

# Delaware Early Childhood Council

## 2009 Annual Report



Ready Families +



Ready Early Care  
& Education +



Ready Communities +



Ready Schools =

Ready  
Children



Report of the Governor, Legislature and  
Interagency Resource Management Committee



December 2009

Dear Friends of Delaware's Children:

On behalf of the all the people who support and participate in the work of the Delaware Early Childhood Council, I am pleased to present this 2009 report that begins with a look to the future with the Council's observations and recommendations on universal preschool.

The Council undertook this study because of the current, and welcomed, national interest in our children's education. For the first time in the existence of the Council both the federal and state governments are actively discussing what happens from birth to age five and the impact a good beginning has on a child's future success in the classroom and in life. While current economic constraints preclude systemic initiatives like universal preschool, the Council offers this position paper to help guide future actions when there is the public will and financial resources to undertake such a bold vision.

This 2009 report also is an opportunity to reflect on the alliances that have formed over the past eight years since **Early Success** was created during Governor Carper's administration. The original **Early Success** was a call to action to improve child care throughout the state, including, forming an early childhood advisory council in 2002 to monitor progress. Delaware was ahead of its time. The 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act now requires that all states form such an advisory group.

Delaware Stars for Early Success and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood™ scholarships are successful programs that began during the Council's early years. At the same time, the United Way of Delaware formed a Success By Six committee that has joined forces with the Council and other organizations throughout the state to promote and help fund early childhood initiatives.

In 2006 **Early Success** was rewritten and expanded to reflect the growing understanding that improving child care was just one piece of what is needed to have children ready for school. **Early Success: Delaware Plan for Early Childhood** exemplifies the state's unique ability to engage interested stakeholders from all parts of the state around common goals.

2009, Governor Markel's first year in office, brings a new Administration with a new and invigorated commitment to young children. Over the past six months, Lieutenant Governor Matt Denn and Connie Bond Stewart, CEO of PNC Bank, have Chaired a review of Delaware's early childhood policies, a crucial next step in moving **Early Success** forward. Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan and her associates from Columbia Teachers College have led the process, called POLICY MATTERS. People from every part of the state - including providers, educators, legislators, community leaders, state administrators, and others –



have assisted in a review and assessment of every state policy governing early childhood. A full report on this work, with specific recommendations, will be completed in early 2010.

Last spring at the Kid's Count meeting, Representative Terry Schooley said, "Children make up 25% of Delaware's population, but are 100% of our future." The Council has made progress over the past eight years because so many people in Delaware care so deeply about our state's children and their future. It gives me great pleasure to handover the leadership of this wonderful organization to someone who has a true passion for and understanding of the complexities of early childhood, Dr. Daniel Rich. I have every confidence that Dan's leadership will bring new dimensions to this work, which has so enriched my life.

In closing I want to particularly acknowledge the Early Childhood Development and Learning Work Group at the Department of Education, under the leadership of Jim Lesko, and Janet Carter and Verna Thompson in the Office of Early Childhood who have worked so hard in support of the Delaware Early Childhood Council...and my sincere thanks to all the people who have supported me and our work.

Sincerely,

Ann D. Wick



## Delaware Early Childhood Council

### 2009 Report to the Governor, Legislature, and Interagency Resource Management Committee

#### Our Vision

Delaware's Most Valuable Resource...

Young children – eager to learn, ready to succeed

By the year 2015, Delaware will have:

- **Ready children:** children who are physically and emotionally healthy with access to high quality early learning experiences
- **Ready families:** families with the knowledge and resources needed to successfully support their child's learning
- **Ready early care and education programs:** programs that safeguard and ensure the growth, development, and learning of children; staffed by teachers who are well prepared, well compensated, and well supported
- **Ready communities:** communities that embrace their role in supporting young children and their families
- **Ready schools:** schools that value and build upon the early learning experiences of children

#### Our Mission

The mission of the Delaware Early Childhood Council is:

To promote the highest quality comprehensive early learning system for Delaware's young children and their families by providing leadership and advocacy to guide the system's development.



## Recommendations for 2010

This year the focus of the Council and its partners on the Policy Matters Committee has been increasing the alignment of Delaware Early Childhood Plan, Early Success, with public policy and funding. To that end the Council partnered with the Delaware Business Roundtable Education Committee and other early childhood stakeholders to undertake an early childhood policy audit and fiscal mapping initiatives.

To advance the alignment of planning, policy and funding, the Markell-Denn Administration in concert with Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan at Columbia University and The Finance Project undertook the Policy Matters and fiscal mapping efforts. A committee lead by Lt. Governor Matt Denn and Connie Bond-Stuart, President of PNC Bank Delaware, was formed to lead the joint efforts. This has been a tremendous opportunity for the state to gather national insight on Delaware's early childhood system and establish a clear, long-term vision and short-term actionable strategies for improvement.

The Policy Matters Committee has prioritized three short term actionable strategies:

- Consolidating early childhood services within the Department of Education
- Providing full financing of Delaware Stars to encourage participation by all programs with strong consideration of tiered reimbursement as a mechanism
- Building a stronger early childhood accountability system including integrated data systems

The Policy Matters and Fiscal Mapping initiatives continue into 2010. The reports of both projects will impact the efforts of the Council in 2010.



**UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL POSITION PAPER  
Delaware Early Childhood Council - August 2009**

**THE NEW REALITY**

The world is not what it was when we were children. Forty years ago, less than a quarter of children under age five were in out of home care, today it is over 65%. Early care and education programs have become critically important places where many first learning experiences occur. For many children, child care is where the foundations of learning are developed, and high quality child care in the first years of life is what makes it possible for many children to successfully move on to elementary school.

Further more, the *information age* when learning facts sufficed is behind us. We have entered the *knowledge age* where information doubles every 2.5 years. The work force of 2039, which is in our schools today, needs to learn how to combine information in innovative ways and to collaborate with enterprises around the world. If America is to retain its economic pre-eminence we must change our educational system and recognize the crucial nature of early education for our national security and future economic productivity. As C. Carlson, head of SRI International said, "Innovation is now the only path to growth, prosperity, environmental sustainability and national security for America. But it is also an incredibly competitive world." We also know that economists estimate that for every dollar spent on early education, seven to seventeen dollars is saved because children who receive quality early education are more likely to complete high school, to forestall child bearing and even to avoid incarceration. Yet America continues to lag behind other nations in preparing our young citizens to succeed in school. This shows up in a shameful high school graduation rate of only 68%, with members of minority groups doing considerably worse than this average. But there is something we can do. *We can begin to prepare our children for school earlier by providing them with high quality early education.* We can begin to help children learn what they will need for their own economic well being and ours nation's.

Both President Obama and Governor Markel have highlighted quality early education as a priority. The Delaware Early Childhood Council and its partners are pleased that early childhood has become the focus of attention both nationally and



in our state. Making early learning a priority reflects the mounting evidence that the first years of a child's life have a profound effect on their later development and outcomes as adults.

## **THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF EARLY EDUCATION**

Programming for children from birth to age five operates under a host of names and in a variety of settings. Preschool is often considered programming for children aged three to five. However, preschool is usually offered as part day/part year and does not necessarily meet the needs of parents who work. Nor does it meet children's needs. Children are often shuffled from caretaker to caretaker many of whom are inadequately trained and fail to provide stimulating programming. Indeed, with 62% of women with children under three in the work force, and a clear body of research that shows the impact quality child care has on young children's growth and development, it is essential that we provide quality preschool experiences for Delaware's children.

This position paper on universal preschool presents a proposal for how public and private programs can together offer appropriate early learning opportunities in the year before a child enters kindergarten, while also supporting children in the critical first four years of life. We can no longer wait for others to begin this task; our nation's future depends upon the kind of early education we provide for our children.

## **CRITERIA FOR A QUALITY PRESCHOOL SYSTEM**

- Parents should be able to select programs that fit the child's needs as well as the family's work/home-life needs
- Curricula should be grounded in evidence based best practices which include, among other things, having a clearly articulated set of learning goals consistent with Delaware's Early Learning Standards and class room exercises based on experiential learning not rote skills
- Children should have the opportunity to attend programs that have cultural, racial and socio-economic diversity
- Quality programs must be accessible



- Funding for preschool programs should not be at the expense of quality birth through four and after-school programs

### **MEETING THE VARIED NEEDS OF FAMILIES**

Preschool should not be mandatory and should be provided in a variety of settings. Some parents may not choose to enroll their children in preschool. Other parents may want part day/part year programs for their children. For those parents who want and/or need full day/full year programs, a variety of options should be included in Delaware's preschool planning. High quality universal preschool opportunities should not be limited to families who qualify for programs due to their economic status nor should they be only accessible to families who can afford enrichment and enhanced learning opportunities for their children. If it is to be universal, it must be for all children.

### **EXPERIENTIAL, PLAY-BASED LEARNING**

In numerous publications about what works best in early education, it is clear that curricula in which children are active learners creates life long learners who can shift and adapt as the economic winds change. Galinsky (2005), after reviewing a number of preschool programs concluded that, "High quality preschool programs are characterized by playful environments in which children have strong relationships with their caregivers and are engaged in active learning." This is true for all children – rich or poor, urban or rural. All children need quality early childhood education that stresses engagement and learning that feels like play. We must insure that preschool is this kind of environment.

In *A Mandate for Playful Learning in Preschool*, Drs. Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, Berk, and Singer make a case against what they call a movement toward "didactic learning" in preschool. They say that young children learn best when learning combines play and teacher led activities that encourage social interactions, listening skills, role playing, and imagination. In the authors' words, preschool children learn best:

*When information is embedded in meaningful contexts that relate to their everyday lives rather than artificial contexts that foster rote learning.*

Research on full day kindergartens in Delaware found that programs with high proportions of small group instruction and less whole group, passive learning were



most effective in building academic achievement - especially for children from low income families.

### **INCLUSIVE, NOT EXCLUSIVE, PROGRAMS**

Community based, family centered, and culturally inclusive preschool experiences offer children from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds opportunities to learn with and from each other. Children are prepared for future life experiences when they play and learn in multi-cultural environments. Therefore, it is important that children from families who do not qualify for the state's reimbursement for child care be included in the state's universal preschool plans. We need to recognize that many families who live above 200% of poverty do not have access to affordable quality-learning opportunities for their children.

### **PARENTS AND TEACHERS AS PARTNERS**

Parents must be encouraged to participate in their child's preschool experience. In planning for universal preschool, it is important to incorporate opportunities for parents and teachers to interact in order to foster communication and trusting relationships that will benefit the children. Particularly in rural areas, many low-income families face difficult transportation issues. Accessibility and transportation issues need to be included in the planning process. Preschool can also provide parents of young children opportunities to gain parenting skills and to learn from each other.

### **FUNDING A COMPREHENSIVE EARLY EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Since its inception in 2002, the Delaware Early Childhood Council has focused on building a comprehensive birth to five and after-school system for all of Delaware's children. The Council feels that it is critical that the state not focus its resources just on the year or two prior to kindergarten. If Delaware institutes universal preschool:

- Birth through age three child care needs increased funding as well. Infant and toddler programs are labor intensive and expensive. From birth to age three, children acquire basic skills - color, number, and letter recognition, social skills and vocabulary - that are the foundation for later school success.



- After-school programs currently receive 42% of the state's Purchase of Care dollars. Funding for these programs must be increased as well so that working parents know their children are in safe nurturing environments when school is closed.

### **DECC'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL IN DELAWARE**

The Delaware Early Childhood Council and its partners recommend a universal preschool system that will provide parents a variety of choices in public and private settings. To be considered a Delaware preschool provider eligible for increased funding, public schools, *Head Start*, *ECAP*, community preschools and child care programs should meet the Early Learning Standards established by the Department of Education and be participants in *Delaware Stars for Early Success*. Preschool teachers must have at least an Associates Degree, and preferably a Bachelors Degree, in early education.

Child care programs engaged in Delaware Stars and Charter Schools would be able to apply to the Department of Education for designation as a Delaware Preschool site.

We further suggest that the State's reimbursement for preschool be modeled on Delaware's elementary school reimbursement rates. Reimbursements should be:

- Based on what it costs to send a child to a publicly funded educational institution.
- A contractual agreement between the family and the Department of Health and Social Services that allows families to be authorized for a full year of preschool.

### **DELAWARE'S OPPORTUNITY: WORLD CLASS UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL**

Both President Obama and Governor Markell have stated the importance of collaboration between the public schools and private preschools in addressing kindergarten readiness. Expanding and improving existing public and private preschool programs will allow financial resources to be expended where they will have the greatest impact on an individual child's learning opportunities. It will



require careful planning and attention to research on what constitutes quality preschool education.

With the new national focus on the importance of early learning, Delaware has an unprecedented opportunity to create innovative, world-class preschool experiences for its children. We need to build on initiatives currently underway at the Department of Education, the Institute for Early Childhood at the University of Delaware, Delaware First, and Delaware Stars. If Delaware is going to realize Vision 2015's goal of having the best education system in the nation, we must provide developmentally appropriate programs for our preschool aged children. The odds of ever catching up are against children who begin kindergarten cognitively behind. By increasing children's readiness for kindergarten and first grade, we can eliminate the achievement gap that so many now experience when they enter school.



## Executive Summary of the DE ECE 2010 Report

### BIRTH TO THREE EARLY INTERVENTION

This year the Birth to Three Early Intervention System developed an **Inclusion Brochure and Inclusion Toolkit** as companion materials to the **Guide to Promoting Inclusion in Early Care and Education**. These materials offer suggestions for activities and resources for including children with disabilities in early care and education programs.

With funds provided by the Birth to Three Early Intervention System (DHSS) and in partnership with the University of Delaware, the **Growing Together Portfolio** is distributed to parents of babies born in Delaware and surrounding hospitals, as well as through the Home Visiting Program.

Through ARRA funds, Birth to Three is supporting the work of **The Delaware Family Voices Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F)** in order to recruit, train and mentor parents of young children with special health care needs (CSHCN) for the purpose of their participation on various councils and advisory boards with a focus on birth to five related interests.

### COALITION FOR EARLY LEARNING

Collaborative stakeholders formalized a member-supported governance structure to be launched in early 2010 that will engage early childhood providers and other interested parties in articulating shared advocacy and public will goals and implementing coordinated strategies for reaching those goals.

### DELAWARE AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

Our work continues on building bridges that link schools, communities, and families through policy development and partnership engagement with other agencies. These links are the key to supporting the whole child, from early care and education programs, through school, to high quality after school and summer programs.

The Alliance has involved itself in many key efforts over the last year that address the common moral, social and educational concerns of Delaware's citizenry, not the least of which were the Governor's Dropout Prevention Summit, the creation and delivery of "Delaware Competencies for School-Age Professionals" and the 60 hour Professional Development curriculum "Moving Youth Ahead in School-Age Programs."



## **DELAWARE CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRICS**

The Developmental Comprehensive Screening Project is a statewide initiative to improve child outcomes, improve referral, comprehensive care, and be culturally sensitive. It is a one year project awarded to the American Academy of Pediatrics-Delaware Chapter by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware's *Blue Prints for the Community*. The project is implemented at four practices (2 in Sussex, 1 in Kent and 1 in New Castle) including 9 physicians, 3 physician assistants, and 5 nurse practitioners.

### **Objectives:**

- Engage the parent in the developmental screening process and provide educational and early intervention service resources. The Parent Resource Center (PRC) will contain resources for children birth to age 5.
- Enhance the primary care provider's ability to complete regular, consistent and time-efficient developmental screenings within select well-child visits using a validated developmental screening tool.
- Establish and report on essential statewide data for developmental screening for children, birth to age 5 to promote early identification and enhanced intervention services in the community including an evaluative study to include baseline data, projected outcomes, and actual outcomes of the project.

## **DIVISION OF CHILD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

DCMHS provided 1785 hours of training in positive behavior management for 390 Delaware early childhood care provider staff who participated in workshops sponsored by DCMHS in August and September, 2009. These workshops were made available by DCMHS to early childhood provider staff at no cost.

DCMHS increased access to mental health treatment for young (pre-school) children in 2009. Forty-four (44) clinicians in Delaware were trained by DCMHS to use Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, an evidence-based mental health treatment designed to reduce problem behaviors and increase pro-social behaviors for children aged 2-5 years with very challenging, disruptive behaviors.

DCMHS will contract for 3.5 Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to deliver ECMHC services at no cost to Delaware pre-school settings and early childhood education centers.



Nearly 40 parents/caregivers received effective, evidence-based parent training that is manualized and research-demonstrated to be effective in reducing child maltreatment (abuse and neglect).

### **DELAWARE STARS FOR EARLY SUCCESS**

In 2009, Delaware Stars for Early Success enrolled 79 licensed child care centers (including 9 Head Start programs) and 15 family and large family child care home providers. This brings the total number of programs enrolled to 128 child care centers and 30 family child care providers.

### **EMOTIONAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

The group's mission is to support the emotional well being of young children and their families in Delaware through a System of Care based on the *Emotional Wellness Framework (2003)*. When it is completed, this system will offer a comprehensive spectrum of services, which are organized into a coordinated network across funding and administrative jurisdictions to meet the needs of young children and their families. The emotional wellness system will be aligned with *Early Success* and involve families, public, and private partnerships in a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach to build children's social emotional competencies.

### **NEMOUR HEALTH AND PREVENTION SERVICES**

*READY CHILDREN:* Collaboration with the Delaware Child and Adult Care Food Program to improve state guidelines on quality nutritional standards for children in early childhood environments; Collaboration with the Division of Public Health and the American Academy of Pediatrics to improve developmental screening in primary care practices statewide.

*READY FAMILIES:* Collaboration with various public and private partners to implement a universal parent education model.

*READY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:* Implementation support in collaboration with public and private partners to support improved quality early childhood professional development, specifically child health domains.

*READY COMMUNITIES:* Advocacy collaboration with various public and private partners to ensure the implementation of Early Success: Delaware's Plan for Early Childhood.



## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

In 2009, **The Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood** at the University of Delaware initiated the system for quality assurance for professional development. This effort includes a system for certification and ongoing monitoring of instructors for professional development, a system for approval of the content for professional development offered to the early childhood field and a certification process for providers of technical assistance.

The Institute also launched a website this year. Providers will be able to access information and dates for professional development opportunities and register online, instructors and curriculum developers will be able to find forms and support information on the website and families will be able to find out more about early childhood services and research.

## **SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS DE**

SVPDE invested financially and with Partners' involvement in the quality improvements and overall growth of the following early learning centers: Kingswood Community Center, the Latin American Community Center, Easy Side Charter School, West Center City Early Learning Center, and Mom's House Wilmington. SVPDE also supported state-wide programs such as T.E.A.C.H. and Delaware STARS and assisted in integrating these programs into the early learning centers in which we are engaged.

## **SUCCESS BY SIX™**

Success By 6™ is partnering with the Department of Education to give leadership to Emotional Wellness Committee of the Delaware Early Childhood Council. The work of this committee is focused on the development of a comprehensive system that will support the emotional wellness of young children.

In 2009 Success By 6™ continued its support of Delaware Stars by leading the coordination of private resource development and serving as fiscal agent for private funds. Success By 6™ also convened stakeholders to begin development of a two-phase campaign: Phase 1 is a public will campaign about the early years as a critical foundation for future school and life successes; Phase 2 will be a consumer education campaign specifically related to Delaware Stars.

**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®**

In July 2009 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) completed our fifth year of the program. During that time T.E.A.C.H. has awarded 392 scholarships. These continuing education opportunities have resulted in increased wages and improved job retention for those participating in the program. 18 individuals have obtained degrees through T.E.A.C.H. scholarships. T.E.A.C.H. is administered in Delaware by The Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children.

**VISION 2015**

One of the six fundamental components of Vision 2015 is high-quality early childhood education, especially for those with the greatest need. To pursue this goal, Vision 2015 helped launch in 2009 the new “Policy Matters” process, in partnership with the Delaware Early Childhood Council, Lt. Governor Denn, Connie Bond Stewart of the business community, and other early childhood education advocates. Policy Matters is led by Sharon Lynn Kagan, Ed.D., of Columbia University, a nationally recognized leader in early childhood education. The initiative will establish a clear vision and actionable strategies for improvements to early childhood education by 2010. In parallel, Vision 2015 is supporting a fiscal mapping initiative by The Finance Project to map and analyze the financial resources that the state devotes to early childhood services. This information will be used by the Policy Matters Committee as it develops its recommendations. Vision 2015 also continued its support for the Delaware Stars for Early Success program.



**Delaware Early Childhood Council  
2009 Meeting Topics and Presenters**

**January 9, 2009**

- Early Literacy Program – Carol Vukelich, Martha Buell, Myae Han
- Help Me Grow Replication (Commonwealth Grant) – Norma Everett, Doug Tynan

**February 13, 2009**

- Kindergarten Readiness Survey & Checklist – Jim Lesko
- Federal Stimulus Legislation – Topics: Head Start & Early Head Start, Child Care Development Fund, Part C of IDEA, Part B of IDEA, Title I Education

**March 13, 2009**

- Preschool Early Learning Foundations – Focus Group

**April 3, 2009**

- Emotional Wellness Committee Report – Janet Umble, Verna Thompson
- Latest Full-Day Kindergarten Study – Martha Buell
- EIEIO request to become formal committee of the Council – Janet Cornwell
- Project LAUNCH grant opportunity – Nancy Widdoes, Helen Arthur

**May 8, 2009**

- Professional Development Committee Report – Kathy Wilson, Martha Buell
- Review and discussion of the Preschool Position Paper

**June 12, 2009**

- Presentations from the Partners in Excellence Pilot Sites
- Presentation of Delaware B.E.S.T. program – Nancy Widdoes, Mary Moor

**August 14, 2009**

- Presentation from the Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood
- Update on Policy Matters and Fiscal Mapping Projects
- Federal application requirements for Early Childhood Councils

**September 17, 2009**

- Presentation on Education Options for Children with Hearing Impairments – Julie Johnson, Nick Fina
- Finalize Preschool position paper, update on Policy Matters and Fiscal Mapping Projects

**November 13, 2009**

- Overview of Early Childhood Advisory Councils application requirements – Verna Thompson, April Hill-Addison

**December 11, 2009**

- Secretary Lillian Lowery, Department of Education
- Meeting and sharing with Dan Rich, Incoming Chair
- Delaware Stars End-of-Year Update

***More than forty interested persons participated in the Delaware Early Childhood Council 2009 meetings. The Council welcomes and encourages broad community representation at all meetings and appreciates the participation of those who attended.***



## 2009 REPORTS FROM PARTNER COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS

### BIRTH TO THREE EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Management Services

Birth to Three is a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system that provides early intervention services and supports for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays and their families.

#### Ready Children Objective I.5.

*"Each child will be provided the opportunity to learn as outlined in the Delaware Early Learning Foundations. These opportunities will be developmentally appropriate and individualized for each child."*

This year the Birth to Three Early Intervention System developed an **Inclusion Brochure and Inclusion Toolkit** as companion materials to the **Guide to Promoting Inclusion in Early Care and Education**. These materials offer suggestions for activities and resources for including children with disabilities in early care and education programs. Copies are available through the Birth to Three website. These materials are used in conjunction with the more comprehensive Guide to the Growing Together Portfolio for Early Care and Education, whose purpose is to assist early care and education providers in identifying children who may have developmental delays, and offering resources and information to early care and education providers and to families.

#### Ready Families Objective II.1.

*"Every family will have access to a comprehensive array of parenting and child development information that will enhance their parental capacity and increase the positive relationships between children and parents. It is important that information regarding available resources for families be accessible and well-timed. This information will be available in the variety of formats and mediums to meet differing family needs."*

With funds provided by the Birth to Three Early Intervention System (DHSS) and in partnership with the University of Delaware, the **Growing Together Portfolio** is distributed to parents of babies born in Delaware and surrounding hospitals, as well as through the Home Visiting Program. The Growing Together Portfolio provides parents with developmental information from birth through five years of age, health and safety reminders, activities to encourage language and literacy development, and a list of resources providing help to new parents. The material is available in Spanish and on the Birth to Three website at: <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dms/epqc/birth3/directry.html>

Ready Families Objective II.8.

*“Families that are consumers of the early care and education system will be engaged as partners in their children’s early care and education program.”*

Through ARRA funds, Birth to Three is supporting the work of **The Delaware Family Voices Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F)** in order to recruit, train and mentor parents of young children with special health care needs (CSHCN) for the purpose of their participation on various councils and advisory boards with a focus on birth to five related interests. F2F will prepare the parents to be effective leaders and be the voice of families with CSHCN at meetings of councils of various agencies and organizations throughout Delaware.

**Contributed by:** Rosanne Griff-Cabelli, Division of Management Services, DHSS,  
rosanne.griff-cabelli@state.de.us

**COALITION FOR EARLY LEARNING****Ready Communities:** Objective IV.1

Identify and develop clear, specific, concise and consistent messages to be used in advertising campaigns.

Delaware Coalition for Early Learning: Collaborative stakeholders formalized a member-supported governance structure to be launched in early 2010 that will engage early childhood providers and other interested parties in articulating shared advocacy and public will goals and implementing coordinated strategies for reaching those goals.

**Contributed by:** Janet Umble, jumble@uwde.org

**DELAWARE AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE (DEASA)**

The Delaware AfterSchool Alliance (DEASA) is a public-private partnership that endorses the goal of all school age children being academically, socially, culturally and physically healthy. Private and public stakeholders, along with schools, children and their families, will work together to:

- Create a long-term policy voice for afterschool programs
- Advocate for policies that support high quality programs
- Support the after school workforce
- Increase public awareness
- Build bridges between the public schools and community-based organizations for school-based or school-linked afterschool programs
- Support family-centered practices

Our work continues on building bridges that link schools, communities, and families through policy development and partnership engagement with other agencies. These links are the key



to supporting the whole child, from early care and education programs, through school, to high quality after school and summer programs.

The Alliance has involved itself in many key efforts over the last year that address the common moral, social and educational concerns of Delaware's citizenry, not the least of which were the Governor's Dropout Prevention Summit, the creation and delivery of "Delaware Competencies for School-Age Professionals" and the 60 hour professional development curriculum "Moving Youth Ahead in School-Age Programs."

During 2010 the Alliance will continue to work toward ensuring all children are healthy, ready for school and life by linking together the very best of health care initiatives, early care and education programs, school curriculum, and after school and summer programs.

**Contributed by:** David Hilyard, David.Hilyard@cffde.org

#### **DELAWARE CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS**

The Developmental Comprehensive Screening Project is a statewide initiative to improve child outcomes, improve referral, comprehensive care, and be culturally sensitive. It is a one year project awarded to the American Academy of Pediatrics-Delaware Chapter by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware's *Blue Prints for the Community*. The project is implemented at four practices (2 in Sussex, 1 in Kent and 1 in New Castle) including 9 physicians, 3 physician assistants, and 5 nurse practitioners.

##### **Objectives:**

- Engage the parent in the developmental screening process and provide educational and early intervention service resources. The Parent Resource Center (PRC) will contain resources for children birth to age five.
- Enhance the primary care provider's ability to complete regular, consistent and time-efficient developmental screenings within select well-child visits using a validated developmental screening tool.
- Establish and report on essential statewide data for developmental screening for children, birth to age five to promote early identification and enhanced intervention services in the community including an evaluative study to include baseline data, projected outcomes, and actual outcomes of the project.

**Contributed by:** Katie Hamilton, kamilton@deaap.org

#### **DIVISION OF CHILD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, DSCYF**

**MISSION:** To provide accessible, effective treatment for children through collaboration with families and service partners.

**VISION:** Children and families: Reaching their fullest potential.

**READY CHILDREN: Objective I.4.**

Every child will have access to social, emotional, and mental health services as needed.

- 1) *Early care and education programs will have access to professional development opportunities related to improvement of staff competence to prevent or ameliorate behavioral challenges in young children with the support and involvement of their families.*

**DCMHS Contribution:** DCMHS provided 1785 hours of training in *positive behavior management* for 390 Delaware early childhood care provider staff who participated in workshops sponsored by DCMHS in August and September, 2009. These workshops were made available by DCMHS to early childhood provider staff at no cost. DSCYF recently increased the minimum requirement for the number of training hours to maintain childcare licensure in Delaware. These DCMHS-sponsored workshops provided no-cost, easily accessible training, directly assisting 390 individuals in meeting the newly increased requirement. Participants rated these workshops as very high in providing useful information, including effective strategies they felt they could use in their work with children. 100% of respondents indicated they would recommend the training to a co-worker.

- 2) *Increase availability of outpatient social and emotional service for young children and their families, including a) Increase the number of trained mental health clinicians with expertise in the treatment of young children, b) Streamline the process for mental health referrals and c) Promote intervention strategies to be conducted in the child's natural environment.*

**DCMHS Contribution:** DCMHS increased access to mental health treatment for young (pre-school) children in 2009. Forty-four (44) clinicians in Delaware were trained by DCMHS to use Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), an evidence-based mental health treatment designed to reduce problem behaviors and increase pro-social behaviors for children aged 2-5 years with very challenging, disruptive behaviors.

PCIT is now available across Delaware and easily accessible to children with parent/caregiver in need of services since it is available at the outpatient level of care directly with no pre-authorization necessary for any child with Medicaid or who is uninsured. The clinicians treated children/families with third party, commercial insurance as well as public clients, assuring that this evidence-based treatment is now available for all pre-school age children in Delaware. It is expected that, with good outcomes from treatment, fewer children will be expelled from pre-school settings. Since PCIT is also proven effective in reducing incidents of child maltreatment (specifically neglect and abuse), it is also anticipated that this treatment will reduce child maltreatment in Delaware. A brochure on this treatment and a therapist roster for PCIT are broadly available.



- 3) *Provide early care and education programs access to mental health consultation or coaching related to social and emotional wellness for young children.*

**DCMHS Contribution:** DCMHS will contract for 3.5 Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to deliver ECMHC services at no cost to Delaware pre-school settings and early childhood education centers. DCMHS applied for and received funding from DHSS Division of Social Services' Child Care Development Fund (\$300,000/yr). Funding became available 10/1/09 and services began in December 2009.

**Objective II.5.** Family support and parent education will be provided by competent staff utilizing evidence based programs that include on-going evaluation.

**DCMHS Contribution:** Nearly 40 parents/caregivers received effective, evidence-based parent training that is manualized and research-demonstrated to be effective in reducing child maltreatment (abuse and neglect).

Additional DCMHS contributions in 2009 include:

- Increased public awareness re: Conference for Young Child Mental Health and Child Traumatic Stress (330 attendees, 96% participant overall satisfaction rating)
- Participated regularly and actively on the Delaware Early Childhood Council
- Participated regularly and actively on the DECC Emotional Wellness Committee
- Developed new, effective partnerships with the Delaware Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics (DE-AAP) and the Delaware Medical Society, Delaware Early Childhood Council. Includes sponsoring a workshop for medical community (physicians, pediatricians, school nurses, child/adolescent psychiatrists) on public child mental health services system in Delaware and the evidence-based treatment in use.
- Participated on the Delaware Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC).

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## **DELAWARE PRACTITIONERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (DE-PEC)**

The Office of Early Childhood in the Department of Education reviews and approves the qualifications of all personnel in child care centers. Determinations are based on the requirements established by the Office of Child Care Licensing. In 2009, 2,766 applications were reviewed and 1,915 credentials were issued. Specifically:

Early Childhood Administrator - 208

Early Childhood Curriculum Coordinator - 69

Early Childhood Teacher - 560

Early Childhood Assistant Teacher - 466

Early Childhood Intern - 253



School-Age Administrator - 102

School-Age Site Coordinator - 55

School-Age Site Assistant - 155

School-Age Intern – 47

Technical assistance is offered by telephone, email or in person. Staff provided this support to 1,400 individuals in 2009.

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## DELAWARE STARS FOR EARLY SUCCESS

### End-of-Year Update: 2009 Program Status

Stars Programs and Enrollment Periods	Number Enrolled	Star Level 1	Achieved Star Level 2	Achieved Star Level 3	Achieved Star Level 4	Alternative Pathway (AP)	Achieved Star Level* 5
Jan. 2007: Centers	12	2	7	2			1
Jan. 2007: Family Child Care	3		1	2			
Feb. 2008: Centers	20	10	8				2
May 2008: Centers	17	11	4				2
Sept. 2008: Family Child Care	12		10	2			
Feb. 2009: Centers	22	19	3				
May 2009: Centers	17	17					
May 2009: Family Child Care	7	6		1			
Nov. 2009: Centers	31	31					
Nov. 2009: Family Child Care	8	8					
Nov. 2009: HS/ Accredited programs	9					9	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>

\*All programs, except Star Level 5 programs, entered at Star Level 1. Star Level 5 are NAEYC accredited.

### Current Programs:

By county:

- New Castle: 126 programs – 106 Centers, 18 Family Child Care Homes (FCC) and 2 Large Family Child Care Homes (LFCC)
- Kent: 16 programs – 12 Centers and 3 FCC, and 1 LFCC



- Sussex: 16 programs – 10 centers and 5 FCC, and 1 LFCC
- Children Served:
- Approximately 10,600 children; licensed capacity in DE is 55,505
- Staff Engaged:
- Approximately 1,750 staff

In 2009, Delaware Stars for Early Success enrolled 79 licensed child care centers (including 9 Head Start programs) and 15 family and large family child care homes. This brings the total number of programs enrolled to 128 child care centers and 30 family child care providers. It is particularly impressive to note that with the enrollment of 79 centers in 2009 over one quarter of the licensed child care centers in the state now participate in Delaware Stars. Staff qualifications continue to provide challenges to child care centers moving from one level to the next.

In 2009, Delaware Stars moved to the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood at the University of Delaware. This move has facilitated greater coordination with professional development efforts and technical assistants.

In 2009 the Stars management team contracted with Mathematica to do a comprehensive review of Delaware Stars. That report will be completed in 2010.

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## EMOTIONAL WELLNESS COMMITTEE

### Ready Children

“Every child will have access to social, emotional and mental health services as needed.”

The Emotional Wellness Committee, a subgroup of the Delaware Early Childhood Council officially began working together in August, 2008. The members include representatives from public and private agencies and programs including the Department of Education, the Office of Child Care Licensing, the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Child Mental Health Services, Delaware Early Childhood Center, the University of Delaware, Children and Families First, Catholic Charities, United Way of Delaware, staff from Head Start, ECAP and private early childhood programs and families. The group’s mission is to support the emotional well-being of young children and their families in Delaware through a System of Care based on the *Emotional Wellness Framework (2003)*. When it is completed, this system will offer a comprehensive spectrum of services, which are organized into a coordinated network across funding and administrative jurisdictions to meet the needs of young children and their families. The emotional wellness system will be aligned with *Early Success* and involve families, public, and private partnerships in a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach to build children’s social emotional competencies.



The Emotional Wellness Committee monthly meetings are currently focused on completing specific tasks to build a system of care in Delaware for children birth to five and their families. The committee is working on mapping, identifying gaps in resources and services, establishing standards for practice and identifying priority areas needed for the systematic promotion of emotional wellness in the state.

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## **FAMILY SUPPORT COORDINATING COUNCIL**

### **Mission**

The Family Support Coordinating Council (FSCC) is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative, public-private council that includes family members and professionals who are committed to assuring that quality family education and support programs, including home visiting, respite care, community based family resource centers and early care and education are available statewide. The group provides leadership in advocating for system change that assures that services are available and adequately resourced and that they are family centered and culturally competent.

### **Actions to Advocate for Systemic Changes**

During 2009 the Family Support Coordinating Council adopted the following priorities for action:

1. Sharing reframed messages that
  - Build public will
  - Change public thinking about parent education and support
  - Normalize help seeking behaviors
  - Educate community leaders and legislators
2. Identify best practices
  - Establish standards for the provision of services
  - Identify and support existing programs that have demonstrated results
  - Work with funders to realign resources to support evidence based programs
  - Map the current network of parent education programs to establish quality and quantity



3. Assure that a continuum of community based services is available to support families
  - Identify and support model programs that will constitute a continuum of family support and education services that are evidence based
4. Work with the Kid's Caucus and Kid's Lobby to influence policies that affect families

**Contributed by:** Karen DeRasmo, karenderasmo@comcast.net

## NEMOURS HEALTH AND PREVENTION SERVICES

Nemours Health and Prevention Services (NHPS) is the health promotion and prevention division of Nemours, is dedicated to working with others to help all children lead healthier lives.

Over the past year, NHPS has remained focused on the following initiatives:

**READY CHILDREN:** Collaboration with the Delaware Child and Adult Care Food Program to improve state guidelines on quality nutritional standards for children in early childhood environments; Collaboration with the Division of Public Health and the American Academy of Pediatrics to improve developmental screening in primary care practices statewide.

**READY FAMILIES:** Collaboration with various public and private partners to implement a universal parent education model.

**READY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:** Implementation support in collaboration with public and private partners to support improved quality early childhood professional development, specifically child health domains.

**READY COMMUNITIES:** Advocacy collaboration with various public and private partners to ensure the implementation of Early Success: Delaware's Plan for Early Childhood. In 2009, NHPS has dedicated staff and resources to addressing the following Early Success objectives:

*Ready Children Objective 1.1: Every child will have a medical home familiar with his or her unique developmental path, offering comprehensive physical and child development services including special health care needs and assessment, intervention, and referral for developmental, behavioral, social, and emotional problems.*

The mission of NHPS is to ensure that all children achieve optimal health outcomes.



Currently, NHPS is involved in addressing the utilization of a standardized developmental screening tool during well child visits to ensure early identification and linkage to appropriate intervention resources.

At the Nemours organization level, work is nearing completion that will integrate a standardized developmental screening tool within the electronic medical record (EMR). Beginning in 2010, five of Nemours Pediatric practices will pilot the implementation of the developmental screener. Physician training and technical assistance from both NHPS and Nemours Behavioral Health staff is currently underway to ensure successful integration of this tool. Nemours Pediatrics has 11 pediatric practices statewide and provides a medical home to a majority of children who are identified at-risk due to socio-economic status. In addition to addressing developmental screening, NHPS is working with physicians statewide on a quality improvement initiative that ensures all children's height and weight are consistently monitored and the families of the young children at risk of becoming overweight are provided with the appropriate guidance and intervention.

**Objective 1.2 Every child will have access to affordable health insurance**

In 2009, NHPS supported the passage of H.B. 132. This bill provides increased access to the Delaware Healthy Children Program for children who are uninsured. The passage of this bill will provide access to a medical home for children currently uninsured and unable to access other forms of public or private health care coverage.

**Ready Families : Objective II.1: Every family will have access to a comprehensive array of parenting and child development information that will enhance their capacity and increase positive relationships between children and parents**

NHPS is supporting the initial training of practitioners in the evidence-based **Triple P-Positive Parenting Program**. This program is a multi-level, parenting, and family support strategy. Triple P aims to prevent behavioral, emotional, and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents. The Triple P system is designed to maximize efficiency, contain costs, and ensure the program has wide reach in the community.

Additionally, NHPS joined with staff from Nemours Behavioral Health in hosting a parent education forum. Utilizing the Triple P approach, NHPS welcomed approximately 150 parents, child care, and health care professionals in a forum dedicated to helping families deal with typical challenging child behaviors, such as tantrums, picky eating, sleep concerns, and routines.

**Ready Early Care and Education Programs Objectives III. 1, III.2, III.3**

To support Delaware's early childhood stakeholders' efforts for improving the quality of child care programs statewide, NHPS has dedicated staff and resources to support supporting



various quality initiatives, such as Delaware Stars and the Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood. In 2009, NHPS joined with other public and private partners to establish the new Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood at the University of Delaware. Over the past year, NHPS partnered with 28 child care centers statewide to promote an innovative training model, *Taking Steps to Healthy Success: A Learning Collaborative to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity*, to improve nutrition and increase physical activity.

Partnering with the Delaware Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to improve state guidelines on quality nutritional standards for children in early childhood programs has been a particular focus of NHPS efforts. Previously, the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL) updated licensing requirements to ensure all licensed programs followed the state CACFP nutrition guidelines. In 2008, NHPS and the CACFP collaborated to implement recommendations to the state CACFP guidelines. These recommended changes now lead the nation in quality improvements to the current USDA CACFP standards.

*The promise of Early Success is one that NHPS sees as integrated within our own mission. Ensuring that all children have a healthy foundation and their families are linked with the resources to assist their children into positive development and lifelong healthy habits is a shared goal.*

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## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

In 2009, **The Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood** at the University of Delaware initiated the system for quality assurance for professional development. This effort includes a system for certification and ongoing monitoring of instructors for professional development, a system for approval of the content for professional development offered to the early childhood field and a certification process for providers of technical assistance. The Professional Development Committee of the Council had several opportunities for review and input on the plans for quality assurance as the Institute was designing the process. Institute staff are now working on implementing the process for instructor certification and content approval.

The Institute also launched a website this year. Providers will be able to access information and dates for professional development opportunities and register online, instructors and curriculum developers will be able to find forms and support information on the website and families will be able to find out more about early childhood services and research. The data collected by the professional development registration portion of the website will allow providers to maintain their own history of professional development and print a transcript of those experiences.

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## **SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS DELAWARE**

Social Venture Partners Delaware is a venture philanthropy firm dedicated to investing in early childhood education for Delaware's most at-risk children. Our investments include cash grants and technical assistance, all with the aim of improving capacity, access, and quality. SVPDE is also a dedicated advocate for Early Childhood Education and Philanthropy.

SVPDE's 2009 contributions to Delaware's Early Success plan included the following objectives:

- ***Ready Children***
- ***Ready Families***
- ***Ready Early Care and Education Programs***
- ***Ready Communities***

SVPDE invested in the quality improvements and overall growth of the following early learning centers: Kingswood Community Center, the Latin American Community Center, Easy Side Charter School, West Center City Early Learning Center, and Mom's House Wilmington. Investments included but were not limited to sizable cash grants, board development, strategic planning, fund development, teacher training, curriculum development, and behavioral health consulting.

SVPDE also supported state-wide ancillary programs such as T.E.A.C.H. and Delaware STARS. In addition to providing grants to these programs, SVPDE has supported and guided the above centers in the participation and utilization of these programs. SVPDE always seeks to measure the impact of their investments and capacity building endeavors. One of our most rewarding outcomes for 2009 is; every Pre-K child in each center SVPDE supported was assessed as "kindergarten ready".

**Contributed by:** David T. Woods, President, [dwoods@svpde.org](mailto:dwoods@svpde.org)

## **SUSSEX EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL**

The mission of the Sussex Early Childhood Council is to foster collaboration among families, communities, providers, and schools for children's early success in Sussex County. Members include child care providers, human service agency representatives, parents, home visitors, school district representatives, and others interested in young children and families in Sussex County. In 2009-2010, SECC has met on a monthly basis to continue to develop a strong interagency network. SECC was written into the Project LAUNCH proposal from DPH to serve as an advisory council for that project. The proposal was not funded but discussion has continued about how to strengthen the commitment to an interagency council. NHPS has presented the Triple P project at a SECC meeting. The training for Triple P will be held in Sussex County in the Fall of 2010. SECC members



discussed how to plan strategically for participation in the training across agencies to enhance implementation outcomes. Leadership of SECC has been involved in discussion of how the local council fits into the evolving form of the state early childhood council. The Sussex Early Childhood Council continues to provide its membership an opportunity to share, network, and plan for ways to better serve the children and families in Sussex County.

**Contributed by:** Dr. Janet Cornwell, SECC Chairperson, Delaware Early Childhood Center, [jrcornwell@lf.k12.de.us](mailto:jrcornwell@lf.k12.de.us)

## **UNITED WAY OF DELAWARE SUCCESS BY 6™**

**MISSION:** The broad mission of United Way of Delaware is to maximize the community's resources to improve the quality of life for all Delawareans by focusing on three key areas: education, income, and health. Success By 6™ is working to ensure that every child in Delaware enters school ready to succeed, a critical foundation for success in school and life. Toward that end, Success By 6™ is committed to being a collaborative partner in the building of an early childhood system that will engage and support the efforts of all early childhood stakeholders.

### **Ready children: Objective I.4**

Every child will have access to social, emotional, and mental health services as needed.

Success By 6™ is partnering with the Department of Education to give leadership to Emotional Wellness Committee of the Delaware Early Childhood Council. The work of this committee is focused on the development of a comprehensive system that will support the emotional wellness of young children.

### **Ready early care and education programs: Objective III.1**

A system of tiered quality for child care centers, family and large family child care homes, and school age programs will be implemented.

In 2009 Success By 6™ continued its support of Delaware Stars by leading the coordination of private resource development and serving as fiscal agent for private funds. Success By 6™ also convened stakeholders to begin development of a two-phase campaign: Phase 1 is a public will campaign about the early years as a critical foundation for future school and life successes; Phase 2 will be a consumer education campaign specifically related to Delaware Stars.

### **Ready Communities: Objective IV.1**

Identify and develop clear, specific, concise and consistent messages to be used in advertising campaigns.



Delaware Coalition for Early Learning: Collaborative stakeholders formalized a member-supported governance structure to be launched in early 2010 that will engage early childhood providers and other interested parties in articulating shared advocacy and public will goals and implementing coordinated strategies for reaching those goals.

**Contributed by:** Janet Umble, Senior Associate, [Jumble@uwde.org](mailto:Jumble@uwde.org)

### **T.E.A.C.H. EARLY CHILDHOOD®**

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) is a scholarship program (which includes an Associate Degree, Early Childhood Director's Certificate and CDA scholarship) for the Early Childhood workforce. It focuses on increased education, compensation and retention for individuals working in child care centers or family child care homes. T.E.A.C.H. is administered in Delaware by The Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children.

In July 2009 we completed our fifth year of the program. In the past 5 years T.E.A.C.H. has:

1. Awarded 392 scholarships
2. Provided funding for 2,621 credits earned
3. Reported an average of 7.7% increase in wages among T.E.A.C.H. scholars
4. Reported an average of 6.3% turnover (staff retention) rate. National rate is between 5-9%.
5. Supported 18 individuals in graduating within the various scholarship options.

**Contributed by:** Debbie Taylor at 302-764-1501 or [dvtaylor.daeyc@comcast.net](mailto:dvtaylor.daeyc@comcast.net)

### **VISION 2015**

Three years ago, a broad coalition of Delaware's public, private and civic leaders launched Vision 2015 – a bold, nationally-acclaimed plan to provide world-class schools for every student in our state. It built on many successes of the past, and set even higher world-class goals for our public education system.

Through partnerships with many agencies and organizations throughout the state, we have been able to achieve significant improvements to our education system since the plan's launch. And, in just the past year, state policymakers—including Governor Jack Markel and Education Secretary Lillian Lowery—have committed to further reforms that align directly with Vision 2015, as well as with bold new federal priorities. The prospect for Delaware's leadership as the "First State in Education" has never been greater. There is still a great deal of work to be done, and the Vision 2015 partnership is committed to accelerating the pace.



One of the six fundamental components of Vision 2015 is high-quality early childhood education, especially for those with the greatest need. To pursue this goal, Vision 2015 helped launch in 2009 the new “Policy Matters” process, in partnership with the Delaware Early Childhood Council, Lt. Governor Denn, Connie Bond Stewart of the business community, and other early childhood education advocates. Policy Matters is led by Sharon Lynn Kagan, Ed.D., of Columbia University, a nationally recognized leader in early childhood education. The initiative will establish a clear vision and actionable strategies for improvements to early childhood education by 2010. In parallel, Vision 2015 is supporting a fiscal mapping initiative by The Finance Project to map and analyze the financial resources that the state devotes to early childhood services. This information will be used by the Policy Matters Committee as it develops its recommendations.

Vision 2015 also continued its support for the Delaware Stars for Early Success program, which currently serves over 115 programs enrolling more than 7,550 children. Through Stars, childcare and education providers are receiving assistance and financial support to improve staff qualifications, facilities and programs.

The Delaware Business Roundtable has been an important contributor to the Policy Matters, fiscal mapping, and Stars efforts, initiatives they feel are essential and in direct alignment with Vision 2015 goals. To date, the business community has invested \$350,000 in these important early childhood education initiatives.

A full progress report on all six components of Vision 2015 and the priorities for 2010 is available at [www.vision2015delaware.org](http://www.vision2015delaware.org). These accomplishments would not have been possible without the generous contributions of members of the Delaware Business Roundtable, the Delaware Community Foundation, Delaware Department of Education, Rodel Foundation of Delaware, University of Delaware, and The Wallace Foundation.

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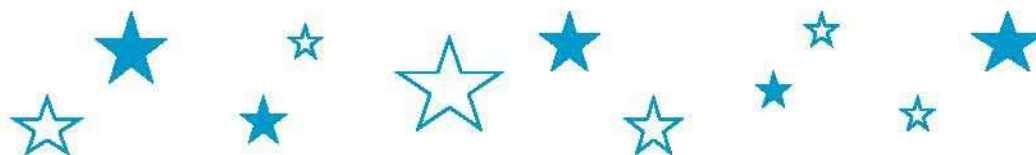
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## KIDS COUNT in Delaware Issue Brief



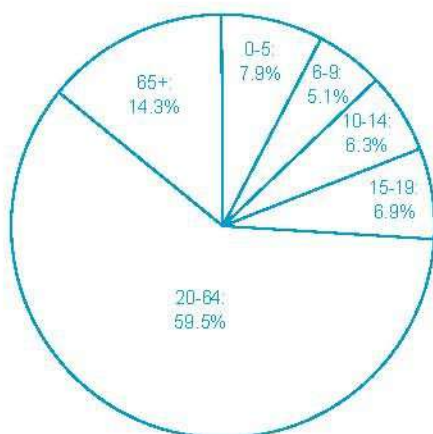
### Indicators for Early Success

Fall 2009

Significant scientific evidence exists supporting the correlation between early experience, brain development and long-term developmental outcomes. Successful preparation of young children includes ensuring adequate growth in a range of physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills. To increase the likelihood of success in school and life, young children require access to appropriate health care, nurturing early relationships, family economic security and quality early learning experiences. Also important is the creation of a set of meaningful indicators will track public commitments to young children over time. In Delaware, work toward this goal is being led by the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative and the Delaware Early Childhood Council who have developed *Early Success: Delaware's Early Childhood Plan*.

### Counting the Kids: Delaware Demographics

#### 2008 Population Estimate and Age Distribution, Delaware



Delaware Total	875,953
Total Children 0-19	229,849
Children 0-5	69,573
Children 6-9	44,613
Children 10-14	55,355
Children 15-19	60,308

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, Population Projection Series, Version 2008.0

#### Population Estimate of Young Children Age 0-5 by Sex and Race, Delaware, 2008

Gender/Age	All Races	White	Black	Other
<b>Male</b>				
0	6,018	4,237	1,577	204
1	5,925	4,176	1,541	208
2	5,742	4,038	1,495	209
3	5,717	4,033	1,476	208
4	5,770	4,071	1,480	219
5	5,559	3,943	1,407	209
<b>Female</b>				
0	6,030	4,243	1,583	204
1	5,947	4,186	1,553	208
2	5,763	4,049	1,506	208
3	5,738	4,044	1,486	208
4	5,787	4,079	1,490	218
5	5,577	3,953	1,416	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,573</b>	<b>49,052</b>	<b>18,010</b>	<b>2,511</b>

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, Population Projection Series, Version 2008.0

Demographically speaking, we are much less of a child centered society now than we were 100 years ago. In the United States, children accounted for 40 percent of the population in 1900, but only 26 percent in 2000. Similar trends are evident in Delaware.

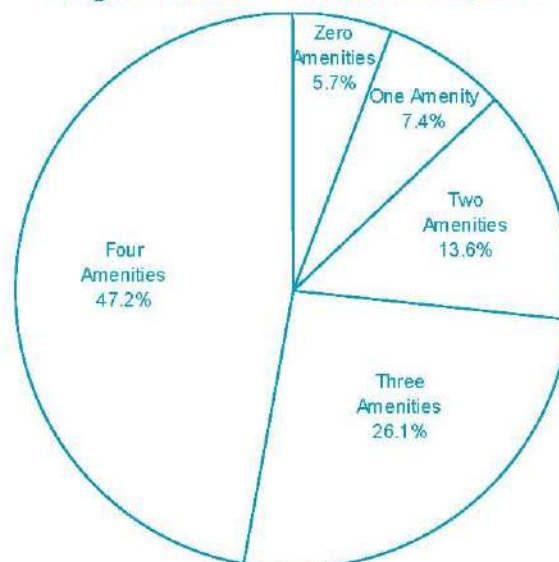


## A Healthy Start for Delaware Children

The neighborhood a young child lives in can greatly influence his or her health, education and personal/social development. Neighborhood amenities such as parks, recreation centers, sidewalks and libraries make it safer for children to play and spend time outdoors, provide for educational enrichment, serve as a vehicle for socializing and enhance overall quality of life. With recent trends of increased obesity rates in children nationwide, encouraging construction and use of neighborhood amenities is one way of encouraging healthy lifestyles— by eliminating barriers that many families face for escaping sedentary activities.



**Percentage of Delaware Children (0-5) Living in Neighborhoods with Amenities, 2007**

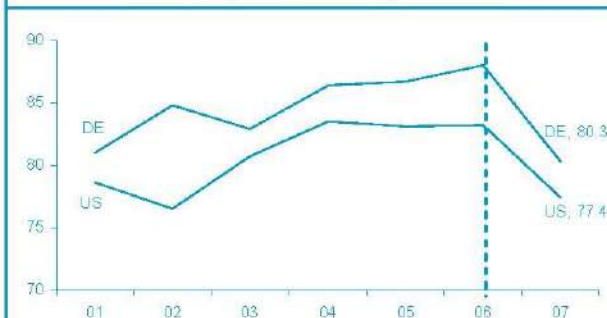


Source: 2007 National Survey of Children's Health

A 2006 study by Nemours Health and Prevention Services of their Delaware Outpatient and Specialty Care found that 14.3% of children age 2-4 were overweight (had a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for age) and that an additional 15.2% were at risk for becoming overweight (had a BMI between the 85th and 95th percentile for age).

### Child Immunizations

Percentage of Children Age 19-35 months who are fully Immunized, Delaware Compared to US



Note: the CDC designation of "fully immunized" changed from 4:3:1 to 4:3:1:3:3:1 dosing. The change from 2006 to 2007 is due to the recommendations change rather than from fewer immunizations.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services

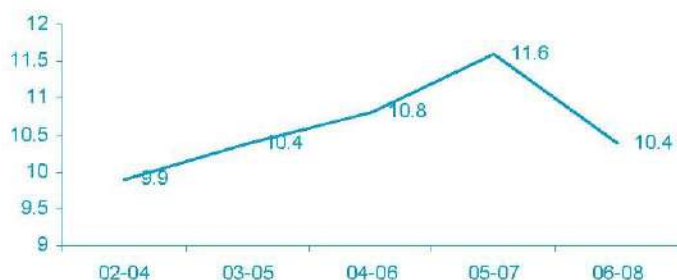
Diseases that once spread quickly and killed thousands of children and adults are now largely controlled by vaccines, one of the most cost-effective preventive health measures. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccinating children against most vaccine-preventable diseases by the time they are two years old. Today, children in the United States routinely get 9 vaccinations that protect them from 13 diseases. Protecting children against severe illnesses also results in positive outcomes other than improved physical health. Children are able to attend school or child care more regularly and parents are not kept home caring for sick children allowing increased parental productivity in the workplace.



## Access to Adequate Health Services

### Young Children without Health Insurance

Three-year Average Percentage of Young Children (0-5) without Health Insurance, Delaware

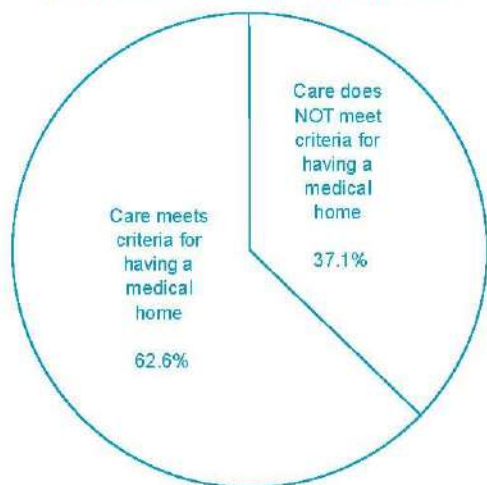


Source: Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware

House Bill 139 (passed in 09) extends Delaware's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to include reduced-cost health insurance coverage for children of families with personal incomes above 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. A cost-sharing program is to be implemented under CHIP where payments must be paid on behalf of the child for such care. The cost-sharing provision of the bill is designed to have the new program impose no cost on the state.

Improved access to effective health care means improvements in the child's health status over time, which can positively affect the child's life. Children with health insurance, whether public or private, are more likely than children without insurance to have a regular and accessible source of health care. Having health insurance makes it more likely for a child to have a medical home, which the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) describes as: care provided through a trusting, collaborative, working partnership with families. This care respects families' diversity and recognizes that they are the constant in a child's life. A family centered, coordinated network designed to promote the healthy development and well being of children and their families is core for the high quality, developmentally appropriate health care services that continue uninterrupted as the individual moves along and within systems of services and from adolescence to adulthood. Finally, a high performance health care system requires appropriate financing to support and sustain medical homes that promote system wide quality care with optimal health outcomes, family satisfaction and cost efficiency.

### Percentage Delaware Children (0-5) Who Received Health Care that Met the AAP Definition of Medical Home, 2007



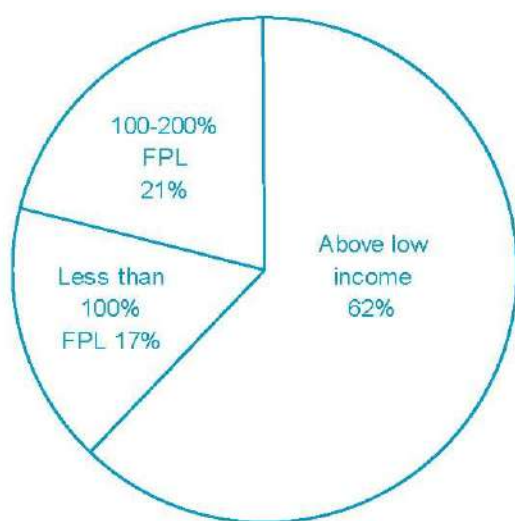
Source: 2007 National Survey of Children's Health

AAP highlights medical home principles including:

- ★ Family-centered partnership ★
- ★ Community-based system ★
- ★ Transitions ★
- ★ Value ★

## An Economic Profile of Delaware's Youngest Children

**Young Children (0-5) by Income, Delaware, 2007**



Note: FPL stands for "Federal Poverty Level." According to the 2007 federal poverty guidelines, a family of three must make less than \$16,705 annually to be considered in poverty.

Source: National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health

Studies conducted by U.S. neuroscientists have found that a child's poverty status has a direct correlation with brain development, especially for very young children—those between the ages of 6 months and 3 years. Unhealthy levels of stress hormones coupled with inadequate nutrition and exposure to environmental toxins produce impairments and delays in brain development, particularly in cognition, language development and memory. Young children who live in poverty continue to perform lower than their peers from higher income families throughout childhood and into adulthood.

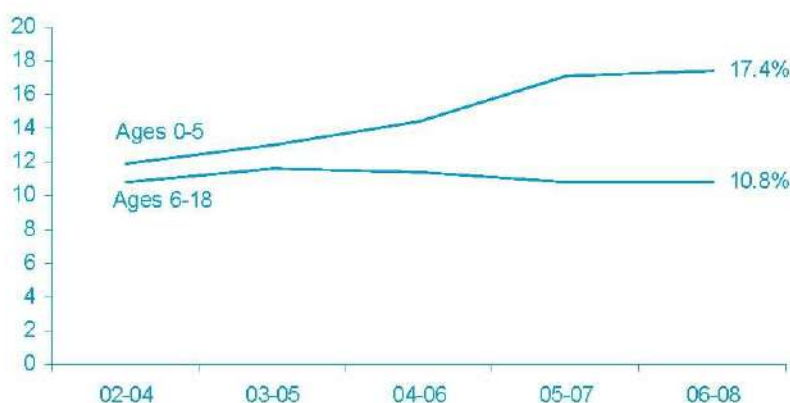
Very young children living in poverty are much less likely than are non-poor children to be able to recognize the letters of the alphabet, count to 20 or higher, write their name, read or pretend to read.

— *Child Trends Data Bank*

In 2009, the General Assembly strengthened Delaware's laws protecting consumers from predatory lending practices. Legislation was enacted to provide protection for consumers of short-term loan products (i.e., payday loans and title loans). Senate Bill 108 requires conspicuous disclosure of significant terms of such loans. It also requires that a lender offer a workout agreement to a consumer and limits the duration and amount of interest that can be charged when a loan is in default.

### Children in Poverty

Three-year Average Percentage of Children (ages 0-5 and ages 6-18) in Poverty, Delaware



Source: Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware



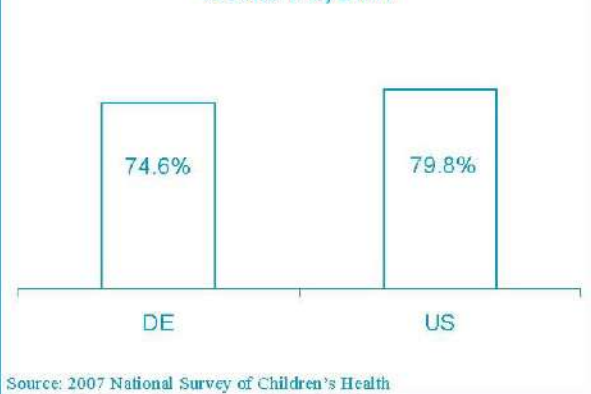
## Supporting Families of Young Children

“Children do well when their families do well, and families do better when they live in supportive communities.”

— Annie E. Casey Foundation

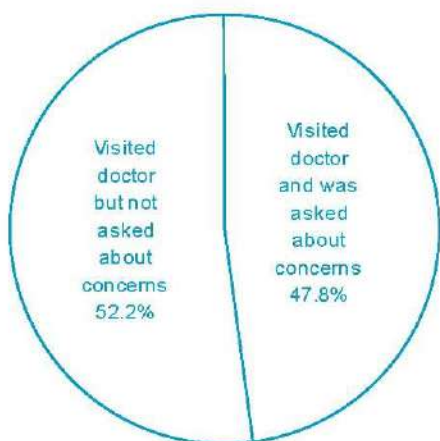
Family is the most important influence in a young child’s development. When families have the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to engage a young child, the child will be much more likely to enter school ready to learn. Families are more successful when they are part of a supportive community. Supportive communities have been described as those in which people help each other out and neighbors watch each others’ children or those in which parents know that other adults are nearby who will help a scared or hurt child.

**Percentage Children (0-5) Living in Neighborhoods that are Supportive, Delaware versus US, 2007**

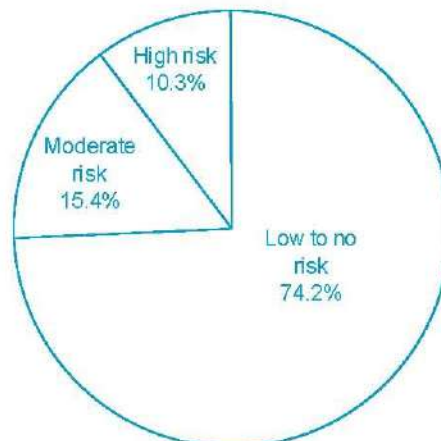


Approved in the 2009 legislative session, House Bill 199 requires that private health insurers in Delaware cover the developmental screenings for infants and toddlers that are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Delaware Early Childhood Council. Such screenings were already covered for children in the state’s Medicaid program. The estimated cost to policyholders of covering these screenings is three cents per member per month.

**Percentage of Delaware Children (0-5) Whose Doctors Asked About Parents’ Concerns Regarding Learning, Development or Behavior in a Sample Year, 2007**



**Percentage Delaware Children (0-5) at Risk for Developmental, Behavioral or Social Delay, 2007**



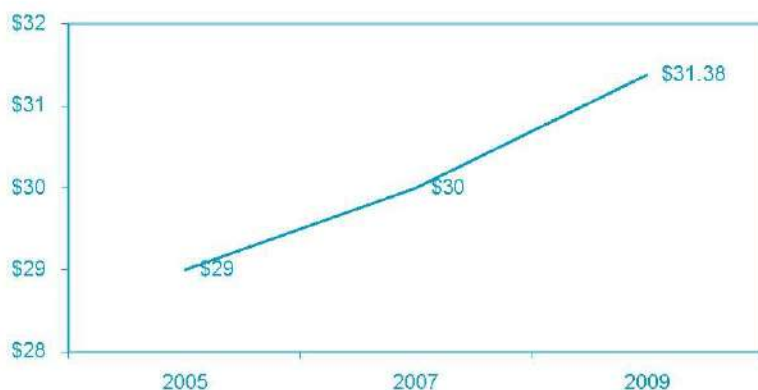
Source for both pie charts: 2007 National Survey of Children’s Health



## Public Investments in Early Learning

### Child Care Market Rate

75th Percentile Cost per Day of Toddler and Preschool Child in Family Child Care Setting, New Castle County, 2005-2009



Source: Workplace Solutions for the Delaware Division of Social Services

All fifty states in the U.S. invest in child care subsidy systems to enable low-income parents to access child care while they work and to support child development. In Delaware, this subsidization is termed Purchase of Care. Subsidy rates are calculated based on local market rate of child care. Market rates are non-discounted prices charged to unrelated and unaffiliated parents. Market rates vary based on location (county), age of child in care and type of child care (family care or center).

Because market rate has increased over time without a corresponding increase in the subsidy rate, Purchase of Care now supports a smaller percentage of a recipient's total child care cost than in previous years. In 2005, the typical Purchase of Care subsidy supported about 72% of a recipient's child care costs (rates ranged from 67% to 75% of market rate) and in 2007, the typical subsidy supported only about 65% of a recipient's child care costs (rates ranged from 57% to 74% of market rate).

Source: The Family and Workplace Connection

### Available Child Care

Number of Licensed Child Care Slots  
Delaware, 2008

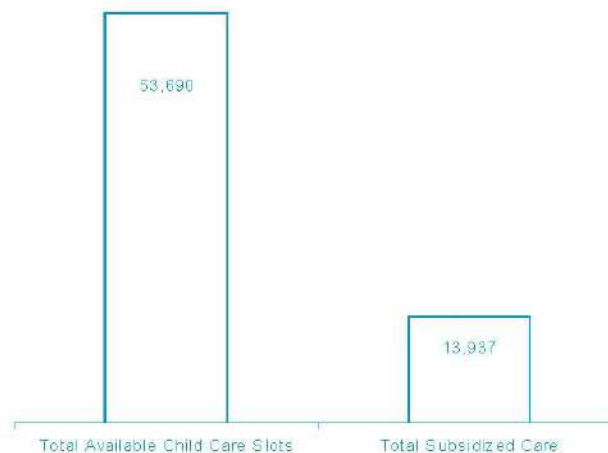
Large Family Child Care Homes	942
Family Child Care Homes	9,929
Child Care Centers	42,819
<b>Total Available Child Care</b>	<b>53,690</b>

### Subsidized Child Care

Number of Children Served Per Month  
Delaware, 2008

Welfare Reform/TANF	3,048
Income Eligible	10,967
<b>Total Subsidized Child Care</b>	<b>13,937</b>

### Available Slots and Subsidized Care



Source: The Family and Workplace Connection



## Quality Child Care and Early Learning in Delaware

Quality early care and education is important to a young child's development, well-being and future success. Because child care standards and practices can vary among early care centers, having a standardized rating system as a uniform method to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings is crucial. Rating systems build on licensing regulations and help policymakers and funders better understand the quality of programming available in a community. These systems help programs make change to achieve higher quality benchmarks and also help parents make informed decisions when selecting a program for their child.

### Delaware Stars for Early Success

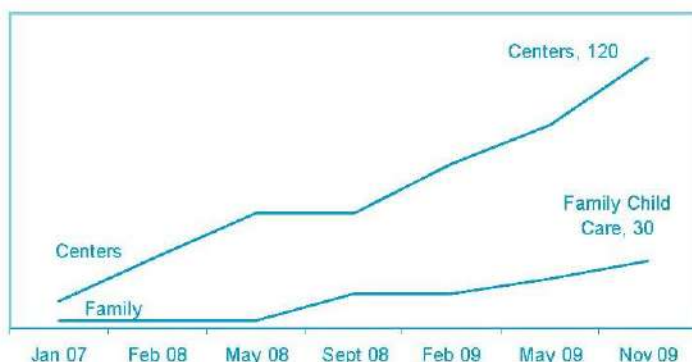
Delaware Stars for Early Success is a voluntary rating and improvement system that was initiated in 2006 by the Delaware Early Childhood Council. Under this initiative, participating programs receive a rating based on a five star scale that ranges from meeting Child Care Licensing Regulations to meeting progressively higher quality standards in the areas of:

- ★ Qualifications and Professional Development
- ★ Learning Environment and Curriculum
- ★ Family and Community Partnerships and
- ★ Management and Administration.

## Delaware Stars for Early Success Delaware's Quality Rating and Improvement System for Child Care and Early Learning Programs

### Stars Program Enrollment

January 2007— November 2009



Source: Delaware Department of Education

By 2015, the goal is to have 75% of the state's centers and 15% of the state's family care programs participating in Delaware Stars quality improvement efforts.



By November 2009, Delaware Stars had successfully enrolled

**150 programs**, including family and large family child care, early care and education and school-age centers, meaning that the program has touched approximately **10,350 children** in the state.

Source: Delaware Department of Education

### ★ For More Information ★

Additional information about Delaware Stars for Early Success is available from the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Education at: (302) 658-5177 or <http://www.dieec.udel.edu/delaware-stars-overview>

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University of Delaware  
298 K Graham Hall  
Newark, DE 19716-7350



For information about the Interagency Resource Management Committee or the Delaware Early Childhood Council please contact:

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Photos by Karen Kaler

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