



Child Care Helps America Work and Learn



Administration for Children & Families

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Recovery Act Builds Partnerships Across the Nation

More than 1,400 early education policy leaders gathered recently at Early Childhood 2010: *Innovation for the Next Generation* (EC2010). Convened jointly by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education, it was the first meeting of its kind to bring together representatives from local, State, and Federal agencies to discuss innovative, evidence-based practices and work toward a shared vision for integrated early childhood systems. With that historic event in mind, it seems fitting to focus this issue of the Child Care Bureau's *Child Care Helps America Work and Learn* series on partnerships and collaboration.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Administrators are making the most of CCDF and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) dollars by forming alliances with private partners, and connecting with other programs and agencies to reach common goals. This issue provides examples of how those efforts are resulting in better plans for child health services, strategies for system-wide improvement, and higher health and safety standards.

To better help States, Territories, and Tribes form integrated early childhood systems, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is making cross-sector system building a top priority. Under the leadership of Joan Lombardi, Deputy Assistant Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development, ACF is putting a new emphasis on supporting stakeholders as they grow and sustain collaborative efforts to improve early childhood education for all children and families, as demonstrated by the joint convening of cross-sector teams at EC2010. We expect that the dozens of State Advisory Councils, which are partially funded with Office of Head Start Recovery Act funds, will help embed cross-sector early childhood collaboration work in early learning communities across the country.

Shannon L. Rudisill
Associate Director
Child Care Bureau
Administration for Children and Families

New Consultants Partner for Health and Safety in Idaho

Thanks in part to the Recovery Act, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare is partnering with IdahoSTARS (State Training and Registry System) to launch the Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) program, which is creating up to 40 new part-time contracts for registered and licensed practical nurse consultants.



As part of this program, CCHC consultants partner with quality consultants from child care resource and referral agencies and inspectors from local health districts—helping child care providers boost quality. In addition, this collaboration helps providers meet quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) standards and the health and safety standards established through the State's new licensing system. Specific CCHC services include:

- Onsite health, mental health, and safety consultation;
- Reviews of child and staff health records for compliance with immunization and other health and safety requirements;
- Provider education through training workshops that link to QRIS and the IdahoSTARS professional development system standards;
- Information about facility improvements, proper infection control, communicable disease prevention, child nutrition, safe sleeping for infants, playground safety, and integration of children with special needs into child care environments; and
- Information and support to help providers and families recognize children with potential developmental delays and obtain referrals to appropriate health services.

Partnership Quick Facts

CCDF Plans for FY 2010–2011 reveal that a large number of Lead Agencies are working in coordination with other governmental entities, associations, and community-based organizations to accomplish the following:

- Thirty-two are developing emergency preparedness and response plans;
- Twenty-eight are implementing activities to support systems building/cross-services integration;
- Eighteen are working to improve child health services;
- Ten are creating or expanding inclusion initiatives; and
- Nine are implementing or expanding parent engagement/family support initiatives.

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Connecticut Partnerships Target Health and Emergency Preparedness

Thanks to the Recovery Act, the Connecticut CCDF Lead Agency (i.e., the Department of Social Services) is using \$198,790 in Recovery Act funds and is partnering with the Department of Public Health, Yale University School of Nursing, and the Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut to expand the availability, consistency, and quality of health, mental health, infant and toddler, and other consultation services for early childhood programs. Among their efforts, these partners and others are working to develop an action plan for identifying and training cross-system, interdisciplinary teams to provide consultation services in child care settings, including center- and home-based programs throughout the State.

In addition, the CCDF Lead Agency is using \$125,000 of its Recovery Act funds to partner with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Department of Public Health, and Save the Children, a nonprofit organization, to develop a state-of-the-art child care emergency planning and response tool. This tool will offer child care providers training developed from a holistic perspective so they are better prepared to plan for and respond to emergencies.



Kansas Committee Makes Systemwide Improvements

The Kansas CCDF Lead Agency (i.e., the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services) is using \$98,918 of its Recovery Act funds to develop a statewide continuous improvement planning process for the Kansas Early Head Start (KEHS) program, which is a state-level child care and Head Start partnership that serves 1,177 children and parents each year. This program is funded through a partnership with the CCDF Lead Agency and the Office of Head Start to promote quality child care through local-level partnerships with Early Head Start and has been operating since 1998.



After the State conducted an evaluation of the KEHS system in 2007, evaluators recommended developing an improvement process in order to streamline the use of online data, automate analysis and reporting, and dedicate resources for local evaluation and technical assistance.

Supported with CCDF Recovery Act funding, a short-term statewide, cross-sector committee—which currently consists of 26 members who represent the CCDF Lead Agency and more than a dozen different programs, associations, and universities—is guiding the development of the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan. The plan will:

- Align KEHS outcomes with Federal and State measures and evidence-based practices for early learning;
- Collect real-time data to promote program accountability and enhance evaluation efforts; and
- Inform policy, funding, and service decisions to improve the lives of children and families.

ABOUT THE RECOVERY ACT

The Recovery Act (Public Law 111-5) provided \$2 billion in supplemental funding to CCDF for grants to States, Territories, and Tribes for child care assistance to low-income families and investments for improving the quality and availability of child care. **Section 1512 of the Recovery Act** requires recipients of Recovery Act funds to submit quarterly reports detailing the use and impact of the funds, including jobs created and retained. The reports are available to the public at www.recovery.gov.

About the Child Care Bureau

The **Child Care Bureau** administers the **CCDF** program, a multibillion-dollar Federal and State partnership to support access to high-quality child care for working families. The Child Care Bureau helps States, Territories, and Tribes administer their CCDF programs through program support, policy guidance, technical assistance, and research.