Earlier this month, the Administration for Children and Families released the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Early Head Start Expansion and Child Care Partnership Grants. As with all new initiatives, the creation of the FOA presented challenges. Not only are we seeking to align two very different programs, but we are also trying to move the country towards a more coordinated system that creates a continuum of services linking home visiting, Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care, Pre-kindergarten and our public schools. While this was a challenging task, with the help of many, I believe we have produced a FOA that is both visionary and well grounded...AND, one that meets our goals.

Many of you participated in the development of this FOA by providing questions, challenges, potential solutions and yes, challenging us to do the best thinking we could. We are eternally grateful for all of your input and I hope that you see your input reflected in the final document. I am also personally grateful to the outstanding staff we have here at the Administration for Children and Families and throughout HHS who worked tirelessly with us to get the job done. Shannon Rudisill, Director of the Office of Child Care and Ann Linehan, Acting Director of the Office of Head Start and their respective staff and Regional Staff have given countless hours to this effort. Finally, we owe big “hats off” to Congress for funding the project and to the White House Domestic Policy Staff, the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Education staff for sharing their insights.

As with all new initiatives, the document reflects compromise. Compromise, by its very definition, combines the views of many into a single statement without compromising the ultimate goal. In the case of the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, this meant combining one program that provides funding directly to communities (and comes with standards, monitoring and comprehensive services) with another - Child Care - that provides block grants that give enormous flexibility to a variety of delivery options. There...
measurement and evaluation activities in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

OCC reflects on Provider Appreciation Day 2014
Expressing our gratitude for our early care and education workforce and the impact they have on our families.

Oregon’s Early Learning Council Works Closely with its Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant
Early Childhood Development staff member reflects on the great working being accomplished in Oregon.

2014 Hurricane Season: Preparedness Begins with You
May 25-31 is National Hurricane Preparedness Week.

The Role of Community Action in the War on Poverty
CSBG continues to support ladders of opportunity into the middle class.

Innovative Approaches to Career Advancement for Low-Income Families
Learn more about the evaluation of promising career pathways programs.

Behavioral Economics and Social Policy: Designing Innovative Solutions for ACF Programs
Project aims to learn how tools from behavioral economics can improve the well-being of were, and are, lessons to be learned from both.

Now, as we turn our efforts to the next phase – implementation - we begin working on how we will support this new vision with strategies that help us reach the overall goal of increasing access to high quality early care and learning programs for our nation’s infants and toddlers. This is indeed and new and exciting chapter in our nation’s early childhood history. Because there is such a shortage of infant toddler programs, we have a unique opportunity to build a solid foundation of quality that can carry us into the future in ways that set a high bar early so that we spend less time fixing problems.

As we move into the next phase, we will once again be calling on all of you to provide us with your best thoughts and resources. During the coming months we will be conducting listening sessions seeking your ideas to support the new EHS-CC partner grantees. What have we learned in the past, what are the gaps and how can we best use our collective resources. We look forward to continuing the conversation with you. Now is the time for caring and sharing.

Linda

Welcome to HHS Secretary Burwell!
Sylvia Mathews Burwell was sworn in as the 22nd Secretary of Health & Human Services on June 9, 2014.

Secretary Burwell is committed to the mission of ensuring that every American has access to the building blocks of healthy and productive lives.

A results-driven manager, Secretary Burwell has led large and complex organizations across the public and private sectors. Most recently, Burwell served as Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Prior to serving in the Administration, Burwell served as President of the Walmart Foundation, and President of the Global Development Program and Chief Operating Officer of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

During the Clinton Administration, Burwell served as Deputy Director of OMB, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Treasury and Staff Director of the National Economic Council. Prior to joining the Clinton Administration, Burwell worked for McKinsey & Company. She has served on the boards of the Council on Foreign Relations, MetLife, and the University of Washington Medical Center, among other organizations.

Secretary Burwell received an A.B. from Harvard University and a B.A. from Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar. A second-generation Greek-American, Burwell hails from Hinton, West Virginia. She and her husband Stephen live in
Individuals and families served by ACF programs.

Turetsky Honored for Public Service at 2014 Burton Awards for Legal Achievement

Honor is presented to an attorney who demonstrates the highest level of professionalism and integrity within the executive branch of federal government.

Partnering to Prepare High School Students for College and Careers

ACF joins inter-agency group to provide education, workforce development, social services, and private-sector leaders with information about ways that high schools and human services agencies can work with the American Job Center network.

See more blogs and visit The Family Room Blog.

Featured Reports


Washington, D.C. with their two young children.

The Secretary leads national efforts to protect the health of all Americans and provide essential human services to those in need. She manages the largest civilian department in the federal government, with more than 67,000 employees and a budget that accounts for almost one out of every four Federal dollars.

Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) Available for Early Head Start Expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Grants

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced a new $500 million funding opportunity to expand access to high-quality, comprehensive services for low-income infants and toddlers and their families. This funding will support the creation of Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships and the expansion of Early Head Start (EHS) services to children and families.

You can find the funding opportunity announcement (FOA) on ACF’s funding opportunities site. Applicants have 75 days to submit their grant proposals, as described in the FOA, online through www.grants.gov.

All agencies eligible to apply for EHS funds can apply for competitive partnership or expansion grants including community organizations, nonprofit or for-profit organizations, and state and local governments. An applicant support site is available on the ECLKC site.

OHS anticipates releasing separate FOAs for American Indian and Alaska Native grantees and for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start EHS-CC Partnerships and EHS Expansion soon.

Early Head Start – Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships:

Early Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) both serve low-income families and their children; however, there are some differences in policy, operations, and funding requirements. EHS-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships will benefit from strategies to bridge these differences. These strategies might include aligning policies to encourage stability and continuity of care, streamlining administrative procedures, and identifying opportunities to support Partnerships and providers.

The Office of Child Care recently released the Top 10 Ways CCDF Can Support Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships. Review the 10 specific areas of CCDF policy that can support EHS-CC Partnership efforts.

ACF joins NHTSA on Look Before you Lock Campaign

Heatstroke is the number one killer of children, outside of car
“If you work hard and play by the rules, you should have the opportunity to succeed, and your ability to get ahead should be determined by your hard work, ambition, and goals – not by the circumstances of your birth.” - President Obama
education for researchers and policymakers. The Web site, www.researchconnections.org, provides access to more than 25,000 resources, including original scholarly research, government reports, factsheets and briefs, data sets, and instruments.

The site also features a “Topics of Interest” section on the home page that highlights a newly released resource on a policy-relevant topic and a collection of other recent resources related to the topic. The two current topics are Parent Engagement, http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/support/announcements/2014/01/topics-of-interest-parent-engagement, and Child Care Decision-Making, http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/support/announcements/2014/01/topics-of-interest-child-care-decision. Other topics will be added on a quarterly basis.

See also the new resources at https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/strengthening-early-childhood-and-school-age-workforce.

President Obama announcing his “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative. (NNPA Photo by Freddie Allen)

Last month, the My Brother’s Keeper Task Force released its 90-day report. This report includes key indicators that will provide a comprehensive view of the environments and outcomes for boys and young men of color and their peers. It also contains recommendations on steps our society can take to begin to expand opportunity for all in areas including:

- Getting a healthy start and entering school ready to learn;
- Reading at grade level by third grade;
- Graduating from high school ready for college and career;
- Completing post-secondary education or training;
- Successfully entering the workforce;
- Reducing violence and providing a second chance.

The President and his administration understand that assuring that all children have a healthy start and enter school ready to learn is the first step in assuring opportunity for all. The beginning years of any child’s life are critical for building the early foundation needed for success in school and later in life. During these years, children’s brains are developing rapidly, influenced by the richness of their experiences. Children who live in poverty, including disproportionate numbers of children of color, face an array of environmental factors that disrupt healthy development and life outcomes. Many factors influence these early childhood disparities, including lack of resources and opportunities for enriching interactions; poor quality early education; and health disparities, which contribute to a lag in detection of delays or disabilities and delivery of necessary services and supports. This
The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a funding opportunity for organizations and individuals to operate as Navigators in Federally-facilitated Marketplaces (FFMs) and State Partnership Marketplaces (SPMs). As they did this year, Navigators will continue to assist consumers in various ways, including as they learn about available coverage options through the Marketplace during the 2015 open enrollment period for the individual market.

Navigators have been an important resource for the millions of Americans who enrolled in coverage in 2014. This second year of funding ensures this important work will continue in 2014-2015, including during the confluence of factors, along with often insufficient supports for early educators and ill-conceived institutional policies, contributes to disturbing trends in school suspensions and expulsions, starting as early as preschool and resulting in deleterious impacts long thereafter.

The My Brother’s Keeper (MBK) early childhood strategy is a multi-pronged approach that addresses the following areas:

1) Closing the Word Gap and Supporting Enriching Home Environments
2) Ensuring Access to High-Quality Early Care and Education
3) Implementing Universal Developmental, Behavioral, And Health Screenings
4) Eliminating School Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Learning Settings

With disparities between children from lower- and higher-income families beginning in infancy, it is imperative that any effort to narrow disparities and facilitate economic mobility for young boys of color start at birth. The key to improving the lives of all our children is to make sure that the communities around them are investing in them; and that means everyone. As an American community we must share the responsibility of giving all of our children equal opportunity to achieve their dreams. It takes a village. As President Obama has said, “We are stronger when America fields a full team.” By better supporting young children and families now, the youngest children of today and tomorrow have higher odds of achieving their full potential. And that will result in a better America for all of us.

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

The Early Learning Challenge Technical Assistance (ELC TA) Program has multiple resources. See a few below.

Aligning with Workforce Data Systems Webinar: Leveraging TA Data to Support a QRIS.

Slides from this webinar highlight TA research findings to date, as well as benefits and considerations for collection and use of TA data. In addition, a DRAFT framework to spark planning discussions about TA data element collection is presented. Slides are now posted in the PDC.

Webinar Summaries now available:

- Webinar Summary: Including Developmental Screening Data in an ECIDS. Access a summary of the webinar on incorporating developmental screening data from early childhood integrated data systems (ECIDSs) into longitudinal data systems.
- Early Learning Governance in RTT-ELC States. This document provides a graphic representation of the governance structures in Round 1 and Round 2 RTT-ELC Grantee states. Early learning program governance structures in states are complex and variable. This representation shows the placement of programs within specific agencies in each state.

Find additional information on the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge here and here.
ACF Family Violence Prevention and Services Program Supports Super Storm Sandy Recovery

The Need for Shelter

Across the country, domestic violence survivors are in need of safe emergency shelter and transitional housing to support living a violence-free life. Many survivors of domestic violence are forced to choose between living with an abuser, seeking emergency shelter, or relocating out of the state, or living on the streets – all options that compromise their safety. For example, being forced to relocate, even temporarily, can impact the ability of some survivors to get to work. As a result, some survivors lose their jobs or experience reduced work hours. This is a particular concern since research shows that economic dependence on an abuser is a key factor affecting a survivor’s decision to stay or leave a violent relationship. Involuntary relocation can have a dangerous effect on survivors by distancing them from their friends, families, and support network, increasing their risk for subsequent violence.

On October 29, 2012, when Super Storm Sandy made landfall, housing services for domestic violence survivors across the storm-affected areas became scarcer and more expensive. The storm had crippling effects on domestic violence programs across New York and New Jersey, limiting their capacity to serve survivors seeking safety and shelter. In New Jersey, twelve domestic violence shelters were forced to close for several weeks; survivors in shelter at the time were relocated to other domestic violence programs or housing providers across the state, and no additional survivors could obtain housing. In New York, six programs had to suspend operations between five and fifteen days, and phone calls to local crisis lines were forwarded to the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Power outages created many problems for shelters straining to remain open, including the loss of significant amounts of perishable food. Across New York and New Jersey, the length of stay for survivors in shelter increased, with many homes now lost to storm damage. Meanwhile, shelter staff struggled to get to work, themselves suffering storm damage to their homes.

ACF’s Impact

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) allocated $2 million to the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program to provide needed resources to those affected by Super Storm Sandy in New York and New Jersey and to the National Domestic Violence Hotline. To date, over 100 domestic violence survivors impacted by Hurricane Sandy in New York and New Jersey have received financial housing assistance. In addition, the National Domestic Violence Hotline has collaborated with the New York and New Jersey state domestic violence coalitions to train emergency responders on the nexus of disasters and domestic violence. This curriculum is intended to improve linkages to appropriate services to inform state, regional and local disaster response and preparedness officials. The National Domestic Violence Hotline has also developed a series of public awareness materials to reach out to survivors in New York and New Jersey who have been affected by Super Storm Sandy and are seeking help for referrals to service and local resources.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Program is proud to lead ACF’s effort to repair the lives of survivors impacted by Super Storm Sandy in order to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals, children, and families get access to the support they need and deserve.
It's hurricane season!

This year's Resolve to be Ready campaign focuses on 'Family Connection' to reinforce the importance of parents including their children in preparedness conversations in advance of potential disasters. The Ready campaign makes an emergency preparedness resolution easy to keep by recommending families consider these three ideas when making a plan: who to call, where to meet and what to pack.

See the age-appropriate tools and resources to introduce conversations about disaster preparedness to children on www.ready.gov/kids, including a downloadable family emergency plan, emergency kit checklists and guidelines on how to make preparedness a year-round family activity.

Some disasters strike without any warning. Have you thought about those supplies you'll need the most? They will usually be the hardest to come by. Enlist your children to help gather supplies for your family's emergency kit. It'll bring you a sense of relief, and your kids a feeling of empowerment. Learn about these tools in Spanish: Propóngase estar listo en el año 2014

Mayor Murray introduces Early Learning Nation resolution to U.S. Conference of Mayors

Seattle Mayor Ed Murray has introduced a resolution to the U.S. Conference of Mayors expressing a commitment to designating “the decade of 2015 - 2025 as an era of community focus in building an Early Learning Nation.”

“Cities throughout the nation are investing in their youth through early learning programs,” said Murray. “I saw this commitment through preschool visits in Boston and Jersey City earlier this year. In addition to seeing the value in person, I've read countless studies that show an early investment in our residents benefits every aspect of our community. I'm proud to have sponsored an early education funding plan in Seattle and look forward to working with mayors throughout the nation on this critical priority."

Fifteen mayors from around the country joined Murray by co-sponsoring this resolution. The resolution also has the support of the Bezos Family Foundation, which has had a vision of an early learning nation for many years.

“We greatly appreciate Mayor Murray's leadership in sponsoring this resolution which is intended to secure a commitment from mayors around the country to build an early learning nation, starting in their communities. Children are born with enormous potential.
However, far too often that potential is not realized. This commitment by our mayors to bring together the latest developments in brain science with community action will ensure our children are well equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century,” said Jackie Bezos, president of the Bezos Family Foundation. The Bezos Family Foundation partners with scientific institutions such as the Institute of Learning and Brain Science (I-LABS) at the University of Washington to help transform the latest research in child development into community action.

This resolution expresses a national commitment, through all local mayors, that children of Generation Alpha (babies born between 2010 - 2025) emerge equipped and prepared to resolve issues and assume leadership positions, while generating innovative and long-term solutions for previously intractable and seemingly unsolvable challenges.

Scientific research clearly shows positive parenting and caregiving in early childhood, starting at birth, is a key contributor to lifelong health and productivity and there is compelling evidence that the foundation for health or disease is established in early childhood – especially between birth and three years of age. High-quality early learning in these critical years has been proven to reduce placements in special education, reduce grade retention, boost graduation rates, decrease teen pregnancy rates, reduce violent crime, juvenile delinquency and incarceration, and increases the odds of long-term employment.

By passing this resolution, the members of the U.S. Conference of Mayors will be showing their commitment to providing unparalleled opportunities for the children of Generation Alpha.

Read the resolution here.

The resolution will be considered at the U.S. Conference of Mayors annual meeting scheduled for Dallas, Texas from June 20-23 as a part of its policy making process.

Supporting Early Childhood

What’s the Buzz? A Look at Professional Development Opportunities for Care Providers
By: Tonia Durden, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Kit Alviz, University of Minnesota Extension

Childcare and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Project (CYTTAP) works to improve the quality and quantity of child care in states with high densities of off-installation military families.
CYTTAP trainings have been attended by over 30,000 child care providers and early childhood education professionals, and that number continues to grow as the CYTTAP expands to more states with high populations of off-installation military families. What are the training participants saying? The quality ratings are all over 95% positive and follow-up surveys tell us that providers are continuing to use skills and strategies learned at trainings, such as designing environments to promote children’s social and emotional development, or building in movement activities with children that achieve at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day.

Training programs include Better Kid Care Instructor Modules, Better Kid Care On Demand, Getting Started in Family Childcare, I am Moving I am Learning, Rock Solid Foundations, and Tools of the Trade II. Participants of face-to-face trainings told us in open-ended responses about the following useful ideas, materials and strategies they received:

**New games** to try with children, especially indoor games and cooperative or non-competitive games

Supplemental **materials**, including books or art supplies that they can use in their centers

Innovative educational strategies, such as **using music to teach** multiple topics like language, math, and spatial awareness or to help with transitions between activities

**A quality refresher** of developmentally and culturally appropriate best practices for seasoned providers

Ways to revamp child care centers and activities that are **simple and affordable**, like creating outdoor activity centers, using everyday household objects to spark curiosity, creating indoor tracks, and more

Many examples of **charts and visual aids** that can help children become more emotionally literate or learn the concept of time

Ways to model, teach, and promote **friendship** among children in their center

For more information about the CYTTAP or to see how your state is involved, please visit the website: [http://child.unl.edu/cyttap](http://child.unl.edu/cyttap). You can also visit Penn State’s Better Kid Care
(BKC) website to learn more about their distance education opportunities and to take advantage of BKC’s Great Ideas Resource Pages which covers a range of topics from caregiver’s sensitivity to scaffolding.

If you have questions or comments about the Childcare and Youth Training & Technical Assistance Project (CYTTAP), you may contact Tonia Durden (402-472-6578 or tdurden2@unl.edu) or Claudia Mincemoyer (814-863-5879 or cxm324@psu.edu).

If you have an Innovation in Early Childhood that is available for public use, let us know.

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

For more information on the Early Childhood Development Office at ACF, visit the website 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.