

## Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Southern Region Retreat Minutes, June 23, 2005

### **In Attendance:**

Angie Chandler, Southwest Resource and Referral  
Stacie Lambe, Portage Even Start  
Penny Chase, 4-C  
Meredith Green, Waisman/Resource

Diane Bloecker, Bureau of Regulation and Licensing  
Therese Ahlers, Infant Mental Health Initiative  
Bridgitte Bodette, Sauk Co. B-3  
Ann Ramminger, Collaboration Coach

**NEXT MEETING: TENTATIVELY NOVEMBER 10, 2005 VIDEOCONFERENCE.** Waiting for state level WECCP players to firm up the date.

### **Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS)**

Therese Ahlers shared information about ECCS. The Department of Public Health has a 3 year grant from the federal government to provide leadership in formulating - collaboratively - a plan for a locally-based, comprehensive system of services for children from birth to age five; and their families. The five early childhood components that go into this system are:

1. Parent Education
2. Family Support
3. Access to Health and Medical Home
4. Early Care and Education
5. Mental Health and Social-Emotional Development

ECCS has Guiding Principles that embody being child-centered, family-focused, locally-based, comprehensive, well-grounded, use of existing expertise, efficient use of resources and public-private partnerships.

Some good examples of an Early Childhood Comprehensive System could be:

- Public Health Departments providing immunization services at child care programs.
- County government services working collaboratively with the Family Resource Center, the local hospital and child care programs to ensure that families with young children have the information and support that they need to raise physically and emotionally healthy children.

Part of the ECCS mission is to collect information about existing collaborative councils in the southern region. Ann Ramminger, as the Collaboration Coach has been designated to gather this information. A grid to gather information on local collaborative groups will be sent by separate email. Each member of the Southern Region Networking Group is asked to complete the grid and email the information to Ann Ramminger at [ramminae@chorus.net](mailto:ramminae@chorus.net) by July 31, 2005.

For more information on ECCS contact Susan Harvey at [harvest@dhfs.state.wi.us](mailto:harvest@dhfs.state.wi.us) or Therese Ahlers at [infantmh@tds.net](mailto:infantmh@tds.net)

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**Wisconsin Initiative for Infant Mental Health**

Therese Ahlers spoke about the importance of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. The Initiative has 6 goals:

1. Raise public awareness of the social & emotional needs of children birth through age five and; the consequences of poor social & emotional development.
2. Create a tiered infant mental health training infrastructure in Wisconsin including all professions that work with young children & families.
3. Develop a coordinated system to screen children birth to age five for social & emotional delays and develop a consistent referral procedure for services.
4. Create a system for providing early mental health assessment and treatment.
5. Develop public policies and services that support the promotion of healthy social & emotional development.
6. Secure additional funding to support healthy social & emotional development through prevention, early intervention, and treatment.

The importance of Social & Emotional Development was stressed by Therese. A Fact Sheet was shared from the Zero to Three Policy Center. A synopsis follows:

- o Social & Emotional Development of children is developed in the context of relationships and within the context of family, community and cultural expectations for young children.
- o 70% of moms with young children work outside of the home.
- o 35% of children under age 6 live in low-income families
- o Infants can experience real depression as early as 4 months of age.
- o Over 39,000 infants enter foster care each year, nearly 80% are prenatally exposed to substance abuse; 40% are born prematurely and/or low birth weight.
- o There is an increasing body of evidence showing that children under the age of six are being asked to leave child care because of behavior issues related to social and emotional issues.
- o Long term costs of ignoring mental health are lower academic achievement, higher school drop out rates and increase risk of juvenile justice involvement.

For more information about the Wisconsin Initiative for Infant Mental Health contact Therese Ahlers at [infantmh@tds.net](mailto:infantmh@tds.net) or visit their website at [www.wiimh.org](http://www.wiimh.org).

To learn more about the Zero to Three Policy Center visit their website at [www.zerotothree.org/policy](http://www.zerotothree.org/policy).

**Progress on Southern Region Outcomes**

- We confirmed the importance of having a core group of members present at all 4 meetings each year.
- It was agreed to have a yearly calendar of meeting dates.
- Each meeting will have a clear agenda with objectives and purpose of meeting.

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- It was agreed that it was a valuable experience to set aside time at each meeting for participants to share updates, best practice, initiatives, etc. with others in the group.
- We reviewed our 3 outcomes and action steps. It was decided to put these outcomes into a chart designating tasks to be accomplishments, the party responsible and notation of progress notes. This document will be sent by separate email.

### Sharing and Updates

- × **Preschool Credential.** A Preschool Credential is in the works. It would be 5 courses, 15 credits and would apply towards an Associate Degree. TEACH scholarship funds apply. Participants develop a portfolio as part of the process.
- × **Registry.** A new career ladder was passed by the Board. It will start January 2006. There will be 14 levels.
- × **PDI 34.** New Teacher Licensing requirements for the Initial Educator seeking to renew a license went into effect in August of 2004.
- × **4K in Sauk-Prairie.** The Sauk Prairie School District has formed a committee for 4K. Early Childhood already provides services in Head Start.
- × **Birth to Three.** Meredith Green shared a collaborative strategy she is taking by coordinating "pocket trainings" for counties with similar demographics. Meredith has agreed to write up a brief summary of this to put on the WECCP website in the Southern Region section.
- × **Child Care Licensing.** All licensed providers are required to have CPR training by 9-1-05. There is a good video & resource packet from CCIC about Shaken Baby Syndrome. The commentary manual for group child care should be out soon.
- × **Columbia County Coordinating Council.** Professionals from various settings (MATC, Family Resource Center, CCR&R, Family Living Agent, Job Center and community members) come together to meet monthly. They planned a free child care conference, held activities for Week of the Young Child awareness and purchased a large # of NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice books.
- × **Dodge County.** Dodge County has a Task Force Group that has high representation from family and group child care and active involvement of the county Family Living Agent.
- × **Dane County.** 4C has 35 certified Spanish speaking providers.
- × **SW Child Care Resource and Referral.** Many preschool programs in the counties of Grant, Lafayette, Crawford, Iowa, Richland and Vernon have closed as a result of 4K in the schools. SWR&R had an innovative substitute program for child care providers. With the budget cuts this program the substitute program still exists but changes will be needed.
- × **WI Model Early Learning Standards.** A training calendar was distributed. There is an overview and a 1-day training available.