

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION CITY NETWORK
MARCH/APRIL 2006

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, National League of Cities at: rucker@nlc.org, phone – 202/626-3004 or fax – 202/626-3043. IYEF 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

- **Parents as Teachers Child and Family Advocacy Award.** For its efforts in helping local governments improve early childhood programs, NLC was recently honored with the 2006 Parents as Teachers Child and Family Advocacy Award. The annual award recognizes individuals or organizations that have been outstanding advocates for children and families. Past recipients include the United Way of America, Marian Wright Edelman, Dolly Parton and Dr. T. Berry Brazelton. NLC President James Hunt, councilmember, Clarksburg, W.Va., accepted the award on March 21 at the Parents as Teachers conference in St. Louis, Mo. The award was given to NLC in recognition of the 2003 City Challenge for Early Childhood Success, which inspired more than 100 cities and towns across the country to develop innovative multi-year strategies to support early childhood development. The challenge was spearheaded by then-NLC President John DeStefano Jr., mayor of New Haven, Conn., and carried out by the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute).
- **Adopt the City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth.** Join cities and towns across the country in adopting a Platform developed by NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families that identifies essential tasks that strengthen families, improve outcomes for children and youth, and sustain community efforts over time. The Platform also lays out a series of concrete action steps that every community can take in early childhood development, youth development, education and afterschool, health and safety, helping youth in transition, family economic success, and improving neighborhoods and community. If you have questions contact Michael Karpman at karpman@nlc.org or 202-626-3072. Click on the following link to view and adopt the platform: <http://www.nlc.org/iyef/7915.cfm>.
- **The Partnership for Working towards an Inclusive Community.** The Partnership, an effort led by NLC, unites city leaders who are working to support such issues as racial justice and inclusionary zoning, as well as those who celebrate the diversity of race, religions, and cultures in order to build communities that are accepting and representative of the differences among citizens. Increased involvement by a wider representation of citizens in governmental activities will be a hallmark of these inclusive communities.

To aid in your efforts to build a more inclusive community in your city and town, NLC has produced two new documents: the 2005 Futures Report, *Inclusive Communities for All*, which describes the past and current work that NLC and its members have undertaken toward this goal, suggests local roles, and calls for local action; and the *Resource Guide for Working Toward Inclusive Communities*, which was created as a companion piece to the Futures Report and is an annotated compilation of many NLC resources designed to help local officials work toward building inclusive communities in their own cities and towns. For more information visit http://www.nlc.org/resources_for_cities/programs_services/7952.cfm, send an email to inclusive@nlc.org, or call (202) 626-3030.

- **Free Audioconference: “Using Your Parks and Recreation Department to Combat Youth Obesity.”** An audioconference addressing youth obesity will take place on April 20th at 4:00pm EST. The presentation will highlight the innovative ways in which departments of parks and/or recreation have promoted physical activity and healthy lifestyles to combat childhood obesity. Speakers will include municipal park and recreation directors. Please join us and for more detailed information and registration, please visit: <http://www.nlc.org/IYEF/events%5F%5F%5Faudioconferences/>.
- **NLC Seeks Examples of City Initiatives to Keep Children and Youth Safe.** NLC’s YEF Institute has launched a nationwide search for exemplary partnership programs in which mayors and law enforcement officials work together for the safety of children and youth. The project seeks to identify and highlight active programs including— but are not limited to— areas such as youth violence prevention/reduction, juvenile re-entry, mentoring, or bullying. Please feel free to submit a nomination or forward this message to a more appropriate person in your city that you believe may be interested in highlighting your city's efforts to keep children and youth safe. To nominate a program go to: <http://report1.nlc.org:8000/surveyor/index.php?sid=44> to fill out a brief questionnaire about the program you are nominating. For more information, contact Melissa Rogers at (202) 626-3006 or rogers@nlc.org.
- **Spotlight Your City and Share Emerging Issues in 2006.** In the New Year, consider having your city or town spotlighted in a Network Update. We are always looking to highlight examples of local government innovation around early childhood. Please contact us if you would like to share your city or town’s work to promote early childhood success. Please contact Tonja Rucker at (202) 626-3004 or rucker@nlc.org to share your experiences.

CITY SPOTLIGHT:

PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA (Pop: 99,291)

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

The City of Portsmouth, Virginia has a long history of providing quality services and programs for young children and their families. In the fall of 1992, Mayor James W. Holley, III and the Portsmouth City Council adopted a priority plan of action that consisted of 10 focus areas to improve the quality of life for city residents. In 1994 a group of city agencies and citizens created a Comprehensive Prevention Plan to address human service issues, but the plan did not include a specific focus on early childhood initiatives.

By 1998, it became clear to Mayor Holley, city leaders, and youth serving agencies that the city needed a focused effort to impact the early learning and literacy of very young citizens. Several collaborations formed to take on this task. One of the leading groups was the Portsmouth Coalition for Youth. This group represented an alliance of local government agencies, nonprofit entities, faith-based organizations, citizens, and youth that facilitated coordinated interagency service provision for children and families. After months of working in a united effort to reduce risk factors, reduce duplication of services, and to provide comprehensive programming, the Portsmouth Coalition for Youth updated the Comprehensive Prevention Plan to include the goal that “every child and family in Portsmouth will start school prepared for success.”

The city focused on assessing early childhood needs and creating a collaboration of local partners to address the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive needs of young children. In September 2003, Mayor Holley accepted the NLC’s Challenge for Early Childhood Success and committed to promoting successful early childhood outcomes through the development of a strategic plan. To accomplish that goal, the city manager reassigned a member of his staff to lead youth development efforts under the new title of Manager of Youth Services. Under this new leadership, designated staff persons participated in the creation of a citywide comprehensive early childhood plan spearheaded by the city’s Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services.

If the multi-year early childhood plan specifically met the needs of young children and their families, the next step was to assess and gain public support for these efforts. Many initiatives and activities were carried out to move the early childhood agenda forward. For example, under the leadership of Mayor Holley, a citywide Neighborhood Enhancement and Action Team (NEAT) Summit encourage city and community organizations to work together to accomplish established goals. The summit included guest speakers, topical workshops, and citizen participation activities. Through the support of the business community, local foundations, the school system, faith-based organizations, and the citizenry, the numbers of early childhood initiatives grew.

The Portsmouth Coalition for Youth continues to collaborate with human service agencies, local community groups, and concerned citizens to provide programs that improve the quality of life for youth and families in the City of Portsmouth. The work currently focuses on five strategic areas:

- Strengthening Families,
- Successful Early Childhood,

- Promoting Cultural and Leisure Activities,
- Individual Self Improvement, and
- Safe and Drug Free Neighborhoods.

The citizens of Portsmouth continue to work together to improve the lives of young children and their families. City leaders, city agencies, community organizations, and citizens recognize that early care and education is important to the future growth and development of the city. A tremendous amount of effort and hard work has been put into creating collaborations and building public support for new and innovative programming. The following city programs strengthen families by educating parents and children from newborn to age seven about how to support optimal growth and development.

- **Ida Barbour Early Learning Center:** The Ida Barbour Early Learning Center provides food, shelter, clothing, and other services to needy children at no cost. The center provides early care and education services to children ages 6 weeks to 7 years. Classes are divided into five groups: infants, tiny tots, toddler one, toddler two, pre-kindergarten, and the before and after school program. Staff offers quality care designed to assist the children in their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical tasks. The center uses the Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP) curriculum for language development and the AI's Pals curriculum for the development of social skills. The center also offers a program for parents called Raising a Reader (RAR), which is designed to increase book sharing between parent and child. The children may take little red bags with three to four different books home each week. This program helps children enter kindergarten more prepared to read.
- **“Portsmouth Reads”:** With support from the Portsmouth city government, this program has garnered the participation of the Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce, the PTA, school representatives, community volunteers, and churches to implement strategies to increase literacy among adults and children. *Portsmouth Reads* is implementing the Raising A Reader (RAR) program in day care settings and public libraries. RAR is also being used in the childcare setting as a stand-alone and in conjunction with Family Reading Nights, which is an initiative that provides parents with information on how to share the various library services and types of children books that are available. Various sites are hosting Motherread/Fatherread training, which helps parents improve their reading and writing skills and learn to read effectively with their children. The program emphasizes reading aloud techniques, family communication, parenting skills, and literacy development. Participants may keep the book used each week to share at home with their children.
- **Infant Initiative:** Parents of newborn babies born in Portsmouth hospitals receive parenting information packets. In the past few years, thousands of parents have received packets. Each packets contains a board book, a Raising a Reader Video on how to share books with children, a toy, a brochure on Portsmouth programs, the kindergarten readiness checklist, and a handout on how to share books with infants. The materials are available for both Spanish- and English-speaking parents.
- **Playschool:** Playschool strives to prepare pre-school girls and boys, ages 3-4, for their upcoming school years. Playschool offers a developmental age-appropriate educational curriculum in addition to enhancing large and small motor skill development. The day

begins with circle time and music. Instructors lead group lessons about appropriate social behaviors, which the children enact in role-playing sessions. Children then participate in learning activities and story time that reinforce the themes taught during group lessons. There are also outside or indoor activities, a favorite being swim time.

- **Healthy Families of Portsmouth:** Healthy Families is a voluntary home visitation service for at-risk first time parents. The program provides a Family Support Worker (FSW), who visits each family weekly in their home. The four goals of the program are to prevent child abuse, enhance positive parent/child interaction, educate parents on child growth and development, and ensure that children enter school ready to learn. FSW workers provide parents with education on child growth and development, educates them on the importance of bonding, and provides them with bonding activities appropriate for their child's age. The FSW also models healthy interaction with the child for the benefit of the parents. Portsmouth Healthy Families is a voluntary program that families can utilize until their child is 5 years old. Referrals can be made from anyone in the community.
- **Resource Mothers:** Resource Mothers is a voluntary home-visiting program for teenagers expecting their first child. The program goal is to ensure that the mother delivers a healthy, full-term baby weighing 2500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces) or more. Home visitors, also called Resource Mothers, provide bi-monthly home visits to each pregnant teenager, starting in the first trimester of her pregnancy. Support, guidance, and education are provided to the teen to ensure a healthy pregnancy resulting in a healthy birth. Resource Mothers stays with the new mom until the child's first birthday. During that year, in addition to guidance and support, resource mothers provide parenting skills and health education to help the mother create a healthy attachment to her baby and maintain good health.

For more information about Portsmouth's efforts, contact Karen Ellis, Youth Services Manager, Parks & Recreation, City of Portsmouth, 757-393-8481 ext. 4175 ellisk@portsmouthva.gov and Donna Wilgus, Vice President of Prevention, Child & Family Services of Eastern Virginia, 757-397-2121 ext. dwilgus@childandfamilyservices.org. For additional information, you may visit www.portsmouthfamiles.com/early.html.

STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT: REACHING AND INFORMING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES ABOUT EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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.

Every child who goes to school should be ready to learn. This is one of the priority education goals in the United States. But in order for this to happen, parents must play an active role in laying a foundation for their children through valuing and appreciating early learning and development.

A parent is a child's first and most influential teacher, and they play a tremendous role in helping their children learn. For many children, parents are the only teacher they have until kindergarten. Children develop skills at different times and at their own pace, so it is vitally important that every child is intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically ready to take on and master the academic and social requirements set forth by local school systems. All parents need good information about child development and how best to maximize learning during these critical stages of development.

We know that what happens to children early in life has a profound impact on later academic achievement. The level of emotional maturity, social competence, and academic skills that children bring to school determine how well they perform and how they generally feel about learning and attending school. Young children need to develop a set of skills prior to entering kindergarten that will enable them to master learning and enjoy the journey of public education.

Children born to immigrant and non-English speaking parents face multiple risk factors that may hinder healthy development and learning. The benefits of participating in a quality early education program can offset some of the daunting challenges that these young children and their families are likely to face. Early education has the potential to address issues of school readiness and language acquisition and support integration of children and their families into the local education system and American society.

Much of the current discussion of education in the United States focuses on new immigrants and non-English speakers in particular. How are we delivering education to these parents and their children? Many immigrant and non-English speaking parents may not know much about the American public education system. City leaders can help ensure that quality early care and parent education is available to these families.

THE STRATEGY IN FOCUS

Immigrant and non-English speaking children are the fastest growing segment of the child population in the U.S. These children come from a variety of nations, speak a multitude of languages, and have a range of ethnic, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Ensuring that these students receive a high-quality education is a pressing issue faced by city leaders, educators, administrators, and policymakers nationwide.

According to the latest census data, nearly one in five of all children in our nation's schools is an immigrant or the American-born child of immigrants. These children come from over 150 nations with the largest number coming from Mexico, the Philippines, Cuba, and Vietnam.

These children can be a great source of strength and hope for the future of America. They need to be full participants in the American experience as children and as adults. These young people, just like generations of immigrants who have come before them, can grow up to be productive citizens who will add their voices to our democracy and contribute to the success of this nation in an increasingly competitive and global market.

One of the most important factors in school success is the extent to which parents actively participate in their children's education prior to their entry into preschool or kindergarten programs. Specific activities, such as reading to children, have been shown to enhance children's language acquisition, early reading performance, social development, and later success in school.

Families in which parents have difficulty communicating in English may have lower rates of participation in literacy activities. Research has shown that parents who do not speak English in the home are more likely to be recent immigrants, live in disadvantaged communities, be unfamiliar with American cultural and education practices, and have lower levels of education and less income. These are significant obstacles for young children to overcome as they prepare to enter school.

It is important that the families of these children receive guided support in the process of integrating and becoming part of local communities and learning about educational resources and programs that are available for their children. While families struggle to learn laws and the practices of the American culture, a system should be in place to provide an environment in which they can access available resources and become fully skilled in learning about educational opportunities for themselves and their children.

Local governments can take an active role in helping families become self-reliant and skilled by providing them with information and resources they need for a strong education foundation for successful entrance into the school system. Providing information and orientation sessions for immigrant and non-English speaking parents, can help them become active partners and participants in their children's formal education from the early years and throughout life.

WHAT CITY LEADERS CAN DO

- **Work cooperatively with community organizations serving young immigrant and non-English speaking children and their families.** Organizations that work with immigrant and non-English speaking families can serve as a bridge to link families and early education programs. Representatives from the various community organizations should be included in the planning and implementation of early education programs.
- **Conduct a community needs assessment in cooperation with local immigrant organizations.** A needs assessment can help administrators identify the early care and education needs of immigrant and non-English speaking families and gaps in service provision and participation. Assessments may be conducted in cooperation with local immigrant service organizations. A component of this process includes identifying who is likely to need early education services. Data on the size, origin, and spoken languages are

available through the U.S. Census Bureau.

- **Develop and distribute community information packets to immigrant and non-English speaking families.** The packets may include, but are not limited to: an overview of city services and key benefits that families may be eligible for; a list of resources to help the families locate and use services for which they are eligible; and other early care and education-related information and documents. The materials and packets should be available in Spanish and other immigrant languages. When disseminating letters, materials, and other resources, you may consider utilizing a trusted source that has credibility and influence with the immigrant and non-English speaking community members.
- **Launch a campaign to recruit bilingual staff and increase training for staff working with young children.** Programs must be prepared to serve immigrant families from a diverse set of countries. Cities might consider recruiting bilingual staff as well as staff to work with linguistic and culturally diverse children and families. Staff should be familiar with diverse cultural norms among groups and trained in teaching strategies for second language acquisition.
- **Enhance and advertise educational opportunities for adult non-English speaking immigrants.** Learning basic skills and literacy in English is the major vehicle that integrates adult immigrants into American society and encourages participation in civic activities. Literate adults are more likely to participate in the workforce, participate in our democracy, and foster literacy in their children. Cities can advertise and promote participation for all types of education programs for children and adults.
- **Promote public/private partnerships to orient and assist immigrant non-English speaking children and their families.** In adapting to life in a new city, a process of integration takes place in local communities. City officials, schools, businesses, charities, foundations, religious institutions, ethnic associations, and other groups can play important roles in helping families adapt to American culture.
- **Call upon the faith community and social networks to support parents.** Some advocates suggest that the best way to reach parents is to create partnerships with faith-based leaders and social network-based organizations, which can facilitate outreach and help develop interest and engagement. Institutions of faith and other community organizations are often the best source of support for helping families overcome obstacles. The foundations of faith and supportive social networks may do more to engage immigrant and non-English speaking parents so that they are knowledgeable about the public school system and aware of the available educational options.
- **Develop leaders within the community to serve as ambassadors.** Often having the involvement of a well-respected leader with the same ethnic background can lend clout, credibility, and influence to outreach efforts. These leaders could be an honorary chair of an early education task force; can raise awareness of the importance of early care and education through speeches and appearances; may participate in advocacy efforts at the local and state level; or choose to help recruit additional community leaders. The ambassadors could serve as mentors for parents and their children who have recently

arrived in this country. Mentors can help foster self-esteem and make invaluable contributions to their overall success and development.

CITY EXAMPLES

The cities listed below are investing numerous and diverse resources in strengthening and supporting immigrant and non-English speaking families for a successful future. The integrated and coordinated services address basic needs, such as housing, clothes, and food. Other services address education, language, and employment assistance. These services equip families with the resources they need to succeed and give parents the opportunity to nurture and provide for their children. These efforts launched by municipal leaders lay the foundation for access to high quality early care and education for young children. Parents and children then have a chance to pursue their dreams and realize their fullest potential.

- **Nashville, Tennessee.** The Nashville New American Coalition is an innovative collaboration promoting two-way integration of foreign-born and native-born Nashville communities and institutions. Working together from all segments of Nashville life, the Coalition offers primary leadership for the region on creative design and coordination of integration processes. The city government, private sector, New American leadership, and social service agencies partner to redirect and integrate local resources with programs through a broad urban, regional, and human development project.

The Coalition promotes integration of the immigrant communities and local communities; provide coordination and technical assistance to local agencies that serve the refugee and legal immigrant populations; and monitors immigrant community needs by facilitating regularly scheduled needs assessment meetings. Through the Reception and Placement Program families secure housing, food, clothing and other basic needs. They also receive assistance in accessing information about early care and education, social services and health care, and employment services. There is collaboration with community partner agencies to better serve the youth population by address the needs of the youth through issues related to education, child care, and juvenile justice.

- **Portland, Oregon.** The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) will lead the Envisioning the Future for Portland's Immigrants and Refugees (EFPIR) project, which will conduct outreach to Portland's refugee and immigrant populations (including Asian Pacific Islanders, Africans, Slavic, Middle Easterners, and the Caribbean) to engage them in the City's Visioning Program. Refugee and immigrant community members, ethnic self-help organizations and their leaders, and refugee and immigrant advocacy coalitions take part in facilitated Visioning Workshops to conceptualize a vision for Portland's refugee and immigrant communities.

The Oregon Refugee Youth Services program provides services designed to establish a system for meeting the needs of youth in the tri-county area, including acculturation to early care and education programs, school services, academic support, parent orientation and support services, recreational services, and resource referral. Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Community School provides site management of school-based services such as extended day activities, family engagement/parent outreach, parent organizing for school success, individual, group and family support, community and business involvement, and service integration with English as a Second Language (ESL).

The Teen Parenting Services program provides case management, pre and postnatal care, referrals, support groups, and parent education to teen mothers. The Washington County School Mentorship provides students with mentors, leadership classes, parental involvement, activities, and tutoring opportunities.

- **Houston, Texas.** Former Mayor Lee P. Brown made a public announcement on May 19, 2001 to establish the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (MOIRA). MOIRA, the first agency of its kind in the city’s history, is dedicated to facilitating a smooth transition for immigrant and refugee communities living in the city of Houston. MOIRA’s policy is to encourage access by all persons residing in the city of Houston—regardless of nation of birth or current citizenship status— to the full benefits, opportunities, and services provided and administered by the city of Houston. Services on Immigration Assistance. Additionally, the agency advises the Mayor on immigration issues; analyzes federal and state legislation affecting immigrants; informs and educates the public about immigrant and immigration policies; acts as a liaison between immigrant communities and city government; advocates on behalf of constituents; and publishes user-friendly and multi-lingual literature to assist immigrants.

MOIRA encourages community-based organizations to participate in Houston’s political, economic, social, and cultural life to create a productive, cooperative, and prosperous environment for all Houstonians. Former Mayor Lee. P. Brown also established the Mayoral Advisory on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (MACIRA). MACIRA’s purpose is to assist MOIRA and the Mayor in formulating and implementing programs, services, policies and legislation that promote nonbiased and nondiscriminatory practices in the delivery of services and benefits for immigrants and refugees.

RESOURCES

The United States Census Bureau — The United States Census Bureau has a number of 3-page Census 2000 profiles that provide detailed demographic, social, economic, and housing information about foreign born populations of the United States. The Bureau intends to complete the list of profiles by the countries of origin on a flow basis. The term foreign born refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. For more information see: <http://www.census.gov/>.

The National Survey of America’s Families — The National Survey of America’s Families provides a comprehensive look at the well-being of children and non-elderly adults. It reveals sometimes-striking differences among the 13 states studied in depth. The survey provides quantitative measures of child, adult, and family well-being in America, with an emphasis on low-income families. For more information see: <http://www.urban.org/center/anf/nsaf.cfm>.

The Immigration Studies Program — The Immigration Studies Program at the Urban Institute addresses many of the critical issues that surround the integration of newcomers. For instance, immigrants are increasingly dispersed across the United States, settling in smaller cities, towns and rural areas. The program also studies how immigrants enter the U.S. labor market, at both the lower-skilled and higher-skilled levels, their contributions to the U.S. economy and tax base, and the composition of the U.S. child population. Research forms a central component of the Immigration Studies Program and distinguishes citizens from non-citizens, legal from undocumented immigrants, and refugees from other immigrants, allowing for more meaningful

analysis of impact of public policy on immigrant families. For more information see:
<http://www.urban.org/toolkit/issues/immigration.cfm#about>.

Useful websites:

The Future of Children— *The Future of Children* is a semi-annual publication of The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and The Brookings Institution that seeks to promote effective policies and programs for children by providing policymakers, service providers, and the media with timely, objective information based on the best available research. The journal offers comprehensive, cross-disciplinary articles focusing on issues related to children. Visit: <http://www.futureofchildren.org/index.htm>.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)— NCES, located within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences, is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education. The Condition of Education, an annual compendium report to Congress, describes the status and recent progress of education in the U.S., and analyzes key data measuring the health of education, important developments, and educational trends. See: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/AnnualReports/reports.asp?type=condition>.

Publications:

Demographic Changes and the Life Circumstances of Immigrant Families by Donald Hernandez, *Future of Children*, 14(2), 17-47.

Latinos in school: Some facts and findings. ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, February 2001. ERIC Online Digest, 162. Available at:
http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed449288.html.

Reaching All Children? Understanding Early Care and Education Participation Among Immigrant Families. For more information see:
http://www.clasp.org/publications/childcare_immigrantfamilies_brief.pdf

U.S. Immigration – Trends & Implications for Schools by Michael Fix and Jeffrey Passel. Presented at National Association for Bilingual Education, NCLB Implementation Institute, New Orleans, Louisiana. January 28-29, 2003.

Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies: Hispanics and the American Future by Marta Tienda and Faith Mitchell. National Research Council of the National Academies, 2006, The National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.

RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections is an effective tool for both policymakers and researchers that facilitates access to current research and findings, datasets, statistics, instruments, and other analytic tools related to child care and early childhood education. It is a partnership among the Child Care Bureau, the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research at the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, and us, the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University. It is a web-based, interactive database of research documents and public

use data sets for conducting secondary analyses on topics related to early care and education. *Research Connections* highlights current research; develops and disseminates materials designed to improve child care policy research; provides technical assistance to researchers and policy makers; synthesizes findings into policy research briefs; and facilitates collaboration in the field. To access this resource, please visit: <http://www.childcareresearch.org>.

Prevent Child Abuse America Conference May 21-24, 2006— The only national-level conference focused on preventing child abuse and neglect will be held in San Diego, May 21-24. The theme of the conference will be *America's Families: We All Play a Supporting Role*. This conference will bring together experts from the fields of child abuse prevention, home visitation, child development, family support, violence prevention and more to learn and discuss the latest practical techniques. For more information, please see: <http://www.preventchildabuse.org>.

Basic Facts about Low-Income Children, 2006— This resource from the National Center for Children in Poverty examines children in low-income families by age, family characteristics, trends, regions, and more. Visit: http://nccp.org/pub_bdf.html.

Congressional Scorecard on Children's Issues, from the Children's Defense Fund Action Council, January 2006. See how your members of Congress voted on key legislation affecting children and families. Available at: <http://www.cdfactioncouncil.org/scorecard2005.pdf>.

From the Beginning: Early Head Start Children, Families, Staff, and Programs in 2004, by Katie Hamm and Danielle Ewen. Issue Brief 7 in the Head Start Series. From the Center for Law and Social Policy, March 2006. This policy brief profiles the Early Head Start program using the latest data from the Program Information Reports that all Head Start grantees must submit to the U.S. Department of Health. Available at: http://www.clasp.org/publications/headstartbrief_7.pdf.

RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Early Intervention in Low Birth Weight Premature Infants: Results at 18 Years of Age for the Infant Health and Development Program, by McCormick MC, Brooks-Gunn J, Buka SL, Goldman J, Yu J, Salganik M, Scott DT, Bennett FC, Kay LL, Bernbaum JC, Bauer CR, Martin C, Woods ER, Martin A and Casey PH. From *Pediatrics*, March 2006. This report follows up an 18-year study of the Infant Health and Development Program (IHDP), and provides evidence of sustained, positive effects of early educational intervention on children's long-term outcomes. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided funding for the study. To read the study, please visit: <http://www.rwjf.org/research/researchdetail.jsp?id=2464&ia=144>.

The State of Preschool: 2005 State Preschool Yearbook, by W. Steven Barnett, Ph.D., Jason T. Hustedt, Ph.D., Kenneth B. Robin, Psy.D., and Karen L. Schulman, M.P.P. From The National Institute for Early Education Research. *The 2005 State Preschool Yearbook* is the third in a series of annual reports profiling state-funded prekindergarten programs in the United States. The 2005 Yearbook primarily focuses on state-funded prekindergarten during the 2004-2005 school year, and also presents data from 2003-2004. Visit: <http://nieer.org/yearbook/pdf/yearbook.pdf>.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems that Spend Smarter: Maximizing Resources to Serve Vulnerable Children, by Kay Johnson and Jane Knitzer. Issue Brief 1, Project Thrive. From the National Center for Children in Poverty, February 2006. This brief from the National Center for Children in Poverty looks at how some states are effectively designing comprehensive, family-focused identification and intervention efforts. Visit: http://nccp.org/media/pti06a_text.pdf. (From Connect for Kids Weekly, March 6, 2006).

Pre-K and Politics: A Closer Look, from Pre-K Now. Using its “political barometer,” Pre-K Now examines the climate in the states for pre-k programs, and states’ diverse approaches to helping more children get ready to learn. This concise report examines the good, the not-so-good, and the slow-to-move state efforts, and surveys political support, funding, advocacy, business and civic leadership, media coverage, and other areas of development. (From Connect for Kids Weekly, March 6, 2006).

OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWS

- **Senate Acts on 2007 Budget.** The Senate recently passed the fiscal year 2007 budget, which included cuts to many programs for kids and families. It also adopted an amendment that added \$7 billion to restore funding for education, nutrition, and social service programs like Head Start, child care, and after-school programs. According to the Coalition on Human Needs, the budget brings many programs back to fiscal year 2005 spending levels. For more information, see the press release from the National Education Association, which is available online at: <http://www.nea.org/newsreleases/2006/nr060317b.html>. *Source: Connect for Kids Weekly.*
- **Planning Webinars announced by Cover the Uninsured Week.** Cover the Uninsured week is hosting interactive planning webinars for individuals interested in holding Cover the Uninsured Week events in their communities. The webinars will include tips on when and where to hold events, build interest, and get media coverage. An Event Planning Webinar is scheduled for March 29 at 2:00 pm EST and a Media Outreach Webinar will be held on April 11 at 2:00 pm EST. Cover the Uninsured Week, a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an annual event that seeks to bring communities together to tell Congress that health coverage for the nearly 46 million uninsured Americans—including more than 8 million children—should be their top priority. During May 1-7, 2006, thousands of issue-related activities will take place in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. To learn more about Cover the Uninsured week, visit: <http://covertheuninsured.org/>. For more information and to RSVP for a webinar, email Cameo Kaisler at cameo.kaisler@gmb.com.
- **Week of the Young Child Celebrates New Theme for 2006: Building Better Futures for All Children.** Week of the Young Child, to be held April 2-8 by early childhood educators, advocates, parents and community partners, is an annual celebration focusing public attention on the needs of young children and their families and recognizing the early childhood services that meet those needs. Sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Week of the Young Child celebrations are organized and coordinated by regional, state, and local NAEYC affiliates, and by individual early childhood programs and community groups serving young children and families. To learn more or find out how you can organize your own event, visit: www.naeyc.org/about/woyc/.