

**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION CITY NETWORK
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2007**

Thank you for your ongoing interest in strengthening early care and education. If you have any questions about the network or this Update, contact Tonja Rucker, Senior Program Associate, Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) at: rucker@nlc.org, phone – 202/626-3004 or fax – 202/626-3043. The YEF Institute staff wants to thank all of the members of the Early Care and Education City Network for working so diligently on behalf of young children. Your dedication and commitment to strengthen early care and education provides numerous families with resources that improve their quality of life. We look forward to working with you and continuing to build upon the successes of initiatives launched in your community.

NLC NETWORK NEWS

- **YEF Institute Announces Upcoming Audioconference Schedule**
NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF) continues its popular audioconference series beginning in Sept. 2007. These free, hour-long audioconferences feature panel discussions of city officials and national experts in policy and programming to help listeners learn new strategies and ideas for supporting children, youth, and families. Registration is now open for:
 - **Thurs., Dec. 13, 12:30 p.m. Eastern Time:** "Reaching and Serving Immigrant Families"
 - **Thurs., Jan. 17, 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time:** "Safe Streets: Preventing Gang Affiliation and Violence"

TO REGISTER FOR THESE FREE CALLS, send complete contact information (name, address, city, state, phone, fax, and email) to iyef@nlc.org. Please indicate which audioconference(s) you are registering for. No phone registrations can be accepted. If you wish, gather a group of people around a speaker phone and use the call as a springboard for brainstorming or training. One day prior to the call, each registrant will receive an email or fax providing a toll-free, dial-in number.

- **New Publications**
The YEF Institute publishes new reports on supporting parents of young children and expanding alternatives for high school. *Supporting Parents: Promising City Efforts to Help Young Children Succeed* highlights lessons from six cities working to promote early childhood success.
http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/4B37CCBB139C4910AC1AB83E5D968DC7/IYEF_Supporting_Parents.pdf.
Setting the Stage for New High Schools features municipal leadership in expanding alternatives for students who struggle in traditional high schools. Click on the links below to download the publications.
http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/8D1C9C4738C7419DAE8060B73828827D/IYEF_Setting_the_Stage.pdf.

CITY SPOTLIGHT: Santa Monica, California (Pop. 88,050)

NOTE: This spotlight provides an opportunity to gather ideas from other network members. Each month, we will spotlight a new city or region. You are encouraged to share information about your local efforts, so that we can spotlight your activities and best practices in a future update.

Located in urban Los Angeles County, the City of Santa Monica has approximately 88,000 residents within 8.3 square miles. With a significant influx of workers into the city, the daytime population swells to over 250,000. In 2000, the census reported that 16 percent of the city's residents are young children of which five percent are of preschool age and 11 percent are school age. The city has a diverse economic base of tourism, retail, entertainment and internet industries contributing to a strong tax base, along with grants and fees for services supporting a \$482 million overall city budget for FY 2007-08.

The City of Santa Monica has a history of strong city council support for early childhood services. This includes convening a group of Santa Monica child care providers to create a Child Care Task Force. To date, the Santa Monica Child Care & Early Education Task Force is an independent entity that receives city staff support on public policy issues affecting child care and early education in Santa Monica. In 1991, with the council adoption of the city's Child Care Master Plan, the city began to address increasing the affordability, accessibility, and quality of child care, especially infant care in Santa Monica. This policy has continued to guide the early childhood vision for Santa Monica. In 2001, through an extensive community dialogue and community planning process, the city created the Santa Monica Early Childhood Initiative. This initiative includes different strategies to improve systems coordination as well as program development, expansion, and planning activities.

The city partners with other organizations and governmental bodies to advance early care and education. Partners include: the school district; local nonprofits; RAND; local hospitals; and the community college. These partnerships support early childhood programs and child care through projects such as providing property to the community college's new early childhood center, working with the school district to create a parent education support group for infants, and providing after-school child care, sports and enrichment programs at schools and community centers. In adopting the June 2007 budget, the city council approved \$24.3 million in general fund dollars to support youth programs. Additionally, over \$1 million in Community Development Program grants goes towards early childhood education and child care programming for Santa Monica families.

Responding to the Increased Demand for Child Care

Research shows that there is a shortage of licensed child care facilities to meet local needs for child care services within the City of Santa Monica. Data collected by city staff demonstrate that certain new development projects create an influx of new employees and families to the city, and thus generate additional need for child care facilities. As a result of these findings, one of the priority strategies of the 1991 Child Care Master Plan was to create ways to expand the supply of child care within the city. To that end, the city has exempted large family child care and child care homes from costly planning fees. In addition, the city has a policy to protect the existing child care spaces resources and specialized staff in the Human Services Division and the Planning Department to address child care planning issues.

In 2006, the city adopted the Child Care Linkage Program. This program levies a fee to any developer constructing new or additional floor area of 7,500 square feet or more. In Santa Monica, this square footage was selected because it is consistent with the city's size threshold that requires discretionary review and approval from the city. A fund is then created by the fees paid by developers and is solely for the purpose of construction and establishment of child care facilities within the City of Santa Monica, exclusive of ongoing expenses and general maintenance costs.

This program was launched as a result of significant advocacy efforts from members of the Santa Monica Child Care & Early Education Task Force. The city contracted with a consulting firm specializing in real estate and urban economics to conduct a nexus study to determine the impact of residential and workplace development on child care availability. The study included an evaluation of all of the costs of developing child care centers given escalating land values and a comparison of Santa Monica –specific data to national and local standards, in particular the standards of Los Angeles County, where many Santa Monica employees reside.

Since the 1980's, Santa Monica has used Development Agreements (DA) in child care. Unlike the linkage fees, each DA is individually tailored to and negotiated with a particular development. A DA is a legal agreement between a city or county that defines and locks in the conditions and requirements for a development (land uses, densities, etc.) during the term of the agreement. Each DA is generally implemented when the developer is requesting exemption from some aspect of the zoning ordinance, particularly use limitations and development standards, or when seeking entitlements for a longer-than-standard period of time. These negotiated agreements have helped the city create a new facility on or off site of that particular development, donate land or funds for land or property acquisition, support child care financially on a limited or ongoing basis and support ongoing operation of early childhood programs.

Improving Quality and On-Site Services in Child Care Centers

One primary goal of the 1991 Child Care Master Plan was to ensure that all children and families have access to high quality programs. The city provided a grant to the resource and referral agency to support a Quality Improvement Program. The funding provides small grants to child care centers and family child care homes. Activities range from quality improvements to supporting staff to attend workshops to improving their internal and external learning environments. This grant program is also closely linked to the Steps to Excellence Project so that participating centers can make quality improvements that will help them receive a higher rating.

The newest initiative that the city Community Development Program supports is a grant to a non profit mental health agency for a Preschool Early Intervention & Violence Prevention pilot program. This program provides mental health consultation in child care centers to address the needs of a minimum of 75 toddler and preschool aged children who exhibit emotional or behavioral behaviors and to improve the quality of relationships within the center, especially the provider-child relationship. Services include: 1) Onsite weekly co-location of a mental health consultant; 2) observation and assessment; 3) referral; 4) parent education; 5) staff training; and 6) therapeutic intervention, as needed.

A quality system of early care and education for young is a good public investment. With more and more parents entering the workforce, cities may have to creatively devise strategies and

policies to meet the needs for child care services. Elected officials and senior city staff persons are embracing the critical importance of the early childhood years and are working together to strengthen the existing early care and education infrastructure in their cities.

For additional information, contact: Julie Taren, Sr. Administrative Analyst, Child and Family Resources, at (310) 458-8701 or julie.taren@smgov.net. To review different documents, the City of Santa Monica Human Services Division website is <http://santa-monica.org/hsd/>.

STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT: LAUNCHING MAYOR'S BOOK CLUBS

NOTE: Strategy spotlights can help spark ideas that might be appropriate for your community. If you have additional approaches to contribute on this month's topic, please pass them along so we can add them to this list for future use.

The first few years of children's lives are critical to learning and healthy development. From as early as the first few months, children's experiences with oral language and literacy development can lay a foundation for later reading success. During this time developmental milestones are occurring and it is easy to build a strong foundation for language development and literacy skills.

New parents and those with very young children are often in particular need of advice and information on how to create an environment that promote emergent literacy skills. Children that grow up in homes with limited experience of being spoken to or read aloud to, generally hear fewer words and when they start kindergarten and may be behind their peers in terms of vocabulary knowledge. More often, this literacy gap may widen as years pass. The evidence is quite compelling that children who are not readers by the end of third grade may never catch up to their peers or ever achieve grade level reading proficiency. These children are often likely to require expensive, remedial education programs, and, later on, may need to repeat grades or even drop out of school. With support from numerous sectors of the community children develop strong reading skills, a key factor in determining life-long success.

THE STRATEGY IN FOCUS

The process of learning and literacy begins in infancy and continues throughout childhood. Developing literacy skills begins at birth and is manifested in everyday activities such as sharing books, telling stories, singing songs, talking to one another, or pointing out and naming objects. Parents and caregivers need to provide a rich literacy environment to help children acquire literacy skills but in many instances parents are unaware or not connected to the resources that help them get children off to a strong literate start.

There are several options for encouraging parents and caregivers to read to young children through messaging and access to books. Some cities have had high profile figures in the community – the mayor, sports stars, news anchors, etc. – volunteer to read to children to set an example, attract media attention to the need to read to children right from birth, and showcase programs that are being launched to increase access to books. The larger community, specifically elected officials can be seen as contributors to literacy development. Mayors, city councilmembers, and other municipal officials can be very instrumental in creating local systems of support that promotes early literacy for infants and toddlers.

An emerging strategy that goes deeper into promoting early reading is Mayor's Book Clubs. The underlying premise is that Mayor's Book Clubs expose young children and their parents to the importance of early reading so that all families live in an environment where books and literacy is highly valued and is accepted as a household norm. Cities usually target a specific population, primarily three and four year olds. These clubs, launched in cities across the nation, vary in scope and look differently depending on the needs and resources of the local community. Common components of Mayor's Book Clubs may include:

- Child friendly resources (i.e., backpack, blanket, bookmark, flashcards);
- Resources for parents;
- Connections for parents to additional city services;
- Book drives;
- Action plans to support parents;
- School readiness guidelines;
- Transition plans into public school;
- Special literacy events during the summer;
- City-wide contest encouraging children to draw pictures about their favorite book;
- A year-end event at City Hall that consists of a celebration of music, storytelling and film. At the evening event the mayor announces a new component of the program to keep the city's youngest residents reading;
- A published list of recommended books, songs and rhymes which corresponds with each month's book;
- The mayor reads the book of the month on the local cable station; and
- Book Club recipes that feature a different recipe for families to enjoy making and eating together.

What City Leaders Can Do:

Mayors and other city officials can — and in many cities already do — play a key role in ensuring that all the children possess the skills they need to be strong readers. Key steps that city leaders can take may include:

- **Launch an early literacy campaign.** Promoting early literacy may strengthen efforts to ensure that young children and their parents get the support services they need to become strong readers. Transit ads, posters in public buildings, inserts in water bills, meeting space available in municipal buildings, and flyers or brochures that inform parents about the importance of early literacy and reading to children.
- **Serve as a champion.** City leaders can use their pulpit to serve as a formal "ambassador" in carrying messages on the importance of early childhood success to other municipal leaders. Champions can fulfill this role by encouraging other municipal and community leaders to get involved and support issues/programs that impact young children and their parents.
- **Use the “bully pulpit” to highlight the importance of early literacy.** Local officials are in the best position to inform the public and put the issue of early literacy on the community's agenda. They are often presented with numerous opportunities to share information and set agendas. Through the venues of: public speeches; council meetings

and hearings; press interviews; meetings with other public officials; business roundtables; or townhall meetings, they are able to garner support from stakeholders across the city.

- **Engage multiple sectors of the community.** City officials have the opportunity to promote a common vision for addressing early literacy and reading among young children. City leaders can convene key stakeholders such as members of the medical community, business leaders, educators, and faith leaders to provide technical advice on literacy program planning and implementation. Many of these leaders have built strong relationships and trust within their field and in local neighborhoods. Additionally, they may have integrated personal relationships within the community. City officials can encourage these leaders to serve as a community partners to promote early literacy among young children. City staff may consider matching a specific group or organization to a neighborhood child care center. The team of volunteers may create time every week to read and build relationships with the children, the center and the community.
- **Utilize/leverage city resources.** Municipal leaders can utilize space in a city building to house parent training sessions and literacy activities. The space could be rooms in a recreation center, an office within a community center, a library, or rental space in an apartment complex. Cities can also work with a local business to secure a donated location for workshops. In-kind resources such as municipal staff, trainers, and resources are also a great asset. City departments can provide developmentally appropriate activity ideas, a lending library for books, and videos through the library system.
- **Help increase funding.** The city can consider setting aside a designated amount of city funding to support a Mayor's Book Club. Additionally, city leaders can provide an opportunity for businesses and corporate sponsors to invest and their logo can then be displayed on project related materials. Cities can provide funding to start or augment existing early literacy programs, or partner with local non-profit organizations to seek funding through public and/or private sources. Potential funding sources include: city general funds, Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money, community foundations, state or federal family support grants, literacy grants, or funding from school districts.
- **Ensure that parents are aware of support services and programs that promote early reading.** Along with making community resources available to parents, cities must get the word out about programs and services. City leaders can engage in targeted outreach and connect parents with the information they need to make good decisions about connecting to programs that promote reading in the home. City leaders can engage in targeted outreach such as fliers, bulletins, newspaper advertisements, or even printing ads on grocery store receipts. By facilitating access to needed services, cities can create more positive early childhood reading experiences.
- **Utilize and work proactively with local media outlets.** In many instances, elected officials have developed strong relationships with reporters in several media outlets. Mail press releases, try to place articles in newspapers, and respond to an editorial if a constructive debate seems possible. When organizing an early reading event, ask for a news photographer and television reporter/camera coverage of the event. Offer to give a

radio, television, or newspaper interview prior to the event. Have people lined up who will add the “human element” to the story.

- **Increase access to library cards.** Conduct registration for library cards and entry into the Mayor’s Book Club at neighborhood libraries, grocery stores, the zoo, community centers, and other local venues where parents frequent and gather.
- **Develop reading materials and training sessions for a Mayor’s Book Club.** Encourage early childhood specialists and local authors to write Mayor’s Book Club books for four-year olds that focus on different aspects of the city. Each book, can be mailed out monthly to all enrolled families, may contain a parent page that provides strategies and games for helping children learn the literacy skills emphasized in the book. The authors can work in coordination with people in the early childhood field to ensure that the design and content of the books are in compliance with early learning guidelines and promotes early literacy. These early childhood experts can also train elected officials and community members serving in the program on the techniques of how to read books to young children and how to maximize children’s learning experience.
- **Host a Book Club show.** Have the mayor host a Book Club show on a local television affiliate or cable station once a month (repeated throughout the month) to read the month's Book Club selection. The general manager of stations may be persuaded to donate air time and staff production. To appeal to parents and their young children, one may consider a talk show format in which older students serve as co-hosts and they travel around the city and help young viewers understand the words and ideas from the books.
- **Organize a community book drive.** City staff may plan a community book drive to collect and distribute a predetermined amount of books over a designated time period to your city’s children. Business, clubs, churches, and community organizations can be invited to participate in a book drive for the Mayor’s Book Club.
- **Help promote and underwrite early literacy programs that are featured on local PBS stations.** These programs can feature local professionals sharing ideas and information on literacy programs and targeting parents of young children. Additionally they can provide simple and practical ideas for parent, caregivers and early childhood educators regarding the appropriate use of television with small children through media literacy training. Part of this agreement may give the city permission to show these programs on the city’s cable access channel and also post them on the city’s website with streaming video.

City Examples

Recently, USA Today expressed an interest in learning more about the importance of early literacy in general and Mayor's Book Clubs in particular. Institute staff was able to connect reporters with elected officials and senior city staff in three member cities that have successfully implemented Mayor’s Book Clubs. The links to the articles are listed below. The cities highlighted in the articles are also listed in the “city example” section below.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-10-15-bookclubs_N.htm?csp=34

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-10-14-bookside_N.htm?csp=34

- **Jacksonville, Florida.** To help increase family awareness of the importance of reading with young children to prepare them for school, Mayor John Peyton launched a Book Club in September 2004. All four-year old pre-kindergarten students in Duval County were invited to join. Free registration was conducted at neighborhood libraries and community centers as well as during a RALLY day at the Jacksonville Zoo in October. Currently, over 8,000 four-year old children are enrolled. Book Club members receive a free backpack filled with several reading tools and the first book in a series that are mailed to parents each month. The Book Club books are written specifically to develop emergent literacy skills for four-year olds and each book focuses on a different part of the city. Each book also contains a parent page that provides strategies and games for helping children learn the literacy skills emphasized in the book. Each month, the Jacksonville Children's Commission and Jacksonville Public Library also publish a list of recommended books, songs and rhymes that correspond with that month's Book Club book. Mayor Peyton also hosts a Book Club show on the local FOX television affiliate station every Saturday morning where he reads each month's Book Club selection. Student co-hosts travel around the city and help young viewers understand the words and ideas from the books.

- **Charleston, South Carolina.** The City of Charleston has incorporated a Mayor's Book Club into its *Countdown to Kindergarten Initiative*. The city partnered with Barnes & Noble, Trident United Way, a local radio station, and a local television to give parents of four-year-olds a school calendar and a book per month that includes learning activities to be carried out at home. An extension of the literacy work occurs in August of every year when Mayor Joseph P. Riley hosts its "First Day Festival". This free community celebration of education introduces the beginning of a new school year and provides parents with information about student support services. With great support from media outlets, thousands of people attended hundreds of businesses donated school supplies. The mayor is serving as the catalyst to mobilize community leaders, school board members, council members and businesses in a campaign to make early literacy a priority for the entire community.

- **Longmont, Colorado.** In April 2007, Bright EYES (Early Years Education Stewards) launched the Mayor's Book Club program, which encourages 3 and 4 year olds and their parents to read a new book together monthly. Each child who enrolls, receives a backpack, t-shirt, a special Mayor's Book Club library card, and one book each month. As part of this program, the Mayor appears on public access TV to read the book to children who have not had the opportunity to read with their parents. Three hundred and fifteen children registered in the first month of the program. The kick-off event was held at the Longmont Public Library, complete with Winnie the Pooh, Cat in the Hat, children's activities, refreshments and featured Mayor Pirnack reading the first book, If You Give a Mouse a Cookie.

RESOURCES

Sharing Books with Babies (SBB) — SBB is a training and resource project for early care and education providers designed to promote early literacy development with infants, toddlers, and preschool children in early care and education settings. The SBB intervention model for early literacy promotion has three program components: specialized training for both home and center-based early care and education providers; developmentally and culturally appropriate children's books distributed at no cost; and information and support for early care and education providers and parents on strategies which encourage early literacy development in their young children. SSB has a training manual and video targeted at early childhood instructors and trainers who train teachers and caregivers. For more information see:

<http://www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders/EarlyLiteracy/TRR.html>.

Reach Out and Read (ROR) — ROR is a national pediatric early literacy program that began in 1989. ROR is a primary prevention program that incorporates early literacy into standard primary pediatric care. When young children come to clinics for routine health visits and immunizations, doctors and nurses prescribe books for their young patients. ROR works with more than 1,800 clinics and hospitals, and with more than 22,000 primary care medical providers in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. For more information see:

<http://www.reachoutandread.org>.

First Book — First Book is a national nonprofit organization with a single mission: to give children from low-income families the opportunity to read and own their first, new books. The children supported by First Book include those who participate in literacy programs based in shelters for homeless and abused children, public housing programs, Head Start centers, migrant worker camps, libraries, and school-based programs. First Book has developed a sustaining network of partnerships from the private and government sectors. For more information see:

<http://www.firstbook.org>.

National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) — NIFL serves as a hub for national literacy efforts and as a resource for linking with programs and services in the literacy community. NIFL promotes literacy throughout the life span, beginning with emerging and early literacy, connects family literacy programs with local resources, offers policy information to government agencies, provides contact information for state literacy programs, and disseminates science-based reading research and products to parents, educators, and policy-makers. For more information see:

<http://www.nifl.gov>.

The National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) — NCFL is a nonprofit organization that supports literacy services for families across the United States through programming, training, research, advocacy, and dissemination of information and resources. NCFL draws on its years of field experience to develop practical tools for educators, administrators, parents and communities that improve literacy services for families. Resources developed by NCFL include curricula, textbooks, student and volunteer recruitment materials, and family activity guides to help programs increase their rate of success. The organization provides vital support to programs and organizations through Web-based and in-person training for professional, paraprofessional and volunteer staff. For more information see: <http://www.familit.org>.

Reading is Fundamental (RIF) — RIF is a national nonprofit children's literacy organization that serves children and families in every state through programs that operate in schools, libraries, community centers, child care centers, Head Start and Even Start centers, hospitals, migrant worker camps, homeless shelters, and detention centers. Through a national network of teachers, parents, and community volunteers, RIF programs provide books and other essential literacy resources to children, at no cost to them or their families. For more information see: <http://www.rif.org>.

Useful websites:

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library — Dolly Parton's Imagination Library developed in 1995 for her hometown of Sevier County, Tennessee, has been replicated in communities across the United States. All children in the community are enrolled at birth or when they move into the community. Each month, from the day the child is born until their 5th birthday, a selected book arrives at the mailbox. The Dollywood Foundation has developed the delivery system, negotiated price, selected the publisher and the individual titles, and created registration and promotional materials. Local champions finance the cost of the books and the mailing. For more information visit: <http://www.dollywoodfoundation.com>.

Raising A Reader — Raising A Reader is a "take-home" book bag program, implemented through child care settings via a ready-to-use Classroom Kit. The program aims to encourage families in an easy, engaging, and non-intimidating manner to establish a regular reading routine at home that excites parents and their preschool children. For more information visit: <http://www.raisingareader.org/research.html>.

Motheread, Inc. — Motheread, Inc. is a private, nonprofit literacy development organization working throughout the United States to integrate literature-based curricula and training into already established literacy and family development programs. A variety of Motheread curricula teaches how to develop literacy skills in specific contexts with different populations, including Spanish-speaking families and fathers. For more information visit: <http://www.motheread.org>.

Talk To Your Baby — Quick Tips (2005) prepared by the National Literacy Trust, in the United Kingdom, is a series of one page "quick tips" for parents and practitioners to help children develop good talking and listening skills. Each sheet is available in English and in a bilingual format with English and Bengali or Panjabi or Gujarati or Urdu or Welsh or Arabic or Chinese or French or Tamil. For more information visit: <http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby/quicktips.html>.
<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby/babyfirstword.html>.

Publications:

Identifying Key Early Literacy and School Readiness Issues: Exploring a Strategy for Assessing Community Needs, by Daniel Weigel and Sally Martin. *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, Fall 2006. This article presents the results of a needs assessment project aimed at identifying priorities for community intervention programs aimed at ensuring that young children enter school ready to learn. A panel of 30 carefully selected early childhood panelists completed 4 rounds of questionnaires designed to develop a prioritized list of key community needs and programs. The article may provide a blueprint for others wishing to identify key community needs related to important early childhood issues. Available at: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v8n2/weigel.html>.

Promoting Language and Literacy in Early Childhood by Tamara Halle, Julia Calkins, and Daniel Johnson. Child Care & Early Education Research Connections, September 2003. This literature review was designed to examine the existing research on promoting language and literacy development in early childhood care and education settings. It provides definitions of emergent literacy, summaries of important syntheses that have already been conducted, an overview of the current policy landscape, and the criteria used to select studies for review. It then provides a summary of key findings from the studies reviewed and tabled at the CCEERC website, as well as lessons gleaned from the research. Available at: <http://www.childcareresearch.org/SendPdf?resourceId=2796>.

School Readiness and Academic Achievement in Reading and Mathematics of Young Hispanic Children in the United States, This policy brief from the National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics presents data on the reading and math readiness of Hispanic children at the start of kindergarten and their achievement at the end of fifth grade. This resource is available at: http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=515226.

DOE's What Works Clearinghouse Review of Curricula and Practices, The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse recently posted its review of 17 early childhood interventions aimed at children three to five years old in center-based settings. Each intervention review covers six domains — oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, early reading/writing, cognition and math. Information on the developer, scope of use, teaching aspects, cost and research results is also provided. The Clearinghouse says interventions with a primary focus on socio-emotional development and approaches to learning may be addressed in a subsequent phase of its review. The new review is available at: <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/Topic.asp?tid=13&ReturnPage=default.asp>.

Cost Per Child for Early Childhood Education and Care: Comparing Head Start, CCDF Child Care, and Prekindergarten/Preschool Programs, This paper by Douglas J. Besharov, Justus A. Myers, and Jeffrey S. Morrow at the American Enterprise Institute calculates the actual per-child costs of Head Start (including Early Head Start), child care provided under the Child Care and Development Fund, and state-funded preschool programs. Costs per child varied dramatically between the programs. The paper is available at: http://www.welfareacademy.org/pubs/Early_Childhood_Education_and_Care_Costs_07_0629.pdf.

Early Learning Standards: Results from a National Survey to Document Trend in State-Level Policies and Practices, this report by Catherine Scott-Little (University of North Carolina), Jim Lesko (Delaware State Department of Education), Jana Martella (Council of Chief State School Officers), and Penny Milburn (Iowa State Department of Education) shows that nearly all states have developed early learning standards for preschool-age children and that progress is being made in developing infant-toddler early learning standards as well. The report discusses the implications and trends associated with this progress as well as areas in need of further research. The report is available at: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v9n1/little.html>.

RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

PreK Now's New Spanish Language Campaign Prekinder: Aprendiendo aprender — Pre-K Now officially launched a new Spanish language campaign – Prekinder: Aprendiendo a aprender

with a great press conference in The Bronx. A partnership with NACCRRA, this initiative includes Spanish language PSAs for television and radio and a new Spanish language parent website – www.prekinder.org to help Latino families learn more about early education options, eligibility and availability in their community. To learn more visit: www.prekinder.org.

Harvard's Center for the Developing Child Creates: *Collaborative Forum With Bold Workplan* — This project, housed at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, fosters the analysis, synthesis, translation, and dissemination of findings from 40 years of early childhood program evaluation studies to learn more about what interventions work best and for whom. By adding program evaluation research to the growing portfolio of neuroscience, developmental psychology, and economics available through the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, the Center will generate unparalleled capacity to advance public understanding of the investment potential of the early childhood years. To learn more go to: <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/forum.html>.

National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force Issues Final Report — The final report of the National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force, *Taking Stock: Assessing and Improving Early Childhood Learning and Program Quality*, recommends developing a comprehensive assessment system to improve child outcomes. A key recommendation involves aligning high-quality and comprehensive standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments as a continuum from Prekindergarten through Third Grade. To learn more go to: http://www.fcdus.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=579564.

Child Trends Identifies Factors Associated with Higher Third Grade Outcomes — Using data from the 2005 Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K), a new research brief from Child Trends, *Pre-Kindergarten to Third Grade (PK-3): School-Based Resources and Third Grade Outcomes*, identifies three elements of elementary school environments - strong principal leadership, high academic standards, and frequent teacher meetings to coordinate instruction - associated with higher Third Grade math and reading scores. To learn more go to: http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=520143.

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Supporting Parents: Promising City Efforts to Help Young Children Succeed, by the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute), captures the lessons from the YEF Institute's 2005-2006 technical assistance projects that were designed to help six cities create programs that support parents of young children. The six project cities made impressive progress in developing model parent support programs that will inspire and motivate other cities across the country. The report is available at: http://www.nlc.org/ASSETS/4B37CCBB139C4910AC1AB83E5D968DC7/IYEF_Supporting_Parents.pdf.

Reducing Disparities Beginning in Early Childhood by the National Center for Children in Poverty, shows that many disparities in health and well-being are rooted in early childhood. These disparities reflect gaps in access to services, unequal treatment, adverse congenital health conditions, and exposures in the early years linked to elevated community and family risks. Poverty brings risks for children of all races; however, racial/ethnic status is an independent risk factor. Young children are more likely than older children to live in families without economic

security. Of the 10.2 million U.S. children ages birth through 5 years, 42 percent lived in low-income families (with income below the federal poverty level-FPL) and 20 percent lived in poor families (income below 100 percent of FPL) in 2005. Minority young children also are overrepresented among the 2.2 million U.S. children ages birth through 5 who live in extremely poor families (income below 50 percent of FPL). The younger the child, the more harmful poverty is to developmental outcomes. The report is available at: http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_744.pdf.

Taking Stock: Assessing and Improving Early Childhood Learning and Program Quality, a report from The National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force, details their final set of recommendations for state early childhood accountability systems. The Task Force assembled a team of well-respected individuals, including leading experts on early childhood assessment, program evaluation, early childhood pedagogy and practice, and advocacy, and focused on designing the best possible approaches to using assessments to strengthen the early childhood field. The report is available at:

http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Prek_education/task_force_report1.pdf.

Summary of Essential Findings: A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy Using Evidence to Improve Outcomes in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children is a new publication from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. It represents a summary of findings from credible, peer-reviewed research, as well as the result of vigorous debate among experts representing numerous fields. The report is available at: http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu/content/downloads/Summary_of_Essential_Findings.pdf.

Status of PK-3 Teacher Preparation in New Jersey, a recent policy brief from the Association for the Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), *Providing Tools Towards Quality: The Status of P-3 Teacher Preparation Programs in New Jersey*, assesses whether PK-3 teacher preparation programs are preparing prospective teachers to teach the continuum from Prekindergarten to Grade Three, reviews how new PK-3 programs are aligned with other certification programs in universities, and examines how the overlap of the PK-3 and K-5 certificates has impacted other university programs. The report is available at: http://www.fcdus.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=582432.