

# Professional Development

## What do we know?

- The quality of child care children receive is associated with providers' educational attainment and participation in advanced training workshops.
- A recent study comparing professional development interventions among preschool teachers of at-risk children found that teachers who took part in coursework combined with mentoring and detailed, instructionally linked feedback yielded the greatest improvement in teaching behavior and children's school readiness outcomes.
- Approximately 10% of Family Child Care Home providers serving School Readiness children do not have a high school diploma. Of approximately 3,303 early educators provider School Readiness services:
  - 1 PhD.
  - 48 Masters Degree
  - 337 Bachelor's Degree
  - 255 Associates Degree
  - 1279 Florida Child Care Professional Certificate
  - 1392 High School Diploma or GED
  - 35 Less than a High School Diploma (FCCH)

## What are we currently doing?

- In 2009-10, the Early Learning Coalition awarded STEP UP scholarships to 39 child care providers seeking an AS degree in Early Childhood from St. Petersburg College for 63 courses. Approximately 60 applicants did not receive a STEP UP scholarship due to limited funding.
- In 2009-10, the Early Learning Coalition provided 121 workshops and four large conferences. 2540 early childhood providers attended the workshops; 751 attended the conferences.
- In 2009, the Florida Early Education and Care Professional Development Initiative adopted seven core competencies for providers. All trainings offered by the ELC of Pinellas have been aligned with the core competencies.
- The Infant Toddler Initiative includes targeted training on Infant Toddler issues along with coaching by the Infant Toddler Specialist. Providers have access to the Infant Toddler Resource Library which includes safe, age appropriate toys for providers to borrow and incorporate into their programs.



## Where are the gaps?

- There is limited coaching and mentoring of STEP UP scholarship recipients to help them navigate the college system. At the rate of awarding one class a semester, it will take seven years to receive an AS degree in Early Childhood.
- Beginning in 2010, pre and post assessments are done to track the learning taking place during training. There is no technical assistance/coaching or monitoring provided to verify that the training is being taken back and implemented within the classroom.
- There are insufficient and inconsistent educational requirements between Family Child Care Home Providers, Informal providers and center staff.
- There are limited in-service training requirements for Informal providers.

## Where should we focus?

*Summary of discussion at September 2010 Board of Director's meeting.*

- **Provide effective training in the Core Competency Areas**
  - Provide various levels of training to meet the needs of all providers.
  - Develop training series that offer an additional "certification" for a specific topic beyond just the training "certificate".
- **Ensure implementation of new knowledge**
  - Require assessment at training and possibly follow-up evidence of implementation.
  - Develop and support a peer mentorship program
    - Provide substitute stipends to allow mentors and mentees to observe programs.
    - Offer vouchers for mentors to attend ELC trainings free.
- **Increase formal education attainment of providers.**
  - Continue Step-Up Scholarship program.
  - Require a minimum of a high school diploma for all School Readiness providers.
  - Explore community partnerships that could expand the Step-Up program.
  - Explore practitioner based education opportunities.
  - Create more incentive to get a formal education such as the WAGES program that subsidizes the low wages often paid to early educators who have a degree.
- **Provide collaborative opportunities with community partners relating to professional development.**
  - Continue the Professional Development Committee.

- Increase participation and partnerships.
- Explore collaboration with Training Times.
- Partner with community agencies such as Neighborhood Family Centers to serve as training locations to increase accessibility.

*Additional input from community stakeholders.*

- The coaching and mentoring of STEP UP scholarships could be connected to the guidance counselors at SPC or USF with a support system set up on the internet.
- Ensure implementation of new knowledge. Pinellas offers wonderful training we need to verify that training is being taken back and used within the classroom.
- Contract with community providers with robust training departments to enhance training, mentoring and onsite consultation services.
- Support high school diploma/GED requirement of all providers but recommend rate increase as incentive.
- Would like to see certain child care trainings be credited towards an AS degree.
- Assisting centers to keep qualified staff by implementing a “Master Teacher” program. Giving advancement to those qualified teachers along with providing a group of “mentoring” teachers for others to call for assistance.
- Continue to explore opportunities for trainings and professional development for school age staff.
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# Access to Care and Market Rate

## What do we know?

- Disparities in child outcomes are evident at 9 months and grow larger by 24 months. Most prominent risk factors low income and maternal education.
- Chapter 411 Florida Statutes states” The School Readiness program shall be established for children birth to the beginning of the school year for which a child is eligible for admission to kindergarten in a public school .....
- The average preschool teacher earns \$27,000 annually in Florida



## What are we currently doing?

- **Enrollment of Low Income Children**

| WAITING       |      |
|---------------|------|
| TOTAL         | 3941 |
| INFANT        | 320  |
| TODDLER       | 492  |
| 2 YEARS       | 565  |
| 3 AND 4 YEARS | 1077 |
| SCHOOL AGE    | 1487 |

| ENROLLED      |       | % of Low Income Children Enrolled |
|---------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| TOTAL         | 2804  |                                   |
| INFANT        | 39    | 1%                                |
| TODDLER       | 114   | 4%                                |
| 2 YEARS       | 275   | 10%                               |
| 3 AND 4 YEARS | 1,150 | 41%                               |
| SCHOOL AGE    | 1,226 | 44%                               |

*COUNTS DO NOT INCLUDE TANF CHILDREN  
OR ABUSE AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN IN CARE*

2,115  
1,557  

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6,476 TOTAL CHILDREN IN CARE

- **2009 Market Rate Comparison**

**HOMES**

|            | <u>STATE</u><br>PINELLAS<br>MARKET<br>RATE | <u>ELC</u><br>PAYMENT<br>RATE | % of<br>current<br>market<br>rate |
|------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| INFANT     | \$170                                      | \$123.60                      | 73%                               |
| TODDLER    | \$165                                      | \$119.25                      | 72%                               |
| 2 YEARS    | \$160                                      | \$115.40                      | 72%                               |
| 3 YEARS    | \$160                                      | \$115.40                      | 72%                               |
| 4 YEARS    | \$150                                      | \$115.40                      | 77%                               |
| SCHOOL AGE | \$145                                      | \$103.85                      | 72%                               |

**CENTERS**

|            | <u>STATE</u><br>PINELLAS<br>MARKET<br>RATE | <u>ELC</u><br>PAYMENT<br>RATE | % of<br>current<br>market<br>rate |
|------------|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| INFANT     | \$224                                      | \$170                         | 76%                               |
| TODDLER    | \$190                                      | \$148.40                      | 78%                               |
| 2 YEARS    | \$150                                      | \$110                         | 73%                               |
| 3 YEARS    | \$142                                      | \$96.15                       | 68%                               |
| 4 YEARS    | \$140                                      | \$96.15                       | 69%                               |
| SCHOOL AGE | \$125                                      | \$80.10                       | 65%                               |

**Where are the gaps?**

- The percentage of low income infants and toddlers enrolled in School Readiness services equals 5% of the total children enrolled in Pinellas County . Two's, three's and four year olds account for 51%. 44% of the children in care are school age.\*

\*Note: School Age rate at \$80.10 per week compared to \$170 per week for infant care. Reducing the number of school age children in care will result in fewer total children served.

- The rate paid in Pinellas County for center based child care is **71.5%** of the 2009 State established market rate for the county.

The rate paid in Pinellas County for home based child care is **73%** of the 2009 State established market rate for the county.

**Where should we focus our resources?**

*Summary of discussion at September 2010 Board of Director's meeting.*

- **Low Income children ages 0-5 years need better access to School Readiness services.**
  - Discontinue School Readiness services upon entry to kindergarten unless funded by alternative source (CCEP).
    - This would be proactive rather than reactive since 90% of brain development happens between 0 and 3 years of age.
    - Children in care early are more ready for school.
    - Serve less children and start at the beginning.
    - Our name is our mission
  - Children at-risk of abuse or neglect or on TANF must be served until age 13 years.
  - Not allowable under AWI guidelines. Allow pregnant mothers to enter the waitlist. Coordinate with community partners to identify these parents and refer for during pregnancy. This could allow for a more stable start.
  - Not allowable under AWI guidelines. Increase parent co-payments on sliding scale.
  - Partner with other agencies for child care services such as Out of School Time grant and 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant providers but it should be noted that these grants serve children aged 9-14 only. HIPPY and other similar programs should be going into homes for children who are on the waitlist to teach skills to children (in informal care too).
  
- **Market Rate**
  - Base rates on provider education and qualifications
  - Providers should be paid same rate by age across the board regardless of location (center or home)
  - More sliding scale and less \$6/week

*Additional input from community stakeholders.*

- Low income children ages 0-5 need better access to School Readiness services. We need to be proactive instead of reactive and focus on the brain development years.
- Out of School Time and 21<sup>st</sup> Century fund 9-14 year olds, but a middle school locations only. It would be nice if OST funded 9-12 year olds in elementary schools as well.
- Focus on working with families, to include all children through 10 years old. Families only receiving subsidy for one of 2 or 3 children may still be unable to work due to lack of child care. Instead of reducing the eligible age to 5, continue through age 9 or end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Increase private sector CCEP participants.
- Hold a community summit on child care that would include providers, parents, related funders, law enforcement, business leaders, and educators from all levels to develop policy and strategy for bringing the community together to advocate for legislation and funding.

- There is great support in the community for increased quality measures, developmentally appropriate curriculum, etc... however concern about the feasibility without an increase in the reimbursement rate.
- I would like to see parent fees increased so more families could be serviced.
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# Developmental Screening and Intervention Services

## What do we know?

- **In the US, 17% of children have a developmental delay** or behavioral disability such as autism, intellectual disabilities or ADHD. Less than 50% of these children are identified as having a problem before starting school, by which time significant delays may have already occurred and opportunities for treatment may have been missed.
- **In Florida, a preschooler is 18 times** more likely to be expelled than children in k-12 grades.



## What are we currently doing locally?

- All children enrolled in the School Readiness Program receive developmental screenings 2x a year during the ages of 0-3 years and 1x a year during the ages of 3-5 years.
- **5,344** ages 0-5 years enrolled in the School Readiness Program received a developmental screening in their early learning environment last year ('09-'10) in Pinellas County.
  - **2320** of those children failed the initial developmental screening and required some kind of follow-up by the Developmental Services Department at the Early Learning Coalition
  - **179** received a referral for formal evaluation and developmental services from FDLRS and Early Steps, the state mandated Part C and Part B services under the IDEA.
  - **2141** received some other form of supportive intervention service including:
    - ongoing monitoring of their development using subsequent screening measures
    - parent conferences
    - technical assistance for the child care provider
    - written developmental activities for the child care provider and parent to practice with the child
    - referral for other services including behavior intervention services and mental health services for the child and/or family

- The Coalition implemented additional intervention services to the Developmental Services Department titled **Supportive Intervention Services** in July, 2010. **Supportive Intervention Services** are designed to serve the children who do not qualify for formal intervention services from Part C or Part B providers, but need some early intervention in order to avoid expulsion due to behavior, social or emotional challenges, or to reach developmental milestones.
- If every child who did not qualify for Part C or Part B services was referred for Supportive Intervention Services, **2141** children could potentially be served. Due to the number of Intervention Specialist currently working in the program, the expected # of children to be served in 2010-2011 is approximately **250**.
- The **Program for Inclusive Early Care and Education** provides intensive training and coaching on working with challenging behaviors and special needs. The P.I.E.C.E. initiative has been very successful but has not yet reached most providers. The program is funded by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council for 2010-2011. This will be the last year it is funded by this source.
- Children who are not enrolled in the School readiness program can also receive free Comprehensive Developmental Screenings in the areas of vision/hearing, cognitive development, motor development, speech/language and social/emotional at quarterly Community Screenings. A “Warm Line” is also available to concerned parents and providers of all children.

### Where are the gaps?

- **2141** children each year who score with concerns on the developmental screenings could benefit from the additional Supportive Intervention Services currently being offered at the Coalition, but only **250** will potentially be served due to the current size of the program.
- **Pinellas County** currently offers very few programs dedicated to interventions for development, behavior, or social and emotional concerns. All programs have wait lists and these issues typically require immediate attention. The results are increased expulsions or inappropriate responses to children with these issues. The PIECE program is in the final year of the grant.
- Although School Readiness Children receive ASQ screenings on a regular basis, the ASQ-SE (Social Emotional) is currently only used upon request.

### Where should we focus?



*Summary of discussion at September 2010 Board of Director's meeting.*

- **Provide accurate developmental screening for School Readiness children**
  - Evaluate reason for disproportionate number of children identified with concern on the ASQ-3.
  - Continue training on effective administration of the ASQ-3. Possibly make this a required training for School Readiness providers, not just as part of Quality Counts.
  - Possibly at greater frequency. AWI funding is allocated to meet requirement for 1 screening per year. Pinellas currently screens more frequently than required by statute.
  
- **Provide Supportive Intervention Services to School Readiness children.**
  - Explore expansion to provide services to all children identified with need.

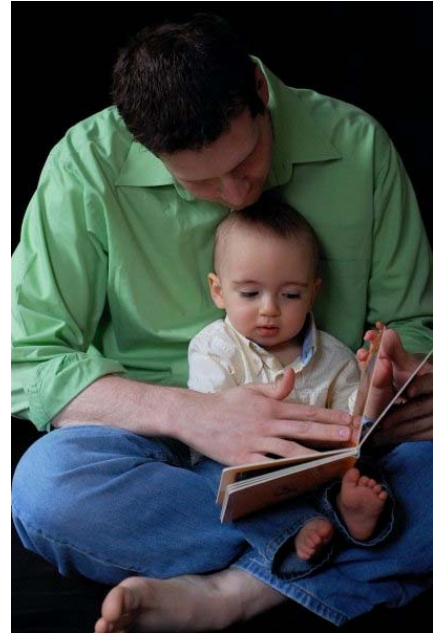
*Additional input from community stakeholders.*

- Include the ASQ-SE in all routine developmental screening.
- Increase access to supportive intervention services, possibly including children not receiving School Readiness scholarships.
- Provide for greater availability of Prevention programs to avert need for Intervention programs. Coordinate Developmental Screenings between all providers of such screenings to avoid duplication of screening services.

# Parent Involvement & Skill Building

## What do we know?

- Home-learning stimulation and parental responsiveness are significantly related to motor and social development, language competence and achievement test scores across poverty levels and different ethnic groups for children birth to age 13 years.
- By the age of 2 years, children who are read to regularly display greater language comprehension, larger vocabularies, and higher cognitive skills than their peers.
- A recent study shows that while in middle income neighborhoods the ratio of books per child is 13 to 1, in low-income neighborhoods, the ratio is 1 age-appropriate book for every 300 children.
- Research shows that greater parent involvement in children's learning positively affects the child's school performance, including higher academic achievement and greater social and emotional development.



## What are we currently doing?

- **Florida First Start** is a home visitation program that serves children exhibiting high risk factors for school failure. This program helps children develop cognitive, social/emotional, language, and motor skills to support future school success. Florida First Start supports parents in their role as their child's first and lifelong teacher. It promotes positive home/school partnerships, family literacy, safe home environments and good health habits, access to community resources and parental understanding of child development and school readiness.
- **Consumer Education** – Child Care Resource and Referral provides families with information on choosing quality child care. They also provide “flip books” that outline appropriate developmental milestones of young children.
- **Born to Read** – The Born to Read program promotes family literacy through the distribution of books and engagement in the public library system. This program targets low-income and at-risk children.

- **Parent Involvement at the Early Education Setting** – Some providers in the community offer parent involvement opportunities such as parent newsletters, conferences, parties and even parent training.
- **HIPPY**- HIPPY stands for "Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters." Parents with children three or four years old may enter the program and children may remain in the program through age five. Home visitors go to client homes once per week to teach parents lessons that they can use with their children throughout the week to build literacy skills. Children also come to recognize their parent as a teacher and develop a positive learning bond.

### Where are the gaps?

- The Early Education Standards used in creating the developmental “flipbooks” have been revised. The “flipbooks” are due for revision, but additional research could be done on alternative resources.
- Family engagement approaches that are systematic, sustained and integrated. While parent involvement is critical for student success, not all programs offer effective parent engagement opportunities.
- Children need easy access to books to support early literacy development. Born to Read is an effective, but small program and does not reach all School Readiness children.

### Where should we focus?

*Summary of discussion at September 2010 Board of Director's meeting.*

- **Engage families through child care providers & community.**
  - Develop a train – the – trainer series for providers who can in turn provide enrichment opportunities for parents. Also invite members of the faith based community and Neighborhood Family Centers to participate and possibly offer the events at their respective institutions.
  - Provide incentives such as books or food for parents to attend.
- **Increase parents access to parent skill building & enrichment materials and activities.**
  - Continue Florida First Start program.
  - Provide educational materials to families during the eligibility /intake process. (Developmental flip books)
  - Access, purchase or produce a series of short video clips to be shown in eligibility intake office waiting areas (in addition to *Choosing Quality Childcare*) to address topics such as:

- Healthy eating ideas
  - The importance of reading
  - Behavior tips
  - Social emotional development
  - Developmental milestones
- **Increase children's access to books.**
    - Continue Born to Read program.
    - Provide books at eligibility/intake offices for children to take home.

*Additional input from community stakeholders.*

- Increase parents access to parent skill building and enrichment materials and activities. Parents As Teachers group meetings for all parents would be a wonderful tool.
- Fund expansion or enhancements of HIPPY, Born to Read and Florida First Start Programs. Possibly working through providers.
- Prevention is more cost efficient than intervention. Prevention of future issues are more easily addressed before the parents and child care/schools become frustrated and overwhelmed. Prevention needs to begin with education at the earliest possible time, perhaps even in High School or Middle School.
- Services need to be provided earlier, to a broader group of people, with an emphasis on social/ emotional development and parenting skills.
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# Quality Early Learning

*“High quality early learning is like a “life jacket” for low-income kids. They need the life preserver; whereas middle and upper-income kids already know how to swim and are not independent on this to get ahead”*

## What do we know?

- Researchers have identified gaps in a number of critical areas, including cognitive development, social-emotional development, and health status. Furthermore, low-income children are more likely to attend lower-quality child care centers making it unlikely that these gaps can be closed later through schooling alone. (*Child Trends volume1, issue3-June 17, 2010*)
- Research indicates that the way adults interact with children plays a very important role in children’s learning and development. These studies demonstrate that in classrooms where teachers are responsive, guiding, and nurturing, children take more initiative and are more likely to be actively involved and persistent in their work.
- Defining and assessing quality early learning has shifted to a focus on teacher-child interactions, child focused teaching style, and content-driven classroom instruction. (*Effective Preschool Curricula and Teaching Strategies/National Center for Children in Poverty*)
- In 2009-2010 participation in the Quality Counts program was low. It was especially limited in concentrated areas of poverty.  
Zip codes:  
33705            2 participating providers  
33711            0 participating providers  
33712            3 participating providers



## What are we currently doing?

- Program Support Specialists visit and assess School Readiness providers on an at-risk analysis of School Readiness Children in Care at least one time per year according to the amount of School Readiness Children enrolled in the program. The focus is on approximately 115 centers to date and approximately 252 Family Child Care Homes throughout the

community. Some providers will receive a desk audit.

- The Program Support Specialists monitor providers to ensure they are in compliance with their School Readiness Agreement.
  1. Liability Insurance
  2. Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum/Character Education
  3. Pre-Post Testing the children
  4. Developmental Screening
  5. Professional Development Requirements
- The Program Review Tool gives the Coalition pertinent information as it relates to the quality of the early learning environment. Currently, the Program Review Tool is only being utilized for informational and Technical Assistance purposes.
- The Quality Counts Program is in transition. Coalition staff have been holding workgroups with providers to develop a revised model that would better meet the needs of the providers and improve quality. Coalition staff are also collaborating with the Juvenile Welfare Board to develop enhanced quality incentives to providers in high risk, high need areas.

### Where are the gaps?

- Enforcement is largely focused on health and safety violations reported by Child Care Licensing. The Program Review Tool which assesses quality early learning environment is utilized as a technical assistance measure.
- There is a lack of connection between poor quality and enforcement measures.
- Requirements for Informal providers (typically relative care-givers) are limited and do not adequately ensure quality. The School Readiness Compliance Policy for Informal Providers is due for review and revision.



### Where should we focus?

*Summary of discussion at September 2010 Board of Director's meeting.*

- **Ensure School Readiness providers are offering a quality early learning experience.**
  - Implement Program Assessment standards and enforcement. Provider representatives strongly supported the Program Review Tool currently being used for technical assistance. This

tool is currently being tested for assessment and enforcement application.

- **Implement an effective Quality Rating System that will improve quality of providers and help families recognize quality care.**
  - Review Quality Counts for Children program. Provider reports that the program is too cumbersome.
- Educate parents on what quality looks like to better drive the market, but focus funding on getting children in care.
- Align quality programs with community partner agencies to maximize resources and benefit.

*Additional input from community stakeholders.*

- There is great support in the community for increased quality measures, developmentally appropriate curriculum, etc... however concern about the feasibility without an increase in the reimbursement rate.
- High-quality child care centers often want additional funds above what CCC pays. These amounts are as much as \$130 more per week.
- Focus quality incentives to providers in high risk, high need areas.
- Would like to see School-age programs have the ability to offer fun educational activities with less focus on kid's choice.
- Technical Assistance as well as a more school aged focused assessment tool.
- Provide for greater access to In-Home Instruction/Playgroups for Informal Caregivers.