

Missouri Head Start-State Collaboration Office
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Priority Area: Health Services

Outcome: Enhanced community awareness regarding the comprehensive health care needs of children and families.

- The Missouri Coalition for Oral Health, which is co-led by the MHSSCO and the Missouri Head Start Association, garnered funding from the Missouri Foundation for Health to launch and implement a 3 year oral health education campaign. The Coalition partnered with the Missouri Dental Association, Missouri Primary Care Association and the Mid-Missouri Area Health Education Center to educate community leaders, health professionals and decision makers regarding the importance of oral health to a person's overall health. The center of this education campaign includes an oral health white paper and community meetings targeted at educating community members about the current oral health system and how to "revamp" this system into a coordinated and comprehensive system to ensure all citizens, especially those who are underinsured or uninsured, have access to an oral health delivery system that is more responsive to their needs.
- Medicaid is changing in Missouri – Peer to Peer Networking Session. In 2005, Missouri's legislature made changes in Missouri's Medicaid program that went into effect August 2005. These changes impacted thousands of Missouri children and reduced or eliminated certain optional Medicaid services for adults. As a result, it was imperative to provide a forum in which HS staff working with families could become educated about the changes in the system including policy and procedure changes, Medicaid reductions, and opportunities to discuss the impact of the cuts. MHSSCO convened representatives from the Missouri Primary Care Association, the Department of Social Services and the Missouri Association for Welfare to discuss the Medicaid cuts and impacts on Missouri families. Twenty Head Start Directors and Coordinating staff throughout the state participated in this forum and gained skills and knowledge necessary to educate their field staff who directly works with families in their communities.
- In partnership with the Missouri Head Start Association, MHSSCO is the co-lead agency for the Missouri Coalition for Oral Health. The Coalition for Oral Health is a broad collaboration of stakeholders who have a desire to improve oral health. The Coalition strives to create an ideal system that links all initiatives across the state and to improve the oral health status for Missourians. MHSSCO served on the Coalition Steering Committee in an ad-hoc position and co-led monthly meetings of the Steering Committee. In partnership with MHSA, garnered funding from the Missouri Foundation for Health to contract an oral health coordinator for the Coalition to further develop, grow and coordinate the activities of the Coalition.

Priority Area: Child Care

Outcome: Coordination of child care needs and resources throughout the state. Coordination will result in a seamless delivery system and quality early education experiences for all low income children

- The Missouri early childhood community has been involved in developing a Quality Rating System for programs serving early childhood and school-age children. The Collaboration Office has served

on the QRS planning committee that began exploring options for a statewide Quality Rating system. MHSSCO funded a small comparison research project that compared two quality rating systems to determine if a Missouri version could be implemented with fewer dollars and more accurately reflects Missouri's infrastructure.

- MHSSCO served on the Steering Committee for the Missouri Early Childhood Comprehensive Services Grant and played a key role in the development of the State Plan, "Shared Goals for Families, Schools and Communities to Support Young Children."
- The Collaboration Office worked with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Early Childhood Taskforce (comprised of superintendents, Departments of Health and Social Services, Parents as Teachers) around the planning for a statewide system for Universal Access to Early Care and Education. The Early Childhood Taskforce was initially brought together in the summer and began work on developing a vision and principles for a universal access system in Missouri. Additional work of the taskforce included, planning and coordinating regional superintendent meetings throughout the state. The primary purpose of these meetings was for superintendents and school personnel and partners to hear about how some of their colleagues have been collaborating in their local communities to support and offer quality early childhood programs. Taskforce members briefed the group on the early work of the taskforce and provided opportunities for feedback. The work of this taskforce will be ongoing as the state of Missouri continues to progress towards developing a universal access system (meaning that everyone who chooses preschool for their children will have access to quality programs, whether through public school programming, Head Start, or private child care).
- MHSSCO supports state funded Early Head Start programs, administered by the Children's Division at the Department of Social Services.
- MHSSCO served on the National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative Team convened by the Missouri Department of Social Services Children's Division. This was a project of the Child Care Bureau and designed to support CCDF state administrators in their efforts to effect system-wide improvement in infant and toddler child care.

Priority Area: Welfare

- MHSSCO served on the Strengthening Families Leadership Team, led by the Department of Social Services. The Strengthening Families Early Childhood Initiative seeks to create a child abuse and neglect prevention framework that helps program developers, policymakers and advocates embed effective prevention strategies into existing systems. As the project progresses, MHSSCO provides assistance in coordinating and disseminating resources and support to Head Start and other early childhood providers to increase the quality and quantity of interactions with parents that may help prevent abuse or neglect.

Priority Area: Family Literacy

Outcome: All low income families will have improved access to family literacy services and activities

- The MHSSCO contracted with the Missouri Head Start Association to plan, coordinate and execute the annual parent leadership workshop. The workshop brought together approximately 50 Head Start parents and staff from around the state. Participants toured the Capitol, practiced "mock testimony" and gained an understanding of the legislative process as well as local, state and national issues that are affecting children and families.
- The Collaboration Office was an integral and founding member of a technology based professional development planning team. The Collaboration Office worked with a diverse group of state agencies to fund and coordinate the implementation of the Winning Teams distance learning broadcast throughout the state. The course was six weeks long, utilized satellite technology to provide training where it is needed most, and was broken down into three facilitated nine hour series, Guiding Behavior, Nurturing the Young Learner and Learning to Read and Write

Priority Area: Homelessness

Outcome: Facilitate and build partnerships with representatives from statewide organizations to sustain a system that will support homeless families and families in transition

- MHSSCO is one of the appointed members to the Governor's Committee to End Chronic Homelessness. The Collaboration Office participates in monthly committee meetings and serves on the Homeless Awareness Subcommittee.
- Homeless in Missouri -Peer to Peer Networking Session. MHSSCO brought together the State Homeless Coordinator and Head coordinating & managing staff interested in building and enhancing relationships with local education agencies as it relates to homelessness children and families. Participants were provided information on the McKinney Vento Act: and had targeted discussions on how public schools and Head Start programs can work together to best serve homeless children and families, how HS can conduct outreach to these families and how the McKinney Vento Act can impact homeless children and families being served in HS programs.

Priority Area: Education

Outcome: Improved and Coordinated Early Childhood Professional Development System

- As a result of supplemental funding, MHSSCO entered into a consulting agreement with the Missouri Head Start Association to coordinate activities for the establishment of a Missouri Leadership Institute for Head Start and Community Action Agency Programs. The Leadership Institute was designed to offer key training that will serve to strengthen leadership at the local level. Additional purposes of the Institute include: creating a management leadership pool for future success, deepening the skills and increasing the effectiveness of those currently in leadership positions, developing the ability to guide vision toward transformational change and service integration between agencies.

Priority Area: Services to Children with Disabilities

Outcome: An early childhood system that will support the inclusion of children with disabilities in all child development, early care and education and family life activities.

- In Missouri there is a need to build stronger partnerships between local school districts and Head Start. MHSSCO convened a meeting with representatives from DESE-Special Education, MHSA, and the Region VII TA System to discuss strategies on how leadership from these organizations could encourage and support the way for local entities to work together to provide seamless services for young children with disabilities. This meeting resulted in the entities developing a survey, "building stronger partnerships between local school districts and Head Start" aimed at addressing barriers, celebrating success, and provided a framework on which to plan future opportunities and the development of a partnership letter between the leadership from MHSSCO, Region VII T/TA and Dept. of Special Education. The letter was disseminated throughout stakeholder networks and posted on websites.
- The Collaboration Office has worked to strengthen relationships with the Council for Inclusive Child Care, the State Interagency Coordinating Council, the Departments of Health and Mental Health, the Head Start Association and Head Start programs to include children with disabilities in all priority areas.
- The Collaboration Office Director was an appointed member on the State Interagency Coordinating Council and participated in quarterly meetings of the council.

Priority Area: Community Services

Outcome: Facilitate collaboration between Head Start agencies and local early care and education activities so that they become an integral part of any efforts to strengthen communities.

- The Department of Social Services, Family Support Division is 1 of 8 organizations across the United States to receive implementation funds for a Head Start Innovation and Improvement project which were established to address the President's initiatives within Head Start Programs. The overarching goal of the Fathers For Life project is to provide interventions to strengthen low-income families with children that have an incarcerated father or a father under supervision of the probation/parole system. MHSSCO played an integral role throughout the planning grant and will continue to play a key role in

the implementation. The Collaboration Office is a member of the executive team, steering team, and is responsible for statewide coordination, consultation and dissemination of information on this grant

- MHSSCO has been working with the Missouri Association for Community Action and Missouri's Community Services Block Grant Administrator to enhance the management system they developed for Community Action Agencies. The Head Start module is designed for both CAA and non-CAA Head Start programs in the state. The new system allows programs to track data and report out for all funding sources including PIR and will be a more flexible management tool than other child-tracking software currently available. The system will also make automatic referrals to other programs for families with low-income, help integrate program priorities, and create seamless transitions for families that move to different program areas within Missouri. In addition the system will allow for state-level reporting for programs funded by the state (like Early Head Start), automatic data migration to the state's professional development system and trainer registry, and real-time access to state-aggregate data and reports.

New partnership /unique activity with an existing partnership developed during the year:

The Missouri Head Start Association served as a sub-contractor to the MHSSCO for the purpose of planning, coordinating and implementing a state wide leadership institute. Several outcomes were determined to be critical to the success of the Institute:

- Create a leadership pool for future success that would serve to strengthen both organizations
- Strengthen the profession through stronger dispersed leadership
- Deepen the skills and increase the effectiveness of those now in leadership positions
- Develop skills critical to the turbulent environment of today and tomorrow

The Missouri Leadership Institute involved five sessions (2-3 days each): Senior Management Overview (targeted at HS and CAA management staff to promote and market the 2005 institute), Leadership Excellence I, Leadership Excellence II, The Strategic Leader/Applied Strategic Planning and Targeted Innovation. Twenty five participants (HS and CAA staff) registered for the 2005 Institute with one participant dropping out of the institute leaving, twenty four participants completing the institute.

In addition to attending sessions, an application project was built into the Institute design. The goal of the project not only involved the transference of learning locally, but gave participants an opportunity to deepen their learning, implement new tools, processes, and directly apply newly acquired skills to the work place. A few of the application projects included: the development of a training module for a specific agency job; presentation of the SMART model to staff; development of a parent leadership training to be presented at the annual parent leadership training event, development and implementation of a plan to assist with management teams, and the creation of a "Supervisor's Survival Guide."

Dr. Timothy Nolan, PhD. from the Center for Leadership Excellence, Innovative Outcomes, Inc., was contracted to facilitate and provide consultation throughout the 2005 Leadership Institute.

Additional activities and successes in the past year:

The Collaboration Office understands the value of examining the dynamics that shape the development of Missouri's early care and education system and consequently the work of the Collaboration Office. In 2005-06 the Collaboration Office completed a comprehensive planning and assessment process. The process was a multifaceted approach that included: 1) the development and dissemination of 360 degree surveys; 2) strategic planning with the Missouri Head Start-State Collaboration Office Advisory Council; and 3) consultation with advisory council members and 4) the establishment of a strategic plan. In fall 2005, aided by a national consultant, the Collaboration Office convened a core planning group to develop a strategic plan for the office. Combined with the pre-work, this process helped inform the direction and scope of work for the Collaboration Office over the next 5 years.

