“In today’s economy, when having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families, we need affordable, high-quality childcare more than ever. It’s not a nice-to-have -- it’s a must-have. So it’s time we stop treating childcare as a side issue, or as a women’s issue, and treat it like the national economic priority that it is for all of us.”

-- President Obama, January 2015, State of the Union Address

March was an extraordinarily busy month culminating in finalization of the 276 new Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grants, the release of the Institute of Medical National study “Transforming the Workforce of Children Birth to Age 8: A unifying Foundation”, the Child Care Aware of America national meeting and the National Head Start Association’s 50th Anniversary of Head Start Conference. April will be just as busy. The first of five Early Head Start-Child Care Orientation “boot camps” begins this week in Boston. This symbolizes an important step towards realizing a goal that every child in America has access to high quality early care and learning. It is fitting that these orientations begin just as we recognize the 50th Anniversary of Head Start. The lessons of 50 decades of Head Start will inform our work in the partnerships and once again put Head Start in a leadership role. With less than five percent of eligible children served in Early Head Start, these partnerships with child care providers will give us the opportunity to expand the quality of Head Start into many more programs. Over 32,000 new children will be served.

But I want to take a moment to describe an event at the National Head Start Association’s national conference. The three day meeting commemorated the 50th Anniversary of Head Start. During the opening ceremony, the audience of over 5,000 paid special tribute to Dr. Ed Zigler, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Yale University, and one of a small group appointed by Sargent Shiver in 1964 to design the Head Start model.

Dr. Zigler has been a special friend to me and so many others over the years. He is someone to whom we all owe so much. It was an honor to introduce him at the NHSA conference. I was truly humbled. As I listened to Dr. Zigler speak, I was in awe of what he has contributed to the field of early childhood. I was thinking what a
proud moment it must have been for him - and how emotional it must have been to reflect on what he, a naive young man from Missouri, laid seed to so many years ago. There is hardly anyone in the ECE community who has not been impacted or had some personal story or affiliation to Head Start. And I don’t mean the 32 million children who have been served. I mean the parents, teachers, directors, and countless early childhood professionals who have learned from the Head Start experience. They are too numerous to even estimate.

Dr. Zigler, who went on to found the Zigler Center for Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University and author over 800 articles and 40 books, never stopped caring for Head Start. And Head Start never stopped caring for him. Just two years ago, as Dr. Zigler was being prepped for hip surgery he learned that his Yale anesthesiologist, John Paul Kim, M.D. was a Head Start alumnus. During the NHSA opening ceremony, Dr. Kim and Dr. Zigler were re-united. The symbolism was felt throughout the audience. Dr. Kim, the son of immigrant parents, credit Head Start for helping their son assimilate into American society and opening the doors to education and his later success.

So now, 50 years later, as we begin the work of the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, I hope that sometime in the future, we will all reflect on the importance of this effort and how it changed the lives of so many children in child care. Wouldn’t it be a proud day for our country?

In the final event of the conference, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Sylvia Mathews-Burwell gave closing remarks. She recalled her memories of attending preschool in a small town in West Virginia and to the surprise of the audience, named her Head Start teacher and thanked her for igniting a passion for learning in her that continues to this day. Secretary Burwell is possibly the highest ranking Obama Administration official and Cabinet Secretary to be a Head Start Alum.

Hats off to Yasmina Vinci, Vanessa Rich and the National Head Start Association for a great conference and many thanks to Dr. Zigler and all those who have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of our youngest and most vulnerable children.

Best,

Linda
Moving Beyond a Culture of Compliance to a Culture of Continuous Improvement in Head Start

How can Head Start and Early Head Start programs best use data to facilitate continuous quality improvement? This resource guide can help leadership, management, and staff in Head Start and Early Head Start programs (1) understand how data can help achieve program goals; (2) learn techniques for fostering a culture of learning; and (3) increase their ability to identify and address gaps and continuously improve their programs.

OPRE posted the resource guide and related webinar as part of the Head Start Leadership, Excellence, and Data Systems (HS LEADS) project:

An Overview of: “A Resource Guide For Head Start Programs: Moving Beyond a Culture of Compliance to a Culture of Continuous Improvement”

Beyond the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study: Building Understanding of How Early Adversity & Stress Impact the Development of Self-Regulation

Over 100 studies demonstrate that parental warmth, supportiveness, and sensitivity predict growth in self-regulation while harsh discipline techniques and maltreatment are associated with self-regulation difficulties. Read this review of literature on the impact of early adversity and stress on self-regulation.

ACF Welcomes New Head Start Director

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell recently announced the appointment of Dr. Blanca Enriquez as the new director of the Office of Head Start.

Originally from El Paso, Texas, Dr. Blanca Estela Enriquez has been involved in early childhood since 1973 in various positions throughout Texas. She has been an administrator and supervisor of Head Start programs, elementary schools, and bilingual education programs since 1973. Most recently she has served as executive director of the Texas Education Service Center Region 19 Head Start program based in El Paso with an annual budget of $32 million. During that time, the program has grown from 1,200 preschoolers at 10 sites to more than 4,000 children at 30 sites and has won many local, state and national awards.

Dr. Enriquez holds a master’s of education degree from the University of Texas at El Paso and a doctorate of philosophy in education administration from New Mexico State University. She has served as a member of the Texas State Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Early Childhood Education and was appointed by former President George W. Bush as an advisory board member for the National Institute for Literacy. She is a member of the National Head Start Association, the National Association for the Education of Children, the Texas and National Associations for Bilingual Education, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

We thank Ann Linehan who has been Acting Director of the Office of Head Start since December 2013. She has done a tremendous job over the course of this period. Her dedication to Head Start, not only during this time, but in her long career, is admirable. She is truly one of Head Start’s biggest champions. Ann will resume her position as Deputy Director of the Office of Head Start when Dr. Enriquez begins in April.

We welcome Dr. Enriquez in her new role.

Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Research Council (NCR) released Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation this month, one of the most important studies of the workforce in our nation’s history.

The report looks at Essential Features of Child Development, Principles to Support Quality Practice and provided A Blueprint for Action.

The report calls for a commitment to the pathways
development to explore other conclusions drawn from our look at this issue.

Research Connections regularly reviews its latest acquisitions and identifies reports and journal articles of high policy relevance.

How is time spent in child care associated with children's social development?

Can narrative- and play-based activity promote low-income preschoolers' oral language, emergent literacy, and social competence?

What impact did a family-centered, school-based parenting and early education intervention for low-income, minority families have on parenting and child behavior problems?

What are practices and design considerations for effective quality improvement initiatives?

What are the roles of home and early education environments in the development of children's early math skills?

What is the relationship of English language exposure in preschool classrooms to dual language learners' expressive language skills?

What are the characteristics of Early Head Start toddlers, families, and programs?

Additional Resources

Invest in Us

Quality early childhood education programs help children grow. See

Tribal Home Visiting Program Highlighted at Congressional Briefing

By Moushumi Beltangady, Senior Policy Advisor and Tribal Home Visiting Program Manager

On March 3, 2015, I was honored to speak about the Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program alongside experts in American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) child health and development at a Congressional Briefing sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The briefing, titled “Toxic Stress and AIAN Children: The Child Health Impact and Promising Policy Solutions”, provided an overview of toxic stress and how it affects AIAN child health, with a discussion of model programs promoting resilience. The Tribal Home Visiting program was highlighted as a promising approach for mitigating the effects of toxic stress due to its focus on building parents’ and caregivers’ ability to provide stable and loving relationships for young AIAN children even in times of hardship.

The briefing began with a presentation from Dr. James Jarvis, MD, FAAP, a member of AAP’s Committee on Native American Child Health (CONACH). Dr. Jarvis argued that toxic stress, the result of strong, excessive, and/or prolonged adversity in childhood without the buffer of stable and supportive relationships with caring adults, is the most important public health threats facing the country. Shiloh Valley, an Alaska Native youth representing the Center for Native American Youth, then spoke movingly about his experiences growing up in his community, the challenges he experienced both being abused by his family and being removed from his home due to the child welfare system, and the harm that losing his connection to his culture and community has done to him and others like him.

Please continue reading here to learn more about Moushumi’s remarks and the 25 Tribal Home Visiting grantees. See the new home visiting brief here.

A Student from the First Class of Head Start Remembers

By Jesus Garcia, Special Assistant, Office of Public Affairs

Fifty years ago, our nation’s government embarked on the War on Poverty with a purpose of solving issues affecting struggling families. Among the many communities being considered for assistance, children were specifically targeted with an innovative program: "Project Head Start."

The idea was born from a panel of child development experts brought together by President Lyndon B. Johnson to help children and their families overcome the barriers of living in poverty. In the summer of 1965, several communities were identified that would serve as inaugural Head Start sites, which consisted of eight-
how investments in quality programs pay off.

**Summit Commitments**

[Image]

**Talking is Teaching Community Campaign Guide**—a new resource designed for communities to start or enhance their own Talking is Teaching campaigns.

ELL policy recommendations are summarized in a new report, [ECS and National Experts Examine: State-level English language learner policies](#).

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute released the sixth annual [County Health Rankings](#). The Rankings examine 30 factors that help measure the health and well-being of people living in nearly every county in the United States.

[Image]

**Resources for Supporting Effective Transitions**
The March 2015 newsletter from the Harvard Family Research Project offers resources to support the process of transition to school.

**Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Program**
The Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Program awards grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) to design, develop, and implement statewide longitudinal data systems to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, disaggregate, and use data.

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**Week Summer Programs**

One of those communities was Clarksburg, West Virginia. Lifelong resident Diana Johnson— one of the first students to participate in Head Start— shared her story.

In an interview, Johnson credits Head Start for helping pave the way for her academic success.

Diana Johnson sits outside a neighbor’s home in Clarksburg, West Virginia in 1964.

**Where did you attend Head Start?** I attended Head Start in the summer of 1965 in an old elementary school called Liberty Grade School, an addition of Clarksburg.

**What's your best memory from the program?** There is not one particular memory of the program that stands out. We were taken on a field trip to a local bread baking company and were given as a souvenir a miniature loaf of bread. I had planned on keeping that loaf of bread forever, but my mother ate it. There was in the same area a Carnation milk plant and we were taken on a field trip to visit it. (The buildings are still in the area, but are being used by other businesses now.)

I remember my Head Start teacher, Miss Urso, who chewed bubble gum and blew bubbles. I have actually talked to her as an adult in the school system as she had become a teacher in the county school system many years ago after Head Start.

We were given a medical screening by the school system nurses - I remember having to pee in a cup. The teacher tested me, because I remember her asking questions and recording them on paper.

Continue reading [here](#).

**The Office of Child Care Posts FAQs**
The Office of Child Care (OCC) has posted responses to a selection of frequently asked questions (FAQs) related to the Reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The FAQs can be found on [this page](#) of the OCC Web site.

Since the law was reauthorized in November, many questions have been submitted, including through the OCC CCDF Reauthorization e-mail address, through OCC Regional Offices, and during meetings and webinars. We know that the FAQs that we have posted do not address all the questions that have been raised, but they cover a wide range of topics; we believe that they will help CCDF grantees as they continue the work of implementing the new law.

Through guidance, upcoming meetings, and ongoing technical assistance, OCC will continue to support our grantees in implementing CCDF Reauthorization. You can continue to find resources and guidance on both the [OCC CCDF Reauthorization page](#) and the [Child Care and Technical Assistance Network Reauthorization resources page](#).
individual student data. The long-term goal of the program is to help all States create comprehensive P-20W (early learning through workforce) systems that foster use of accurate and timely data, support analysis and informed decision-making at all levels of the education system, increase the efficiency with in analyzing data to support the continuous improvement of education services, facilitate research to improve student academic achievement and close achievement gaps, support education accountability systems, and simplify the processes used by SEAs to make education data transparent through Federal and public reporting.

Priorities: Over the past decade, States have made progress in developing Statewide longitudinal data systems, most of them with the assistance of SLDS Program funds. This competition will focus on enhancing States’ capacity to use those systems to identify problems and drive improvement efforts. States may apply for funds to address up to two of the priority data use cases described in this section. SEAs may apply for grants selecting up to two of the following data use priorities:

1. Financial Equity and Return on Investment;
2. Educator Talent Management;
3. Early Learning;
4. College and Career;
5. Evaluation and Research;
6. Instructional Support.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: June 10, 2015.

Dates of Informational Meetings: The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) was to hold webinars designed to provide technical assistance to interested applicants. Detailed information regarding these webinars will be provided on IES’ Web site at http://ies.ed.gov/funding.

Planning for New Consumer Ed for Parents

When Congress reauthorized the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) of 2014, for the first time there is a requirement for a transparent, enhanced consumer education hotline and web site included in the Office of Child Care’s authorizing legislation. This National Toll-Free Hotline and Web Site supports the purpose of the CCDBG to provide consumer education to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the development of their children in child care settings.

The goal is to have an enhanced web site for referral to local child care providers, provide nationwide capacity, ensure information is available at all hours, deliver services in different languages for families who speak languages other than English as their primary language and ensure that families have access to easy-to-understand child care consumer education and referral services.

Want to see details of the CCDBG Reauthorization? Information can be found at the Office of Child Care’s website by clicking here.

Region III Interagency Council on Homelessness’ Health and Housing Subcommittee

The Region III Interagency Council on Homelessness’ Health and Housing Subcommittee hosted a webinar last month to introduce A Housing and Shelter Provider’s Guide to Developmental and Behavioral Screening. This guide is part of the Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! initiative, a coordinated federal effort to encourage healthy child development, universal developmental and behavioral screening for children, and support for the families and providers who care for them.

The webinar was the first step in a year-long effort to support housing and shelter providers that want to implement developmental and behavioral screening (a five minute activity) as a part of their intake process. After the webinar, interested parties can request technical assistance in incorporating the screening activity. In the fall, housing and shelter providers that are working towards incorporating screening will be invited to participate in a symposium to share lessons learned. The symposium will also include subject matter experts as speakers.

This effort supports the Opening Doors goal of ending homelessness among families, youth and children. More specifically, this effort aims to:

* Link families to the benefits, supports, and community-based services they need to achieve and maintain housing stability and
* Identify and implement effective prevention methods to help families avoid homelessness.

Through this effort, Region III hopes to screen all children experiencing homelessness and refer those at risk for delays for a comprehensive screening and early intervention. They also hope to educate parents and alleviate some of their stress so they can focus on housing stability and self-sufficiency.
Brain development videos available online:

Brain Builders (First Five Years Fund)

In Brief Series (Center on the Developing Child) The InBrief series provides brief summaries of recent scientific presentations and research on the science of early childhood development and early childhood program evaluation.

Three Concepts in Early Development

Brain Hero (Center on the Developing Child)

How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development (Alberta Family Wellness)

The Linguistic Genius of Babies (Patricia Kuhl, Ted Talk)

What Babies Learn Before They’re Born (Annie Murphy Paul, Ted Talk)

Video Series 1: The Magic of Everyday Moments: Seeing is Believing (ZERO TO THREE)

See CEELO’S Directory of State Early Learning Contacts. Recognizing that the information in the directory isn’t static, CEELO re-verifies and re-publishes the Directory each year to ensure the information is current.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Each year in April, time is spent acknowledging the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect, and to promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families. Materials to help you plan for National Child Abuse Prevention Month can be accessed here.

Early Childhood Health

Hearing screening resources available in Spanish

Otoacoustic emissions hearing screening can be conducted accurately on children 0–5 years of age, regardless of the language they speak. To support parents who speak Spanish, the Early Childhood Hearing Outreach (ECHO) Initiative has developed several tools that programs can use. See support materials in Spanish.

Healthy teeth are vital for a healthy life

Tooth decay remains the most common chronic childhood disease in America. Nearly two years ago, the Schuyler Center launched an initiative, Keep NY Smiling, to improve dental health. This significant health issue does not get attention because the impact is often hidden by poverty and health disparities. See the newly released final report, The Power of Prevention: The Potential for a Generation of Cavity Free Kids.

See more on Children’s Oral Health here. CDC provides information on what parents and caregivers can do to ensure good oral health.

Early Childhood Workforce

Childcare and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Project

Increasing the Quality and Quantity of Childcare Providers serving Military Families

By: Kathleen Lodl and Tonia Durden University of Nebraska-Lincoln & Claudia Mincemoyer, Penn State University

Did you know that military families face unique challenges and have a growing need to access quality community-based childcare? Well, in 2010, the Department of Defense Office of Military Community and Family Policy launched an initiative to expand the capacity for Active, Guard and Reserve families who are geographically...
and about 1 in 2 were taking medication for ADHD. Almost 1 in 4 preschoolers were treated with medication alone.

Learn more about ADHD and CDC’s work in the area of ADHD. Visit [www.cdc.gov/adhd](http://www.cdc.gov/adhd)

This initiative is designed to improve the awareness and availability of quality childcare by utilizing existing local, state and federal resources. The Childcare and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Project (CYTTAP) is being conducted by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension with Penn State Extension in collaboration with the U. S. Department of Defense.

This project is designed to develop and deliver training for early childhood and youth professionals and currently operational in 16 states (Alaska, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington) and focuses its efforts on providing professional development for individuals who care for children ages 0-12 from off-installation military families, particularly Guard and Reserve families.

Utilizing local-level partnerships with Extension systems in participating states allows the CYTTAP to identify target audiences and provide long-term sustainability in each state. It also ensures that each state has a custom designed training package that reflects the unique needs of the state. One state partner reflects “One of the main strengths of this whole initiative is that it’s tailored to your state. You can talk with your stakeholders in your state and see what will work in your state. It doesn’t have to be what works for another state works here”

As a result of this project, it is expected that the skills of more than 28,000 child and youth development professionals will be strengthened, increasing the quality of services provided to nearly 300,000 military children. Wow!

The CYTTAP accomplishes its goals using four main strategies:

1. Train the trainer workshops are being offered in select counties in each of the 16 states

2. Face to face training is being offered to childcare providers in select counties in each state by highly trained and qualified instructors

3. The CYTTAP recruits and trains new family childcare providers

4. Online education and mentoring is being provided through Penn State’s Better Kid Care online professional development system

The following training options are available to states through CYTTAP:

- Rock Solid Foundations-Social/Emotional
- Better Kid Care On Demand
- Better Kid Care Instructor Modules
- Getting Started in Family Child Care
- I am Moving I am Learning
- Tools of the Trade II
- Click2Science
The hours providers earn are accepted for Child Development Associate (CDA) formal education hours. In addition, most of the participating states credit the trainings towards state-approved professional development hours required to maintain licensing/certification or quality improvement ratings. CYTTAP also recruits and trains new home-based childcare providers. The primary goal of this project is to therefore increase the quantity and quality of childcare services for off installation military children and families.

By building upon the existing resources and early care initiatives in each state, the goal of this project is to increase the number of military children ready for school and demonstrate improved educational competencies, resulting in the long-term outcome of military-ready soldiers who are confident that their children have access to high quality, stable child care.

Click on the link below to see how YOUR state is engaged in the Childcare and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Project: http://child.unl.edu/cyttap. If your state is not one of the participating partners, you can still explore the online training modules from Better Kid Care. Check it out: http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare.

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Highlights

Pennsylvania’s Promise for Children’s Early Learning GPS. GPS stands for Guiding Parents Smoothly – helping families set the right course for their children’s success in kindergarten and beyond. It’s great for anyone who has a young child in their life – grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends and neighbors. Every child should have quality early learning experiences, but families do not always know where to turn for those resources. Early Learning GPS is a web-based interactive tool that helps families make informed choices about their young child’s development and choose a quality early learning program. Its purposes are to create an interactive way for families to think about what they can do to support their child’s development and simple action steps they can take with additional supports and engage families when they are most receptive and make it easy for them to follow their own learning path.

The tool can also make it easier for professionals serving children and families, and businesses who want to provide information to their employees, to have meaningful conversations about their children’s early learning. It supports several of Pennsylvania’s family engagement standards and is a valuable tool to promote family support and engagement activities statewide.

Washington Early Achievers to see changes in the Environmental Rating Scale threshold beginning July 1, 2015.

The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) are one set of assessment tools used in Early Achievers. The ERS assess the learning
environment, health and safety of children in multiple early learning settings. Through both the QRIS pilot (2007-2009) and in Early Achievers since 2012, Washington has seen that using the ERS, coupled with coaching, leads to large improvements in child care quality.

As part of their program, Washington has made modifications to ERS in Early Achievers. Click here to see examples of how the ERS has been modified since Early Achievers was initially launched.

In addition to the changes in the ERS threshold, the Department of Early Learning (DEL) is looking at ways to strengthen the alignment between licensing and Early Achievers. The path of quality improvement begins at licensing, so it’s important to make sure that all providers have access to tools and training from day one. DEL is exploring ways to make some of the training currently available to providers when they enroll in Early Achievers available to providers before they enroll.

**Early Learning Governance in Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge States- Updated 2015**

State-level governance offices have the responsibility to set policy; make program decisions; regulate, budget, and allocate funds; and collect and interpret data. The governance of early childhood programs is complex. Programs focused on young children are often located in different agencies and departments, and how the structures of those agencies relate to each other varies considerably from State to State. Each State’s governance structure is unique in terms of focus, funding, communication and coordination, influence on decision makers, and data sharing.

Last year, the ELC TA team released *Early Learning Governance in Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) States* to provide information on the early learning governance structures in Phase 1 and 2 RTT-ELC States. This version has been updated to include Phase 3 States and reflect changes to State governance structures since that initial release.

[View the full resource here.](#)

**What’s happening in early learning?**

**The Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program**

The [Vermont Child Care Apprenticeship Program](#) (VCCAP) helps build quality child care through on-the-job mentoring and access to higher education for newer employees in the field. Like apprenticeship in other trades, Child Care Apprenticeship follows the traditional model that combines 4000 hours of on-the-job training with 297 hours of related instruction.
Child care apprentices work with qualified mentors in their workplace to build their skills and confidence on the job. They also enroll in a sequence of six tuition-free college courses, which are geared specifically to provide the knowledge they’ll need to work successfully with young children and their families. The courses delve into communication, child development, curriculum development, program management and more. Often, completion of the Apprenticeship Program and related courses will jumpstart apprentices’ goals to complete degrees and/or other credentials in the field.

Abigail Gendreau, a current apprentice at Bristol Family Center in Bristol, VT.

After apprentices are enrolled, and as space allows, the courses are also opened up to community members who are working in the field. Some take one or more of these courses in efforts to earn their Vermont Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Director Credential, to earn or renew their Child Development Associate credential, or to achieve another professional goal.

Thanks to Vermont’s Early Learning Challenge Grant, access to VCCAP and the tuition-free college courses was able to expand to four more regions of the state in 2014-2015, and plans are underway to expand to two more regions in 2016. The cost per region is $46,000.00 for the six courses, which are offered one per semester, over a two year timeframe. The goal is for all who work with children in Vermont to have access to mentoring and higher education.

VCCAP is the result of collaboration between the VT Department of Labor and a statewide nonprofit, the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council (VCCICC). VCCICC supports professional development opportunities for Vermont’s child care workforce. To learn more, please visit www.vtchildcareindustry.org.

Looking for New Materials?

Too Small to Fail released a new Community Campaign Guide with lessons from their “Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing” campaigns in Tulsa and Oakland.

Find creative assets available for free download, relevant word gap references, training materials, tips for parents and more. This website is intended for a wide audience, and the “Talking is Teaching Community Campaign Guide” is live on toosmall.org.

The campaign, titled ‘Talking is Teaching: Talk Read Sing’, aims to close the “word gap”—a difference of about 30 million words that children in high-income families hear from parents and caregivers by their fourth birthday, compared to those in low-income families. The fewer words children hear and learn, the more likely they are to experience an achievement gap, which persists through the preschool and kindergarten years and has a life-long impact on health and well-being. Parents and caregivers can help close the word gap by talking, reading and singing to their children from birth every day.

Research shows that there is a lack of awareness about the importance of talking,
reading, and singing to children among low-income families. According to a March 2014 survey of low-income parents, grandparents, and caregivers in Oakland, only 43 percent of low-income parents reported telling a story to their child on a daily basis; only 49 percent sang to their child daily; only 42 percent played a non-electronic game; and only 52 percent read a book each day.

These activities have been shown to have a profound impact on the early learning of very young children, whose brains develop approximately 80 percent of their capacity by age three.

For more information on this campaign click [here](#).

The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is excited to kick off its partnership this month with the [Crayon Collection](#), a national initiative that collects millions of repurposed crayons from restaurants each year to donate to at-risk children across the country. By engaging with local businesses, Head Start centers will expand the Crayon Collection’s reach to our nation’s youngest, most at-risk early learners. The kick off was part of NHSA’s celebration of Head Start’s 50th anniversary at their annual conference earlier this month. This partnership will help keep crayons out of landfills and put them in the hands of vulnerable children nationwide.

[Sign up](#) to receive the Early Childhood Development Newsletter. If you have questions or comments regarding the newsletter please contact:

[marsha.basloe@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:marsha.basloe@acf.hhs.gov)

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For more information on the Early Childhood Development Office at ACF, visit the website [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd).

The Early Childhood Development newsletter contains links to other websites and news articles. These links represent just a few examples of the numerous reference materials currently available to the public. The opinions expressed in any articles or web pages do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administration for Children and Families. The inclusion of resources should not be construed or interpreted as an endorsement of any private organization or business listed herein.