

WVHSA NEWSLETTER

How is the Collaboration Office working to support local programs?

By Traci Dalton, WV Head Start Collaboration Director

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The Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) works to facilitate collaboration among Head Start/Early Head Start agencies and local entities. The methods utilized by which the Collaboration Office coordinates and leads efforts for diverse entities to work together are: communication, access, and systems. These methods serve to convene stakeholders for sharing and planning, facilitate local Head Start/Early Head Start's access to appropriate entities to secure needed services and the formalization of critical partnerships. In addition, the Collaboration Office supports policy, planning and implementation of cross agency State systems for early childhood that include and serve the Head Start/Early Head Start community.

The scope of work for the Collaboration Office over the next year will reflect the priorities of the Office of Head Start and the Regional Office. These priorities will ensure local Head Start/Early Head Start programs' needs are being addressed so children and families are receiving the highest quality of services and arrive at school ready to learn.

Specifically, the HSSCO scope of work will concentrate primarily around three core areas: School Transitions, Professional Development, and Child Care and Early Childhood Systems. HSSCO objectives and action steps surrounding these specific areas of concentration are:

Increasing the availability and access of high quality childcare for Head Start/Early Head Start children and other low-income families in West Virginia.

Developing strategies for increasing access, improving quality and supporting Head Start/child care collaborations through the work of the WV Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Ensuring HS Performance Standards are included in the WV QRIS standards to support state system building efforts.

Supporting the availability of properly credentialed staff to provide direct services to low-income children and families across systems and programs from birth to five.

Developing collaborations with Institutions of Higher Education to promote professional development and acquisition of higher education credentials for Head Start/ Early Head Start teachers through traditional and non-traditional programs to education and credential the ECE workforce.

Partner in the creation, approval, and implementation of a Pre-K/K paraprofessional certificate for Teacher Assistants/Aides that will be accepted as a CDA equivalent.

Promoting improved access to ACDS, CDA, and WVIT training for Early Head Start staff and teaching assistants/aides providing service to Head Start enrolled children across settings.

Participating in the development of an Infant/Toddler credential that will meet the needs of staff at all levels of their development and ensure "qualified" staff working in Early Head Start and childcare.

Supporting efforts to assist families, schools, and communities to have the resources available to assist children arriving at school ready to learn.

Participating in policy revisions that would align credentialing requirements for teaching assistants/aides working within the WV Universal Pre K system to meet Head Start Act requirements.

Working with the Department of Education on School Readiness Initiatives through membership on the WV Universal Pre K Continuous Quality Improvement Council and the WV Early Childhood Advisory Council.

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TID BITS

Email Address

wvhsa@comcast.net

website

wvheadstart.org

Become a Member of the West Virginia Head Start Association

For more information contact Becky Gooch-Erbacher, Executive Director at (304) 233-4450.

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day

By Johnna Barber, NCWVCAA Education Program Specialist

The National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day observed on May 3, is a day for everyone to encourage and promote positive development of infants, toddlers, children, and youth.

Communities across the country observed the day with events, youth demonstrations, and social networking campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of mental health and boost understanding of the mental health needs of children and their families.

As a Head Start/Early Head Start Program, we encouraged our staff to wear green in which the color green symbolizes and signifies new life, new growth, and new beginnings.

The winner of our 2011 Mental Health Awareness Day was Tina Gillespie of the Cowen Head Start Center, in Webster County. Tina discussed with her children activities they could participate in to make minds healthy; the discussion led into going to the doctor, dentist, etc. Her class also talked about what makes them happy and how to keep their body and minds healthy, while incorporating the *Choosy* music from the I Am Moving, I Am Learning Curriculum.



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- Promoting interoperability between Head Start data system(s) and WVEIS (state Pre-K – 12 data system). Building upon the assignment of a unique identifier for 4 yrs olds dually enrolled in Head Start and UPK (already established) to also include 3yr olds enrolled in Head Start.
- Improving Head Start's coordination with state and local school entities to foster seamless transition of children and continuity of services between Head Start/Universal Pre-K and K-12 in order to better integrate Head Start into a continuum of services that will positively impact the school readiness and long-term success of Head Start children.
- Partnering with the WV Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child, and Family Health to advise in-home family education programming created and/or expanded through federal funding from the Health Care bill and work to ensure link between this group and the WV Early Childhood Advisory Council.

(It is important to note the objectives and action steps highlighted in this article are not inclusive of additional regional and state priorities but do reflect core concentration areas).

It is my hope to continue to strengthen the communication between my office and Head Start and Early Head Start grantees; as well as, partners about the work of the Collaboration Office. In addition, to increase the understanding of the HSSCO scope of work and how national, regional, and state needs and priorities all link together to support local Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

For more information about the Collaboration Office strategic plan or to discuss how the Collaboration Office can support your efforts contact Traci Dalton, Head Start Collaboration Director, at Traci.L.Dalton@wv.gov or at 304-356-4604. Information about the Collaboration Office is also available at www.wvheadstart.org

It's the most wonderful time of the year...how's your PIR preparation going?

By Kelly Smith, Account Executive ChildPlus.Net

The old saying, 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure' definitely applies to PIR data – it's better to avoid issues, rather than spend time and effort trying to correct them, *especially when they can be prevented*. And who wouldn't want to make PIR calculation easier? Well, it's as simple as using ChildPlus.net! Now selected by over 1,000 Head Start/EHS agencies nationwide, ChildPlus.net is the most widely used program management software for many reasons - one of which is its accuracy and efficiency in preparing and calculating the PIR.

All PIR related fields in the software are easily identifiable – just look for red PIR links. Click a PIR link and a pop up explains the specific PIR question that particular field answers. That way, you can proactively work to ensure your data is completely accurate. The software also includes PIR Audit reports that verify and troubleshoot incorrect values. Our reports also directly link data to data entry screens so if you see an error, simply click the link, adjust the data, click refresh and your report automatically updates – it doesn't get easier than that!

To identify and resolve issues early on, you can calculate your PIR monthly or quarterly. Not only that, but ChildPlus.net PIR data is calculated with 1 click – it really is that simple. So come August, there's little stress when the official data is due. You can export the data for easy upload to the OHS website and, because you've been monitoring it throughout the year, it's in great shape!

Should you have questions about calculating the PIR in ChildPlus.net, we encouraged you to contact our FREE Technical Support. Any and all users can contact us by phone, email and via the web as often as needed and our friendly, knowledgeable technical support team will be happy to help.

We know your PIR isn't just about submitting data once a year - it's about monitoring data during the year to prevent the stress you anticipate and dread in August. A hassle-free PIR is possible with ChildPlus.net! To learn more about how to simplify your PIR as well as more about ChildPlus.net's most popular features, sign up for FREE a web demonstration and 30 day no obligation trials, contact us today at 800.888.6674 or sales@childplus.com.

Be sure to mark your calendar for the Region III Users Group meeting scheduled October 25th in Harrisonburg, VA. Whether you're an agency that's currently using ChildPlus.net or an agency that'd like to hear more about the software from actual agencies using it, everyone is

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

*The West Virginia Head Start Association's Annual Pre and Fall
Conference is November 15, 16, and 17, 2011 at
Embassy Suites in Charleston WV.*

WV Universal Pre-k Update: Reaching the 2012-13 Goal of Universal Access

By Clayton Burch, Assistant Director WVDE Office of School Readiness

Since 2003, West Virginia early care and education partners have worked diligently to develop and foster the growth of WV's Universal Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) system. WV Pre-K is offered in each of the 55 counties, and work continues in each community to develop a system for universal access for all 4 year old children, as well as 3 year old children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP). In addition to in-state recognition, this work has received national attention. The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University has recently ranked WV Pre-K as 3rd in the nation for access for 4 year old children, 8th in the nation for access for 3 year old children and 4th in the nation for total spending for pre-k.

With the ongoing work of each county collaborative team and the supportive partnership among WVDHHR, WVDE and the Head Start Collaboration offices, counties continue to submit annual plans updating the state collaborative partners on their progress to offer universal pre-k. Of the nearly 1000 classrooms, which include full-day, half-day and double session settings, counties have reported that nearly 70% of all classrooms are supported with blended funding. The following chart outlines the progress the state has made in auditing each program to ensure access has been provided and that WVBE Policy 2525 has been implemented. The goal of universal access is quickly approaching and soon the 2012-13 goal will be a reality.

West Virginia has seen substantial growth in universal pre-k. Much work is still to be done, however, in order to meet the daunting timetable of offering universal access to all eligible children by 2012-13. It will only be through the continued collaborative efforts and work of the multitude of stakeholders that this task will be accomplished. The collaborative partners recognize and are grateful to those communities that have accomplished so much in the development of an early care and education system. Each of us within the stakeholder community must strengthen the shared commitment to do whatever must be done to assist each and every community in West Virginia to attain the important and necessary goal of a Universal Pre-K system.

**Your West Virginia Head Start Association
2010-11 Board of Directors**

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Friends: Edith Redd, Tim Salmons, Terri Wontrobski

UP & COMING

2011 WVHS Association Meeting Dates

1/12 & 13/11	Morgantown, WV
3/16 & 3/17/11	Morgantown, WV
6/08 & 6/09/11	TBA
6/27/11	Special Association Meeting

2011 WVHSA Board of Directors Meeting Dates

2/10/11	Conference call
4/14/11	Conference call
5/12/11	Conference call
8/11/11	Conference call
9/08/11	Charleston, WV
10/13/11	TBA

***MISSION
STATEMENT***

***The West Virginia Head Start
Association's Mission Statement for
2010-2011***

Speaking with one voice for West Virginia's young children and families by:

- involving parents as decision makers,
- advocating for high quality services,
- strengthening partnerships on the local and state level,
- providing statewide training for early childhood programs, and
- circulating key information to local Head Start programs.