

HSSCO ANNUAL STATE PROFILE REPORT

Activities for March – May, 2007

Arkansas

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A. Briefly describe your accomplishments in the following areas. Where possible, indicate the goals from your work plan and the desired and actual outcomes.

- 1. *Help build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services for all low-income children.***

Include a description of how you are supporting Head Start-child care-pre-kindergarten collaborations at the local level and Head Start- pre-kindergarten collaborations at the state and local levels.

Continuation of involvement in Arkansas Legislative Session as it related to sharing of information regarding Arkansas Head Start programs and the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success collaborative efforts, issues and concerns. Arkansas Legislature approved additional state general revenue for state-funded pre-k program, Arkansas Better Chance for School Success, bringing the total to \$100 million.

Routine meetings with Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education to discuss collaborative issues relating to Arkansas Better Chance for School Success and local Head Start programs.

Continued work with Arkansas Head Start Association in enhancement of collaborative efforts with Arkansas Better Chance for School Success. Met locally with Head Start, Community Action Agency, and ABC providers in southeast Arkansas to promote and enhance effective collaborative strategies.

Participated in Pre-K Now Conference call "Leadership Matters: Governor's Pre-K Proposals" on April 25th. Kathryn Hazelett, Policy Director for Governor Mike Beebe, was a presenter on the conference call and discussed Arkansas Better Chance for School Success. She mentioned ongoing collaborative efforts between state pre-k and Head Start in Arkansas.

Working in partnership with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Invest Early in Education (a coalition of early childhood professionals, parents and other individuals who led the campaign to make high quality preschool an important part of education in Arkansas and secured additional funding for the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success programs) in sponsoring roundtable discussions across the state. These forums are scheduled for June and will provide an opportunity for Head Start, Community Action Agencies, ABC providers, and other early childhood programs to take an objective look at the current status of early education in the community and link all stakeholders who have an interest in the success of our youngest citizens.

Participated in conference calls with NHTSA and Office of Head Start discussing pre-k partnerships, blended funding and other issues. Calls held on March 7th and April 12th.

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

- ***Health Care***

Continued leadership role in collaborative effort with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Behavioral Health Services on Arkansas Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative. Participation in monthly conference calls with sponsoring organizations, pilot sites and evaluation team.

Participated in Arkansas Oral Health Coalition planning retreat held on March 19th.

Participated in Office of Head Start conference call on March 5th to discuss upcoming Oral Health Webinars, focusing on collaborative efforts occurring throughout the nation between Head Start programs and oral health providers. Participated in OHS Oral Health Webinar on May 9th for Region 6.

Volunteered at first Arkansas Mission of Mercy, held in Little Rock on May 18th-19th which provided 1,542 patients in desperate need of dental services in excess of \$630,000 in donated dental care. There were 866 fillings and 2,774 teeth extracted. 580 volunteers, including 140 dentists, 45 dental hygienist, 143 dental assistants, 16 pharmacists, 39 nurses, and 197 support staff provided support for the ArMOM, which was sponsored by Arkansas State Dental Association and Delta Dental of Arkansas. The Arkansas Oral Health Coalition and the Arkansas Homeless Coalition were active volunteers in this effort.

Routine participation in monthly CASSP Coordinating Council meetings and Arkansas Oral Health Coalition meetings.

Attended Mental Health Cluster Training for Arkansas Head Start programs on March 7th.

Secured presenter for May Head Start directors and staff classes on Sickle Cell awareness; distribution of fluoride brochures and posters from Arkansas Office of Oral Health to local Head Start programs.

- ***Welfare***

Participated in Alliance conference call with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Division of Children & Family Services on March 15th. Purpose of the call was to discuss collaborative efforts between child welfare and child care organizations.

- ***Childcare***

Strengthening Families luncheon held at Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office on March 7th; participated in Strengthening Families meeting held at Cox Creative Center on same day.

Continue involvement with Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Initiative; participated in Social Emotional/Medical Homes committee meeting on April 27th.

Working with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Strengthening Families Arkansas, in identifying Head Start partners in the State Partnerships for Prevention Project, a Zero to Three Initiative to strengthen states' child abuse and neglect prevention initiatives, focusing on supporting the capacity of child care providers to help prevent child maltreatment in families with very young children.

Participated in Arkansas Professional Development Registry meeting on March 26th to discuss proposed changes in registry process for child care workers.

- **Education**

Meeting with Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, Department of Education, and Governor's Office staff to discuss possible submission of National Governor's Association Early Childhood Summit grant proposal. Participated in NGA bidders conference call on March 28th. After much discussion, decision was made to not apply at this time.

Attended Education Cluster Training for Arkansas Head Start programs held on April 24th.

- **Community Services**

Hosted, in coordination with Arkansas Coalition for Economic Security, a Beans & Cornbread Reception for Arkansas legislators held on March 5th. Numerous state legislators and constitutional officers attended, including Governor Mike Beebe and Lieutenant Governor Bill Halter.

Facilitating Mental Health Protocol Committee for Arkansas Crisis Response Team (AR-CRT): meeting held on March 1st. Preliminary report given at statewide training held at Criminal Justice Institute in Little Rock on March 9th. Final recommendations to be presented to Board of Directors in the summer. Also serving as Co-Chair of the Education & Training Committee for AR-CRT.

Collaborating partner for Arkansas Governor's Family Friendly Employer Award Luncheon held on April 5th; sponsored and funded by DHHS, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education. The Arkansas Governor's Family Friendly Employer Initiative recognizes Arkansas employers for establishing and providing resources that support employees in balancing the needs of both work and family. Child Development, Inc., a Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant & Seasonal Head Start program, was a Semi-Finalist for the 2007 Award recognition.

Member of Arkansas Coalition for Children of Incarcerated Parents; meeting held on March 20th.

Participated in crisis call-out on March 12th; debriefing held on March 22nd.

- **Family Literacy Services**

Continuing work with education partners in the area of family literacy.

- **Services to Children with Disabilities**

Co-sponsorship of Welcome the Children "Celebrating Cultural Harmony" second annual conference held in North Little Rock on May 2nd-4th. The focus of the conference was to enhance the understanding of cultural issues, teach strategies to support Latino children and make appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays.

Continued work with partners in ECHO (Early Childhood Hearing Outreach) project, through Arkansas Children's Hospital, in coordination with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management, Utah State University. Training held for Region 6 TA Specialists in Little Rock on May 30th-31st.

Participated in Disability conference call with Region 6 Disability Specialist and Arkansas Head Start and Early Head Start programs on April 3rd.

- **Services to Homeless Children and Families**

Serving on Arkansas Homeless Coalition and Arkansas Homeless Policy Academy. Attend monthly meetings of Homeless Coalition and quarterly meetings of Homeless Policy Academy. Member of Action Task Force and Legislative Committee for Arkansas Homeless Coalition. Beginning initial plans for Homeless Conference tentatively scheduled for October 2007.

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

Continued service on Arkansas System of Care Stakeholders Planning Committee. HB 2358 passed the state legislature and has been signed into law in an effort to reform children's mental health services in Arkansas. Governor Mike Beebe held a press conference on March 21st, supporting the legislative effort and announcing First Lady Ginger Beebe's upcoming tour of the state to visit with families of children with mental illness. Member of Medicaid workgroup and Special Language sub-committee to discuss proposed changes in Medicaid to assist in the delivery of appropriate services to children and families in need of mental health intervention and treatment.

Served on panel "Pre-K Effects on Rural Children's Education in Arkansas" at 2007 Arkansas Rural Development Conference held in Hot Springs on May 22nd-24th. Panel members included Head Start State Collaboration Director; Tonya Russell, Director, Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education; Terrie Baker, Early Childhood Advocate; Jimmy Cunningham, Superintendent, Danville Schools; State Representative Leroy Dangeau; and Mark Shriver, Save the Children, Washington DC.

Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Director and Arkansas Head Start program directors and staff participated in the review of Arkansas Better Chance for School Success grant applications (state-funded pre-k program).

B. Briefly discuss the following aspects of your work:

1. Describe how you have supported and collaborated with the Regional Office on national and regional priorities (e.g. Fatherhood, Faith-Based and Community, Healthy Marriage, Youth and Rural Initiatives and TA Network, professional development, Community Action Agencies, State Head Start Association, and other activities.

Signatures obtained for updated MOU agreement among Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Community Services and Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education, and the Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office. Copies of all MOU agreements can be found on the Arkansas Head Start Association/State Collaboration website at www.arheadstart.org

Meeting held on May 1st among Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office, Arkansas Head Start Association, Arkansas Community Action Agencies Association, Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services Division of Child Care & Early Childhood Education and Office of Community Services to discuss ongoing priorities and upcoming events.

Participated in monthly Region 6 Head Start State Collaboration Directors conference calls with Regional Office on March 13th, April 3rd, and May 8th.

Attended Arkansas Head Start directors and staff classes on March 14th and May 16th, as well as ongoing and active involvement with Arkansas Institute planning committees working on Annual Head Start Institute to be held in Batesville on July 16th-18th. Attended Arkansas Head Start Association Board of Directors meetings on March 15th and May 17th. Participated in conference call with AHSA Executive Committee on April 24th.

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

Reviewed proposed IM for Head Start Emergency Preparedness; comments submitted to Office of Head Start.

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

The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration and the Arkansas Commission of Child Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence sponsored a forum on “Endangered Children in Arkansas” on May 15th in Russellville. Beth Stanford, Director of Education for the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault, presented information about the Oklahoma Head Start Domestic Violence Initiative curriculum, which is a collaborative delivery model; Cindy Stokes provided information on work being done in Arkansas to assist local communities to effectively and efficiently identify and protect children endangered by meth and other drugs; and Sherry Williamson, gave an update on new child abuse legislation in Arkansas, as well as an overview of the dynamics of child abuse and mandated reporting.

Participated and hosted Arkansas Kids Count Day at the Capitol on March 8th. Participated in Kids Count Steering Committee meeting on April 11th for finalize plans for Arkansas Kids Count Post-Legislative conference held in Little Rock on May 17th. Assisted in presentation of awards to state legislators.

Evaluation survey disseminated by independent evaluator on previous year’s grant activities for Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office. Report presented to Arkansas Head Start Directors and AHSA Board at May meetings. Also disseminated to state level partners in May.

Participated in NHSA webinar on Health & Physical Fitness on May 22nd.

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

Serve on Welcome the Children Advisory Committee; the project is funded by the Division of Child Care & Early Childhood education and administered by Partners for Inclusive Communities. Using research-based training materials, the primary goal is to provide training and technical assistance to help early childhood providers, including Head Start, and other educators in understanding cultural issues, learning strategies to support Latino children, and making appropriate referrals of children who exhibit possible developmental delays. Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office was a contributing sponsor of the second annual conference held May 2nd-4th, in North Little Rock.

D. How do your responses to the questions above impact your approved work plan for the current or coming year?

The Arkansas Head Start State Collaboration Office is pleased with progress made during the first quarter of our current grant period. We continue to spend much time in supporting and enhancing local collaborative efforts between Head Start and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success, the state-funded pre-k program for 3 and 4 year old children from families at 200% or below of the Federal poverty level.