

## HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

### NEWSLETTER

March 2011



---

#### Five Year Grant

The HSSCO five year grant for 2011-2016 has been approved. The full application narrative is available for viewing on the DEL website: <http://www.Del.wa.gov/publications/partnerships/>

#### Starting Strong

Mark your calendars for the third annual Starting Strong Institute on August 11 & 12, 2011 in Spokane. This will be a great opportunity for communities to hear from national experts and to dialogue with peers. Content will be targeted both toward those who are already engaged in P-3 efforts and those just beginning. Registration information will be out soon. For more information, visit the conference website at: [www.esd101.net/startingstrong](http://www.esd101.net/startingstrong)

#### Working Connections Child Care Subsidy

Below are updates to the previously announced changes to Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy. Effective March 1, 2011:

- Families who currently receive WCCC benefits remain eligible until their monthly incomes exceed 175 percent of federal poverty level.
- Families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and families of children with special needs have priority for new enrollment.
- Other families with incomes up to 175 percent of the federal poverty level may enroll on a “first come, first served” basis, until the program reaches a set limit.
- The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) will keep a waiting list of eligible families who apply. Families will be notified by mail when there are openings and will have 10 days to complete the application process.
- The copayment increases previously announced for February 1 and March 1 remain the same.
- For more information, visit [www.del.wa.gov/care/help/connections.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/care/help/connections.aspx)

#### Washington State Early Learning Benchmarks Review

On Feb. 17 and 18, 2011 the Benchmarks Review Workgroup met to outline the process for revising Washington’s early learning guidelines, the Early Learning and Development Benchmarks. The

workgroup includes representatives from DEL, OSPI, Thrive by Five, child care, Head Start and ECEAP, parents, K-12 staff, disabilities experts, and tribes. The group is being facilitated by the National Equity Project. The Benchmarks document was intended to be revisited every five years to ensure consistency with current research and best practices and the needs of Washington State. At the February meeting the Workgroup concluded that there is a need for transformative changes to the Benchmarks to promote multicultural inclusion and relevance. The existing document will serve as a core resource in designing the new version along with other relevant documents such as the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and K-12 standards. The workgroup will meet again in about a month to develop framing principles for the updated Benchmarks.

Once a draft version of the revised Benchmarks is developed, there will be opportunities for vetting and feedback- stay tuned.

### **Strengthening Families**

In 2006, Washington was one of nine States to be awarded a seed grant to implement the Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education approach into the state's early childhood system. The Strengthening Families Washington initiative is based on national research and evidence that recognizes the important role child care providers play in building protective factors in families with young children. Through the use of resources, support and strategies, the protective factors help parents develop more effective parenting methods (even under stress), thereby reducing the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Washington is working on embedding the Strengthening Families Protective Factor framework into our state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). With support from the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, a team from DEL (including HSSCO staff) convened a group of parents for a two-day community café meeting in Seattle. At this meeting, the group discussed ways to integrate the protective factors into the *Community and Family Partnerships* section of Washington's QRIS. They also brainstormed how to make the current standards for this QRIS section more functional for families and providers.

### **Head Start Dental Home Initiative (DHI)**

The Washington DHI leadership team is moving forward with efforts to improve Head Start/Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) collaboration. State support grant funds will be provided to two communities currently engaged in the work of developing sustainable Head Start/ABCD partnerships. These communities will engage in planning processes over the coming months to develop new collaborative models which will be shared with Head Start and ABCD staff across the state.

Check out new resources from the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center including Oral Health Resource Bulletin: Volume XXIV and Oral Health for Infants, Children, Adolescents, and Pregnant Women: Knowledge Path at <http://www.mchoralhealth.org>

### **I Am Moving I Am Learning**

There is still space for participants in the "I Am Moving, I Am Learning" (IMIL) Head Start Grantee training in Portland, OR scheduled for March 29-31, 2011. This training is open to all Washington

grantees regardless of whether or not your program has already had staff trained in IMIL; so if you have received IMIL training in the past this is an opportunity to send new staff or those who were unable to attend previous training. There is no fee associated with this training but pre-registration is required and can be completed at: <http://www.certain.com/system/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x10427978d62>

The deadline to receive the lodging group rate of \$113 + tax at the Portland Doubletree is March 15<sup>th</sup>. For hotel reservations, call (503) 281-6111.

### **Hearing Screening**

This year's Washington State Newborn Hearing Screening Meeting will be held on May 20, 2011 in Spokane or June 3, 2011 in Seattle. The meeting is presented by Seattle Children's Hospital and the Washington State Department of Health Early Hearing-loss Detection, Diagnosis and Intervention Program (EHDDI). Featured topics include updates from the Department of Health, Cochlear implants, parent experiences with EHDDI, and peer networking. Registration is FREE and lunch will be provided. Registration details will be available in late April.

For questions or more information, contact Wendy Harrison at (206) 987-2457 or [wendy.harrison@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:wendy.harrison@seattlechildrens.org).

### **Site Visit: Neighborhood House**

One of our goals for the HSSCO is to make it out to local programs for site visits on a quarterly basis so that we can see the great work you all are doing first hand and gain a better understanding of the unique strengths and challenges around the state. Since this is one of the most fun parts of the job, we decided to start including a brief write-up about these visits in the newsletter.

Thanks to Kathee Richter from Neighborhood House's Head Start program for taking the time to share information about their program with us. It was wonderful to learn about Neighborhood House's long history (est. 1906) and hear about the great work they are doing with families from very diverse backgrounds. We were delighted to tour Neighborhood House's new High Point facility in West Seattle which along with being a beautiful community center, sports cutting-edge green technology. In addition to the two Head Start Classrooms, this building has meeting spaces for ESL classes, after school programs and other community services. Thanks for the wonderful work Neighborhood house is doing for children, families and communities.

### **Other News**

For more information about what's happening in DEL, check out the DEL newsletter at: [www.del.wa.gov/publications/communications/](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/communications/)

For more information about what's happening in ECEAP (this is also a great source for links to interesting research and articles), check out the ECEAP Reminders and Links newsletter at: <http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/eceap/Default.aspx>

### **Contact Information**

We want this newsletter to be useful for YOU. If you have suggestions for future newsletter topics or

feedback/questions regarding any of the HSSCO's activities, please send those thoughts along to Kaelyn Bristol at (360) 725-3517 or [Kaelyn.bristol@del.wa.gov](mailto:Kaelyn.bristol@del.wa.gov) - we would love to hear from you!