

WVHSA NEWSLETTER

Collaborations

By Traci Dalton Volume 13, Issue 3
March 2011

Collaboration has become an accepted, embedded business practice for us in Head Start and in the early childhood community in West Virginia. Collaboration has transcended from “an event” to “an approach” or a “framework” that guides everything we do here in West Virginia. Despite embracing collaboration as we do, there is recognition that this collaborative approach is a commitment to achieve and maintain.

I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate each of you on your collaborative successes and hope to inspire or “re-energize” you through some quotes and thoughts on collaboration.

"In the Long History..." Darwin on Collaboration

"It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed." - Charles Darwin

This quote demonstrates how necessary it is that we collaborate with one another to find advances. For instance, the pack of wolves that hunts together is more likely to catch their prey than the lone wolf. Likewise, a team of scientists brings more to the table and is better able to solve problems than one scientist, cloistered away in his ivory tower. Throughout natural history, collaboration has been a necessary part of life that **leads** towards realization of a desired outcome.

"Politeness..." Land on Collaboration

"Politeness is the poison of collaboration." - Edwin Land

When collaborating with others, it is tempting to say that you like something, or that you think something is good, just to be polite. In reality, this does not advance the project or idea being collaborated on. Any collaborative project should reflect the will of all those involved. By holding in what you really think, for the sake of avoiding hurting someone else's feelings, you destroy the opportunity for honest **communication** in a collaborative environment.

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Become a Member of the West Virginia Head Start Association

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West Virginia Pre-K Early Childhood Assessment System Update

By Monica Harless, Child Assessment and School Readiness Coordinator

WVDE–Office of School Readiness

The West Virginia Department of Education's Office of School Readiness, along with the WVDE Office of Special Programs, WV State Head Start Collaboration Office and childcare collaborative partners, are moving forth with implementation of the West Virginia Pre-K Early Childhood Assessment System for the state's pre-k classrooms. Developed by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), the Early Learning Scale Assessment System provides pre-k educators the opportunity to focus observations of children's developmental progress over time to make informed decisions about instruction, children's development, and to assist with parent conferences and Kindergarten transitions.

To ensure that educators from all WV Pre-K classrooms are trained to reliability on this system, a state training cadre was identified in September 2010 to lead teacher training. Recently, this statewide group of nearly 70 pre-k leaders completed a six-day training series focusing on the Early Learning Scale Assessment System. The training series concluded with a reliability scoring section to ensure participants are properly equipped with the competence to cascade the Early Learning Assessment System training model to all WV Universal Pre-K educators.

The pre-k leaders who were trained to reliability on the instrument will now work with their county pre-k collaborative teams to develop a strategic plan to train all WV Pre-K educators to reliability. Implementation of this instrument in WV's Pre-K classrooms will help inform intentional planning and teaching, guide instruction, inform families of children's progress over time, and will also provide the WVDE, Head Start, and childcare partners with data regarding children's growth and development throughout their pre-k year to assist with the identification of key kindergarten readiness skills. For additional information, contact Monica Harless, Coordinator, WVDE Early Childhood Assessment and School Readiness, at mdharless@access.k12.wv.us or (304) 558-5325

Monongalia County Early Head Start Family Socializations

By Brenda Yohn

Nutrition promotion in Monongalia County Early Head Start has taken over! Family Service Specialists began offering a nutrition socialization to the families from 5:00-6:30pm during this 2010-11 year. With the entire family available to come to the center for an activity, songs and good food, this event has been a hit with our families this year.

One night the focus was on vegetables. The families were all invited to sing 'The Veggie Song' to the tune of 'The Muffin Man'. Each young child chose a vegetable to show in the middle of the singing circle. Then, baked sweet potatoes were served as a tasty treat for everyone.

Another night began with the reading of the book, Pete's A Pizza. Each child was able to 'use' a sibling or parent as their own pizza to make. They put make-believe tomato sauce, mushrooms and cheese on their 'pizzas' before baking. Following the pretend play, each child could make their own pizza roll from a whole wheat tortilla and selected healthy toppings.

While singing 'I'm a Little Apple' last fall, the children were able to pick apples from a pretend apple tree and then assemble real apple slices with oats and cinnamon-sugar to bake for their tasting. While waiting for the baking, parents measured 10 teaspoons of sugar into a glass to demonstrate the amount of sugar in 12 ounces of sodas.

Weaving literacy activities, singing, movement and tasty nutritious food together, families can be reinforced with a strong fabric that lasts a lifetime.

CASE WV Head Start/ Early Head Start

By Melissa Shinault

Curby from the Raleigh County Solid Waste Authority visited the CASE WV Head Start/Early Head Start Classrooms on January 20, 2011. Curby's assistant Tonya read some wonderful Recycling books to the children and the children learned some recycling tips.



CASE WV Head Start/ Early Head Start to Promote Healthy Eating Habits

March is National Nutrition Month and CASE WV Head Start/ Early Head Start is encouraging all children and families to eat healthy. In January and February children, families, and staff were given the opportunity to submit healthy and diverse recipes for a cookbook that will be compiled and given to all families the end of March. CASE WV received over 125 different recipes for the cookbook. The recipes ranged from appetizers to desserts. Recipes from different ethnic groups are placed in the cookbook for children to experience a diverse range of foods. Classrooms were asked to create a page of artwork showing healthy food choices for the cover or inserts in the cookbook. The cookbook will be given to children and families free of charge. If you would like to receive a free cookbook you may contact Carol Lusk at clusk@casewv.info or Melissa Shinault at mshinault@casewv.info

Collaborations

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"Gang Up..." Stallkamp

"The secret is to gang up on the problem, rather than each other." - Thomas Stallkamp

While it's important not to be too polite when collaborating on a project, it's also important to attack the problems that come up during the course of collaboration, rather than your collaborative partners. If you focus on trying to advance a position over and above all concern for the task you are trying to collaborate on, the collaboration will deteriorate.

"We Could Learn..." Anonymous

"We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, while others are bright, some have weird names, but we have to learn to live in the same box." - Anonymous

You might not choose all of your team mates if you were to have put together the team yourself, but that doesn't mean you don't have to work with them and try to get along. The [workforce is a diverse place](#) and the sooner you learn how to deal with diversity in a collaborative environment, the smoother the collaboration will work.

"Individually..." Satoro

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean." - Ryunosuke Satoro

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Each individual in collaboration brings with himself or herself unique characteristics, but when everyone is grouped together, all of those characteristics add up together and become something greater. If you look at the collaborative team as a whole, rather than a conglomerate of individuals, the collaboration will run more smoothly.

"Few Things in Life..." - Adams

"Few things in life are less efficient than a group of people trying to write a sentence. The advantage of this method is that you end up with something for which you will not be personally blamed." - Scott Adams

If tasks are not divided up, and multiple people attempt to work on one task, then the result can be chaos. Even something as simple as writing a sentence becomes complex when multiple people are involved. When [collaborating for effectiveness](#), it is best to divide the smaller tasks rather than to have every task collaborated on.

"The Purpose in Life..." - Gschwandtner

"The purpose of life is to collaborate for a common cause; the problem is nobody seems to know what it is." - Gerhard Gschwandtner

Simplify Recruitment using



Is there such a thing as "extra time" during Head Start recruitment season? There can be if you use ChildPlus.net! No matter what the Head Start reason or season, ChildPlus.net has all the essential features needed from a program management software—that's why it's the most widely used Head Start/EHS software nationwide! From creating customized bulk recruitment letters, to improving the application entry process, to uploading file attachments for quick and easy access, ChildPlus.net is filled with many helpful tools that simplify recruitment!

Think about how much time you currently spend preparing recruitment letters. With ChildPlus.net you'll SAVE HOURS creating these types of custom letters. Simply add your agency's logo and signatures then format the text and layout. ChildPlus.net automatically retrieves participant information for each letter. In minutes you can prepare an entire batch of letters with little effort!

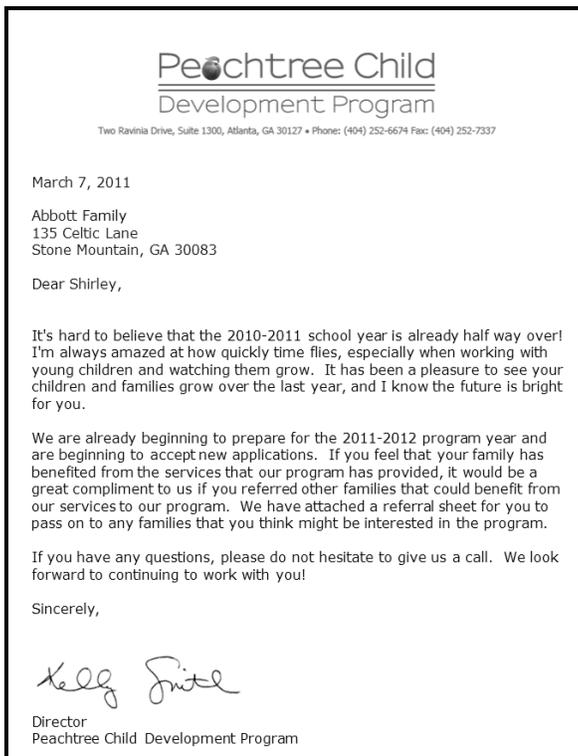
ChildPlus.net comes with a built-in application template so you can customize it to gather all agency specific information. The onscreen application is also configurable so your paper application matches the screen. That way, data entry is fast and there's no back and forth between the screen, paper, mouse and keyboard. The onscreen application also builds as you enter data. When inputting a child's application, only related fields like Health Coverage, Enrollment and Immunization display rather than when entering an adult, fields like Highest Grade Completed, Employment Status and Custody display. That way, you're not tabbing between unnecessary fields and can focus on quick application entry. ChildPlus.net also completes fields automatically with only typing one letter and copies data from similar fields related to parents and children to avoid duplicate reentry. Added together, these time saving features really improve the speed and efficiency of data entry.

After your applications are entered and all your critical paperwork is handy, scan these documents into the system to save yourself a step in the future. The ChildPlus.net File

Attachment feature will allow you to save critical

documents like signed applications, consent forms and income verification documents so they're easily accessible at all your sites. Look for this feature to debut this spring!

In the midst of a busy recruitment season, you'll find many reasons to use ChildPlus.net. But the benefits of ChildPlus.net don't stop there. To learn more about the software and upcoming features, join us at the June Director's meeting as well as the April Region III ChildPlus.net User Group Meeting. You can also register for a **FREE** software Demonstration or Trial by contacting a sales representative at **800.888.6674** or **sales@childplus.com**.



Changing the Way We Do Business for the Health of Our Students

By Rebecca J. King RN, MSN, Med, WVDE-Office of Healthy Schools

As we embark on the 21st Century learner and move closer to universal Pre-K, we must also address the needs of the whole child to ensure success. These needs include the integral part of the school, parents/guardians, medical and dental homes and community in the lives of our students. The RESA-Regional School Wellness Specialist (RSWS), RESA-WVEIS Directors and Regional HealthCheck Specialist have been doing trainings around the state to educate all personnel involved in the pre-enrollment of new enterers. School readiness moves beyond the confined walls of Early Education into the health and wellness of each child.

The health care benefits of children in West Virginia, including Medicaid and WVCHIP recipients, support a medical and dental home concept. At minimal an annual well child visits and dental examinations should be encouraged by school personnel. The unclothed physical exam and surveillance of developmental levels of each child from an extensively trained physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner is a process no one can conceptualize. The integral processing and connection of each growth and development factor according to the expected structure, function, developmental level, cognitive, social and emotional domain of every child while encompassing the knowledge-base and history of the family along with their abilities to ensure the child's success is beyond our grasp as educators. This model in itself is preventive care, health promotion and early identification beyond anything we could ever image. As many pre-schools continue with a onetime massive screening of children, remember this is most likely the first encounter new enterers may have with school staff thus leading to stranger anxiety, noncompliance and many other variables that exist with massive screenings. We cannot dismiss the possibility of inaccurate labeling or over identification due to the variables accompanying massive screening outside of the medical home.

If you view the WVDHHR-HealthCheck Periodicity Schedule for Education at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/section6/SchoolHealthServicesUpdate.htm>, you will be amazed to learn that most children have been seen eleven, yes eleven, times by a medical provider from birth to age two for well child visits alone. This is not inclusive of the other visits including sick child, follow-ups, re-screenings, referrals, etc. I can only fathom the outcomes we could have looking at the whole child by working collaboratively with the child's medical and dental home.

As we move closer to universal Pre-K, I challenge each of you to connect with the child's medical and dental home through the utilization of the HealthCheck (EPSDT). Education personnel can focus on the excellent individual learning plans we have in place while providing the intense therapies such as developmental, speech and language and audiology as identified with the medical home engaged as an integral component of education and care. The time saved from the antiquated massive screening approach will allow thorough reviews and case management of referrals and immunization records in a time of chicken-pox and whooping cough outbreaks. Please remember West Virginia leads the nation in Hepatitis B, so we must intensely focus on vaccine-preventable communicable diseases to protect the child in school and at home along with the staff, pregnant women and elderly.

It is time to focus on the linkage to community for follow-up on referrals and resources. As universal Pre-k includes universal enrollment, we have to work smarter not harder to make a difference in the lives of every child in each and every classroom. Together we can make a difference.

I close with this quote from Edward Schor, author of *EPSDT and School Readiness* (2007), "For the EPSDT program to realize its mission to promote child well-being and prepare children for school and future work, Medicaid policy officials—at both the federal and state levels—need to work closely and collaboratively with child health clinicians whose expertise is in health promotion and child development. Such collaboration will help ensure that children enter school healthy and ready to learn (<http://wvde.state.wv.us/healthyschools/section6/documents/EPSTDTandSchoolReadinessbyEdwardSchor.pdf>)".

Kay Goodwin: Cutting early education funding is misdirected

February 27, 2011 @ 10:45 PM

The Herald-Dispatch

As chairman of the *West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council*, I believe it is important for all West Virginians to be aware that proposed federal funding cuts will have serious and detrimental effects on programs in our state.

The *Early Childhood Advisory Council*, the statewide coordinating body for early childhood programs and policies, is concerned about reductions in funding that are now in the budget documents of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In its budget proposal for the remaining months of Fiscal Year 2011, the House has proposed drastic cuts to Head Start, Early Head Start, the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, and the Child Care Development Block Grant, along with countless other programs that affect the quality of lives for West Virginia children and families every day.

These cuts are not only dollar signs. These cuts must be viewed as a loss of quality education for our children, a loss of quality childcare available for working families, and a loss of meaningful employment for our child care and education professionals.

Lawmakers and elected officials all across the country are now facing a major challenge: managing shrinking budgets while supporting policies that will strengthen America's workforce and get our economy growing again. They have our sympathy and our recognition that this is a unique and complex dilemma.

In difficult economic times, families set priorities and seek to focus on what matters most. We as a country and we as a state must do the same. The *West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council* strongly urges our elected officials to recognize and remember what existing data supports: investing in early childhood education is a fiscally responsible way to reduce deficits and produce immense gains for children and for taxpayers.

It has been proven that the short-term costs of this investment are more than offset by immediate and long-term benefits: better health, reduced dependence on social programs, less contact with the criminal justice system, and increased productivity and independence.

It is puzzling and frightening to our council that national lawmakers are proposing devastating cuts to the very early childhood programs that serve our most at-risk children.

Our country cannot move forward if we insist on moving backward in our funding of effective and economically stimulating programs. We, the *West Virginia Early Childhood Advisory Council*, urge lawmakers to maintain the current funding available to states and communities for the important early childhood programs that keep children learning and the economy growing.

Kay Goodwin is cabinet secretary for the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts.

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UP & COMING

2011 WVHS Association Meeting Dates

1/12 & 13/11 Morgantown, WV

3/16 & 3/17/11 Morgantown, WV

6/08 & 6/09/11 TBA

2011 WVHSA Board of Directors Meeting Dates

2/10/11 Conference call

4/14/11 Conference call

5/12/11 Conference call

8/11/11 Conference call

9/08/11 Charleston, WV

10/13/11 TBA

***MISSION
STATEMENT***

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***The West Virginia Head Start
Association's Mission Statement for
2010-2011***

Speaking with one voice for West Virginia's young children and families by:

- involving parents as decision makers,
- advocating for high quality services,
- strengthening partnerships on the local and state level,
- providing statewide training for early childhood programs, and
- circulating key information to local Head Start programs.