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Enhancing Head Start Communication

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August/September 1997

Issue No. 63

Technology

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The Bulletin is a service of HSB's Training and Technical Assistance Branch. Its purpose is to enhance communication among the Head Start Bureau, Head Start programs, and interested national, regional, and state organizations and agencies.

JoAn Knight Herren
Chief T/TA Branch
Head Start Bureau

Jeffrey Fredericks
Editor-in-Chief
Head Start Bulletin

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Opportunities Through Investment in Technology

Technology has transformed the world. It has also changed the way Head Start programs operate, simplifying programs administration; offering unique opportunities in the classroom; and facilitating communications and collaborations with organizations around town, around the state, around the country, and around the world.

By Jeff Fredericks

Remember when fax machines were new and awesome? Now they're almost as essential as the telephone. The same is true with the new computer technologies--now computers, modems, and on-line services may seem awesome (and perhaps a little intimidating). But the day is coming when computers and the electronic communication that they offer will be indispensable.

This issue of the Bulletin highlights some of the new technologies available and illustrates ways in which they are already becoming invaluable to Head Start and Early Head Start. From staff development to family literacy, from record keeping to resource sharing, computer technology is shaping the way Head Start programs perform. The enhanced capabilities offered through computers will become increasingly important as Head Start programs come to grips with welfare reform and its impact on Head Start children and families.

I hope this issue of the Bulletin provides you with ideas about how your Head Start program can take advantage of technology to enhance services to children and families. The Bulletin is also meant to be a resource--take advantage of the references and referrals it provides!

Jeff Fredericks is Publications Manager at the Head Start Bureau and Editor-in-Chief of the Bulletin.

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Central Office News

Helen Taylor Testifies

Helen H. Taylor, Associate Commissioner of Head Start, testified at a Congressional hearing on child care for children from birth to three years old. The hearing, which was held on July 10, focused on recent research regarding infant/ toddler brain development, innovative proposals for expanding quality child care, and issues of quality and accessibility.

Ms. Taylor testified on the Early Head Start program, "One of our most promising early childhood initiatives." "Since 1965, Head Start has blazed a trail for our nation by showing the benefits of high quality, comprehensive early childhood services," Ms. Taylor told Congressional leaders. "We are committed to using Early Head Start to motivate a national campaign to do the right thing for our youngest children. Towards that end, we have developed detailed performance standards for serving infants, toddlers, and pregnant women to help guide program development at the state and local levels. We have created a major, rigorous evaluation to assess outcomes and determine effective strategies. We are also beginning a new emphasis on partnerships with other Federal agencies involved in child care, health services, community development, and education reform. And we are reaching out to work with state and local governments to stimulate others to invent their own ways to provide more young children with the chance for safe, healthy development and learning."

Migrant Programs Branch

The Migrant Head Start TASC has developed a series of cluster trainings in technology. These trainings have included information on:

- Basic hardware/software concepts

- Accessing and utilizing the Internet
- Developing multimedia presentations
- The Head Start Family Information System (HSFIS)

The TASC is reviewing its training methods and materials, in light of the new technologies, to ensure that training and technical assistance is provided in the most effective and efficient way possible. The TASC is also developing a WEB site, which will make a wide variety of information and resources available to Migrant Head Start program and others interested in the field.

Betty Kelson Retires

After more than 40 years of service to children and families, Betty Kelson retired from the Head Start Bureau. "I really enjoyed working with Head Start," Betty said. "I feel like I have thousands of children all around the country." Betty helped to review the first grant applications for Head Start when the "project" was started under the Johnson Administration. Over the years, Betty has supported Head Start in a variety of capacities, working most recently with the migrant Head Start programs. Her contributions on behalf of Head Start children and families have been appreciated by many.

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Region VIII

Many of the programs in Region VIII have been responding to new advances in technology.

The Carbon County Child Development Program (CCCDP) in Wyoming has used computer networking to link centers located around the State and to create teleconferencing capabilities. CCCDP is also collaborating with the local Chamber of Commerce to develop a Web site. The Jamestown and Valley City programs in North Dakota have computerized their programs. Children love the developmentally appropriate software; staff have been able to keep more complete records and share information in a more timely manner. The programs support staff development by encouraging staff to take computer classes at local colleges, attending workshops, and providing technical assistance. Rural Utah Child Development has converted to a computerized system of record keeping, child tracking, planning, and communicating. Tri-County Head Start in southwestern Colorado also has information in its system on health and human resources available to families. Badlands Head Start in South Dakota utilizes technology to overcome barriers to service created by large geographical distances. In addition to its office computers, all of the program's home visitors and family service coordinators use laptop computers in the field. The program is also collaborating with the local university on ways in which computer technology can facilitate access to coursework and training.

For more information on activities in Region VIII, contact Cynthia Thomas at 303-844-3100, ext. 391.

Region X

ROXTEC-L is the listserv developed in Region X to link Head Start programs and staff in

Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. The listserv provides a forum for sharing information and ideas about computer and technology use. Although ROXTEC-L is targeted for Region X, there are other participants around the country who have an interest in learning through the listserv.

For more information, contact Charles Smith, Family Services Specialist, Region X Support Center, Portland State University, Telephone: 503-725-5917, Fax: 503-725-4838, E-mail: CHARLES@SES.PDX.EDU

Region IV

The Region IV Administration for Children and Families is collaborating in a "Fatherhood" project with the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame, Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, and a number of Head Start programs throughout the Region.

Through the leadership of Gwendolyn Johnson, the regional male involvement initiative received \$1 million from the Kellogg Foundation for training and technical assistance, mentoring services, health services, screening and therapy, educational/college assistance, and scholarships.

In addition, the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity has contributed more than \$10 million in volunteer services, including repairs and renovations at Head Start sites, supplies and equipment, training and technical assistance, counseling and therapy services, mentoring services, and the purchase of a facility to house six Head Start classrooms.

For more information on Region IV activities, contact Dorothy Mabry at 404-588-5732.

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Region IV Technology Survey Results
by *Harry W. Bickel, Jr.*

Region IVb TASC conducted a survey of computer hardware and software use throughout the region (175 responses were received). The following are highlights of the results:

- 98% of programs use computers in their administrative offices.
- 63% of programs use computers in the classroom.
- 26% of programs have computers that are not networked.
- 94% of programs use some sort of data tracking software.
- 64% of programs have integrated software suites.
- Virtually all of the programs have word processing software; 77% have spreadsheet software; 59% have database software; and 43% have desktop publishing software.

For more information, contact: *Harry W. Bickel, Jr., Health Specialist, Region IVb TASC.*
Telephone: 502-745-4041, Fax: 502-745-3340, E-mail: hwbick01@homer.louisville.edu

Region I

Staff from the Regional Office are holding a series of meetings with TANF staff in states throughout the region. The purpose of these meetings is to explore ways of enhancing support for families through Head Start-child care partnerships.

Head Start staff in the Regional Office have been working jointly with staff from the Office of Child Support Enforcement to raise awareness and participation in child support enforcement efforts. Regional Office staff have been meeting with Head Start grantees to provide information about this initiative and the ways in which it contributes to parent involvement and family self-sufficiency.

Region IX

The Regional Office is working with the Regional Head Start Association to educate programs about the importance of insurance. A workshop is being developed to address issues related to liability insurance for non-governmental organizations and the experiences of various Head Start programs which have needed such coverage.

Regional Office staff in the Head Start branch collaborated with the Regional Child Support Enforcement Unit in a joint presentation at the Regional Head Start Association training conference, which was held June 19, 1997 in Long Beach, CA. Linkages with Child Support Enforcement, the impact of welfare reform on Head Start families, and employment were among the topics discussed.

The Head Start branch will be participating in a joint training conference with the Regional Head Start Association, the California Head Start-State Collaboration Project, and California State Human Services Administrators on August 5, 1997, in Sacramento, CA. An overview of the Head Start program will be presented, along with ways to strengthen partnerships and improve linkages with other programs serving similar populations.

New Staff: The Head Start branch has a new Program Specialist. Ms. Marilyn Nakamura will be serving the Hawaiian Islands and the Outer Pacific Head Start service area.

For more information on Region XI activities, contact Marcia Beersdorf at 415-437-8064, or Bob Beggs at 415-437-8061.

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Routine Maintenance

The new program year is about to start! There are a number of steps you can take to make sure you're ready.

Facilities

This is a good time to take stock of your facility and your program resources. Make any needed repairs to your facility, repair or replace any damaged furniture or materials, stock up on supplies, and seek contributions of needed items or services from people and organizations within your community. The Head Start Facilities Manual provides useful information, as does the Head Start Facility Information and Referral Service (see [article](#) on p. 17).

Disabilities

Since 10 percent of children enrolled in your program have special needs, it is important to make sure that your program accommodates them. Not only should your facility meet ADA requirements, your staff should be trained in working with special-needs children and in the use of special equipment. Your regional RAP can assist with information and resources for including children with disabilities and their families in your Head Start program. Additional information can be found in the Head Start Program Performance Standards for Children with Disabilities, as well as in the Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community.

Planning

Now is a good time to take stock of your community and your program to assess what changes have taken place over the past year, what needs have emerged, and how your

program might adjust to reflect the current environment better. Developing a Head Start Training Plan (with worksheets) is an excellent resource to help you through this process, from determining the needs of your program and setting priorities, to preparing a training budget and allocating funds, to evaluating your plan and making any necessary adjustments.

Staff Orientation & Training

Both new and returning staff will need an orientation in preparation for the new program year. Be sure to include everyone, from teachers to program specialists to bus drivers. There are many resources available for training, and in each of the major program areas. Take advantage of them!

Recruitment & Enrollment

Recruitment is a major part of Head Start, and you should make sure your recruitment plan incorporates strategies for reaching out to all eligible families (including those of diverse ethnic backgrounds and those who have children with disabilities). A variety of resources is available, including A Head Start Handbook of the Parent Involvement Vision and Strategies (which includes a section on recruitment and enrollment). You should also have materials on your program prepared for hand-outs! Families will need to be oriented to Head Start--and how you handle this process can be a crucial factor in getting parents actively involved in your program. Give thought, too, to strategies for family goal-setting and planning.

Parent Involvement

Now is a good time to focus on your parent involvement efforts, to involve parents from the beginning of the new program year. There are many resources available to support your parent involvement efforts, including A Head Start Handbook of the Parent Involvement Vision and Strategies and Engaging Parents and Building Supportive Communities, two of the training guides. Two new video-based training packages, "Linking Our Voices" and "Our Stories Keep Us Connected," are also available in English and Spanish.

Health

School-readiness includes health and dental check-ups and immunizations. The Health Data Tracking Instrument (with user's guide) is a useful tool, along with the Head Start Immunization Schedule. The training guides can help you incorporate health and wellness into your Head Start program on an ongoing basis.

The Head Start Publications Management Center (HSPMC) has a wide variety of publications and resources available. For a current catalogue or to place an order contact the HSPMC by fax at (703) 683-5769 or by E-mail at puborder@headstartinfo.org.

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New Initiatives

The Smart Card: A Smart Way to Go for Head Start

THIS HEALTH PASSPORT FACILITATES INTERAGENCY COOPERATION, REDUCES PAPERWORK, AND GIVES FAMILIES CONTROL OVER THEIR HEALTH CARE INFORMATION.

By Kenneth Akwuole

One common feature of recent Federal legislation is the emphasis on built-in flexibility that will allow State and local governments to be more creative in implementing Federally-sponsored program. Head Start has always maintained this philosophy, recognizing that local programs serve families with differing needs and under different circumstances around the country.

The Head Start Bureau also promotes collaboration as a means of strengthening services to Head Start children and families. In fact, the revised Program Performance Standards call for the formation of "Family and Community Partnerships" in the delivery of those services. Technology is playing an increasingly important role in enhancing service delivery and, as a result, the Bureau is looking to expand the use of technology in Head Start.

Toward that end, the Head Start Bureau has joined in the effort by the Western Governors Association (WGA) to develop an electronic health card called the "Health Passport" (HPP). Card technology has proven to be one of the most effective management tools of the information age. In both the public and private sectors, cards are replacing cumbersome, paper-based systems for establishing eligibility, transferring information, and executing financial transactions. For example, much of the information required for patient or client enrollment, eligibility verification, and program reporting are common among government

social programs. A card that carries basic demographic, financial, and immunological information will help to minimize the time it takes to obtain and verify such information.

The goal of the WGA, the Head Start Bureau, and other Federal sponsors is to develop and test a dynamic, versatile, and multipurpose electronic health card that will improve information sharing and administrative efficiency among public and private health care providers and nutrition programs, while placing families firmly in control of the information on the card.

For the Head Start community, the HPP project provides an opportunity for important collaboration with other service providers. The Head Start program will benefit from this project by sharing basic information and referrals with other core programs, such as WIC, EPSDT, immunizations, migrant, and Indian Health Service programs. The HPP will also lower administrative barriers to Head Start services by reducing the amount of paperwork associated with family visits.

The HPP will enhance the tracking of health care outcomes by increasing the availability and accuracy of health statistics. Health screening and measurements obtained at each Medicaid screening or other doctor's visits will be encoded in the card. The portability and security the HPP will provide makes it a viable project, especially among migrant families.

Most importantly, the HPP is designed to promote personal responsibility in health care and nutrition by placing individuals firmly in control of the information on the card. HPP offers the prospect of families gaining technological control of information entry and flow, so that they are empowered to access other community services and resources to meet their specific needs.

An 11-month feasibility study across six western states indicated that the HPP concept is technically, economically, and organizationally viable. The feasibility study also revealed that the participants in this project are similar in terms of client base, services provided, and information needs. These participants included four states (Wyoming, North Dakota, Nevada, and Idaho) and seven programs (WIC, Immunization, EPSDT, Maternal and Child Health, Head Start, Indian Health Services, and other Medicaid Services).

In addition, four Head Start programs participated in the final feasibility study of the HPP project and are expected to provide the sites for the field demonstration. These programs are: Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program (BECEP)/Head Start in Bismarck, North Dakota; Nevada International Head Start in Reno/Sparks, Nevada, Laramie County Head Start in Cheyenne, Wyoming; and Twin Falls County Head Start in Twin Falls, Idaho.

The design and development phase of the HPP demonstration project is scheduled to begin in August 1997, and the deployment phase is expected to begin by April 1998. The evaluation phase of the project will begin in the summer of 1999, after 18 months of operation. The Urban Institute, a private, non-profit, policy research and education organization, will conduct the evaluation of the HPP demonstration project.

Kenneth Akwuole is a 1996-97 National Head Start Fellow. For more information on Smart Card, contact Bill Wilson at the Head Start Bureau. T: 202-205-8913.

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New Initiatives

Head Start--Child Care Initiative Project

The Head Start and Child Care Bureaus are sponsoring an initiative at the national, regional, state, and community levels to support high-quality early childhood services and enable parents to work and to prepare for employment. The goal of this initiative is to assist the Head Start and Child Care Bureaus in developing policies and practices that foster grantees' abilities to maximize the benefits of collaboration for young children and families.

A work group has been formed to address issues in the following areas:

- What are the key Federal policies, regulations, and management practices that support local Head Start-child care partnerships?
- Are there Federal policies, regulations, and management practices that unnecessarily hinder or complicate the efforts of local early childhood agencies to share resources and work together?
- What changes and improvements in Federal policies and practices would assist local program in providing more high quality services that support parents' needs for education, training, and work?
- Strengths of current practice, along with existing barriers, will be identified. Findings from the analysis of these issues will be shared with grantees and delegate agencies, Regional Offices, and others through a series of national and regional meetings.

For more information, contact Tom Schultz, Special Assistant to the Associate Commissioner, at the Head Start Bureau E-mail: tschultz@acf.dhhs.gov.

ACF Priorities

Olivia Golden, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), has identified the following priority areas for FY1997:

1. Welfare reform: Assume accountability for moving families to work.
2. Child Support: Ensure financial support for children from both parents.
3. Child Care: Create access to affordable child care for low-income working families.
4. Infants and Toddlers: Reach children earlier to promote full development (e.g., through Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care).
5. Head Start: Enroll 1 million children in quality Head Start by 2002 and prepare them to be ready to learn.
6. Child Welfare: Provide safety, permanency, and well-being for children and double the number of adoptions from the public child welfare system.
7. ACF Reinvention: Build capacity to meet partners' needs.

America Reads!

Head Start is playing a key role in President Clinton's America Reads Challenge. The Administration proposes to expand Head Start, increasing the program's funding by some \$325 million in fiscal year 1998 and by several billions of dollars over the next five years, with the goal of having one million children in the program by fiscal year 2002. Head Start has made an important contribution to child and family literacy. The expansion of Head Start, with its family literacy component, will help the Administration to meet its goal of helping children to read well and independently by the end of third grade.

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Technology

Head Start and the Internet

THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF TALK ABOUT THE INTERNET, BUT IS IT RELEVANT TO HEAD START? YES!

By Chuck Lynd

Why would a single mother with limited income in an inner city or rural area want to go on-line? Why would administrators working with limited resources invest in equipment, provide appropriate support for staff, and allocate funds that compete with other pressing priorities? Is it really worth it?

For more and more programs, the answer is "yes." Head Start grantees around the country are going on-line, and some programs are even establishing a "home page" on the World Wide Web. This article offers several reasons why your program might want to consider joining the pioneers who are beginning to settle this new frontier called the Internet.

What Is the Internet?

Think of the Internet as a sort of worldwide phone system, with data being exchanged instead of voice conversations. The World Wide Web is a simple way for people to exchange information on the Internet. People point and click a mouse to navigate the Web--gathering and exchanging information, communicating via email, "chat rooms" and bulletin boards, and even downloading software. The Internet, or electronic communication in general, is becoming an essential way to communicate.

Knowing how to make use of this technology effectively is becoming a literacy skill alongside reading, writing, and arithmetic. Regardless of income level, everyone needs literacy skills, and equity issues demand that we begin to insist that computers and access to

the Internet be available to Head Start families and children.

Access to this new communications medium is not as difficult as it once was. Local providers of on-line services have sprung up in communities around the country, and computer technology and networking have surfaced in recent years as important agenda items for most Head Start programs. Steadily falling prices for both new and used computer equipment also has made this transition more practical. Many Head Start programs have installed computers and early learning software for use in preschool classrooms. Fax machines have become a necessity, and programs routinely have access to a modem to connect with the Head Start Bulletin Board System (BBS) or one of the commercial on-line services. Distance learning options for staff development are being introduced as cost-effective alternatives to traditional inservice programming. Some programs are beginning to develop strategic plans that make technology literacy a goal for all staff, teachers, parents, and volunteers.

Going "On Line"

Unfortunately, just because you have a modem-equipped computer does not mean you are ready to "surf the Net." You need to find an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to let you connect to the network. A first step to learn what community-based networks or local ISPs are available is to call the public library. The reference librarian can usually explain the options and help you identify resource organizations that can help you get connected. Even if there is no fully developed service in your area, chances are good that other groups are already planning to develop a network that will link schools, businesses, community agencies, and local residents to the Internet. Libraries and local colleges often take a lead role in these efforts because of their greater experience with technology and networking. Head Start programs can not only become part of the local network, they can play a leadership role in helping low-income families take advantage of this important community asset.

In addition to the ISP, you'll also need "browser" software, which tells your computer how to communicate with the Internet. With the installation of this software, you will have access to the Internet and a wealth of resources available to Head Start programs. The Head Start BBS, for example, has recently established a home page on the World Wide Web and installed a new graphical version of its bulletin board that helps make the exchange of messages and files easy to use. HandsNet, a service that links human service agencies and grassroots community programs all over the nation, offers a wide variety of news and information specifically targeted to professionals who work with low-income families.

Networking for Children and Families Programs that invested in technology now find themselves prepared to "internetwork" with the larger community. Collaboration with other community agencies and service organizations is essential in order to help low-income families meet the challenges of welfare reform, child care, job training, and the transition to work. Communicating with these groups via the Internet and community-based networks dramatically increases the opportunity for individuals and organizations to communicate, collaborate, access information, and share resources. The world will be at your fingertips!

For more information, contact: Chuck Lynn, Information Technology Specialist, Region Vb TASC. T: 614-447-0844, ext. 118, F: 614-447-9043, E-mail: Lynd.7@osu.edu.

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Head Start Bulletin Board

By Karen O'Donnell

The National Head Start Bulletin Board System (BBS), implemented in 1992, provides information to members of the Head Start community across the United States. Users can enter, read, and respond to e-mail messages; read and download files; and share information of interest to all Head Start programs. The BBS is a rich reservoir of information, enhanced by user participation.

The Head Start Bureau uses the BBS to disseminate information rapidly to all Head Start programs. For example, when the proposed revisions to the Program Performance Standards were issued, they were posted and available on the BBS by 9:30 a.m. Users in the western half of the country found this particularly helpful, since they did not have to wait several days for the mail to arrive. Users were also able to share comments and provide feedback to the Head Start Bureau via the BBS.

The BBS provides a newsletter and calendar of training opportunities and conferences. RFPs, grant availability, information memoranda, and program instructions are also posted to the BBS as soon as they are released.

How to Use the BBS

The BBS is available free of charge to Head Start programs. All you need is a computer, a modem, a telephone line, and some sort of communications software. (You don't even need Windows!) Simply use the software to dial 1-800-477-8278, then answer a few brief questions. Full users receive an hour a day free on the BBS.

Future Plans

The Head Start Bureau is expanding its presence on the World Wide Web. The current site provides information on programs, initiatives, the training and technical assistance network, as well as an electronic library. You can also access a complete listing of Head Start grantees, organized by state.

Future plans for expansion include adding discussion forums, an area on the BBS for parents, more program information, and expanding information on research.

For more information, contact: Karen O'Donnell, System Operator, NHS BBS. T: 703-807-2312, F: 703-528-2857, E-mail: kareno@synmhs.USA.com.

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Fax On Demand

By Kurt Walker

Technology has evolved very rapidly in recent years, and Head Start programs around the country have been keeping up with the changes at a variety of different speeds. Although many programs are not yet "on the 'Net," virtually all Head Start programs have fax machines. And with the right set-up, a fax machine can provide access to a wide variety of electronic information and resources.

What Is Fax On Demand?

Fax on Demand is a computerized resource information system that allows callers to use a touch-tone phone to request information, which is then sent directly to the caller's fax machine. The system is ideal for anyone--large grantees, T/TA providers, State Collaboration Projects--anyone serving as a resource for a number of different Head Start programs and other early childhood partners. Callers have fast and easy access to electronic information, even if they don't have access to the Internet.

How Does It Work?

The Fax On Demand system is set up at the host organization on a computer with a modem. Documents and other resources available to callers are loaded into that computer's memory. The system software can be obtained at your local computer software dealer. The caller dials the Fax on Demand (FOD) telephone number from a touch-tone phone and listens to an electronic greeting. The greeting includes a brief overview of the documents available through the Fax on Demand system. The caller then selects the document to be sent by fax by pressing the appropriate document number on the touch-tone phone. After selecting the documents, the caller identifies the fax number to which they should be sent. If the caller is

using a phone/fax (a fax machine with a telephone handset), then she or he can simply press the start button on the fax machine.

The Fax on Demand computer system will automatically transmit all of the requested documents to the caller's fax.

For more information, contact:

Kurt Walker, Project Director,

Kentucky Head Start-State Collaboration Project.

T: 502-564-3010

F. 502-564-6952

E-mail: Kwalkerhscp@juno.com

FOD: 502-564-2690

Head Start Finds Solutions in a User Group

By Bernie Lagud

Ever wish that you didn't have to reinvent the wheel--that you had easy access to already-developed resources and materials? Or that you could brainstorm with other people working on the same issues and trying to solve the same problems you are? User groups may be the resource you're looking for.

What Is a User Group?

A user group is a network of people who share a common interest. The members of this human network interact and share information on a peer-to-peer basis, raising the knowledge and expertise levels of group members through the exchange of information, resources, and services.

Members of user groups can communicate with one another electronically, or they can meet in person as we do in Region IX. During these meetings, group members share each others' enrollment packets, tracking forms, control sheets, or data entry procedures. They also participate in peer training. For instance, if one member's program implements a new software module, such as mental health tracking, he or she could provide training on that topic to others. Finally, user group members have a resource pool of fellow users who can help problem-solve and develop new and creative uses for technology.

Users Groups in Region IX

At the request of Head Start grantees, the Region IX TASC organized two user groups. Local programs opened up their facilities and moved their administrative computers into training rooms to allow participants hands-on experience during training. The two groups meet quarterly to share ideas, tips, and tricks on using various software. The first Child Plus User Group met in October 1992 and had 13 participants. Since then, registration at some events has been as high as 90. The group recently split into the Northern and Southern California chapters.

Because of their success, user groups will be a training vehicle for Child Plus in Region IX. The groups will also continue their involvement with Region IX Head Start Associations, TASC, and Child Plus in Atlanta.

How to Start a User Group

The first step in starting a user group is to find out who else in your area is using the same software. The software developer may be able to provide you with a user list. The developer might also be able to provide training materials, software, and other assistance for your user group meetings. Contact other users to do an informal survey of needs, issues, ideas and interests, and to invite them to join the user's group. You may also want to contact your local PC/Mac user group for ideas and assistance. These groups are excellent resources for "gurus" and computer professionals who enjoy providing inkind consultation services.

Keeping the User Group Going

Now that you've got your user group established, there are several steps you can take to keep it going:

- Involve all users in the group: planning training topics, meeting arrangements, vendor relations, and collaborating with other user groups.
- Stay connected on a regular basis: use Internet/e-mail or perhaps have the vendor sponsor a Web page.
- Find local community colleges, nonprofit training centers, and private training labs which could donate (or discount)their computer labs for user group training.
- When a lab is not available, don't call off the meeting--the "hands off" approach to training can be just as valuable. Make presentations, share written forms, policies and procedures. Encourage participants to bring their laptops!

Resources

Some of the resources available in starting and maintaining your user group include:

- Your regional TASC/HSQIC
- Your local PC/Mac user group
- Local computer vendors and computer training centers
- A site on the World Wide Web for locating and registering user groups: <http://www.ugconnection.com>

For more information contact: Bernie Lagud, ADP Specialist, Region IX TASC. T: 510-935-9711, F. 510-985-0413, E-mail: tasc9@devassoc.com.

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CDA Via Satellite

By Lydia B. Bernales

The Archdiocese of New York Head Start is one of several programs participating in the Early Childhood Professional Development Network (ECPDN). The ECPDN program was developed to facilitate the certification of early childhood educators. The candidates, instead of going to class, participate via satellite--watching the seminar live on cable and calling in their questions and comments. For those without cable, tapes of the seminar can be used for discussion, and homework can be faxed into ECPDN.

Certificates of participation are awarded at the end of each course. Upon completion of the program--participating in local discussions, viewing 120 hours of videotapes, and completing 20 homework assignments--the candidates earn 9 credits. CDA candidates must also prepare a portfolio on the Competency Goals and apply for assessment and certification by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact: Nora Feury, Executive Director, or Lydia B. Berwies, Education Director/Facilitator, Archdiocese of New York Head Start Program. T: 718-409-1277, F: 718-409-3219.

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Computers in the Classroom

by *Laura J. Colker*

Five years ago, the idea of having a computer in a Head Start classroom bordered on the radical. Many respected early childhood educators felt that computers were another example of how society is pushing children to grow up too fast. They felt that computers were isolating and detracted from children's time with concrete materials, such as blocks or table toys that provided "hands on" play.

Today, the idea of computers in the classroom is not nearly as controversial. Through observations, most of us realize that computers are not isolating when set up to be an activity area, and can, in fact, become the most social area of the classroom. Moreover, it is the very abstract nature of computers that is able to extend children's thinking. By "mirroring" on the computer what the child learns from playing with table toys, a child's thinking is gradually extended to a more advanced level. Including computers in the classroom is also a step toward equity. There is little doubt that society's computer needs will increase over time, and making computers available gives both girls and boys an early opportunity to become comfortable with this technology.

- When setting up a computer area in your classroom, these are some questions that need to be answered:
- Where can the computer be placed so it is out of the line of traffic?
- Where can children talk quietly together?

- Where are there sufficient electrical outlets to support the equipment?
- What other activity areas would be good to have close by--or far away?

After thinking through these questions, many classroom teachers like to set up the computer near the library or the writing area. Even though these are quiet areas, having the computer nearby creates or enhances the literacy environment. Avoid locating the area close to art, sand and water, or cooking activities because paint, water, and food can harm equipment.

In furnishing the computer area, think of how you can best promote socialization. Most classrooms choose to have two children working at one computer, so that children can share ideas and help each other. Ideally, your computer area would have two computers and a shared printer. This allows four children to be in the computer area at one time. If your program has only one computer, place two chairs at the computer and set the printer on its own stand or table. As with all activity areas, tables, chairs, and desks should be child-sized. With creative thinking, you can design a computer area that draws in children for learning and fun.

When selecting a computer system, there are two major considerations: hardware and software. For many programs, the selection of hardware is determined by financial resources. Because the initial investment in setting up a computer area can be costly, many programs actively seek donations from local businesses. In many areas, partnerships are created between food store chains and schools that involve collecting receipts up to a specified dollar amount. When a certain amount of receipts has been collected, the food store donates a computer or software to the program.

When selecting a computer, look for standard memory and a hard drive. You do not need to purchase an enlarged computer keyboard, unless children in your care have special vision or manual dexterity needs that would necessitate such adaptations. A mouse makes operating the computer fun and easy for children; a color printer greatly enhances the experiences.

The other major consideration is software. A great deal of software for young children is currently in the marketplace. Some of it is wonderful; some of it is just plain bad. In the early days, publishers took software that had been written for school-age children and added "bells, whistles and glitz"--forgetting that the content made little sense to preschoolers.

In recent years, a concerted effort has been made to develop appropriate software for young children. Much of this newer software, including an ever-growing quantity of CD-ROMs, is ideal for young children. The challenge for educators is to sift out the good software from the bad. Most software publishers will allow you to preview their software free or charge, so that you can evaluate its appropriateness for your classroom. The checklist on the next page will help you to review software. With thoughtfully selected, developmentally appropriate software, young children can enhance their cognitive and socio-emotional skills at the same time that they are refining their fine motor skills.

Computers are an excellent way to meet the individual needs of children. They provide children with opportunities to learn in a variety of ways, and at a pace that meets their unique needs. After all, this is what Head Start is about.

For more information, contact: Laura J. Colker, Head Start National Education Training Project, 2277 Research Boulevard, #7A, Rockville, MD 20850

Distance Learning!

by Lois Sexton

The New Horizons Training Center, a program of the Macon Program for Progress, has made good use of the "information highway" in improving the quality of care for children in North Carolina. The Training Center uses state-of-the-art fiber optics technology to provide distance education to child care providers across the State, as well as to bring the best of technology to parents and children.

The Training Center serves as a model of total interagency collaboration, consumer orientation, and one-stop service access.

Comprehensive services provided through the Center include training in nutrition; prenatal care; health and mental health; dental care; transportation; housing; full inclusion of challenged children birth to five years of age; family sufficiency and empowerment; literacy; GED; computer literacy; and adult professional development. In addition to the classrooms, computer classrooms have been created for children - including developmentally appropriate software selected to foster open-ended, creative learning. Two of the classrooms for children have been equipped with cameras and sound so that training sessions can include live observation.

Funding for the New Horizons Training Center was made available through a State Information Highway grant, with additional funding from the regional office. The services provided through the Center benefit the entire region, enhancing caregiver skills and creating early childhood experiences that enrich the lives of children and parents.

For more information, contact: Lois Sexton, Director, New Horizons Center for Children and Families, Macon Program for Progress. T: 704-524-4473, F: 704-524-0823.

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Disabilities

Checklist for Selecting Developmentally Appropriate Software

- Program content and approach are appropriate to child's stage of cognitive development. (Does not require abstract reasoning abilities.)
- Child can use independently without adult help.
- Child can move through the program and skip around at will.
- Child can exit the program at any time.
- Program moves quickly without any "down" time on screen.
- Pictures are used to represent words (for examples, a green paintbrush to represent the color green).
- Program deals with processes rather than a correct answer. (Program is open-ended and offers choices).
- Different degrees of difficulty can be set.

- Child's progress can be tracked.
- A helpful teacher's guide accompanies the software.
- The content is well-defined.
- Feedback is helpful to the child and non-judgmental.
- Content is bias-free; images are multiethnic.
- Content relates to what is being taught in other activity areas in the classroom.

A good resource is the High/Scope Buyer's Guide to Children's Software (1995), which is available from the High/Scope Foundation To order, call 800-407-7377.

Technology Transforms Learning for Children and Parents

By Sandy Waddell, Bob Hughes, and Peggy Coyne

With the help of computers, children and parents can access a variety of information and resources that otherwise would be unavailable to them. This is especially true for those with disabilities. Learners who are unable to turn the pages of a book can navigate text electronically on the computer screen. Learners with visual impairments can have text enlarged or the color changed to meet their needs. Learners who are unable to hold a pencil can type out text on a computer keyboard.

Computer technology can also help parents and children who have had difficulty with traditional approaches to learning. The use of creative learning software can overcome psychological "blocks" to "book learning." This could be especially helpful for parents who struggled with learning as a child. A model computer learning program for parents and teachers has been implemented in Massachusetts.

A collaboration between North Shore Head Start in Beverly, MA, and the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), a not-for-profit educational research and development organization, the Family and Community Literacy Project draws learners at all levels into the fold.

At the center of the project, launched three years ago, is the belief that parents who are comfortable with computers will extend those attitudes to their children, thereby preparing them for a society that depends on computers for information and job advancement.

Head Start parents and instructors as well as K-3 teachers attend training together, forging a transitional link between Head Start and local elementary schools. The adults begin their voyage into technology using pre-literacy and early literacy software. The benefit is twofold, offering easy entry to the world of computers and providing familiarity with applications that can be used with children.

Parents whose own learning has been difficult because it was foreshortened or because they struggled with undiagnosed learning disabilities gain confidence as they address their reading deficiencies and gain mastery over such skills as word processing.

The long-term hope is that technology will act as a catalyst, opening educational paths once closed to people with special needs and other excluded groups.

As the project has evolved, so has its supporters. The Children's Trust Fund and Hasbro Children's Foundation this year funded the program at the Salem Family Learning Center, where parents and teachers receive training and have drop-in access to computers. The center also offers a range of family support services, including STEP training and AA meetings.

Hasbro Children's Foundation has provided money to begin replicating the project nationally.

For more information, contact Sandy Waddell Director, North Shore Head Start. T: 508-524-0042, E-mail: regis12@concentric.com. The CAST home page is located at: <http://www.cast.org>.

Success!

There's nothing like success to breed success. Of 12 parents who participated in the Family and Community Literacy Project, two have gone on to receive associate of arts degrees and several more are enrolled or have completed certification or diploma programs.

Those achievements shine against the backdrop of an estimated 80 percent of North Shore Head Start parents who have not completed high school and are armed with limited literacy skills. Sandy Waddell, Director of the North Shore Head Start program, believes that about half of those parents struggled with undiagnosed learning disabilities during the course of their own education.

Filling in those gaps was among the aims of the Family and Community Literacy Project. But looming large in the picture for Head Start professionals was the hope that boosting parents' abilities and morale would help to end intergenerational cycles of poor academic achievement and high drop-out rates.

For CAST, the project continued the not-for-profit organization's mission to develop and adapt technologies that level the playing field for people with disabilities and other traditionally excluded populations.

Parents in the program also benefited from a range of services offered by North Shore Head Start at the Salem Family Learning Center, including ongoing career and educational counseling as well as parent training and support classes. Through these family support services, parents can meet a broad range of needs as they pursue their own educational and professional development.

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Facilities

Head Start Facility Referral and Information Service

The Head Start Facility Referral and Information Service (HSFRIS) is a time-saving tool for providing the Head Start community with resources and information on current facility issues and concerns. The database includes relevant Head Start documents, pamphlets, brochures, books, book chapters, government documents, newsletters, journal articles, special journal issues, professional associations/ organizations, conference proceedings, state materials, monographs, current legislation, and audiovisual materials on a wide range of issues. Additional resources are added regularly.

Using the Service

Callers and information specialists work together to select resource materials that are most relevant to the callers' needs. The database provides callers with print-outs (citations) of selected resources that contain the following information:

- Title of the resource
- Abstract or description of the resource
- Publication date
- Publisher/Source information
- Cost (if applicable)

Once callers receive the printed citation(s), they decide whether they want to contact the publisher/source for the information. Please note that callers are referred to resources; the service does not distribute the resources listed on the database.

For More Information

Callers can contact an information specialist through any of the following:

Telephone:

1-800-303-0705 (An Information Specialist is available from 9 a.m.--5 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday; voice mail is available during non-office hours)

Fax:

301-519-6760 (Attention: Head Start Facility Referral and Information Service)

E-mail:

jallen@smtpinet.aspensys.com

Mail:

Head Start Facility Referral and Information Service, 2277 Research Blvd., 7A, Rockville, MD 20850

The Davis-Bacon Act

What is the Davis-Bacon Act?

The Davis-Bacon Act is a Federal law which requires that "prevailing wages" and fringe benefits be paid to all laborers and mechanics employed under Federal contracts, and certain federally financed construction and renovation projects, if the account of the contract exceeds \$2,000. These requirements apply to contracts entered into after October 1, 1994. (Specific language may be found in Section 644(g) of the Head Start Act.)

In contracts covered by the Davis-Bacon Act, "prevailing wages" and fringe benefits must be paid to the mutual employees who work at the construction or renovation site. Covered individuals must be employees of a contractor or sub-contractor. The prevailing wages, which are set by the Department of Labor (DOL), must be included in bid specifications in contracts.

Compliance by Grantees

When the Davis-Bacon Act applies to the renovation or construction of a Head Start facility, grantees will have certain responsibilities specified by the law and DOL regulations. Those responsibilities are to:

Determine prevailing wages.

The grantee must determine the correct prevailing wage for the type and location of the labor for which it will contract. The correct prevailing wage must be included in the grantee's bid solicitation and contract.

The DOL publishes wage determining annually in the Federal Register. The determinations are updated as needed, which may be as often as several times a year. Information on

prevailing wages can be obtained by contacting your program specialist, or by contacting Aspen Systems, the Head Start Facility Referral and Information Services (HSFRIS), at 1-800-303-0705.

Include labor standards clauses.

The grantee must include in the bid solicitation and contract a series of contract clauses called the "labor standards clauses." The labor standards clauses are found in DOL regulations and can be obtained from the Head Start Facility Referral and Information Service.

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Research, Demonstration, & Evaluation

The Head Start Performance Measures

THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES ARE HEAD START'S COMMITMENT TO RESULTS--AND TO DOCUMENTING OUR ACHIEVEMENT.

by James A. Harrell

Questions have been raised recently about Head Start Performance Measures--what they are and what they mean. This article provides an overview of these measures, the commitment they represent to quality and excellence in Head Start, and their implications for services provided to Head Start children and families.

What are the Head Start Performance Measures?

The Performance Measures are methods and procedures for assessing the quality and effectiveness of the Head Start program through outcomes for children and families and through program indicators. These findings will provide a snapshot of how well the Head Start program is performing nationally or regionally at a given point in time. The Performance Measures are a statement of the Head Start program's commitment to continuous improvement--an ongoing pursuit of excellence in achieving our ultimate goal: socially competent children who are ready to learn and ready to meet the challenges of life. They are Head Start's commitment to results--results translated into real terms like increased learning ability, better health, sound nutrition, stronger families, supportive communities, and efficiently run programs. They are Head Start's promise to the American taxpayers who foot the bill for this valuable effort.

- In Head Start, we are promising to:

- Enhance children's growth and development;
- Strengthen families as the primary nurturers of children;
- Provide children with educational, health and nutritional services;
- Link children and families to needed community services;
- Ensure well-managed programs that include parents in decision-making.

The Performance Measures will allow us to document our successes in achieving these five objectives.

A Conceptual Framework

The illustration on the following page provides a conceptual framework for the Performance Measures, showing how the measures are organized and, more importantly, how they relate to Head Start's ultimate goal of enhancing children's social competence. The pyramid illustrates how the five objectives identified above provide the support essential to realizing the goal of social competence in children.

The pyramid further highlights the relationship between what are processes (Objectives 3-5) and what are outcomes (Objectives 1 and 2), leading to the goal of social competence. Achieving these objectives--both process and outcome-based--is critical to the ultimate success of Head Start.

How Will the Head Start Performance Measures Be Used?

From a national perspective, the data that we track and report on a regular basis will be like a "report card." They will tell Federal staff, policy makers, budgeters, and others where we are making excellent progress and--just as important--where we need to improve. We will use the measures to hold ourselves accountable. They will shine a spotlight on areas where additional knowledge-development or training and technical assistance may be needed. And those data will also tell Congress and the American people what they are buying for their billion-dollar investment in Head Start.

In time, we hope that local Head Start programs will also adopt the pyramid as their own framework for self-assessment, for individual program goal-setting, and for tracking improvement. The real pursuit of excellence in Head Start will always be community-based, program-specific work.

In describing how the Head Start Performance Measures will be used, it is equally important to clarify how they will NOT be used. The Performance Measures will not be used as a yardstick for measuring program compliance, nor will they replace the Program Performance Standards.

The Program Performance Standards are the mandatory regulations which grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start program; they define the services that must be provided by Head Start programs. The Performance Measures, on the

other hand, are tools to help us assess change the impact that Head Start is having in specific areas (e.g., health, literacy). The Performance Measures will help programs to document their successes, as well as areas for improvement. The measures also move beyond assessing individual programs to assessing how well the Head Start program is performing in a variety of areas, in a variety of locations, and over time. The Performance Measures will not be used to assess individual children or to single out individual programs as winners or losers.

How Can We Make the Head Start Performance Measures Work for Children and Families?

There are a number of ways in which the Performance Measures can benefit Head Start children and families (and others). As a whole, and from a national perspective, a focus on these specific results will give us an important tool that we can use to:

Clarify our purpose.

These measures lay out what we in Head Start have committed to accomplish.

Identify our opportunities.

Using these measures, we can assess both our successes and equally important--the efforts that have not been sufficient or effective. These areas present opportunities for increased attention and improved results.

Unify our efforts.

By setting out a results-oriented agenda, we can avoid the tendency to rush to our proverbial horses and ride off in all directions at once. By focusing on the desired result, we can work together and use our multiple resources to achieve a common goal.

Solidify our support.

By tracking progress on these measures over time, we will generate greater confidence in our achievements - from the community level to Congress. Without these objective measures, we will continue to face the problem of explaining ourselves to an often uninformed and sometimes unimpressed political constituency.

We plan to publish the report on the Head Start Program Performance Measures soon. It will be distributed to all Head Start programs and published electronically through the Head Start Bulletin Board. In the meantime, I hope that this article has helped to clarify what the Head Start Performance Measures are and how they will benefit Head Start children and families.

Performance Measures--Conceptual Framework

Child's Social Competence

1. Enhance children's growth and development
2. Strengthen families as the primary nurturers of children
3. Provide children with educational health and nutritional services
4. Link children and families to needed community services
5. Ensure well-managed programs that involve parents in decision-making

James A. Harrell is Acting Commissioner of the Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

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Program Performance Standards

Nurturing the Promise: Multimedia Materials for the Revised Head Start Program Performance Standards

by E. Dollie Wolverton

The revised Head Start Program Performance Standards will take effect on January 1, 1998. To help members of the Head Start community gain a better understanding of the standards, the Head Start Bureau has produced a set of multimedia materials entitled Nurturing the Promise. These materials consist of a video, a brochure, a wall chart, a set of transparencies, and a user's guide.

As grantees and delegate agencies begin their plans for implementing the revised Program Performance Standards, the Head Start Bureau encourages communities to use the standards as the basis for planning, developing, and implementing quality services for low-income children and their families. The Nurturing the Promise materials have been designed to help programs achieve this goal.

The specific objectives of the Nurturing the Promise materials are to: (1) acknowledge and honor the history and culture of Head Start; (2) build awareness of the skills needed in the implementation of the Head Start Program Performance Standards to provide quality services to children and families; and (3) create an environment in which other community-based agencies can see themselves, along with Head Start staff and families, working as a team. The Nurturing the Promise materials offer an opportunity to confirm our commitment to high-quality services that enhance the strengths of each Head Start child within the context of his or her family and community.

The Nurturing the Promise Materials

Video--The Nurturing the Promise video presents four stories of Head Start children,

families, staff, and communities working together. The video is designed to illustrate the comprehensiveness of Head Start, to promote discussion of the challenges and opportunities presented by the Program Performance Standards, and to motivate different audiences to identify ways to work together to consistently provide the highest level of service to children and families.

Brochure--The brochure is designed for a broad audience and provides an overview of Head Start, its program philosophy, and the process through which the Program Performance Standards were revised. In addition, contact information is provided for all of the Regional Offices, the American Indian Programs, and the Migrant Programs.

Wall Chart--The wall chart serves as a quick reference to the Program Performance Standards. It contains a table of contents of the standards, highlights key changes and new terms, and provides a list of resources available to support training on the implementation of the Program Performance Standards.

Transparencies--A set of 48 transparencies is available for use during training for the implementation of the Program Performance Standards. The transparencies include a brief introduction to the standards, a table of contents for the transparency' package, an overview of the major topics included in each section, and relevant cross-references.

User's Guide--The User's Guide is designed to assist individuals in using the Nurturing the Promise materials effectively with a variety of audiences. The guide provides general information and discussion points for training, as well as suggestions on how to use the materials to develop or expand collaborative partnerships with public and private agencies in the community and at the state and national levels. Also included is a listing of other training resources available to Head Start grantee and delegate agencies.

The Nurturing the Promise materials, along with other relevant resource materials, will be available from the Head Start Publications Management Center, F: 703-683-5769, E-mail: puborder@headstartinfo.org. Additional information is available on the Head Start Home Page: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb>.

E. Dollie Wolverton is Chief of the Education Services Branch at the Head Start Bureau

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Meetings

National Head Start Association Meeting

The National Head Start Association held its annual conference in Boston on May 28-31. Head Start Bureau staff presented a number of workshops at the conference, on such topics as training and technical assistance, welfare reform, Head Start-child care partnerships, parent involvement, and the revised Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Transition

The National Head Start-Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Dissemination Meeting, "Expanding Our Shared Legacy," was held April 23-26 in Washington, D.C. This was the final meeting of the 31 Transition Demonstration projects, whose services conclude this September. Many discussion and planning groups, as well as hands-on workshops, were held throughout the meeting, which brought together not only members of the demonstration network, but also school personnel and parents from the 31 communities where the demonstration was implemented.

The grantee dissemination and evaluation efforts will continue through May 1998. The national research analysis also continues at this time. The formal findings are expected to be released sometime in the fall of 1998, although some of the transition practices which evolved under the demonstration have already influenced the revised Head Start Program Performance Standards. The effective practices developed and implemented under the Transition demonstration have also been institutionalized by many Head Start programs and public schools. *For more information contact Michele Plutro at E-mail mplutro@acf.dhhs.gov.*

Head Start-State Collaboration Network

The Head Start-State Collaboration Network Meeting was held June 16-18 in Washington, D. C. This three-day event included representatives from the 50 State Collaboration Projects, along with their State government and State Head Start Association partners. Issues addressed during the meeting, included: Head Start-Child Care partnerships; mental health in Head Start; welfare reform and collaboration; state funding for Head Start and other preschool programs; and marketing Head Start. *For more information, contact Karen Mitchell at the Head Start Bureau T: 202-205-8551.*

Target Cities

The Head Start Target Cities Grantees Cluster Meeting was held June 12-13 in Washington, D.C. Highlights of the projects, which focus on issues related to substance abuse in the inner cities, were reviewed, along with innovative project designs. Other areas addressed during the meeting include: health, mental health, and substance abuse; referring Head Start parents; Early Head Start; training Head Start staff; and prevention. *For more information, contact Frankie Gibson at 202-205-8399 or Jack Corrigan at 202-205-8403.*

Roundtable on Head Start Research

The final meeting of the Roundtable on Head Start Research was held June 19-20 in Washington, D.C. Entitled "Supporting the Mental Health of Children and Families," the Roundtable session explored the historical roles of mental health services in Head Start; the assessment of mental health in poverty populations and its implications for Head Start; promising interventions for supporting the mental health of Head Start children and families; changes in the provision of mental health services and their implications for Head Start; and implications for research in the field. *For more information contact Natasha Cabrera at 301-496-1174.*

Technology In Head Start

A first-ever conference devoted entirely to Technology in Head Start was held June 23-25 in Atlanta. Sponsored by the Region IV TASC, the conference drew participants interested in technology from around the country.

Sessions were offered to accommodate people with varying levels of expertise, from a beginners' "Introduction to Computers," to an advanced users group where participants discussed various applications for cutting-edge technology. Other sessions included:-- Assessing Your Program's Needs and Developing a Computer/Technology Implementation Plan--Establishing Technology Partnerships Preventing and Fixing Problems with Your Computer System--Putting Your Computer on a Network That Works for You--Technology for Children with Disabilities--Upgrading and Updating Your Management Information System--The Modern Office: NonComputer Technology That Can Work For You.

A "Computer Playroom" or laboratory was available for participants to come in and try out new technologies at their own pace. The conference also featured a live satellite link to the

Head Start Bureau in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact Harry W. Bickel, Jr., at the Region IVb TASC. T: 502-745-4041, F. 502-745-3340, E-mail: Hwbick01@homer.louisville.edu.

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September 25 - 28

The Evolution of Dispute Resolution: SPIDR Silver Anniversary Annual Conference, Orlando, FL, Contact: The Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution, Washington, DC. T: 202-783-7277, E-mail: spidr@spidr.org.

OCTOBER 1997

October 1 - 4

Entering the 21st Century: The Opportunities, Choices and Challenges, National Black Child Development Institute 27th Annual Conference, Atlanta Hilton and Towers, Atlanta, GA, Contact: National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI), Washington, DC. T: 202-387-1281 or 800-556-2234, E-mail: moreinfo@nbcdi.org; website: <http://www.nbcdi.org>.

October 19 - 22

Forging New Directions into the Next Millennium Biennial National Conference: Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, Baltimore, MD, Contact: Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, Washington, DC. T: 202-863-2441.

October 20 - 24

Implementing a Family Literacy Program: Staff Training, Louisville, KY, Contact: National

Center for Family Literacy, Louisville, KY. T: 502-584-1133.

October 28 - Nov. 1

Computer Technology and Volunteerism Conference, (sponsored by Literacy Volunteers of America and two other organizations), Charlotte, NC, Contact: Marty Angelone, Literacy Volunteers of America, Syracuse, NY. T: 315-472-0001, ext. 206.

For a more complete calendar listing, contact the Head Start electronic Bulletin Board System at 703-807-2312 or 800-477-8278.

Resources

healthfinder

healthfinder is a "gateway" site on the World Wide Web for accessing a broad range of consumer health information resources. Topics covered include maternal and child health, child care, child safety, consumer resources, developmental disabilities, foreign language resources, and special interest areas (e.g., American Indian and migrant issues). *Healthfinder* has been developed by the Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with other Federal agencies, to help consumers find information more efficiently and effectively, and to ensure that the information received is timely, accurate, and unbiased. *For more information visit the healthfinder website at <http://www.healthfinder.gov> or send an E-mail to healthfinder@health.org.*

I Am Your Child Campaign

The I Am Your Child Campaign has a number of resources available to help families, caregivers, and communities enhance the role we all play in supporting healthy child development. Two books currently available are *Community Mobilization. What Communities Can Do To Help Promote Children's Healthy Development* and *The First Years Last Forever. The New Brain Research and Your Child's Healthy Development*. These books are free of charge to professionals and organizations providing services at community sites for parents and caregivers. *For more information contact I Am Your Child at 1-888-447-3400.*

Dream House

Charlie Allen of Nashville, Tennessee, believes that children need a private space to retreat to now and then. Toward that end, he has designed and built thousands of simple, inexpensive, walk-in playhouses consisting of two pieces of plywood and six 2x4s. Plans for building the Dream House, along with the 10 easy steps for assembly, are available free of charge. *Contact: Charles Allen P. O. Box 158366, Nashville, TN 37215. T: 615/255-2096.*

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Send Us Stuff!

The purpose of the Bulletin is to serve the Head Start community, and we want to hear from you! Send us information on events and new initiatives you've been involved in, and send us photographs! When you send photos, please be sure to include the following:

- The names of any people pictured in the photo
- Where it was taken (or at what event)
- The name of your Head Start program
- Please do not write in ink on the back of the photo--it smears when you stack them and ruins the picture underneath! Use a label or a pencil (and don't press too hard).

Because we keep these materials on file for use both now and in the future, we would appreciate your sending only those photos and materials that you do not need returned.

Send your questions, comments, and contributions to:

Head Start Bulletin
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013

ALSO: Put us on your mailing list! We'd love to get copies of your newsletters, to keep in touch with what's happening in your programs and communities.

Have Things Changed Lately?

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