

Collaboration in Southern Regional Early Care and Education Systems:

Descriptions of state collaboration efforts to improve the
quality of programs in the early care and education system

By

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SOUTHERN REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON CHILD CARE

Collaboration in Southern Regional Early Care and Education Systems

INTRODUCTION

The Southern Institute on Children and Families established the Southern Regional Initiative on Child Care in January 2000 with support from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The Initiative is guided by a 23-member Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care composed of gubernatorial representatives from 16 southern states, a mayoral appointee representing the District of Columbia, a representative of the Southern Growth Policies Board and representatives appointed by the Southern Institute. Participants in the Initiative are Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

In January of 2001, the Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care and its Staff Work Group embarked on a southern regional action plan to achieve quality. The action plan, presented in the October 2002 publication entitled ***Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education***, sets forth 7 goals and 39 action steps.¹ The first goal and action step establish the need to coordinate across programs in the early care and education system.

Goal One: All children and families will have the benefit of a quality, comprehensive and coordinated early care and education system.

Action Step 1.1: Public policy at the federal, state and local level will require planning and coordination across major systems to improve quality, including Head Start, state pre-kindergarten, subsidized child care and licensing.

A report entitled ***Collaboration Among Child Care, Head Start, and Pre-Kindergarten: A Telephone Survey of Selected Southern States***, resulted from a survey of eight southern states and was published by the Southern Institute in December 2002.² Respondents generally agreed that collaboration requires a great deal of time and work but is worth the effort. Collaboration maximizes resources, expands the availability of quality early care and education and also improves the quality of early care and education.

During March 2003, the Southern Institute contacted states represented on the Task Force and invited them to submit information describing collaborative early care and education initiatives in their states. Respondents were Arkansas, District of Columbia, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Each state was asked to provide descriptions of collaborative early care and education initiatives in the following areas:

- State infrastructures for collaboration in early care and education;
- State collaborative planning committees formed to improve family and child indicators with an improvement plan that requires collaboration in the early care and education system;
- Comprehensive early care and education professional development systems;
- Universal pre-kindergarten implemented collaboratively in school, Head Start and child care settings with common quality standards;
- Common standards developed collaboratively for early literacy or the early education component of No Child Left Behind;
- Mental health services provided to families with young children in child care, Head Start and pre-kindergarten, with support to teachers in early care and education settings;
- Comprehensive family support services as provided by Head Start extended to families in child care or pre-kindergarten programs; and
- Tiered child care licensing systems with quality standards that are established and/or applied collaboratively.

The categories below have been added to accommodate initiatives submitted but not covered in the previous listing:

- Improved health services for children and families in child care;
- Improved child care inspection and monitoring systems; and
- Expansion of child care services.

Descriptions of collaboration efforts to improve the quality of programs in the early care and education system, as submitted by southern states and the District of Columbia, are presented below.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVES ON COLLABORATION IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Arkansas

The Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and the Head Start Collaboration Project joined together to develop a training program to address the issue of pre-literacy skills. The *Pre-K*

Early Learning Literacy in Arkansas Initiative (Pre K-ELLA) emerged. This is a comprehensive, five-day training course designed for all early education settings, including center-based care, family child care homes and professionals working with parents in the *Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-school Youngsters (HIPPY)* program. The joint efforts of all concerned resulted in this 30-hour comprehensive training being delivered, free of charge, all across the state through the support of Arkansas universities, community colleges and technical institutes. The training includes the following components:

- Social and Emotional Development related to Literacy
- Creating Learning Environments that are Literacy Rich and Guide Behavior
- Overview of Language Development – Language Arts
- Promoting Language and Literacy
 - The Role of Play
 - Dramatic Play, Drama and Play Acting
 - Read Aloud
 - Storytelling
 - Poetry, Nursery Rhymes, Finger Plays, Songs
- Reading Experiences – Shared Reading
- Learning about Letters, Sounds and Words
- Environmental Print
- Writing in the Pre-K Balanced Literacy Program
- Assessment, Observation and Portfolio
- Fostering Children’s Emergent Literacy Development through the Family

This collaboration also produced a comprehensive evaluation that studied the comparison of teacher behavior and classroom environment in pre- and post-training settings. The data from this evaluation will be available in July 2003 and will be used to refine any elements of the training deemed necessary.

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Louisiana

Louisiana established a Children's Cabinet to facilitate and require coordination of policy, planning and budgeting affecting programs and services to children and their families, to coordinate delivery of services to children and their families and to eliminate duplication of services where appropriate. The Children's Cabinet is a policy office within the Office of the Governor. It is comprised of the various secretaries of the departments impacting children, representatives of the legislature, a representative of the Supreme Court, a representative of the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board, the Commissioner of Administration and a representative of the Governor's Office. A 39-member Advisory Board representing children's advocacy groups, state agencies and parents advises the Children's Cabinet.

The Children's Cabinet and Children's Cabinet Advisory Board meet regularly to address issues impacting children and, during the past several years, have successfully prioritized early care and education of Louisiana's young children. The Children's Cabinet also provides input and support for the development of the Children's Budget.

As a result of the leadership and coordination of the Children's Cabinet, Louisiana now places a higher priority on early intervention and prevention. The state implemented an extremely successful pre-kindergarten program for at-risk children and also has teamed with state universities to provide infant mental health initiatives. Louisiana has amplified home visiting opportunities to offer education and parenting skills to new parents. The state also has increased the number of children participating in high quality child care programs. Louisiana expanded its LaCHIP program to establish LaMOMS, covering pregnant women up to 200 percent of the poverty level and their newborn infants. Louisiana also has redesigned its Part C program for infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities. These actions would not have been possible without significant support and collaboration from various entities.

Most recently the Children's Cabinet, working with the Louisiana Maternal and Child Health program, began developing a plan for a more formalized and comprehensive system of early childhood. Through this effort a needs assessment and state plan for all early childhood services will be completed. Early child care and education is one of the priority areas to be addressed.

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Mississippi

Mississippi's governor created the Mississippi Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Childhood Services and the Mississippi Governor's Interagency Advisory Council for Early Childhood Services. The councils are composed of representatives from the Mississippi Department of Human Services, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, the Mississippi Department of Health, the Mississippi Department of Education and a host of other state and local agencies. The Coordinating Council reports to the legislature and is co-chaired by the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the State Superintendent of Education. Both councils were compiled to address key issues surrounding legislation concerning early childhood issues in the state. The two committees meet to create tentative legislation to be reviewed and adopted by the Mississippi legislative body.

Mississippi has been successful in passing legislation as a direct result of the collaboration efforts of the Mississippi Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Childhood Services and the Mississippi Governor's Interagency Advisory Council for Early Childhood Services. The legislation directs the Mississippi Department of Human Services in conjunction with the Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi Health Department's Division of Child Care Licensure to conduct an assessment of school readiness programs operated by licensed child care centers and public school pre-kindergarten programs in the state, analyze the data and produce a report on the findings that includes recommendations on the need for additional early childhood programs or services. The Mississippi legislature has mandated funding allocation for the completion of the project.

Coordination will continue through the Mississippi Interagency Councils for Early Childhood Services. The councils will continue to meet quarterly, as mandated by law. Representation from all designated agencies and organizations will continue.

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Missouri

In 1994, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) received a grant from the Danforth Foundation to bring state agencies together for joint planning for early care and education. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education took the lead to convene members at the mid-management level from the Departments of Health, Mental Health and Social Services and the Head Start Collaboration Office.

Throughout the years, the group became known as the Early Childhood Interagency Team (ECIT) and has been extremely successful in cataloging resources, cross training, developing joint goals and strategies, blending resources and working together toward a common vision.

With DESE's leadership, the group was instrumental in the development of the state's early learning guidelines. The larger early childhood community and key stakeholders from across the state were at the table with the team throughout the process. Standards were developed in all five domains of school readiness as defined by the National Education Goals Panel.

The key aspects of the ongoing, successful collaborative effort have been the dedication of the leadership, the release time and support given by executive management and the honesty and flexibility of the members. A very important key, however, has been the neutral and collaborative influence of the Head Start Collaboration Office. Located on the University of Missouri – Columbia campus at the Center for Family Policy and Research, convening functions eventually gravitated to the Collaboration Office. The neutrality, as well as the collaborative attitude and approach of the office, have enhanced the ongoing collaboration.

As a result, Head Start, Early Head Start, Child Care, Licensing, Pre-K, First Steps, Parents As Teachers and other programs have blended and integrated in many unique and creative ways. The development of Basic Child Care Orientation Training and offering the Heads Up Reading program statewide are examples of other collaborative ventures.

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North Carolina

Smart Start is North Carolina's nationally recognized and award-winning early childhood initiative designed to ensure that young children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Smart Start is a public-private initiative that provides early education funding to all of the state's 100 counties. Smart Start funds are administered at the local level through local non-profit organizations called local partnerships. The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) is the statewide non-profit organization that provides oversight and technical assistance for local partnerships. Services at the local level range depending on local needs. Funding for Smart Start is currently \$200 million in state funds. Smart Start has raised nearly \$192 million in donations since it began.

Currently, 81 local partnerships have been established and administer funding and programs throughout the state. Smart Start funds are used to improve the quality of child care, make child care more affordable and accessible, provide access to health services and offer family support. Smart Start has achieved tremendous results in these areas and continues to strive to reach all children in North Carolina.

Smart Start has garnered much national recognition and is considered a model for comprehensive early childhood education initiatives. In 2001, the NCPC established a National Technical Assistance Center to assist other states with development of early education initiatives. Smart Start has received two national awards recognizing its work to improve the well-being of young children. In 1998, Smart Start received the Innovations in American Governments Award from the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. In 1999, Smart Start was awarded the Innovation in Government Award from the Council of State Governments.

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South Carolina

South Carolina has an Early Childhood Coordinating Council, which has been working across agency lines to collaborate on early child care and education. The Council is exploring child care regulations to raise standards and will soon make its recommendation for a tiered licensing system. Newly elected Governor Mark Sanford established a Task Force on Education before taking office. The report from the Task Force reflected the need for a coordinated and collaborative system in the state from birth to age four, to bring all areas under one umbrella. This recommendation is under study.

In addition to the Early Childhood Coordinating Council, South Carolina has First Steps, an early childhood initiative to improve care for children from birth to age four. First Steps collaborates with all health and human services agencies including social services, health services, Early Head Start, Head Start, ChildFind, early childhood in public schools and mental health to improve outcomes for children, with an emphasis on preparing children to succeed in school.

In late 2001, South Carolina became part of a national study, *Universal Financing for Early Care and Education for America's Children Project*, in order to plan for a comprehensive early care and education infrastructure system accompanied by a long-range financing plan for young children. The basic premise for the initiative is that policies and costs must be considered together. This project has brought together a large group representing both public and private constituencies and agencies to serve as a state-level task force. This South Carolina Task Force has worked with the national partners (Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan and Dr. Richard Brandon) on the recommendations, costs and implications of the proposed system. The South Carolina Task Force is preparing recommendations, including costs and impacts specific to South Carolina, to assure access to quality early care and education that meets the needs of families. South Carolina is one of three states, along with Ohio and Illinois, to partner in this study funded by the Packard, Mott, Carnegie and Casey Foundations. South Carolina is continuing to work with Dr. Kagan and Dr. Brandon toward implementing this South Carolina plan in stages.

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Texas

The Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Services staff assembled a state-level task force of early education leaders including representatives from the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Texas Education Agency's Pre-Kindergarten program and various other related programs, to strengthen collaboration between child care, Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten. Since May 2002, the task force has met to address issues surrounding collaboration with the goal of eliminating barriers to ensure that full-day, full-year child care services are available to low-income parents involved in work, training or education.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is represented on the Office of Early Childhood Coordination Advisory Committee, which was created by Senate Bill 665 of the 77th Legislature. The goal of the office is to promote community support for parents of all children younger than age six through an integrated state and local level decision-making process. The office is charged with identifying gaps in childhood services, funding sources for early childhood services, opportunities for collaboration to better serve children birth to age six, and to identify methods of coordinating services between agencies and programs. Housed in the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, members include representatives from all state agencies working with children under age six as well as private and non-profit agencies.

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West Virginia

Quality Teams have been established in each of the six Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) delivery areas to promote local collaborations. The state licensing specialists in the six regions lead the teams, which receive a small allotment of child care funding to support their operation. The meetings attract a variety of participants, including staff from CCR&R agencies, Department of Health and Human Resources staff who regulate family child care, Child & Adult Food Program staff, child care center directors, Head Start directors, Family Resource Center representatives, local Health Department staff, the local Fire Marshall inspectors, family day care providers, parents, West Virginia University extension agents, higher education representatives and others. The teams have developed brochures, sponsored local child care conferences, purchased educational materials for centers and provided educational toys to providers.

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STATE COLLABORATIVE PLANNING COMMITTEES FORMED TO IMPROVE FAMILY AND CHILD INDICATORS WITH AN IMPROVEMENT PLAN THAT REQUIRES COLLABORATION IN THE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

Arkansas

The Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families serve as joint administrators of the Arkansas team for the School Readiness Indicators Initiative. This is a multi-state initiative that uses child well-being indicators to build a change agenda in states and local communities in order to improve school readiness and ensure early school success. The task of participating states is to develop a set of child outcomes and systems indicators for children from birth through eight years of age. Indicators are clustered in age sets: 0-3, 3-5 and 5-8. The Arkansas team is one of 17 state teams working individually and as a group to develop a comprehensive set of measures to monitor school readiness and service systems outcomes for children and families. Indicators fall within the categories of K-3 Education/Readiness for School, 0-5 Education, Child Outcomes, Community, Family, Economic Well-Being, Health and Safety. This collaboration will provide information and benchmarks to help guide other state efforts in the area of school readiness.

The Department of Education will manage a pilot project in the fall of 2003 that will implement new and more uniform assessment measures for children entering kindergarten, based on the work of the School Readiness Indicators Initiative, the Early Childhood Education Frameworks, Head Start performance standards and Pre-K ELLA. Representatives from Head Start, Arkansas Better Chance, Even Start, Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, the Department of Education and private child care providers all worked together to agree on assessment standards for this project. The project will go statewide during the fall of 2004.

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Maryland

In December 2001, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families and the Council for Excellence in Government convened a group of 40 leaders in state and local government and advocacy and service-providing organizations to form the Leadership in Action Program (LAP). The program had dual aims of accelerating the rate at which children enter school ready to learn in Maryland and increasing the leadership capacity of the participants who are accountable for that result.

The LAP members engaged in research, discussion and debate to fully understand the complexities of the school readiness issue, and the factors that explain why less than half of Maryland's kindergartners in 2001 were assessed as having the skills necessary to succeed in school. Through its deliberations, LAP members developed a 5-Year School Readiness Action Agenda that provides a roadmap to achieving the result that all children in Maryland enter school ready to learn. "All" children, in this case, refers to children birth through age five of all socio-economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds, including those with disabilities, special needs and diverse abilities. The 5-Year School Readiness Action Agenda establishes a target that, by the 2006-07 school year, 75 percent of all kindergartners will be assessed as fully ready for school on the state's readiness assessment, the Work Sampling System.

This 5-Year Action Agenda is based on accomplishing 6 goals through the implementation of 25 strategies. In brief, those goals are:

- All children, birth through age five, will have access to quality early care and education programs that meet the needs of families, including full-day options.
- Parents of young children will succeed in their role as their child's first teacher.
- Children, birth through age five, and their families, will receive necessary income support benefits and health and mental health care to ensure they arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies.
- All early care and education staff will be appropriately trained in promoting and understanding school readiness.
- All Maryland citizens will understand the value of quality early care and education as the means to achieve school readiness.
- Maryland will have an infrastructure that promotes, sufficiently funds and holds accountable its school readiness efforts.

The Action Agenda was completed in October 2002. Since that time, LAP members have continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis with support from the Council on Excellence in Government and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Workgroups were established to move the Action Agenda forward and institutionalize the collaborative planning function within the Subcabinet for Children, Youth and Families.

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In May 2002 Missouri began participation in the School Readiness Indicators Project, a 17-state initiative to develop a set of school readiness indicators for each participating state. Additional goals include informing public policy through reliable, relevant data and implementing a positive change agenda.

Missouri's Governor, Bob Holden, appointed the collaborative team of 11 early care and education professionals, and First Lady Lori Hauser Holden leads the team. The team developed a core indicators list after considering nearly 100 potential indicators. Baseline data is being collected on the core set of 24 indicators and an annual report card is planned. The work of the indicators process is now informing the development of policy as the state's Children Services Commission assesses the status of early care and education and prepares to promote and support early care and education legislation in the upcoming legislative session.

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Oklahoma

In April 2000 Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating appointed a public-private task force to conduct a review of early childhood care and education in the state and make recommendations for improving the level of school readiness among young children. The task force was composed of concerned business leaders and state and private agency representatives, who created a blueprint for improving services for families and children. They also supported legislation to establish an on-going public-private Partnership for School Readiness but were repeatedly defeated through opposition from conservative organizations. The task force members rallied to continue their work with the assistance of the United Way, the Success by 6[®] initiative and the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. The four strategies identified are 1) develop a strong public policy, 2) create a statewide early childhood public-private partnership, 3) conduct a major public engagement campaign, and 4) mobilize communities to provide supportive environments for young children and their families. The results sought are 1) families nurture, teach and provide for their young children, 2) children are born healthy and remain healthy, 3) families can find and afford high quality child care when they need it, and 4) children enter school prepared to learn and continue to succeed. The legislation to create Oklahomans for School Readiness became law in 2003, and the new governor pledged his support and will assist in raising funds for the new organization. Next steps include the appointment of a non-profit board for resource development, creation of an identifiable brand for the group and creation of a comprehensive approach with benchmarks to school readiness.

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The Texas Workforce Commission served as the lead agency for Texas, along with nine other states, to participate in the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning strategic planning session. This national center focuses on strengthening the capacity of child care and Head Start to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children. A task force comprised of representatives from Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten, child care and private and non-profit agencies was formed to develop a strategic plan to addressing these

issues. The Texas Workforce Commission has been collaborating with the other representatives to ensure that social and emotional development is included in guidelines and standards for children in Texas.

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West Virginia

In the first year of his administration, Governor Wise published his agenda for children, based on recommendations of his Transition Task Force on Children. The Agenda established four broad goals and strategies in education, health care, economic support and safety. In October 2002 Governor and Mrs. Wise hosted a summit on early care and education to continue the work of the Transition Task Force and further define the governor's early childhood agenda. The summit brought together more than 200 citizens who worked in small groups to identify areas for action.

A report was published outlining the participants' recommendations for improving the care and education of young children as a shared responsibility of government, communities and families. Priority issues include:

- Engaging in a local and state public education campaign;
- Providing quality early care and education professionals opportunities to improve their skills and advance their careers;
- Including child care as a partner in the pre-kindergarten program;
- Encouraging parent/guardian and family involvement in the early care and education of their children;
- Identifying adequate resources to sustain the early care and education system in West Virginia;
- Ensuring collaboration and common vision among all groups; and
- Providing adequate transportation for the pre-kindergarten program.

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COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS

Arkansas

The Arkansas Head Start Collaboration Project was awarded a grant from the Head Start Bureau in 1997. Members of the project sought ways to improve the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators in all developmental domains to strengthen early learning for young children in Arkansas. They formed a partnership with the Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and organized a Staff Development Work Group that consisted of 30 representatives from institutions of higher education, Head Start grantees, community child care programs and education service cooperative early childhood programs. Meetings of this group focused on identification of the need for consistency and continuity among training opportunities offered to those working in the field of early education and care. Key points of discussion included availability of training opportunities, the need for a state registry, linkage of advanced training experiences to benefits and the need for involvement of professional associations. Members realized that collaboration among stakeholders would be crucial to achieve the goal of a comprehensive system of professional development for the diverse field of early education and care.

The work of this group resulted in the formation of the Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Development System (AECPPDS). This system is currently managed by the Professional Development Steering Committee, whose purpose is to provide early childhood professionals in Arkansas access to a coordinated professional development system based upon current research and best practice. The system contains high quality training experiences and allows for the development of career pathways to meet diverse needs of individuals. The Spectrum (Career Lattice) details 10 levels of career development based on training, education experience in the field and professional activity and plans a course for any individual that wishes to grow and set professional goals. Ten competency areas are identified for training purposes: child growth and development, creating caring communities to support learning and development, supporting learning and development through curriculum planning and implementation, assessment and evaluation, family, community professionalism, program management, communication and general knowledge.

Individual early childhood practitioners use the Practitioner Registry in order to accumulate a record of all training experiences they complete during their career. This facilitates the process for practitioners to identify career opportunities and develop personal career paths. The Training Registry is a system of tracking all verified statewide training and makes current information readily available on the Division Web site. The AECPPDS also maintains an up-to-date Trainer Registry, which verifies the qualifications of individual trainers to provide training.

Verification includes documentation of the trainer's education, training and experience in identified areas of expertise. All trainers for programs sponsored by the AECPPDS must meet qualifications consistent with or above the training qualifications set by the Trainer Registry.

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Kentucky

The Kentucky Professional Development Framework is the action plan for the education, training and credentialing of early childhood development professionals. The Professional Development Framework is the product of months of planning for a seamless statewide system. Its purpose is to help implement the KIDS NOW early childhood development initiative legislated by the Kentucky General Assembly in 2000.

The Professional Development Framework is based on the reports of five work groups of early childhood professionals who made recommendations to the state's Early Childhood Professional Development Council. The Early Childhood Professional Development Council reviewed and revised the recommendations and presented them to the Early Childhood Development Authority for final approval and implementation.

The Professional Development Framework defines five levels of professional accomplishment and the training, credentialing and articulation requirements for each. Included are:

- A core content section describing what early childhood professionals should know at each level.
- A credentials section describing three early childhood professional credentials offered in the state of Kentucky – the Commonwealth Child Care Credential (for entry-level professionals), the Director's Credential and the Trainer's Credential. These credentials fit into the five levels of professional

accomplishment along with the Child Development Associate (CDA) certificates and college degrees in early childhood at two and four-year institutes of higher education.

- A training section outlining a seamless track in which early childhood professionals build knowledge and competence from level to level.
- An articulation section describing how credit for education and training at each level transfers to the next level.
- A scholarship section describing how the formal education and training of early childhood professionals is funded.

Since implementation of the Commonwealth Child Care Credential in the spring of 2002, more than 474 Commonwealth Child Care Credentials have been awarded and more than 200 early childhood scholars have received funding to complete the CDA. Since implementation in January of 2001, more than 3,500 scholarship awards have been made for KIDS NOW scholars in 25 public and 5 private institutes of higher education. Approximately 85 percent of the KIDS NOW scholars are enrolled in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. The first Trainer's Credentials will be awarded in the spring of 2003. The Director's Credential has been rolled out in six four-year institutes of higher education and in the Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges. Training of early childhood professionals in the Professional Development Framework is taking place across the state and being offered at professional conferences.

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Maryland

The Maryland Child Care Credential is a framework of requirements that identifies educational and experiential prerequisites for individuals working at all levels in child care. Providers enter the credential program based on their current level of education and experience. From this starting point, they move through predetermined areas of study comprising a core body of knowledge. Designed to lead to greater professionalism, improved quality of care and career

advancement, this systematic approach allows providers to progress through six levels of achievement.

As each new level is achieved, providers receive recognition, incentives and support. They may be eligible for funding for training vouchers and achievement bonuses. Training vouchers are available to assist providers taking workshops or classes. Achievement bonuses are awarded to providers after they have worked for one year at their new level, completed continued training and participated in professional activities. These bonuses are currently set at rates that range from \$200 for level two to \$1,000 for level six.

The credentialing program works with the tiered reimbursement program to improve quality. In the tiered reimbursement program, child care facilities can qualify for higher levels of payment for child care vouchers through the Purchase of Care program.

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Missouri

Several years ago, Missouri and Kansas were jointly funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation to consider a bi-state approach to professional development. Key stakeholders from both states were convened and a strategic plan for professional development was created. The group launched Opportunities in a Professional Education Network (OPEN). Bi-state core competencies and a career lattice also were developed.

Missouri continues to move forward and has established a trainer registry, a Professional Achievement and Recognition System (PARS) and registry and is moving toward a trainer approval process. The state also has a Workforce Incentive Project (WIN) and employs Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.[®]) in a number of counties. Training is coordinated through the state's Resource and Referral Network. A goal is to align training with the core competencies over time.

Work is continuing on articulation and alignment of course offerings with the core competencies through the work of a collaborative committee specifically designated for this purpose.

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North Carolina

North Carolina has created an integrated professional development system. Under the leadership of the North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development many things have happened. □ The Institute's Web site provides complete information on this collaborative and comprehensive professional development system (www.ncchildcare.org).

Whether it is work on articulation, helping child care teachers create their own professional development plans, increasing public awareness or developing online courses within the community college system, the Institute is a statewide collaborative effort to create a dynamic system. In addition to the work of the Institute, the state has woven professional development through college coursework into its star licensure system. It also has the most comprehensive and well-funded professional development and compensation system in the country with its T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Project (\$4 million), T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Health Insurance Program (\$2.25 million) and its Child Care WAGES[®] Project (\$7.7 million). These three efforts support continued formal education with increased compensation. □

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Oklahoma

The Center for Early Childhood Professional Development operates from the University of Oklahoma, College of Continuing Education, as a one stop training and education resource for child care providers. The center manages the Oklahoma Registry Professional Development Ladder where teachers can document their education and training, and directors can receive a director's credential. The Center operates the Training Approval System, coordinates training technical assistance statewide and sponsors an extensive video lending library and Child Care Careers coursework. The center also sponsors community-based training for directors, teachers and family child care providers. This includes a new 20-hour course for entry level teachers that will be offered in

workshop or online format. The Center provides trained evaluators to conduct the four environment rating scales for early childhood, infant/toddler, school age and family child care for child care facilities at no cost. It houses the Oklahoma Accreditation Support Project that provides financial and technical assistance for facilities seeking national accreditation. Director training is provided through statewide satellite broadcasts and a Director's Leadership Academy. The Center administers the T.E.A.C.H.[®] scholarship program providing financial assistance for teachers seeking their credential or degree. It also provides the Rewarding Education with Wages and Respect for Dedication (REWARD) Oklahoma project providing salary supplements to teachers with credentials or college coursework who remain in their child care program. More information on each of these programs is available on the Web site at www.cecpcd.org.

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South Carolina

The South Carolina Center for Child Care Career Development administers a statewide child care credentialing and professional development program. From 1993-2002, the Center administered the South Carolina ABC Child Care Credentials to ensure that all child care staff had core knowledge and competencies. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Project scholarship program was implemented in 2000 and the ABC standards were revised to require a three-hour college credit course for the South Carolina Early Childhood Credential. The Center collaborated with the early childhood departments at the state's 16 technical colleges to move the ABC Credential to academic credit. Over 3,200 T.E.A.C.H.[□] scholarships have been awarded since December 17, 2000. Within the first 15 months of the training database, Center staff registered 97,272 individual training entries for the child care licensing entity (South Carolina Department of Social Services).

To address articulation, the SC Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) has partnered with the Head Start Collaboration Office and the South Carolina Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (SCAECTE) to host an Early Childhood Education Summit series for the higher education institutions offering early childhood education coursework in South Carolina.

A partnership among the WestEd Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (PITC), the University of South Carolina (USC) and the SCDHHS is building expertise in caring for infants and toddlers within the higher education institutions and key

state agencies of South Carolina. The University of South Carolina and WestEd PITC are providing this certification training through graduate classes.

The USC/Gateway Child Development and Research Center is a unique public/private partnership including USC, USC Development Foundation, the Schuyler and Yvonne Moore Family Foundation, Gateway Academy (private child care provider), Head Start, SCDHHS, South Carolina Educational Television (SCETV) and the South Carolina State Department of Education (SDE). Each partner brings a different perspective in seeking new strategies to address the challenges of providing a model of quality child care for children from birth through 12 years of age to serve as a learning laboratory for training and educating SDE and SCDHHS providers, students from junior and senior institutions of higher learning and the Head Start staff. A state of the art mediated studio classroom in the Research Center will be used to meet the education and training needs of the South Carolina early care and education community. The mediated classroom will be linked to SCETV for broadcast to 1,800 sites statewide.

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Tennessee

In May 1992 the first state steering committee meeting of the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) was held in Nashville, Tennessee with representatives from the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Tennessee State University Center of Excellence, Tennessee Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association for Family Child Care and Tennessee Board of Regents. In collaboration with the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Council for Professional Development, core competencies were adopted as the foundation of the first statewide early childhood training and professional recognition system in the nation administered by higher education. TECTA is funded by the Department of Human Services,

and State Management is provided by Tennessee State University (TSU) Center of Excellence.

Currently, a consortium of Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) colleges and universities, including 5 four-year institutions and 13 community colleges, participate in the TECTA program. A free 30-hour orientation class is available to caregivers working in regulated child care agencies. To assure accessibility, orientation classes are held within 50 miles of each caregiver's work place, at non-traditional sites in the evenings and on Saturdays. There are five orientation specializations including center-based, family child care, infant/toddler, school age and administrator. Orientation class is the academic gateway to five early childhood academic courses consisting of 13 credit hours and Child Development Associate (CDA) preparation. These courses follow NCATE standards and articulate into the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) early childhood degree. TECTA was instrumental in formulating and implementing the statewide A.A.S. early childhood degree which is offered at each TBR community college and uses common course syllabi and descriptions.

Since inception, TECTA has trained 8,947 caregivers with 268,410 contact hours in orientation classes. There have been 9,155 academic course completions with 411,975 contact hours. In addition, the number of successful CDA candidates in Tennessee has increased from 129 to 399. One hundred and twenty-six associate degrees have been awarded.

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Virginia

Virginia does not yet have a truly comprehensive early care and education professional development system, but it does have some enhancements underway for the components of such systems made available through the Department of Social Services. A comprehensive child care training curriculum covering birth through age 12 is being revised in collaboration with a state university and should be ready to launch within 12 months. This curriculum is part of an alternate path for providers who do not wish to pursue college level courses or degrees. The curriculum will prepare providers who wish to pursue a Child Development Associate credential or equivalent. Completion of this or an equivalent curriculum can be used as the platform for other quality initiatives. For example, completion of the course, which is about 150 contact hours with a

competency assessment, could be used as one quality criterion when developing a tiered reimbursement system.

Virginia maintains other components of a potential comprehensive system including: a college course scholarship program that awards approximately 2,500 course scholarships annually; a collaboration with a private, non-profit advocacy agency to use part of the state's scholarship appropriation to expand the private agency's program providing partial funding for tuition, books, travel and compensation incentives; and a provider training program that offers approximately 250 workshops annually to approximately 7,000 providers, plus 2 child/infant development video series for providers.

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West Virginia

The mission of STARS (State Training and Registry System) is to improve the quality of care and education for young children and their families by enhancing the skills and career opportunities for early care and education practitioners working in a variety of settings including child care programs, private and public preschools, Head Start, early intervention and school aged programs. In addition to teachers, parent educators, regulators and trainers also participate in STARS.

Goals of the project include:

- Adopt a core body of knowledge needed by all practitioners to ensure a consistent base of training.
- Ensure all practitioners have training based on the core body of knowledge available to them.
- Implement a career pathway encouraging increased compensation for higher levels of training.
- Strengthen connections among local, regional and state partners to benefit children and families.

Key components are:

- A Core Competencies (a common core body of knowledge that reflects developmentally appropriate and family-centered practices) is the basis of the professional development system.
- A Career Pathway is based on the Core Competencies and is available to practitioners at all levels providing a framework to encourage higher levels of skills, credentials and wages.
- A Registry and Credentialing system tracks, establishes and formally recognizes a practitioner's level of skill and accomplishment on the Career Pathway.
- A Training Approval System ensures training provided throughout the state meets the minimum standards of the Core Competencies and trainers are qualified to provide such training.

The Coordinated Training System offers Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and ensures that specialized training and early childhood college credits and degree programs are accessible to practitioners. A West Virginia Training Certificate is awarded for completion of 120 hours of approved training. The project is funded as a collaborative project of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources/Division of Early Care and Education; Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health/West Virginia Birth to Three; West Virginia Department of Education/Office of Special Education; Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families/Head Start State Collaboration and is supported and administered by River Valley Child Development Services.

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West Virginia has several training initiatives that complement the STARS professional development program. These include:

The West Virginia Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist (ACDS) is a model training program for early childhood providers developed by River Valley Child Development Services in coordination with the Department of Labor. This is a collaborative effort of multiple agencies, funded by the State Departments of Health and Human Resources, Education and Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families. A Board of Directors makes many of the operational decisions for the ACDS program.

Due to the number of agencies coordinating efforts to support ACDS, the program has grown substantially. The Federal Head Start Bureau accepted this credential in lieu of its Child Development Associate credential and the National Association for the Education of Young Children accepts it for the purpose of accreditation of child care centers in West Virginia. Other states are now implementing their version of this successful program, and the Department of Education is making the training available to its students. Currently, there are 10 articulation agreements with various West Virginia colleges, translating the training received through the Apprenticeship program into college credit toward an associate degree in occupational development with an emphasis in early childhood. Part of a Head Start State Collaboration Supplement Grant was used to pilot expansion of the apprenticeship program to family child care and TANF recipients who were interested in child care careers.

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The West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources (Training Connections) project is an expansion of a training calendar developed and currently operated by the state Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health (MCFH) through a contract with River Valley Early Childhood Development Services and supported with a blend of funds from Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), MCFH's Birth to Three Program and Department of Education's Special Education Program (IDEA, Parts B and C). The Head Start collaboration project now contributes to this effort. The calendar originally was designed to track national, state and local training available for early childhood practitioners and a statewide resource library.

Training Connections now provides other services including: 1) publishing the West Virginia Early Childhood Provider Quarterly; 2) contracting for national experts to deliver training, such as "The Human Side of Management" and "Managing Change" offered by Wheelock College; 3) coordinating early childhood conferences; 4) providing scholarships for providers to attend state level conferences; and 5) providing technical assistance to the CCR&R training specialist, including specialized training. This project continues to grow. Other improvements include an early childhood web page, a part-time state conference coordinator, a media/public awareness consultant, coordination of infant and toddler training, a lending library of assistive technology and operation of the Professional Development database.

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The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the Higher Education Policy Commission hosted a workshop in September 2002, led by the National Governors' Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices to explore issues regarding post-secondary opportunities for welfare recipients and low-wage workers in West Virginia. National experts, NGA staff and participants developed plans to build on West Virginia's early care and education career pathway and lay the groundwork for designing a career pathway in the health field. The plans addressed include:

- Identifying state policy options and challenges for supporting post-secondary participants.
- Helping employed students balance post-secondary education with family and work responsibilities through supports and curriculum redesign.
- Getting the word out and helping prepare new recruits for post-secondary education, outreach and remediation for new student populations.
- Developing career pathways to help welfare recipients and low-income workers reach self-sufficiency.

This forum was successful through the development of new partners and plans for the Partners Implementing the Early Care and Education System (PIECES) Professional Development Committee.

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UNIVERSAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN IMPLEMENTED COLLABORATIVELY IN SCHOOL, HEAD START AND CHILD CARE SETTINGS WITH COMMON QUALITY STANDARDS

Georgia

About 10 years ago, when universal pre-kindergarten became law in Georgia, it was a galvanizing moment for the early childhood community, particularly public school pre-kindergarten, Head Start and child care. The legislation had enormous impact on the state and on collaboration. The Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program was established in 1993 to provide Georgia's four-year-old children with high quality preschool experiences. This program, funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education, was expected to serve approximately 62,500 children in the 2002 school year. With this statewide pre-kindergarten program, Georgia reaches a higher proportion of four-year-old children than any other state in the nation.

Every four-year-old child is eligible; however, there is a waiting list. The program is voluntary for both families and communities. Because participation in the pre-kindergarten program is voluntary on the part of public schools and private child development centers, there may not be enough spaces in every community for all four-year-olds who wish to participate. Every effort is made to contract with eligible centers to match children with available spaces. Funding does limit the number of children served.

Common quality standards were adopted for universal pre-kindergarten. These standards are met by all participating providers, both public and private. Professional development was one of the most important standards established for its impact on quality of care. Georgia, using Head Start as its guide, requires all teachers to have an associate degree in early childhood.

Pre-kindergarten programs usually operate on the regular school system calendar for the length of a typical school day. Programs may be offered at local public schools, Head Start programs or through private providers of preschool services. Extended day services beyond the 6.5 hour instructional day (before and after school care) is made available through collaboration between Head Start and the state's publicly funded child care program. This collaboration provides early childhood services for children attending pre-kindergarten programs so families who work full-time will have full-day child care.

An evaluation by Georgia State University found that children who attended the Georgia Pre-Kindergarten Program had higher academic and social ratings by their kindergarten teachers and better kindergarten attendance than children who did not attend preschool programs.

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Louisiana

The *Louisiana Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children* document was developed by a committee consisting of representatives of higher education institutions, technical colleges, child care, Head Start, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health and Hospitals, as well as representatives from local school system administrators and classroom teachers. In November 2001, the committee began developing state standards for all pre-kindergarten children. Over the next six months, the committee developed the *Louisiana Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children*, which was piloted and reviewed in the public schools, non-public schools, Head Start centers, daycare centers and in university classes during the 2002-2003 school year. After the pilot year, final revisions were made by the committee from the feedback given and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to approve the document in May 2003.

The *Louisiana Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children* document contains both program and content standards needed for the effective operation of a quality early childhood program. The program standards were developed to provide early childhood educators and administrators with recommendations to guide the ongoing development, evaluation and improvement of early childhood center-based programs. The content practice standards provide early childhood educators with a common understanding of what young children should know and do. The purpose of these standards is to provide a guide for designing and implementing a curriculum to facilitate learning and skill acquisition in each pre-kindergarten child. They also are designed to assist teachers in providing children with the foundational experiences to support later achievement of the K-12 content standards. The content standards are mandatory for all pre-kindergarten programs in the public school systems and are voluntary for all other pre-kindergarten settings.

These program and content standards are based on research in developmentally appropriate practice for preschool children with emphasis on cognitive, language and literacy, social and emotional and creative development. These standards were developed for all Louisiana preschool students, including students with disabilities and students who are linguistically and culturally diverse.

Through the development and use of these pre-kindergarten standards, the goal of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is to ensure quality across early childhood programs under the present jurisdiction of the Department of Education, to provide quality standards to other agencies that serve four-year-old children and to provide for a consistent flow from pre-kindergarten to kindergarten, thus meeting the mandates of the federal “No Child Left Behind” legislation.

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North Carolina

Before the creation of the *More at Four* Pre-kindergarten Program, thousands of at-risk four-year-olds in North Carolina were falling through the cracks, perpetuating a persistent achievement gap in North Carolina’s public schools. An estimated 10,000 to 12,000 at-risk four-year-olds are not receiving any services at all, and thousands more are in programs not meeting high enough standards to ensure school readiness. To address this problem, Governor Mike Easley created a standards-driven state pre-kindergarten program that specifically targets at-risk four-year-olds (the year before children enter kindergarten) and prepares them to be successful in school.

The *More at Four* Pre-kindergarten Program complements Smart Start’s comprehensive system of supports for families with children from birth to the start of kindergarten. Smart Start focuses on ensuring that communities can identify and fund priority services for all families with young children. *More at Four* targets the educational needs of the state’s most at-risk four-year-olds, providing communities and the state, with the standards and resources necessary to address this previously unmet need.

More at Four is a highly targeted program, focusing on a specific age group (four-year-olds) and providing high-quality programs (standards-driven educational pre-kindergarten). It is designed to utilize the state’s existing early childhood service delivery systems (e.g. Head Start, public school pre-kindergarten, private child care) and elevates the potential of these programs by ensuring that they operate using consistent standards for pre-kindergarten programs regardless of who delivers it. This is *More at Four*’s unique contribution to North Carolina’s early care and education system and is an important mechanism for promoting school readiness for all the state’s four-year-olds.

The *More at Four* Pre-kindergarten Program is the newest component of North Carolina's early care and education system. *More at Four* is an educational standards based pre-kindergarten program specifically targeting at-risk four-year-olds and preparing them to be successful in school. The program was created during 2001-2002 to serve approximately 1,600 children. Classrooms were implemented in 34 competitively selected counties. *More at Four* has been expanded statewide for 2002-2003 to serve an additional 6,000 children. Funding is available to every county that chooses to implement the program. *More at Four* funds are blended at the community level with other funding sources to increase the number of classrooms meeting quality standards.

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West Virginia

During the 2002 West Virginia legislative session, the significance of early education and the need for a more cohesive, coordinated early childhood system captured the interest of legislators. As a result, in March 2002, the West Virginia State Legislature passed WV code §18-5-44 (as part of Senate Bill 247), providing universal access to high quality early care and education in West Virginia pre-kindergarten by school year 2012-2013. In recognition of the importance of early education, the need to maximize state resources and passage of Senate Bill 247, the Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and the State Superintendent of Schools established PIECES Advisory Council. PIECES is an interagency and collaborative group comprised of volunteer members from state and local agencies, early childhood providers, legislators, advocates, business members, parents and community members. The Council was convened in May 2002 and charged with developing a comprehensive plan for quality early care and education coordinating existing programs for children from birth through five years of age. The Council's vision for West Virginia's early care and education system is, *"All children and families in West Virginia will have access to high quality early care and education programs that provide a foundation for academic success and lifelong learning while supporting parents' ability to work."*

Since its inception, the Council has progressed in the development of an early care and education system. Eight ad hoc committees have been established with collaborative memberships to focus on specific aspects of the early care and education system. To support communication, the Council established a Web site and community portal that are updated on a regular basis. The Council was

instrumental in the development of West Virginia Department of Education Policy 2525, West Virginia's Universal Access to Early Education System. The policy was adopted by the West Virginia Board of Education on January 9, 2003. The Council and committee members gave guidance, feedback and established compromise on a variety of sections in the policy. A format for county early childhood plans, draft content standards and objectives for children ages three through five, a curriculum review tool and a technical assistance plan have been designed through collaborative group processes.

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COMMON STANDARDS DEVELOPED COLLABORATIVELY FOR EARLY LITERACY OR THE EARLY EDUCATION COMPONENT OF NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Arkansas

The Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework was approved by the State Board of Education in June 1996 the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission (an 18-member governor appointed Commission) appointed a task force of 30 diverse members to begin the arduous task of establishing an early childhood education framework. The framework was envisioned to guide the growth and development of children through a successful transition to a kindergarten curriculum based on the K-12 Frameworks. As the task force worked over a 12-month period, a facilitator led them in studying, reframing and refocusing beliefs from both fields of education and child growth and development, thereby blending the concepts to ensure development across the domains.

By 1998, the K-12 frameworks had been refocused to address specific benchmarks for attainment. The resulting five-developmental learning strands (DOMAINS) are the basis or expansion of the framework: social/emotional development, creative/aesthetic learning, cognitive/intellectual learning, physical development and language.

For each strand, developmental benchmarks are identified and strategies/activities to promote development in each strand are given. Both general and specific strategies are included, and when possible, follow a sequence of learning. Some of the activities are specific to children who are

English Language Learners (ELL), children with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and children with special needs. The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) is used as a resource to ensure consistency between suggested activities and program evaluation.

A final component to tie the framework and benchmarks together is the use of the developmental rating scale. These three documents form the *Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework: Benchmarks with Strategies and Activities*. In June 2002 the *Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care* was finalized. Experts from many disciplines related to infant and toddler age children such as early care, child growth and development, education, children with special needs, faith-based programs, children of English Language Learning families, teacher preparation, early Head Start and health professions were represented during the development and review phases. This framework is a document to guide the design and implementation of local early childhood programs caring for children of infant and toddler ages and was developed to align with the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework and the Arkansas Department of Education Frameworks for kindergarten.

The addition of the Infant and Toddler Framework provides a clear continuum for development and learning for children from birth to kindergarten and aligns to the Kindergarten Framework.

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Louisiana

The State Head Start Collaboration Project convened the Early Care and Development Committee to guide the development of early learning standards for children birth to three years of age. The committee was comprised of experts from many disciplines related to infant and toddler-age children, such as early care, child growth and development, children with special needs and faith-based programs. Also included were representatives from higher education institutions, technical colleges, the Department of Social Services, Head Start, child advocacy organizations, the Bureau of Licensing and the Department of Health.

This framework of standards is a document to guide the design and implementation of local early childhood programs caring for children of infant and toddler ages. These standards were developed to align with the Louisiana

Department of Education's Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children. A draft of standards will be published in the fall of 2003 and distributed for review by child care providers, Head Start and other child serving agencies.

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South Carolina

The South Carolina State Department of Education (SDE) Office of Early Childhood Education and the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) have joined together to form the Good Start, Grow Smart working group. Members of this group represent the major funding streams for early care and education in South Carolina as well as other important key players: SDE (chair of the group), SCDHHS, Office of First Steps, Head Start, private for-profit child care, faith based child care and the TANF program. This group is currently working on voluntary early learning state guidelines for four- and five-year-old children that will be aligned with existing state K-12 standards. Another step in this process is to coordinate professional development and training of child care teachers, providers and administrators to link existing training and education initiatives/resources such as T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Project, statewide infant/toddler training from WestEd Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers initiative, SDE 4 and 5 K training, SC READS Summer Institute, SC Early Childhood Credential and the statewide training registry.

A recent example of this coordinated training approach was the June 2003 SC READS Summer Institute, the SDE annual statewide initiative to support the school readiness of young children through professional development and training of child care teachers, providers and administrators. Staff of SCDHHS joined with SDE staff and certified trainers from the WestEd Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers to provide this training.

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Tennessee

HeadsUp Reading is an initiative of four state agencies in Tennessee: Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Head Start State Collaboration Office and the Tennessee State University Center of Excellence for Research and Policy on Basic Skills.

The purpose of HeadsUp Reading in Tennessee is to provide quality staff development in early literacy for all early childhood education providers by offering HeadsUp Reading for:

- College credit through the community college network and the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) program.
- In-service hours through the Tennessee Child Care Provider Training (TN-CCPT) program.
- In-service hours for public school teachers in the elementary schools.

The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance is an early childhood training and professional recognition system that offers college courses for early childhood providers. These courses range from beginning orientation to CDA credentials to an AAS and finally to articulation to full four-year degrees. Tennessee has 13 community colleges across the state. TN-CCPT is a state wide training system designed to promote increased access and utilization of training for child care providers. This training is provided by the 11 Child Care Resource Centers located across the state. Additionally, the HeadsUp Reading courses can be taken for renewal of the certified early childhood and elementary teacher's license.

HeadsUp Reading in Tennessee is a collaborative effort for comprehensive change in the early childhood arena.

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Virginia

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) office, located in the Department of Social Services, is working with the Head Start Collaboration Project and Pre-Kindergarten staffs in the Department of Education (DOE) to distribute and receive comment on the “early learning guidelines” for four-year-olds. These guidelines, developed by DOE, will be addressed in the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004-2005 CCDF State Plan. They also will be factored into the state’s Head Start FFY 2004 refunding application.

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MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED TO FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE, HEAD START AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN WITH SUPPORT TO TEACHERS IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SETTINGS

Arkansas

The Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and the Head Start Collaboration Project joined together in September of 2002 to launch an ad hoc interagency initiative to stimulate greater collaboration and strategic planning for early childhood mental health issues. Other representatives in the Mental Health Initiative include the DHS Division of Mental Health and local Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC’s); the Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics of the College of Medicine of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; the Starting Early, Starting Smart (SESS)-funded provider, Child Development, Inc.; the Arkansas Department of Education; the Arkansas Department of Health, and; private child care and mental health care providers. The group voiced a consensus that on-site assistance by mental health professionals with specialized expertise in early childhood mental health would be the most practical way to thoroughly integrate child development, educational and medical services for young children and families at risk of social-emotional problems. The pilot project is sponsored by the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, and will provide on-

site assistance and professional development to selected early childhood care and education providers. The design will be completed and sites selected by the fall of 2003.

The DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE), through the Child Care and Development Fund, is sponsoring the University of Central Arkansas Department of Early Childhood Special Education in the development of a 40 hour training series in social and emotional development. A comprehensive training guide will be developed (during the summer and fall of 2003) with approximately 12 training modules designed to increase the early childhood professional's skills in promoting the overall social and emotional development of young children. The instructional training plan will then be developed to organize the presentation of the training modules. Three training sessions will be conducted beginning in the spring of 2004 and ending in the spring of 2005. At the conclusion of the training, follow-up consultations will be provided for participants. A continuous evaluation process will accompany the project, using formative and summative analysis of each phase of the training.

Participants from interested preschools and day care centers in Faulkner County, Even Start, the University of Central Arkansas Child Study Center and all CAPCA Head Start Centers representing Cleburne, White and Faulkner counties will have an opportunity to participate in the training. Collaboration is crucial to the success of the project. Professional development "sites" will be established where best practice is supported and displayed for participants to visit, reflect on best practices and respond through telephone conversations, email correspondence, CHAT room dialogue and/or personal discussions. The training team has strong background experiences working with partnerships through local schools, CAPCA Head Start Centers and the UCA Child Study Center. After the project is developed and tested, the design will be analyzed and refined in order to make the program available statewide.

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Kentucky

Individuals working with young children in child care settings recognize each child's behavior may call for a different strategy and that commonly used strategies do not always help. In some cases a child's behavior becomes overwhelming for him or her, as well as friends, family and staff. Therefore, the worker may determine the child's needs are greater than usual.

KIDS NOW, Kentucky's Early Childhood Initiative includes an Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) component building on the state's current infrastructure in meeting the needs of young children enrolled in child care. KIDS NOW provides an enhancement of the Early Childhood Mental Health component through a collaborative approach by the Department of Public Health and the Division of Mental Health. Currently, Healthy Start in Child Care consultants serve as an initial resource in the area of social and emotional development. Consultants have been trained to use the Devereux Early Childhood Screening tool (DECA) with children and to work on suggested strategies with child care staff.

When there is a greater need, there is now another resource. The increased efforts include providing a specialist in children's mental health in the local Community Mental Health Center to work directly with child care staff in meeting the needs of young children. The initiative will provide 14 Early Childhood Mental Health Specialists statewide, one per Community Mental Health Center.

The goal of the ECMH Initiative is to provide mental health consultation to early childhood programs, and assessment/therapeutic services for children age birth to five years and their families.

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Maryland

To develop capacity to provide early childhood mental health consultation and intervention in a variety of early care and education settings, the Child Care Administration (CCA) provided funds for two sites for a two-year period.

- Each site involves the collaboration of the Local Management Board (LMB), Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Center (CCRC) and Core Services Agency (CSA).
- Project Act of the Abilities Network was asked to have a role in regards to training, support and clinical (peer) supervision of the consultants.
- Two models including different lead agencies are being piloted:
 - The LMB is the lead agency in Baltimore City.
 - The CCRC is the lead agency for the Upper Eastern Shore.
- The intervention and consultation are given in family child care homes, child care centers, Head Start and Pre-School settings. Services also may be provided in the child's own home to assure carryover from one setting to the next, or if the family is receiving home visits and the program has sufficient resources to respond to the request.
- The intervention and consultation are being given to the providers of care, i.e., teachers, aides and parents in order to achieve the following:
 - Numbers within the social and personal domain for those children fully developed and approaching fully developed will increase, as measured by the work sampling system.
 - Symptoms of young children will decrease.
 - Children will stay in child care.
 - Children will stay in their homes.
 - Programs are better able to serve children in their homes.
 - Providers are better able to meet the needs of young children.
- The Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development is conducting an evaluation of the models and outcomes.

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Oklahoma

Oklahoma's Division of Child Care was concerned about the increase in teacher comments about young children's social and emotional health. Two statewide conferences and a satellite broadcast were offered to address the problem of challenging behavior by children in child care. In response to the demand for assistance from the child care community, a pilot collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (DMHSAS) was developed. Licensed mental health practitioners with early childhood expertise from community mental health centers were paired with child care centers to provide programmatic mental health consultation. This type of mental health consultation helps the program solve a specific issue affecting more than one child, family or staff member. This consultation is preventive in nature because it tries to intervene before problems become serious. The mental health

consultants visited the facilities weekly for two hours over a two-month period. At the end of the pilot the child care center directors and consultants were interviewed about their experience, and based on their enthusiastic response the Division of Child Care entered into a one-year contract with DMHSAS to offer the service in select counties. Division of Child Care funds are combined with DMHSAS funds to make consultation to child care centers financially feasible for community mental health centers. The service is free to child care centers. Priority is given to centers with a high percentage of subsidy children and a history of licensing compliance.

Another new initiative is the creation of a Warmline to provide immediate telephone consultation to teaching staff and directors on issues related to the care and guidance of young children. This telephone hotline will assist caregivers in intervening more effectively with children with challenging behaviors and provide additional resources for answering health and safety questions. Staff members from the Oklahoma Department of Health (ODH) answer the Warmline and offer referrals connecting child care providers with local resources. Twenty-four hour access to a dial-in tape information system allows providers continuous access to information about health, behavior and child guidance.

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**COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES AS
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CHILD CARE OR PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS**

Texas

The Texas Workforce Commission provides representation and financial support to both the Children and Adult State Teams of the Texas Community Resource Coordination Groups (CRCGs). The CRCGs bring together representatives of state and local government agencies to resolve complex family crises. Families who need an extraordinary level of assistance for a short time or help with the burden of caring for a family member with a long-term disability are able to lead in the problem-solving process once the CRCG brings appropriate agencies to the table. A children's version of these groups helps to resolve family situations involving young children.

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TIERED CHILD CARE LICENSING SYSTEM WITH QUALITY STANDARDS THAT ARE ESTABLISHED AND/OR APPLIED COLLABORATIVELY

Arkansas

The Arkansas Early Childhood Commission (Governor appointed statutory children's cabinet) and the State Board of Education appointed a work group to establish quality accreditation standards for early care programs in Arkansas. This group includes representatives from Head Start, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. Quality Approval/Early Childhood Accreditation standards have been in place since 1995 and are currently in the process of review and revision. The revisions are scheduled to be completed before fall 2003.

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program is the state funded early care and education intervention program designed to serve children at-risk of school failure. Programs are either center-based or home-based. Children must meet eligibility criteria and be between the ages of birth to school entry to receive services. The Arkansas Legislature established the ABC Program with Act 212 in 1991. The ABC Task Force, comprised of 36 members representing a diversity of early childhood interests, convened in August 2001 to tackle quality issues. The "Core Quality Component Model" was the product of this effort. Higher standards in five major areas are addressed: low student to teacher ratio/well compensated staff; professional development; developmental screening; meaningful parent and community engagement activities; and proven curricula and learning processes. The standards recommended by the Task Force have now been approved by the State Board of Education and are currently being implemented in programs statewide. These standards reflect a higher reimbursement for Quality Care.

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Kentucky

STARS for KIDS NOW, Kentucky's voluntary quality rating system for licensed Type I and Type II child care centers and certified family child care homes, is available statewide. This system uses a scale of one through four STARS to identify levels of quality. All STARS levels surpass the minimum licensing requirements that all programs must meet. Early care and education programs work to meet standards associated with quality care that result in positive outcomes for young children. Programs are assessed in the following areas: staff/child ratios; group size; curriculum; parent involvement; training/education of staff; regulatory compliance; and personnel practices.

STARS for KIDS NOW provides parents with a tool to help identify levels of quality when seeking a child care setting outside of their home. Child care centers and family child care homes participating in STARS for KIDS NOW demonstrate a commitment toward providing quality care and education. Parents can use the rating system to gain an understanding of the factors that contribute to quality care and education and can choose a child care setting that best matches their family's needs.

Early care and education settings that choose to participate in STARS for KIDS NOW may receive free technical assistance from regional Child Care Resource and Referral agencies and local health departments. Upon receiving a star rating, programs are eligible for a one-time cash STARS Achievement Award.

Additional quality incentive dollars are available, on a quarterly basis, based on the size of the program, the number of subsidy children served and the level of STAR attainment. Assistance with staff training and education is offered through the Early Childhood Development Scholarship Program.

STARS for KIDS NOW standards are based on research that demonstrates what combination of criteria are essential for quality early childhood environments. The recommendations for the content of each level were constructed by a representative group of consumers, child care providers, non-profit group representatives and others who work and live with young children.

STARS for KIDS NOW represents a collaborative effort to ensure that young children in Kentucky are in early care and education settings that are seeking ever-increasing quality.

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Maryland

Maryland's tiered reimbursement program has several components designed to improve quality:

- Program Accreditation – Family child care providers and child care centers must actively pursue program accreditation through an approved accreditation organization.
- Staff Credentialing-At tiered reimbursement Level Two or higher, family child care providers and at least 60 percent of lead staff persons in child care centers must have a Maryland Child Care Credential at an appropriate level.
- Learning Environment-Participation in the tiered reimbursement program requires that child care facilities enhance the learning environment beyond the regulatory requirements. Programs must include in daily activities at least 15 minutes of reading activities per day for all ages of children served.
- Parent Involvement-Parents are an important component of quality child care services. Family child care providers and child care centers participating in the tiered reimbursement program must include and involve parents in a variety of ways, such as conferences, field trips, open house activities, parent message boards and handbooks.
- Program Evaluation-Each family child care home and child care center will use program evaluation tools to assess the strengths and weaknesses of programs. These include:
 - Application of an age and program specific environmental rating scale (Level Two–self-assessment, Levels Three and Four–independent assessment and minimum score)
 - Staff evaluation (Levels Two, Three and Four)
 - Staff and parent surveys (Levels Three and Four)
 - Development of program goals (Level Three)

- Develop, assess and revise program goals (Level Four)
- Staff Compensation – Child care centers are required to include with their application, incentives for staff including an incremental salary scale based on education and experience. Child care centers participating in the highest level of tiered reimbursement also must offer a benefits package for staff.
- Continued Training – Continued training is required at each of the tiered reimbursement levels based on the position held in the child care facility and must be maintained throughout the period of approval at each tiered reimbursement level.

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North Carolina

North Carolina recently began implementing a tiered rating licensing system. This system issues licenses to child care centers and family day care homes with a range of stars available from one to five, five being the highest level of quality.

This tiered system enables parents to tell at a glance the level of quality care provided by looking at the number of stars on the license. A rating of “one-star” lets parents know the program meets North Carolina’s minimum standards for child care. Licenses with two to five stars represent higher levels of quality, with five stars signaling to parents the center offers the highest level of quality care available.

The number of stars on a license is based on how well the center performs in three areas: staff education standards, program standards, and compliance history. A center can earn a maximum of five points in each area.

North Carolina helps child care providers meet these new standards. One way is through the T.E.A.C.H.[®] (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Scholarship Program. Child care centers can sponsor their staff to participate in T.E.A.C.H.[®], which helps pay for community college and university courses. T.E.A.C.H.[®] also offers bonuses to teachers who finish certain levels of education and who keep working in child care.

Other collaborating partners in improving the quality of child care in North Carolina are Smart Start, by offering quality initiatives to assist providers in improving their star ratings, the subsidized child care program by offering rate reimbursements incentives to providers who provide a higher quality of care of children eligible for subsidized child care services, Child Care Resource and

Referral Agencies who provide technical assistance to providers who are seeking to improve their star-ratings, the *More at Four* Program, a pre-kindergarten program for four-year-old children that operates in North Carolina child care centers who are able to obtain a four or five star and works with those centers to obtain and maintain the higher quality of care.

The collaboration of this project is very unique in that the North Carolina Division of Child Development has done a tremendous job of marketing the elements of quality child care and virtually all components of the early childhood community have “signed-on” to assisting centers all across the state in achieving the highest number of stars possible, whether that center be in a rural community or a city or whether that center be operated as a not-for-profit or a for-profit center. The results are staggering and the current statistics show after only two years, approximately 67 percent of all children enrolled in center based programs in North Carolina, receive care in a center rated as a three star or higher facility.

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Oklahoma

Oklahoma’s Reaching for the Stars program was launched in February 1998 with three star levels. One star programs met minimum licensing requirements; two star programs either met additional quality criteria or were nationally accredited; three star programs met quality criteria and were nationally accredited. In July 2000 a fourth level, one star plus, was created as a transitional level for programs seeking two star status. Quality criteria include master teachers with credentials or college coursework, additional training for directors and teachers, salary scale, lesson plans, interest centers, daily reading to children, parent involvement and program evaluation. The program initially had three goals, all of which have been achieved by the program:

1. To improve the overall quality of child care and the competency level of child care providers;
2. To raise the DHS reimbursement rate, resulting in more slots for children whose families are receiving child care assistance; and
3. To provide a system whereby parents could evaluate the quality of child care programs.

Today, 85 percent of children receiving child care assistance in a center receive care in a one star plus or higher center. Almost 55 percent of children receiving assistance in a family child care home are in a one star plus or higher home. A variety of resources have been made available to providers to support their

success, including improvement grants, conference vouchers, an accreditation support project, environment rating scales, early childhood coordinators at each two year college, a T.E.A.C.H.® scholarship program and a REWARD wage supplement program. Research has shown programs at a higher star level have higher environment rating scale scores, teachers with more education, improved salaries and reduced turnover. A major public awareness campaign resulted in many parents using the star rating to select child care. On-going research will evaluate if child outcomes improve in response to higher star level care.

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IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN CHILD CARE

Texas

From 1998 to 2003, the Texas Workforce Commission was awarded the Maternal and Child Health Bureau's Healthy Child Care America (HCCA) grant. The HCCA Texas project is a statewide coordination effort between health organizations and the child care system. The purpose of the grant is to assist Texas in building a statewide infrastructure to open up access to health resources and improve training for child care workers to identify early family health issues and remedies. The focus of the grant program for 2004 has shifted to support sustainability and integration of the HCCA program into Texas' system of services for children in early childhood.

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District of Columbia

Healthy Child Care District of Columbia is the District of Columbia's health systems in child care initiative under the Community Integrated Services Systems (CISS) grant program sponsored by the United States Bureau of Maternal and Child Health. The overall goal of the initiative is the development of an integrated health and child care system providing information and capacity-building for children, families and child care providers. This goal is being accomplished through several strategies, focusing on establishing and

strengthening effective linkages, services, programs and collaborative efforts already in existence in the District. The project has five major objectives:

- To assess the level of need for and barriers to health services among parents and child care providers;
- To establish a network of collaborating partners to integrate child care and health systems throughout the city;
- To increase access to health information and screening services for families and child care providers;
- To establish a District of Columbia Child Care Health Consultant Corps to advise child care providers about health and mental health needs of children in child care; and
- To establish a Home Visitors Council to coordinate services, planning and training for the home visitor programs in various agencies throughout the city.

The Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) is the grantee for this initiative. OECD provides the basic structure and oversight for all initiative activities. Office of Maternal and Child Health, Department of Health is the co-applicant and implementer for this grant. The District of Columbia Public Library System is a primary partner. The library provides staff for public awareness for child care providers and serves as secretariat for the organizations working together to educate families about health opportunities.

The World Bank provides the program printing and resource people. Catholic Charities of the Metropolitan Area is another major private sector partner. They provide critical planning and communication services. The United Planning Organization plays a major role in coordinating activities with community-based partners. The Clorox Corporation made its public relations firm available for two years for planning, promotion and fundraising. Private practice doctors, psychologists, allied health specialists and dentists volunteer for the Child Care Health and Mental Health Consultant Corps. The partnership operates as a collaborative with rotating leadership among the primary partners listed above.

The funding for this project comes primarily from a Community Integrated Services Systems (CISS) Grant Program sponsored by the United States Bureau of Maternal and Child Health. The Office of Early Childhood Development and all of the partners contribute in-kind services and small operating grants for various components of the initiative.

The decision making for this partnership is by consensus among the public and private partners. Overall management is coordinated through the Office of Early Childhood Development but each partner takes major task responsibility and must complete agreed upon tasks by the Child Care Consultant Corps, Health and Safety Training Directory and the Home Visitor Council, co-sponsor of the annual Maternal and Child Health Conference.

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IMPROVED CHILD CARE INSPECTION AND MONITORING SYSTEM

District of Columbia

The primary goal of this effort is to improve the quality of child care in the District of Columbia by improving its inspection and monitoring system. By increasing coordination and integration, this initiative seeks to do more with less, to streamline the system and make it more efficient and to improve consistency of enforcement and ease of compliance by providers. The key strategy for achieving this goal is to use the military model to guide the vision of what an integrated, team-oriented system looks like and to guide the actual steps for achieving it.

Development of this project has been a collaborative effort among several parties:

- Several individuals from both government and private child care monitoring agencies (e.g., Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Parks and Recreation, the State Education Agency and the United Planning Organization);
- Advocates from the National Women's Law Center; and
- High-level child care inspection personnel from nearby military bases (Bolling Air Force Base and Quantico Marine Corps Base), as well as an expert from the United States Department of Defense Office of Family Policy.

As the first step in this initiative, the planning group organized a forum on the District of Columbia early child care and education monitoring system and how to use the military's system as a guide for making improvements to it. Experts from the military and the National Women's Law Center served as presenters and resources on how the military's monitoring system is structured. In addition, a parent, provider and advocate spoke about their perspectives on child care monitoring and what they want from this system.

The stakeholders who attended shared information about the scope and challenges of their jobs and were asked to identify gaps and overlaps in the current system, what works and what does not, and how, after examining the military model, the District's system might be improved. Their highest priority

recommendations for improvements were to:

- Finalize the underlying regulatory standards all agencies/personnel must enforce.
- Develop tools and procedures increasing coordination and consistency of enforcement action, e.g., unified inspection protocols and checklists.
- Develop training and credentialing opportunities improving inspectors' skills in maintaining strict enforcement as well as support for provider compliance.
- Increase formal and informal communication and coordination between agencies to create a coherent, more effective and more efficient inspection and enforcement system, for instance by using a centralized database for inspection results and conducting at least one multidisciplinary "team" inspection each year.

A critical task is to finish collecting and analyzing information about the current inspection system. Also, a follow-up forum has been planned for March 26, 2003, the purpose of which is to begin to implement the primary recommendations above. This forum will bring together representatives of all the disparate agencies involved in child care monitoring policy and operations and create an ongoing process for enabling all to participate in designing a coordinated system.

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Louisiana

In 2002, the Department of Social Services began funding initiatives focused on improving the quality of registered family child day care homes. The Department of Social Services contracted with the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to make announced and unannounced visits to family child day care programs. Resource and Referral staff provided support to the family child care home providers in understanding the regulations required to remain registered with the state such as the necessity for CPR training and fire marshal inspections. The Resource and Referral staff also provided training related to early brain development and the importance of reading. Family child day care home providers were given books to encourage reading with the children.

This project paved the beginning of a stronger collaborative relationship between the Department of Education Nutrition Sponsor program and the Department of Social Services Child Care Division. Both agencies have provided cross training to programs. One outcome of the project includes the coordination of training

schedules between the Department of Education Nutrition Sponsors and the Department of Social Services Resource and Referral agencies.

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EXPANSION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

District of Columbia

Through collaboration with several other local partners the District of Columbia has been able to expand quality child care services in the following ways:

In April 2001, Washington Area Community Investment Fund (WACIF) formed a partnership between the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), The Enterprise Foundation, District of Columbia Bar Pro Bono Corporation, Washington Architectural Foundation and District of Columbia DHS Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) to establish the CareBuilders' Initiative to implement the facility expansion recommendations of the University of the District of Columbia, Center for Applied Research and Urban Policy (CARUP) *Market Rate and Capacity Utilization Study*. The recommendations are to improve the access to affordable quality child care services in the city, and achieve the goals of the Child Care and Development Fund. In addition to the partners, the Initiative has enlisted the services of specialists from various industries with experience in finance management, real estate and business development for the child care industry. The CareBuilders' Initiative will provide technical assistance and provide access to resources for facility renovations. The Washington Area Community Investment Fund is responsible for managing, coordinating administering and documenting this effort.

CareBuilders will initiate strategies to implement the goals listed below to increase the supply by 16 percent (400 new slots) and improve the quality of center-based child care facilities in the low-income communities in those wards.

Goal 1: Increase the number of center-based child care providers that are "loan ready" for facility expansion in Wards 1, 7, and 8 of the District of Columbia. Loan ready means able to obtain financing from commercial lenders, community development financial institutions, private foundations, corporations and other entities providing financing for facility expansion.

Goal 2: Increase the business development capacity of 15 center-based child care providers to improve the quality and supply of center-based child care facilities in Wards 1, 7 and 8 of the District of Columbia.

Goal 3: Increase the availability of financial management and business development resource materials and referral information for center-based child care facility expansion.

The members of the Initiative will work directly with selected centers to analyze space requirements, review and make recommendations to improve programs and staff education, review financial strength of the organization and prepare development proformas and budgets to determine the feasibility of projects. The assistance is designed to give the managers of child care organizations the skills needed to complete real estate development projects to increase infant and toddler slots. Recipients will develop the ability to identify and approach potential funding sources, to include grants and loans. The District of Columbia Bar Association Community Development Pro Bono Program offers assistance to child care providers on various legal matters.

For additional information regarding this project, please contact:

Juan Bargos

Phone: (202) 737-4700

The After Care for All Program provides before and after school care at elementary and middle schools in the District of Columbia. The program is funded through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood Development and the District of Columbia Public Schools. The program is administered by the Public Schools. Using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families direct dollars the program is located in schools where at least 75 percent of the student population receive free or reduced lunch. The program has been provided at no cost to parents.

In FY2002 funding was provided for 10,000 children. In FY2003 that number was reduced to 8,000 children. The program costs an estimated \$1,000 - \$1,200 per child.

For additional information regarding this project, please contact:

Barbara Kamara

Executive Director, Office of Early Childhood Development

Phone: (202) 727-5220

Fax: (202) 724-7228

Email: bkamara@dhs.dcgov.org

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood Development funds preschool and school age

services for children at programs operated by the District of Columbia Department of Parks and Recreation. The MOU stipulates a number of children to be served on a per child cost basis.

Preschool programs provide full-day services and are located throughout the District. All the preschool programs are nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. School age programs provide before and after school services and full-day care in the summer and on school days out. Extended day services are provided for children in Head Start programs operated by Parks and Recreation, meaning children are provided services full-day, full-year in the same program. More than 1,000 children receive services through this partnership.

For additional information regarding this project, please contact:

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Through a Memorandum of Understanding the Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood Development funds extended day services for two Head Start sites operated by the District of Columbia Public Schools. This program also has recently started a Head Start Family Child Care System. Funding is provided to offer full-day and year round care for children. Funding is provided on a per child basis. Approximately 60 children are served through this partnership.

For additional information regarding this project, please contact:

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SHARING COLLABORATION STRATEGIES

From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development describes the child care system in the United States as “highly fragmented and characterized by marked variations in quality, ranging from rich, growth-promoting experiences to unstimulating, highly unstable and sometimes dangerous settings.”³ Through collaboration efforts, southern states are attempting to overcome the disadvantages inherent in a fragmented system. The

initiatives described in this report indicate that states are working to enact collaboration strategies to improve the quality of care and efficiency of the early care and education system.

It is the intention of the Southern Institute that these brief descriptions and the accompanying contact information will be of assistance to southern states as they work to improve quality through collaboration. By sharing successful collaboration strategies, state leaders can assist each other as they work to achieve a quality, comprehensive and coordinated early care and education system.

¹ Southern Regional Task Force on Child Care, [Southern Regional Action Plan to Improve the Quality of Early Care and Education](#). (The Southern Institute on Children and Families, October 2002).

² Campbell, Dottie C., [Collaboration Among Child Care, Head Start, and Pre-Kindergarten: A Telephone Survey of Selected Southern States](#). (The Southern Institute on Children and Families, December 2002).

³ Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, Editors; Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Board on Children, Youth, and Families, [From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development](#). (National Academy Press, (November 2000).