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## Working Together for a Better Beginning

“In states that make it a priority to educate our youngest children...studies show students grow up more likely to read and do math at grade level, graduate high school, hold a job, form more stable families of their own. We know this works. So let's do what works and make sure none of our children start the race of life already behind.”

—President Barack Obama, State of the Union, February 12, 2013

## Early Childhood Development

Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20447

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### Have you been to our website recently?

Learn more about the Office of Early Childhood Development and click [here](#).

### The Affordable Care Act

Visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)



Logo of Health Insurance Marketplace, Have health insurance questions? which is linked to [https://www.healthcare.gov/quick-answers/?fromLoc=MPBadge&utm\\_medium=widget&utm\\_content=120x130-en&utm\\_campaign=hcgov](https://www.healthcare.gov/quick-answers/?fromLoc=MPBadge&utm_medium=widget&utm_content=120x130-en&utm_campaign=hcgov)

### Check out these ACF blogs

The ACF blog — The Family Room —

## Happy Holidays from ECD!

Happy Holidays! This has been an interesting and exciting year for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Office and the early childhood field.

I have the opportunity to work with the Office of Head Start, the Office of Child Care, and the Interagency Team, and together we have continued to support high quality early learning and development!

I am grateful that our efforts have given us the opportunity to work with multiple federal agencies, state administrators and tribal councils as well as a wide range of national organizations and non-profit partners. These interagency efforts help ensure a complete and integrated approach to improving the nation's early care and education. Thank you for your partnership.

At the heart of our work is our commitment to achieve our goals:

- Building successful Early Learning and Development Systems across Head Start, child care, and pre-K
- Promoting high quality and accountable early learning and development programs for all children
- Improving the health and safety of early learning and development programs
- Ensuring an effective early childhood workforce
- Promoting family support and engagement in the child's development

We are looking forward to continuing our work this upcoming year and especially working with you, our partners. Together, we make a difference for children and families throughout the country.

Happy Holidays,

*Linda*



talks about new initiatives at the agency, success stories and policy announcements.

### [Economic Mobility and Early Childhood Education](#)

The latest research indicates that disparities start earlier in life than most of us could have anticipated, making early childhood education a central ingredient in closing the opportunity gap. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/news/economic-mobility-and-early-childhood-education>

### [Children's Bureau Launches Historical E-Book](#)

A new e-book recounts the Children's Bureau's efforts that set the foundation for today's programs for children and families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/12/childrens-bureau-launches-historical-e-book>

### [Take Time to Be a Healthy Dad Today](#)

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse sponsors Fatherhood Buzz Outreach focusing on Men's Health. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/11/take-time-to-be-a-healthy-dad-today>

### [Growing Economies Through SEEDS](#)

Tribes and Native Communities create programs designed to help sustain local communities. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/11/growing-economies-through-seeds>

### [Historic Opportunity for Early Childhood Education](#)

Less than five percent of children eligible for Early Head Start are served. New legislation proposed today would triple the number of children receiving these services. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/11/historic-opportunity-for-early-childhood-education>

## Six States Awarded Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Grants



Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont will each receive a share of the 2013 Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge \$280 million grant fund to improve quality and expand access to early learning programs throughout their states. The six winners join fourteen existing state grantees. Twenty states will now have additional federal resources to support their reform agenda for early childhood education.

"We continue to work on efforts that will provide every child the opportunity for a high-quality early childhood development program," said Deputy Assistant Secretary of Early Childhood Linda K. Smith. "Thanks to the leadership of U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and their ability to work with governors, state officials, and early education advocates across the now 20 Early Learning Challenge states, thousands more of our youngest children will receive a stronger foundation needed to succeed in school and in life."

The Race to Top-Early Learning Challenge program was first launched in 2011 as a program jointly administered by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services.

"The Obama administration has consistently been raising the bar for quality in early education programs," said Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. "Providing a strong foundation for all children to learn through life is an investment in our nation's economic future."

Through this competition, the Obama Administration called on states to create proposals to improve early learning by coordinating existing programs, evaluating and rating program quality, and increasing access to high-quality programs, particularly for children with high needs.

First year funding attracted 37 applicants and collectively awarded \$500 million to nine states: California, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island and Washington. With more modest 2012 funding, the second round invited the next five highest-scoring applicants—Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin—to modify their 2011 applications and create plans. These states were funded in 2012.

Today, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services announced the following awards to six states: Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont.

Grants will be awarded over a 4-year period effective January 1, 2014 in accordance with each state's plan.

Find information on the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge [here](#) and [here](#).

### [New Information on the Early Care and Education Workforce](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/11/new-information-on-the-early-care-and-education-workforce)

New brief presents data from the first-ever nationally representative survey of early care and education workers. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/blog/2013/11/new-information-on-the-early-care-and-education-workforce>

## Featured Research

Dual Language Learners Make Key Gains – Head Start programs and public pre-kindergarten are beneficial to Latino children.

<http://fpg.unc.edu/news/dual-language-learners-make-key-gains-head-start-and-public-pre-k>.

Posted on the [OPRE website](#) are two briefs titled [Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration in the Context of Early Childhood Care and Education](#) and [Say What You Mean and Mean What You Say: Terminology Agnosticism in Child Care Questionnaires](#). These are part of the [Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis and Technical Expertise Project](#).

Also NEW [Welfare Rules Databook: State TANF Policies as of July 2012](#) and a book of tables titled [The CCDF Policies Database Book of Tables: Key Cross-State Variations in CCDF Policies as of October 1, 2012](#). This database book is part of the [Child Care and Development Fund \(CCDF\) Policies Database](#) project.

Center on the Developing Child. A new 6-minute video from the [National Scientific Council on the Developing](#)

## Head Start is in Good Hands

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes recently stepped down as Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS) after a long history with Head Start and Deputy Director Ann Linehan has been appointed Acting Director.

Head Start is in good hands with **Ann Linehan**, Acting Director of the Office of Head Start (OHS). Ann, who joined the Department of Health and Human Services in 1992, began her Federal career as Regional Program Manager for Head Start programs in the six New England states. In 1996, she joined the OHS headquarters in Washington, DC, and served in a number of key senior management positions before becoming Deputy Director and Acting Director. Prior to Federal service, Ann was Executive Director of a non-profit Head Start and child care agency for nearly ten years. She began her professional career working as a teacher and coordinator of services for special needs children and their families.

Starting from her days as a Head Start Fellow, to her time as Executive Director of the National Migrant Head Start Association, and finally to leading OHS, Yvette was a leader. Upon arriving at OHS, Yvette put her skills in policy to work in designing what would become several of the most significant reforms in the history of Head Start. Driven by a relentless passion to help the youngest and most vulnerable in our country, Yvette and her team launched a reform agenda that is bold, innovative, and built on the best evidence available. The reforms are designed to ensure that every child and family who walks through a Head Start door receives the quality early experiences they deserve, in a safe, enriching, and empowering environment.

We are pleased to have worked with Yvette during her tenure and wish her well as she takes some well-deserved time to be with her family. We are looking forward to our work with Ann Linehan as she continues her work to ensure that all Head Start children have the comprehensive services so important for success.

## Learn About Our Developmental and Behavioral Screening Initiative

Maximizing the health and developmental potential of children and families in the United States is an urgent priority—developmental and behavioral challenges are associated with lower scores on developmental assessments as well as later behavior issues and lower academic achievement.<sup>1</sup> Recent statistics indicate that 1 in 6 children have a developmental disability in the United States. Young children who live in families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level are even more likely to have a developmental delay.<sup>2</sup>

Effective promotion of healthy child development and wellness is best achieved early in a child's life with well-coordinated, multi-sector coordination of services and communication with families. Public awareness of typical child development and risks for delay, developmental and behavioral screening, early identification of delays as well as linkages to referral and follow up services can be delivered anywhere young children and families spend time--in the home and in communities through a range of programs and services.

The Departments of Health and Human Services and Education have partnered to launch a public awareness campaign—targeted at numerous sectors (e.g. early care and education, medical, primary health care, child welfare, mental health) — highlighting the importance of universal developmental and behavioral screening and

[Child, In Brief: The Science of Neglect](#), explains why significant deprivation is so harmful in the earliest years of life and why effective interventions are likely to pay significant dividends in better long-term outcomes in learning, health, and parenting of the next generation.

Education Commission of the States looked at P – 3 Efforts in a [50-state scan](#) of enacted policies from the 2013 legislative sessions to capture the ongoing work that lawmakers across the country are engaging in to strengthen their P-3 systems.

Investing in Young Children A Fact Sheet on Early Care and Education Participation, Access, and Quality <http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/Investing-in-Young-Children.pdf>

See a [Child Care Decision-Making Literature Review](#) on [the OPRE website](#). Child Trends produced this review as part of the [Child Care and Early Education Policy and Research Analysis](#).

Zero to Three presents [a national review](#) of states' and jurisdictions' Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that have been implemented statewide, focusing on how these systems can include standards that explicitly address the needs of infants and toddlers.

support within the context of normative child development. [Please continue reading here to see the package](#) of materials that will be launched as part of the public awareness campaign.

<sup>1</sup> Glascoe F. (2001). Are over-referrals on developmental screening tests really a problem? *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 155(1), 54-9.

<sup>2</sup> Boyle, C, Boulet, S, Schieve, L., et al. (2011). Trends in the Prevalence of Developmental Disabilities in US Children, 1997–2008, *Pediatrics*, online, 1034-1042.

## Reflecting on a Year of Recovery After Superstorm Sandy and Moving Forward

By Linda Greenberg, PhD, Senior Advisor

The one-year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy serves as an opportunity to reflect on the past year; recovering from the devastating effects of the storm are far from over. Superstorm Sandy impacted the lives of millions and caused damage and suffering in hundreds of communities across New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maryland. Although the devastating effects of the storm still linger, and many areas are awaiting restoration, there is much work underway to rebuild storm-damaged areas.

Recovery is more than rebuilding buildings; it is about getting lives back on track, getting kids back to school, restoring health and social services, and creating safe environments to live. The storm and its aftermath exacerbated the needs of the most vulnerable. How do we protect small children, children with special needs, and the frail elderly?

The Administration for Children and Families awarded \$475 million for supplemental social service block grants (SSBG) to New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maryland. This program provides flexible funding to States to offer a wide range of services to children and families, vulnerable older adults, persons with disabilities, and at-risk adolescents and young adults. States determine the types of services that will be provided, who is eligible to receive services, and how funds are used within the requirements of Federal law.

ACF staff recently visited State officials in New York and New Jersey to learn more about recovery efforts underway. Continue reading about [Sandy efforts here](#).

## The Strong Start for America's Children Act Introduced on November 13th

The **Strong Start for America's Children Act**, introduced by Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Representative George Miller (D-CA), and Representative Richard Hanna (R-NY), would greatly increase access to and quality of programs that serve children from birth to kindergarten.

## Additional Resources

Have you used our ACF materials on [Expanding Early Care and Education for Homeless Children](#)? See [here](#) and [here](#)!

See the new brief [Early Care and Education for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness](#) as part of the McKinney-Vento Law Into Practice Brief Series by ED-OESE-SASA | Homeless, Neglected or Delinquent Education Programs.

On November 18, the Early Learning Challenge TA Program's Community of Practice on Developmental Screening hosted a webinar entitled "Including Developmental Screening Data in an ECIDS". Presenters included Missy Cochenour, State Support Team member from SLDS, Colleen Murphy, Parent Support Programs Manager in Utah, and Denise Mauzy, ELC TA and DaSy. The webinar participants included the RTT-ELC grantees and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grantees who are working on issues related to developmental screening. The recording of the webinar is located at: <http://elcta.adobeconnect.com/p8b7mpuoquq/>.

**"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children."**

**Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa, 1918-2013**

*"Learning begins at birth, and the preparation for learning begins before birth. The investment we make as a nation in early learning will pay dividends for generations to come."* [Senator Tom Harkin](#), Chairman of the U.S. Senate HELP Committee commenting on the Strong Start for America's Children Act.



Picture of child and Senator Harkin hands raised in "high five"

Read the [Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2013 House Bill](#) and [Senate Bill](#).

Read the [summary](#) of the Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2013.

## ACF hosts a Presidential Management Fellow for State Advisory Council Review

**Katie Garcia** joined the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as a 2012, Presidential Management Fellow. Her permanent position is in the Office of Financial Planning and Analysis (OFPA) under the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) staff division where she is a Management Analyst with duties aligned under the HHS Program Integrity Initiative and OMB A-123 Internal Controls. She is currently participating in a five month rotation with ACF in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development working on data analysis. She will be tasked to examine the outcomes of the three-year early childhood State Advisory Council grants and recommend future opportunities for growth and development in early childhood systems development.

ACF is thrilled to have Katie work with the Early Childhood Department on this State Advisory Council project! For more about Katie Garcia, [click this link](#).

ACF published the [SAC Progress Report](#) earlier this year. Katie will be working on the Final Report.



## Supporting Those Who Teach Our Youngest Children

By Shannon

Rudisill, Director of Office of Child Care

Recently, I had the honor of being a graduation speaker for Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) D.C. T.E.A.C.H. awards scholarships to early childhood and afterschool teachers, allowing them to pursue associate's degrees and bachelor's degrees in early education. This was D.C.'s largest class ever – 23

Picture of girl and teacher at desk

students successfully completed their degrees.

Many of the graduates have overcome obstacles to reach this goal in addition to the daily challenges of working full-time in child care, studying, and caring for their own families. One of my co-speakers was struggling to pay for two of her own children to attend college and wondered how she could ever afford to go back to school herself. That's where T.E.A.C.H. came in. The scholarship paid for her studies while counselors were available to help her navigate the higher education administration. Her employer offered time off and teamed up with T.E.A.C.H. to pay bonuses and raises as she completed her bachelor's degree.

Employer support is critical. Martha's Table Child Development Center for example made a huge commitment to the program – with 20 teachers

currently on scholarship. The college instructor actually comes on-site to Martha's Table to provide the classes. Colleagues support each other through studying and juggling work, school and family responsibilities.

I was thinking of the T.E.A.C.H. graduation as I read new data from ACF's National Survey of Early Care and Education. For more information on T.E.A.C.H. and the Child and Development Block Grant, [continue reading here](#).

## Have You Been to the vBTT Institute?

### vBTT Institute

The archive for the 17th Annual Virtual Birth to Three Institute (vBTT) has been posted in its entirety, and is available to the early learning community. The 17 videos, numerous video guides, and Q&A and professional development tip sheets are available to all interested parties, and are available as continuing education credits for a fee at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/btt/archive.html>

vBTT was a five-week online professional development experience that ran from May 28 - June 27, 2013. Each week focused on one content track related to early childhood education and included one plenary webcast and two relating webinars. The Content tracks were: Inclusive Child Development; Child Health and Prenatal Services; Family and Community Partnerships; Management and Professional Development; and Home Visiting and Family Child Care.

By: Angie Godfrey, Office of Head Start, Infant/Toddler Program Specialist



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[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)

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.*

