mission is to promote the economic security of all Arkansans through public education, advocacy and collaboration.

- ***Childcare***

Continuing work with Arkansas Children's Week planning committee meeting in preparation for 2008 Arkansas Children's Week activities to be held in April.

Participation in Arkansas Out of School Network annual state conference held September 14th-15th in Little Rock.

Attended meeting of Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development Steering Committee and work groups held on October 15th. Worked with AECPPDS in identifying additional Head Start participants for involvement in various assigned activities. Jackie Dedman, with Region 6 TA Network will serve on the core competency workgroup for professional development.

- ***Education***

Attended and assisted with sponsorship of the Arkansas Parent Education Network and State Department of Education state conference on family involvement held October 8th-10th in Hot Springs.

- ***Community Services***

As a member of the Arkansas Homeless Coalition, participated in Thanksgiving Outreach Dinner held on November 20th at Barton Coliseum in Little Rock where more than 200 meals were served to the homeless including many children and families. Backpacks were distributed to children in attendance, as well as clothing, blankets and other items which were available to the homeless.

- ***Family Literacy Services***

Working with Department of Education and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education in developing a brochure for use with Reach Out & Read, a project of the Arkansas chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- ***Services to Children with Disabilities***

State Special Quest team meetings held to discuss and prepare for next steps in Arkansas. Meeting held with Deputy Director of Department of Human Services to discuss options for training in Arkansas.

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. Mississippi County Early Head Start ECHO team was trained in October.

Participated in ACED (Arkansas Coalition for Education of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing) meeting on November 28th to discuss priorities for next year. State Summit on Early Intervention and Education of Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing was held on September 28th-29th.

- **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.

State Homeless Conference held October 1st – 3rd in Little Rock. The theme of this year's conference was "Children: The Forgotten Homeless." Participated on panel, along with local Head Start director and staff, at a workshop entitled "Giving Homeless Children a Head Start" at the conference. HSSCO assisted with sponsorship of a children's art & poetry contest on "What a Home Means to Me." Art and poetry was displayed at a reception prior to the conference.

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

Continued participation with Arkansas System of Care Stakeholders Planning, Services and Supports workgroup, focusing on children's mental health reform.

Invited participant in Leadership Workshop on EPSDT: Advancing a Collaborative Action Agenda to Improve Child Health held on November 27th – 28th. The workshop was hosted by the Arkansas Department of Health, Family Health Branch and the Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Services. The Maternal & Child Health Bureau (MCHB), Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services 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, an opportunity to discuss important topics related to child health. The structured and facilitated discussions gave participants an opportunity to advance potential strategies for improving child health services, as well as opportunities for collaboration.

Continued participation as member of 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. This project will support efforts to improve early identification of young children with developmental problems.

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.

Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office worked in cooperation with the Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Office of Community Services to co-sponsor a leadership, finance, governance & management conference on November 14th – 15th in Little Rock. The Region 6 TA Network staff assisted in the provision of this training.

Participated in Region 6 Head Start State Collaboration Directors conference calls with Regional Office.

Attended Region 6 Head Start Association annual training conference and Region 6 Board meeting held in San Antonio, Texas on September 11th – 13th.

Participated in meeting with AHSA executive committee on November 15th.

Participated in OHS training through a webinar for HSSCO directors on accessing and participating in the HSSCO workspace on ECLKC held on September 5th.

Routine meetings with Jan Cox, liaison from Booz-Allen-Hamilton, contractor for Region 6 ACF Head Start, to Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office.

Participated in the Region 6 "I Am Moving, I Am Learning" training held in Dallas on November 6th-8th.

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

The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office and the Arkansas Commission of Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence sponsored a forum on "Endangered Children in Arkansas" which was held October 30th in Searcy. The forum included topics on indicators of child abuse and the relationship between substance abuse/use and family violence.

Participated in Arkansas Kids Count Coalition Steering Committee planning retreat on November 14th in Hot Springs to discuss and prioritize upcoming public policy issues for children and families.

Selected as board member for the Arkansas State Parent Information and Resource Center, a program supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to the Center for Effective Parenting, a collaborative project among the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Jones Center for Families. Participated in board meeting on November 28th.

Prepared, in cooperation with partners, the renewal application for the Arkansas HSSCO. The Arkansas Head Start Association approved the budget and activities submitted for the upcoming year.

Participated in Mid South Summer School task force meeting on October 12th to plan for 2008 conference to be held in June.

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

Serve on Welcome the Children Advisory Committee; the project is 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, and other educators in understanding cultural issues, learning strategies to support Latino children, and making appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays. Community team trainings continue to be held throughout the fall for early childhood providers, including Head Start.

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 made during the third quarter of our current grant period. Similar to activities throughout the year, we continue to spend an extensive amount of time in promoting and enhancing state and local collaborative efforts between Head Start and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success, the state-funded pre-k program for 3 and 4 year old children from families at 200% or below of the Federal poverty level. Arkansas Head Start programs are very concerned about additional funding of Arkansas Better Chance for School Success programs in certain areas of the state, and the effect it has had on enrollment numbers for Head Start programs. The HSSCO worked in conjunction with the Arkansas Head Start Association in surveying Arkansas programs on enrollment this fall. More and more time is spent in the area of pre-k and Head Start collaboration.