School Readiness and Early School Success Consultation Memo

Miami-Dade County, Florida

June 2008

SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY SCHOOL SUCCESS CONSULTATION MEMO
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
June 2008

This memo documents the various consultations, discussions and other resources used to inform The Children's Trust and its partners regarding the key issues and proposed results on which to focus local collaborative activities around children's school readiness and success.

Background

The Children's Trust, The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation and the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe are partners in a September 2007 grant award from Annie E. Casey Foundation through The Children's Trust's membership in the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership. This award supports local policy research to develop work focused on children's school readiness and early-grade school success. The intent is to use neighborhood-level data to strengthen and expand policy advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged children and families. Additionally, it seeks to promote collaboration and coordination of efforts on data-driven advocacy to impact state and local policy.

Miami-Dade County builds on considerable prior research related to school readiness as well as major initiatives already underway (e.g., Quality Counts, Ready Schools Miami, Healthy Start Coalition, HealthConnect in the Early Years, The Parent Academy) and on-going advocacy work – in some instances for children not only in Miami-Dade County but across Florida also. The steps taken through this grant to update the research and program of work are as follows.

In early 2008, we prepared a school readiness system scan providing data on the current status of children's school readiness and early school success. It also identified the numerous institutions, and to some degree the status of system coordination among them, responsible for getting children ready for school.

Throughout researching the system scan, engaging stakeholders in discussions, connecting with the Florida Kids Count grantee, and capitalizing on our organizations' leadership positions locally and in related statewide efforts, we worked to identify key policy and program issues. At the same time, we identified relevant data, specifically at the sub-county level, to highlight the substantial differences in components of children's school readiness across neighborhoods.

The research, discussions and data led to an evidence-based problem statement describing the key barriers to school readiness and success for Miami-Dade's children. Ultimately, this will lead to a community action plan to address those differentials and better coordinate systems related to school readiness, and to data sharing/integration efforts so we can measure and track changes for children across neighborhoods and across systems.

Consultations and Information Sources

The partner organizations in this grant are Miami-Dade leaders in early childhood care and education and school readiness. Daily, we discuss these issues throughout the local community as well as at the state and national levels. We decided to bring together individuals from agencies across the school readiness components – a natural next step to further identify (and sometimes validate) key issues to rally collaboration around school readiness and success.

On March 24, 2008, we conducted a comprehensive *School Readiness and Early School Success Stakeholders' Meeting.* This 2-1/2 hour discussion was attended by 41 individuals representing 20 different organizations. Following introductory remarks by each grant partner's CEO, highlights from the School Readiness and Early School Success System Scan were presented. The bulk of the meeting was a facilitated, lively discussion identifying local strengths, opportunities and challenges leading to suggestions for moving the agenda forward. (See attachment for agenda, attendees, remarks, presentation, and discussion points and questions).

We also reviewed local research and early childhood needs assessments conducted by the grant partners that have informed advocacy and investment decisions of the partner organizations over the past several years:

- The Children's Trust's Needs Assessment series of reports from 2003;
- The Children's Trust's 2007 Parent Survey on Child Health and Well-Being in Miami-Dade County;
- The Children's Trust 2008 Child Well-Being Indicators Report;
- The Early Learning Coalition's 2006 Strategic Plan that includes a community needs assessment section; and
- The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation's and Ready Schools Miami's 2007 Parent Engagement Environmental Scan.

Preliminary telephone conversations with the Florida KIDS COUNT grantee – Center for the Study of Children's Futures, an initiative of the Department of Child & Family Studies of the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute at the University of South Florida – were followed by an on-site, six-hour visit to the center by a representative of The Children's Trust on May 7, 2008. We reviewed statewide data collection and advocacy efforts on behalf of children, and discussed potential avenues for collaboration between the two Annie E. Casey Foundation-funded projects, as well as more broadly for our two organizations. These promising opportunities for collaboration were identified:

- One benefit of Florida KIDS COUNT being part of the Institute is access to its researchers who participate on task forces and committees and provide their expertise throughout the state. This provides a conduit to transmit data-based reports with recommendations for action and public policies to decision-makers, making the transition from research to policy. Sharing Miami-Dade's school readiness research and efforts with Florida KIDS COUNT and its extended network, possibly as a case study highlighting specific neighborhoods, can benefit both entities as Miami-Dade and the Institute can build upon each others' knowledge bases.
- Florida KIDS COUNT can help Miami-Dade's school readiness initiative by:
  - Identifying key individuals and bridging data relationships at state agencies to assist with data inquiries at these agencies.

- •Developing one-page flyers and issue briefs that are easy to read and digest across multiple audiences.
- •Offering its extensive mailing list with a statewide readership for dissemination purposes.

➢ Florida KIDS COUNT has a well-established reputation for consistent data collection that permits comparability among jurisdictions throughout Florida. Comparable data across Florida counties for children in the early years is sparse and not easily accessible. The Children's Services Councils across Florida (including The Children's Trust) do not collect this data consistently. Miami-Dade's school readiness initiative can provide a foundation on which to build, and Florida KIDS COUNT can help with identifying and developing an approved set of consistent and comparable early childhood education and development indicators across all Children's Services Councils.

Miami-Dade County is well-represented in statewide efforts advocating for and developing early childhood education and school readiness initiatives, service coordination and data integration. The key issues identified for Miami-Dade County are consistent with those promulgated by these organizations. Some major players and activities are:

➢ The Policy Group for Florida's Families and Children is an independent, analytical group of statewide leaders that develops and supports public policies focusing on the well-being of families and children that are grounded in evidence-based research (Children's Services Councils across the state were instrumental in creating this group; The Children's Trust CEO is a Policy Group Fellow.)

➢ Florida's Policy Matters Project wrapped up in October 2007, but before then state-based stakeholders conducted a self-assessment, set goals and priorities, and focused on politically feasible options to identify policy strategies that support an early childhood system that includes children birth to age 8; both public and private providers; home, center, school and community-based programs; and statewide implementation. The result is a prioritized policy agenda and strategic plan, extending several years into the future to yield lasting benefits for Florida's families and children. (The Children's Trust was an active participant.)

➢ The Governor's Children and Youth Cabinet was created in July 2007 to promote collaboration, creativity, increased efficiency, information sharing, and improved service delivery among its state agencies and organizations. (Two Board members of The Children's Trust, one of whom is also on the coalition's board, are Cabinet members.)

➢ Florida Children's Services Council promotes policies that build effective primary prevention and early intervention systems of supports for Florida's children and families. (The Children's Trust CEO is its chairman.)

➢ Association of Early Learning Coalitions provides leadership as the professional association of the executive directors of Florida's 31 Early Learning Coalitions. (The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe's CEO participates.)

➢ The Children's Forum is a private, not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing the quality, affordability and availability of child care and early education through a broad array of programs, services, and publications. (A board member of The Children's Trust is on The Children's Forum's Board.)

➢ The Children's Campaign is an advocacy organization devoted to making children's issues a legislative priority, including advocacy for high quality pre-K, child care and early learning opportunities.
➢ Florida Association of Healthy Start Coalitions provides leadership for coalitions across Florida as they offer universal risk screening of all pregnant women and infants up to age 3.
➢ United Way of Florida offers leadership in public policy to the 34 United Ways throughout Florida.

Key Issues and Expected Results

Following reviews of local, recent early childhood research and needs assessments, ongoing statewide activities, as well as discussions with stakeholders involved in various aspects of school readiness, these issues – all revolving around coordination and collaboration – are identified as primary to Miami-Dade County moving its school readiness agenda and activities forward:

Coordination of Efforts

Miami-Dade County is at the forefront of school readiness within the state of Florida. Local understanding and sensitivity toward early childhood development and its returns on investment appear to be high. But, the numerous early childhood initiatives and projects taking place throughout the Miami-Dade community, as well as at the state level, has resulted in knowledgeable stakeholders requesting a "take stock" inventory to map out what has been accomplished and what is underway in terms of research, data collection, advocacy efforts and groups, strategic plans and collaborations across ongoing projects to determine what data are being collected, by whom, for what purpose, and how it relates to other endeavors and can be shared by participants throughout the system.

> Expected result: Create a clearinghouse of early childhood education and development activities, advocacy priorities and expected outcomes within Miami-Dade County connected to and reflecting statewide efforts. The school readiness system scan began this process, but more work is needed to ensure all efforts are included, as well as to engage all stakeholders. From this can emerge a more coordinated approach to school readiness.

Quality Early Childhood Care and Education

With implementation of a voluntary pre-kindergarten program for all 4 year olds throughout Florida, there is an even greater need to ensure these programs are of high quality. Miami-Dade's Quality Counts initiative – a voluntary rating system that reviews centers and family child care programs according to clearly defined, high-quality standards using a 5 Star method of evaluation, and offers supports and incentives to help providers reach their goals – began operations in the fall of 2007. It is a joint initiative of The Children's Trust, Early Learning Coalition and The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation.

> Expected result: Continue to build on Miami-Dade's Quality Counts initiative. Have additional child care centers and homes seek national accreditation. Use the results to improve and prove the benefits of a comprehensive quality system.

<u>Seamless Transition Across Early Education and Public School Settings</u>
There is a lack of coordination and communication across early education systems –
child care to pre-kindergarten to public school – so that when a child enters public
school, little of his or her history is known. Additionally, the weakest areas for
Miami-Dade preschoolers in poverty are language development, literacy and
behavior concerns as reported by parents and confirmed by formal assessments.
Interventions to develop language skills and modify behavior occur over time and
require consistent reinforcement, all requiring coordination of efforts and
understanding of the individual child across settings.

> <u>Expected result:</u> Support the efforts of Ready Schools Miami to lead the way in
> building bridges for children to make easy, seamless transitions from child
> care and preschools to kindergarten. This includes building connections
> between child care sites and the public school system to align curriculums and
> ensure continued professional development opportunities for early childhood
> educators, as well as actively helping parents become more involved in their
> children's informal and formal education. These coordinated efforts will lead to
> improvements in children's language skills and behavior.

<u>Data Coordination/Integration</u>
The need for better coordinated efforts across all aspects of school readiness
requires sharing data across systems to better understand the relationships among
neighborhood, family, services, schools and children ready for school.

> <u>Expected result:</u> Create a Data Integration Workgroup that meets regularly to
> build a child-level data integration system for Miami-Dade County and become
> more familiar with the discussions taking place in the Children and Youth
> Cabinet to do the same at the state level. The Data Integration Workgroup
> met on April 22, 2008, with a charge "To begin discussion and action planning
> on possibilities and strategies for better coordinating and integrating data
> across major service systems regarding community disparities and approaches
> to improving children's school readiness and early school success, with an end
> goal of enabling better data-driven planning, decision-making and advocacy."
> (See attached agenda.)

Next Steps
With an ultimate goal of strengthening and expanding policy advocacy on behalf of
disadvantaged children and families in Miami-Dade County's low-income urban
neighborhoods, our next step is to create a work plan designed to embrace and
implement the key issues identified above. We also intend to build on our
discussions with Florida KIDS COUNT, specifically with respect to working with other
Children's Services Councils to create a mutually agreed upon set of consistently
collected and measured early childhood education and development indicators
across the state.

SCHOOL READINESS AND SUCCESS CONSULTATION MEMO
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

List of Attachments

Stakeholders meeting – March 24, 2008
➢Agenda
➢List of Invitees and Attendees
➢CEO Introductory Talking Points
➢Background and System Scan Presentation
➢Discussion Points and Questions

Data Integration Workgroup – April 22, 2008
➢Agenda
➢List of Invitees and Attendees

School Readiness and Early School Success Stakeholders' Meeting

March 24, 2008
12:00pm to 2:30pm
(lunch provided)

Ryder Room, United Way of Miami-Dade
3250 SW Third Avenue, Miami

AGENDA

Objective: Review current status of Miami-Dade County's systems that support children's school readiness, and identify key policy and program issues and relevant indicator data resulting in an action plan to better coordinate these systems and achieve school readiness and early school success for all Miami-Dade children.

- **Welcome and Introductions**

   Modesto E. Abety*, President/CEO,* The Children's Trust

   David Lawrence, Jr.*, President,* The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation

   Evelio Torres, *President/CEO,* Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

- **Initiative Introduction and Preliminary School Readiness Systems Scan**

- **Building upon Community Strengths and Opportunities; Addressing Weaknesses and Threats – Facilitated Discussion**

- **Next Steps – Developing, Prioritizing and Implementing an Action Plan**

School Readiness and Early Success Stakeholders
March 24, 2008

List of Invitees and Attendees to School Readiness and Early School Success Stakeholders Meeting held March 24, 2008

Attended	First Name	Last Name	Title	Agency
Yes	**Mark**	**Buchbinder**	**Executive Director**	**Alliance for Human Services**
Yes	**Dia**	**Carter-Webb**	**Director, School-Based Education**	**Arts for Learning**
Yes	**Maria**	**Katz**		**Barry University Head Start**
No	Elaine	Celaya	Director, Healthy Families	Children's Home Society
Yes	**Fred**	**Hicks**	**Chief Information Officer**	**Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe**
Yes	**Pam**	**Hollingswoth**	**Quality Counts**	**Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe**
No	Angelo	Parrino	Senior Director of Administration	Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Yes	**Ana**	**Pizano**	**Special Projects Manager**	**Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe**
Yes	**Blythe**	**Robinson**	**Sr. Director of Programs**	**Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe**
No	Jackye	Russell	Director, School Readiness	Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Yes	**Evelio**	**Torres**	**President and Chief Executive Officer**	**Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe**
Yes	**Mark**	**Gross**		**Family Central**
No	Wendy	Salomon	Vice President	Family Central
No	Katherine	Espinosa-Suarez	Child Find Outreach Specialist	FL Diagnostic Learning & Resource System - South
Yes	**Wil**	**Blechman**	**Board Chair**	**Florida Association for Infant Mental Health**
No	Alan	Abramowitz	Regional Director	Florida Department of Children and Families
No	Suzette	Frazier	Regional Safety Program Manager, Child Care Licensing	Florida Department of Children and Families
Yes	**Jeff**	**Hurst**	**Family Services Counselor Supervisor**	**Florida Department of Children and Families**
Yes	**Chuck**	**Bleiker**	**Associate Professor, Department of Education and SPARK evaluator**	**Florida International University**
Yes	**Gail**	**Gregg**	**Associate Professor, Department of Education**	**Florida International University**
No	Marisel	Losa	President and Chief Executive Officer	Health Council of South Florida
Yes	**Lilia**	**Abril**	**Health Connect in the Early Years**	**Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade**
Yes	**Manuel**	**Fermin**	**Executive Director**	**Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade**
No	Gayane	Stepanian	Director for Community Affairs	Injury Free Coalition for Kids
Yes	**Marta**	**Fernandez**	**Program Coordinator, All-Aboard Educational Services**	**Institute for Child and Family Health, Inc.**
Yes	**Maria**	**Pinon**	**Supervisor, All-Aboard Family Literacy**	**Institute for Child and Family Health, Inc.**
No	Hana	Fink	Executive Director	March of Dimes
No	Marie	Severe	Early Steps Operations Manager	Miami Children's Hospital
Yes	**Maria**	**Binelo**	**Director, Eligibility Services Division**	**Miami Dade County Department of Human Services**
Yes	**Grace**	**Laskis**	**Head Start Education Division**	**Miami-Dade County Community Action Agency**
Yes	**Jane**	**McQueen**	**Director, Head Start/Early Head Start**	**Miami-Dade County Community Action Agency**
No	Maritza	Alonso	Acting Assistant Director	Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services
No	Daisy	Hensley	Inclusion Assessment, Child Development Services	Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services
No	Edith	Humes	Bureau Chief, Child Development Services	Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services
No	Phyllis	Tynes-Saunders	Director	Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services
No	Lillian	Rivera	Department Adminstrator	Miami-Dade County Health Department
Yes	**Karen**	**Weller**	**Chair, Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade**	**Miami-Dade County Health Department**
No	Imran	Ali	Director, Child Advocate	Miami-Dade County Office of the Mayor
Yes	**Mariela**	**Ayala**	**Division of Early Childhood**	**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**
Yes	**Betty**	**Key**	**Admnistrative Director, Division of Early Childhood**	**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

School Readiness and Early Success Stakeholders
March 24, 2008

Attended	First Name	Last Name	Title	Agency
No	Jerry	Levitt	Executive Director, Office of Program Evaluation	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Yes	**Sandy**	**Smith-Moise**	**Dean, The Parent Academy**	**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**
No	Anne	Thompson	Director, Office of Parental Involvement	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Yes	**Marisabel**	**Trastoy**	**Division of Early Childhood**	**Miami-Dade County Public Schools**
No	Frances	Allegra	Executive Director	Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe
No	Colleen	Perdue	Director of Research & Program Development	Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe
Yes	**Mo**	**Abety**	**President and Chief Executive Officer**	**The Children's Trust**
No	Andrew	Brickman	Executive Director, Health Programs	The Children's Trust
Yes	**Darrin**	**Buffkin**	**Community Indicators & GIS Analyst**	**The Children's Trust**
Yes	**Sharon**	**DeJoy**	**Research and Evaluation Manager**	**The Children's Trust**
No	Loretta	Duvall	Senior Contract Administrator Manager	The Children's Trust
Yes	**Lori**	**Hanson**	**Director of Research & Evaluation**	**The Children's Trust**
Yes	**Jesse**	**Leinfelder**	**Administrator, Quality Counts**	**The Children's Trust**
Yes	**Lisa**	**Pittman**	**Sr Research & Evaluation Analyst**	**The Children's Trust**
No	Diana	Ragbeer	Director of Public Policy & Communications	The Children's Trust
No	Bevone	Ritchie	Administrator, Early Childhood & Maternal Health	The Children's Trust
No	Jeff	Dow	Program Director, Ready Schools Florida	The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation
Yes	**David**	**Lawrence, Jr.**	**President**	**The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation**
Yes	**Ana**	**Sejeck**	**COO & Ready Schools Miami Project Director**	**The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation**
Yes	**Abby**	**Thorman**	**Consultant**	**Thorman Strategy Group**
No	Emily	Bennett	Program Officer	United Way of Miami-Dade
Yes	**Kathleen**	**Crucet**	**Program Officer**	**United Way of Miami-Dade**
No	Mary	Donworth	Vice President, Community Investments	United Way of Miami-Dade
Yes	**Lou**	**Esposito**	**Director, Evaluation & Outcome Measurement**	**United Way of Miami-Dade**
Yes	**Gladys**	**Montes**	**Director, Center for Excellence in Early Education**	**United Way of Miami-Dade**
No	Darryl	Greenfield	Professor of Psychology and Pediatrics, Head Start Evaluator	University of Miami
Yes	**Amira**	**Itzhak**	**Linda Ray Intervention Center**	**University of Miami**
No	Lynne	Katz	Director, Linda Ray Intervention Center	University of Miami
No	Judy	Schaechter	Assistant Professor of Pediatrics	University of Miami
Yes	**Marie**	**White**	**Linda Ray Intervention Center**	**University of Miami**
Yes	**Susan**	**Gold**	**Associate Professor, Education Division**	**University of Miami Mailman Center**
Yes	**Elaine**	**Matthews**	**Early Steps Coordinator**	**University of Miami Mailman Center**
No	Susan	Weitzel	Director, Florida KIDS COUNT	University of South Florida

NNIP School Readiness and Success Initiative Stakeholders Meeting
Monday, March 24, 2008
Talking Points for speakers

MO – welcome everyone (about 40 have RSVP'd) and have them introduce themselves

MO: provide background and focus on neighborhood aspect

- Excited by opportunity to participate in *NNIP-National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership – School Readiness and Success Initiative*
- This is funded by a small ($15,000) grant from the Annie E Casey Foundation working through the Urban Institute to develop this School Readiness project based upon indicators
- The grant was awarded to a collaboration among The Children's Trust, the Early Childhood Initiative Foundation/Ready Schools, and the Early Learning Coalition.
- The NNIP School Readiness initiative includes 8 other communities along with Miami-Dade: Atlanta, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Denver, Indianapolis, Memphis, Milwaukee, and Providence
- This provides the opportunity to gain expertise from some of the best thinkers in the nation on how to use <u>neighborhood level data</u> to inform systems change

---

Plan for today:
  Envision an action plan for children's school readiness and success, by
   >Helping us identify community strengths & opportunities, building on past & current work
   >Identifying key policy and program issues and expected results
   >Identifying the relevant indicators needed to measure and track efforts across
        neighborhoods and over time

Here we are "again" as it were, continuing to gain awareness of the multiple efforts to gather meaningful data that many of you have been involved in for considerable time.
Let's make it a useful continuation of our ongoing work.

Certainly at The Trust we have invested a great deal of time and energy in data collection. And we know data in itself is not enough. We have to figure out how to analyze, "frame" and use the data effectively.

A significant focus of NNIP is the "*Neighborhood*" element. NNIP is asking us to take a serious look at the giant differences between some neighborhoods and other neighborhoods (Ex, Opa Locka and Coral Gables--)

This NNIP work can help us get more sophisticated about addressing the crying needs of "target" neighborhoods, and learn from other communities facing similar challenges.

We appreciate your participation and hope today will get us started on increasingly more productive collaboration.

Next Dave

Dave: focus on collaboration and planning aspect

- The Children's Trust and the Early Childhood Initiative Foundation are committed to making investments that promote children's well-being in a variety of ways.
- Clearly there are many needs in Miami-Dade County, but also unique resources and partnerships to make a difference.
- The NNIP effort that collects data, provides national expertise and perspective, and identifies opportunities is likely to be extremely helpful, particularly as resources tighten.
- The national NNIP School Readiness and Success Initiative helps connect our Ready Schools Miami work in Miami-Dade with a bigger picture.

Goal is to expand policy advocacy for children-families in low-income urban neighborhoods. Annie E. Casey Foundation and NNIP are trying to do this through:
- Promoting local collaboration among "data intermediaries," funders and advocates
- Increasing data-driven advocacy to affect policies at local and state levels
- Supporting joint research and advocacy across cities and states to affect federal policy

This is a big endeavor.

In the first stage now underway, we are developing a local "School Readiness and Success Brief."
In that process we are asked to:
- Use available data to compare circumstances of children in low-income neighborhoods with children in better-off neighborhoods
- Describe key barriers to school readiness and early-grade success for low-income children
- Draw implications for programs and policy

Thank you for joining in that challenge.

Next Evelio

Evelio: focus on school readiness aspect

The Early Learning Coalition is tasked with improving school readiness of low-income children.

Thank you for being here working towards that goal on the NNIP *School Readiness and Success Initiative*

We have always known that children do better in school when they have strong families and communities behind them. The National School Readiness Indicators Initiative proposes a formula for achieving "Ready Children". That formula requires

> Ready Families + Ready Early Childhood Education Services + Ready Health Services + Ready Schools + Ready Communities

Only by achieving all of these -- families, early childhood services, health services, schools, and communities that are supportive and effective --can we really achieve "Ready Children." Now this is a challenge!

The ELC surely stands to benefit from NNIP's comprehensive data analysis within the big picture. We need more ammunition for effective state-level advocacy.

We need to know how to best target support services to areas of greatest need.

- For example, child screening/assessment data being collected through our contract with County Child Development Services has not been put to full use in terms of planning services to address identified needs--this NNIP work may help do that.
- We are implementing a comprehensive child care quality initiative, Quality Counts—the quality rating improvement system. This initiative will be generating a great deal of data—and it needs to be analyzed within the larger context so that we continue to make good plans as Quality Counts rolls-out.

To preserve social services in this time of economic challenges, we will need comprehensive and coordinated responses; we will need accurate and "well-framed" data to guide advocacy efforts to retain funding.
The NNIP *School Readiness and Success Initiative* should serve us well here in Miami-Dade County.

Next: Lisa Pittman will take us into the School Readiness System Scan

Annie E. Casey Foundation
and
National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership

School Readiness and
Early School Success Initiative

Miami-Dade County
March 2008

Goals of This Discussion

- Share background on the School Readiness and Early School Success initiative
- Review highlights of the System Scan
- Receive your feedback on corrections/additions needed
- Identify community strengths and challenges related to school readiness
- Identify key policy and program issues and expected results
- Secure your support and involvement

National Neighborhood Indicators Partnerships

- Collaborative effort by the Urban Institute and local partners
  - GOAL: gather and use neighborhood-level information systems in local policymaking and community building
- Theme is *democratizing information*
- Miami one of 30 communities nationwide
- This School Readiness initiative is one of several cross-site activities

---

School Readiness Initiative

- Competitive grant from Annie E. Casey Foundation
  - Promotes collaboration on data-driven advocacy on children's issues
- Timeliness of Grant for Miami-Dade
- Opportunity to build on past and current efforts

School Readiness Initiative – Grant Requirements

- Phase 1
  - School Readiness and Early School Success System Scan
  - Consultations with Local Organizations
  - School Readiness and Success Brief

- Phase 2
  - Develop a plan for Miami-Dade's School Readiness & Success
  - Conduct a community forum
  - Participate in cross-site policy research and advocacy

Ready Child Equation

Ready Families
+
Ready Services – ECE
+
Ready Services – Health
+
Ready Schools
+
Ready Communities:
=
Ready Children

- Describes children's family context and home environment
- Describes availability, quality and affordability of proven programs (ECE and health) that influence child development and school readiness
- Describes the critical elements of schools that influence child development and school success
- Describes the resources and supports available to families with young children
- Describes what children know and can do in each domain of child development: physical well-being & motor development, social & emotional development, approaches to learning, language development and literacy, and cognition & general knowledge

Miami-Dade's Preliminary School Readiness System Scan

- Some limitations
- Data in document reflects entire county
  - Exception is maps
- Identifies key data elements within each school readiness category
- Addresses critical components of a comprehensive school readiness system
- Identifies notable system coordination efforts and providers of key services

Getting Ready for School

Selected factors to indicate whether children have the tools to succeed in school

- *Ready Families*: Family structure; births to teens and unwed moms; child abuse; foster care
- *Ready Services – Early Care & Education*: Enrollment in early education programs; credentials of ECE teachers; accredited centers and homes; child care subsidies
- *Ready Services – Health*: Prenatal care and low birth weight babies; breastfeeding; health insurance; developmental screenings and assessments; immunizations
- *Ready Schools*: school enrollment; attendance; retention rate; class size; 4th grade reading scores
- *Ready Communities*: young children living in poverty; juvenile crime; lead poisoning
- *Ready Children*: kindergarten instrument to assess school readiness, literacy activities in the home

Miami-Dade County is Above Average on Some Fronts

Ready Families
- Rate of teen births

Ready Services – Early Care and Education
- Number and percentage of accredited child care centers

Ready Services – Health
- Infant mortality
- Mothers receiving adequate prenatal care

And Lags on Other Indicators

Ready Services – Early Care and Education
- VPK providers falling below minimum performance cut-off

Ready Services - Health
- Births to unwed mothers
- Lead poisoning (specifically among new immigrants)

Ready Schools
- 4th graders reading at or above grade level

Ready Children
- School readiness scores
- On other screenings: language development, literacy, behavior problems greatest concerns

Opportunities or Challenges?

- Miami-Dade is one of the most diverse, and poor, counties in the nation:
  - 192,000 children under the age of 6 in Miami-Dade County
    - 67% are either foreign born or have at least one foreign born parent (24% national average)
    - 56% are Hispanic/Latino; 24% are non-Hispanic black, and 18% are non-Hispanic white, and 2% are Asian, Native American, or multi-racial
    - 22% live in poverty (42,000 children)
    - 43% live at or below 185% of poverty (83,000 children)
  - Among children age 5-17, 71% speak a language other than English at home (19% national average)

2006 American Community Survey Data

Components to Coordinate

- Home visiting/family support/parent counseling
- Foster care/Child Protective Services
- Licensed Child Care (center and home care)
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- State and Local Pre-K
- Medicaid, KidCare (SCHIP), Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment
- Immunization and Lead Screening
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services

Notable System Coordination Efforts

Ready Families	Ready Services – ECE	Ready Services – Health	Ready Schools	Ready Communities

Ready Schools Miami

Quality Counts

Health Connect in the Early Years

Health Connect in Our Schools

Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade County

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Selected School Readiness Policy Options

Ready Families	Selected home visiting; family support programs; adult literacy, education and ESL
Ready Services – Early Care & Education	Highly-qualified early education providers; affordable, accredited child care and preschool
Ready Services – Health	Health insurance; medical homes, developmental health services and early intervention
Ready Schools	Transition planning; integrated curriculums; community schools; small class size
Ready Communities	Income support programs, toxin inspections and removal; public awareness/action campaigns; affordable housing

School Readiness and Early School Success Stakeholders' Discussion Points and Questions

March 24, 2008

Objective: Identify key policy/program issues and relevant data that can contribute to a community action plan to better coordinate systems and achieve school readiness and early school success for Miami-Dade children.

What things do we have going for us? How do we capitalize on each of these?

- *Strengths* (internal resources/capacity) and *Opportunities* (prospects in the external environment) that are *helpful to achieving the objective*

    Some examples we've already mentioned...
    - ➤ Miami-Dade is at forefront of school readiness...many local initiatives underway
    - ➤ State and national interest groups and ongoing research regarding early childhood investment and policy
    - ➤ Community data integration discussions and high-level interest in accomplishing alignment of data systems
    - ➤ Richly diverse community

What challenges must we overcome? How do we defend against each of these?

- *Weaknesses* (internal) and *Threats* (external conditions) that are *harmful to achieving the objective*

    Some examples we've already mentioned...
    - ➤ Separate organizations are all busy carrying out individual missions and priorities, with little time to coordinate; perhaps some turf-protection issues
    - ➤ Large influx of refugees and new entrants – unique needs related to language and literacy skills
    - ➤ Current economic conditions resulting in severe financial restrictions at local and state levels
    - ➤ Getting data at the true "neighborhood" level

Other Questions for Discussion:

- What relevant measures and data indicators would you prioritize to collect and track to inform and measure change related to the objective? What would be helpful for you to know (and in what format) to impact your organization's decisions related to school readiness and early school success?
- What are the top three key early childhood education issues within our community? How might they differ or align across neighborhoods and other subgroups?
- How do we best integrate data and other efforts into other existing school readiness initiatives, across agencies and within the community?

Next Steps/Action Planning:

- Annie E. Casey grant deliverables
  - ➢ Update scan with ***input from the community***
  - ➢ ***Follow-up discussions*** with key organizations and Florida KidsCount at USF
  - ➢ ***School Readiness and Success Brief***...to get to a more specific, neighborhood level needs analysis than the scan and inform both targeted and universal efforts
  - ➢ Potential to ***pursue support for Phase 2*** of work to further develop a local plan; hold a community forum to raise awareness; participate in local and national level policy research and advocacy
- What are the priorities and methods to plan and gather meaningful data and to put the data to use informing policy and practice?
  - ➢ Interest in formation of a local Data Workgroup of representatives from agencies that collect relevant data and are interested in exploring data sharing/integration agreements? To focus on data integration, relevant analyses, and dissemination...

Data Integration Workgroup
School Readiness and Early School Success Stakeholders

Tuesday, April 22, 2008
12:30pm to 2:30pm (lunch provided)

Training Room, The Children's Trust
3150 SW Third Avenue, 8th Floor, Miami

AGENDA

Objective: To begin discussion and action planning on possibilities and strategies for better coordinating and integrating data across major service systems regarding community disparities and approaches to improving children's school readiness and early school success, with an end goal of enabling better data-driven planning, decision-making and advocacy.

- **Welcome and Introductions**

- **Background**
  - **Recap March School Readiness & Early School Success Stakeholders Discussion**
  - **Ready Schools Miami Initiative Overview and Miami-Dade County Public Schools Involvement**

- **Local Aspirations and Purposes for Data Integration Work**
  - **Better Understanding of the Whole Child (school readiness equation)**
  - **Improved Service Coordination and Targeted Delivery**
  - **Informed, Data-Driven Policy Decision-making**

- **Potential Efforts to Build Upon/Learn From**
  - **Data Quality Campaign (national resource www.DataQualityCampaign.org)**
  - **Florida's current efforts (DOE's Data Warehouse (edwapp.doe.state.fl.us/home.aspx); AWI's Early Learning Information System www.floridacsc.org/_docs/elisbenefitsfamilies12-07.pdf; Children and Youth Cabinet http://www.flgov.com/youth_cabinet)**
  - **Local, Community-level Examples (Philadelphia Kids Integrated Data System (KIDS); Broward Information Network (BIN) www.broward.org/bin)**

- **Group Discussion regarding Issues and Next Steps**
  - **Institutional Readiness (identifying and engaging the right data partners to begin work)**
  - **Legal and Privacy Matters (HIPAA, FERPA, unique identifier challenges)**
  - **Data, Technology and System Administration (data repository; protocols for access and use)**
  - **Funding and Sustainability**

Data Integration Workgroup Discussion
April 22, 2008

Attend	First Name	Last Name	Title & Dept	Agency
X	Fred	Hicks	Chief Information Officer	Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
	Ana	Pizano	Special Projects Manager	Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
	Suzette	Frazier	Regional Safety Program Manager, Child Care Licensing	Florida Department of Children and Families
X	Jeffrey	Hurst	Family Services Counselor Supervisor, Child Care Licensing	Florida Department of Children and Families
	Charles	Bleiker	Associate Professor, Department of Education and SPARK evaluator	Florida International University
	Louis	Manfra	Assistant Professor, Department of Education and Center for the Study of School Readiness	Florida International University
	Manuel	Fermin	Executive Director	Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade
X	Diana	Sierra	Consultant	Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade
	Grace	Laskis	Education Division, Head Start/Early Head Start Division	Miami-Dade County Community Action Agency
	Michael	Grubbs	Facilities and Technology Manager, Head Start	Miami-Dade County Community Action Agency
X	Karen	Weller	Chair, Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade	Miami-Dade County Health Department
X	Susana	Cossio	Child Find Specialist, FDLRS South and CHRIS Project	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
	Gisela	Feild	Administrative Director, Assessment, Research and Data Analysis	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
X	Jerry	Levitt	Executive Director, Office of Program Evaluation	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
X	Jorge	Fernandez	IT Project Director	Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe
X	Colleen	Perdue	Director of Research & Program Development	Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe
X	Andrew	Brickman	Executive Director, Health Programs	The Children's Trust
X	Darrin	Buffkin	Community Indicators & GIS Analyst	The Children's Trust
X	Debra	Davis	Chief Information Officer	The Children's Trust
X	Lori	Hanson	Director of Research & Evaluation	The Children's Trust
X	Lisa	Pittman	Sr Research & Evaluation Analyst	The Children's Trust
X	Stephanie	Scott	Resource Development Manager	The Children's Trust
X	Olga	Camacho	Software Specialist, Lead, Children's Registry and Information Systems (CHRIS)	University of Miami
X	Christine	Delgado	Director, Children's Registry and Information Systems (CHRIS)	University of Miami
X	Antonio	Gonzalez	Information Systems, Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System (FDLRS)	University of Miami
X	Darryl	Greenfield	Professor of Psychology and Pediatrics, Head Start Evaluator	University of Miami
X	Marygrace	Kaiser	Director, Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System (FDLRS)	University of Miami