

*Fulfilling Pennsylvania's*

Promise  
*for*  
Children



*Office of Child Development and Early Learning*  
**2006-2007 Annual Report**

## Education

Keystone STARS moves from a pilot program to statewide implementation, **6/03**

Pennsylvania becomes a BUILD Initiative state partner. **8/03**

PA legislature approves two new funding streams for early childhood education: Head Start Supplemental Assistance to serve 2,484 children in 04-05; and Accountability Block Grant (ABG) to fund programs that will enhance students' academic achievement and school readiness in school districts and includes three early childhood options: pre-kindergarten, full-day kindergarten, and reduced class size in grades K-3, to serve approximately 54,583 children in ABG-funded full day kindergarten and 3,000 children in ABG-funded pre-kindergarten. **7/04**

PA legislature approves funding for 04-05 to serve approximately 108,710 children (monthly average) through Child Care Works, 63,248 children through Early Intervention (birth-5), 62,074 children through school-funded Full Day Kindergarten, 132,111 children through Keystone STARS, 3,602 children through Nurse-Family Partnership. **7/04**

Two Governor's Institutes are offered for early childhood practitioners focusing on literacy. **7/04**

Keystone STARS is opened to family child care providers. **7/04**

Work begins to change the scope of the teaching certificates for early childhood education, elementary education, and special education and to strengthen the teacher preparation program approval guidelines. **8/04**

More than 2,000 early learning practitioners participate in early childhood-specific summer professional development. **8/04**

**Office of Child Development established!** **9/04**

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards for Pre-Kindergarten are published. **12/04**

Pennsylvania facilitates Mind in the Making institutes to enhance the teaching practices of early childhood teachers to improve quality early education. **12/04**

Task Force recommends reformed Early Childhood Education Guidelines for institutions of higher education. **12/04**

Task Force recommends reformed Elementary Education Guidelines for institutions of higher education. **3/05**

Task Force recommends reformed Special Education Guidelines for institutions of higher education. **5/05**

State-wide Infant-Toddler Strategy created. **5/05**

Pre K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success, a public-private initiative, begins funding districts, Head Start, child care and Early Intervention teams to create high quality pre-kindergarten programs. Lead funding provided by Heinz Endowments, the Grable Foundation and the William Penn Foundation. **6/05**

PA legislature approves funding for 05-06 to serve approximately 118,518 children (monthly average) through Child Care Works, 66,711 children through Early Intervention (birth-5), 54,583 children through ABG-funded full day kindergarten, 68,187 children through school-funded full day kindergarten, 4,710 children through Head Start State Supplemental, 153,863 children through Keystone STARS, 3,736 children through Nurse Family Partnership, 3,646 children through ABG-funded pre-kindergarten, 8,377 children through school-funded pre-k and K4. **7/05**

PA Early Learning Keys to Quality, a regional approach that combines practitioner professional development and the Keystone STARS quality improvement programs, is created. **7/05**

Pennsylvania awards first MAWA Performance Grants for Inclusive Practices, a competitive grant for Preschool Early Intervention Programs to increase the number of children with developmental delays/disabilities included in typical early childhood programs. **7/05**

Early Childhood Capital Investment Fund, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania State Public School Building Authority, launched a \$5 million revolving low interest loan fund to help school districts invest more fully in early childhood education. **7/05**

Child Care Works eligibility regulations revised and new rules remove barriers and increase access for low-income families. **7/05**

Work begins on developing a single, unified subsidy system to serve all families eligible for subsidized child care. **7/05**

Early Childhood Education Partnership Conference held with US Department of Health and Human Services, Region III. **9/05**

Department of Welfare and Department of Education hold first Annual Early Childhood Education conference. **10/05**

Support received from the Heinz Endowments for the Color Me Healthy (child nutrition) program and for a pilot infant toddler mental health program in western Pennsylvania. **11/05**

Infant/Toddler Mental Health Initiative implemented in three Regional Keys. **1/06**

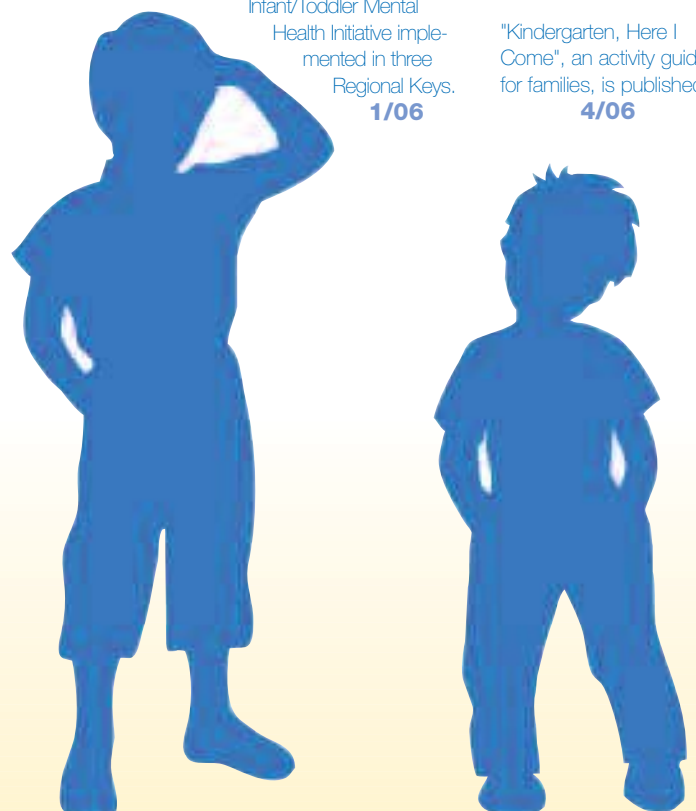
PA Department of Education launches the campaign for career and technical education facilities, promoting student preparation for Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. **2/06**

Development of a common set of child outcomes assessments for all early care and education programs in Pennsylvania. **2/06**

First-ever Pre-kindergarten regulations for public schools established by the State Board of Education. **3/06**

Parent Handbook developed for all Child Care Works families that are eligible for child care subsidy. **3/06**

"Kindergarten, Here I Come", an activity guide for families, is published. **4/06**



## Development

## Improvement

### Funding

### Literacy

Pennsylvania organizes statewide "Week of the Young Child" - "One Book, Every Young Child" campaign.  
**4/06**

Parents are provided information on Keystone STARS as part of their parent Resource & Referral services.  
**5/06**

Early Childhood Career Lattice is developed.  
**5/06**

"Partnering for Success: Pre-kindergarten Programs in Pennsylvania," a guide book to promote pre-kindergarten partnerships, is published.  
**6/06**

School-Age Credential is created.  
**6/06**

PA legislature approves funding for 06-07 to serve approximately: 122,084 children (monthly average) through Child Care Works, 69,325 children through Early Intervention (birth-5), 55,098 children through ABG-funded full day kindergarten, 69,287 children through school-funded full day kindergarten, 5,779 children through Head Start State Supplemental, 138,128 children through Keystone STARS, 3,947 children through Nurse Family

Partnership, 4,287 children through ABG-funded pre-kindergarten, 10,456 children through school-funded pre-k and K4.  
**7/06**

New pre-certification orientation video introduced for prospective child care center and group child care homes.  
**7/06**

Keystone STARS is open to Head Start programs.  
**9/06**

"Evaluation of Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Quality Rating System in Child Care Settings" study finds Keystone STARS is improving quality of child care and reversing the negative trend of declining quality over the past decade.  
**12/06**

State Board of Education regulations regarding pre-kindergarten programs (Title 22, Ch. 4, 11, 12) go into effect.  
**12/06**

Creation of the PA Early Learning Keys to Quality Professional Development Advisory Committee to convene representatives from higher education institutions offering early childhood education degrees and members of the early childhood community to address the professional development needs of the field.  
**12/06**

Pennsylvania convenes early childhood and K-12 communities to facilitate the development of kindergarten transition planning based on the nationally-recognized framework by Dr. Robert Pianta.  
**12/06**

OCD receives grant from U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to develop a common system of measuring child progress across state early childhood programs including Early Intervention.  
**12/06**

Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning is created in the Departments of Education and Public Welfare.  
**1/07**

Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention programs joined under one office.  
**1/07**

First "Program Reach and County Risk Assessment" report published.  
**1/07**

"Friends of Children's Trust Fund" nonprofit organization created to accept/solicit private and federal investments in the Children's Trust Fund program.  
**3/07**

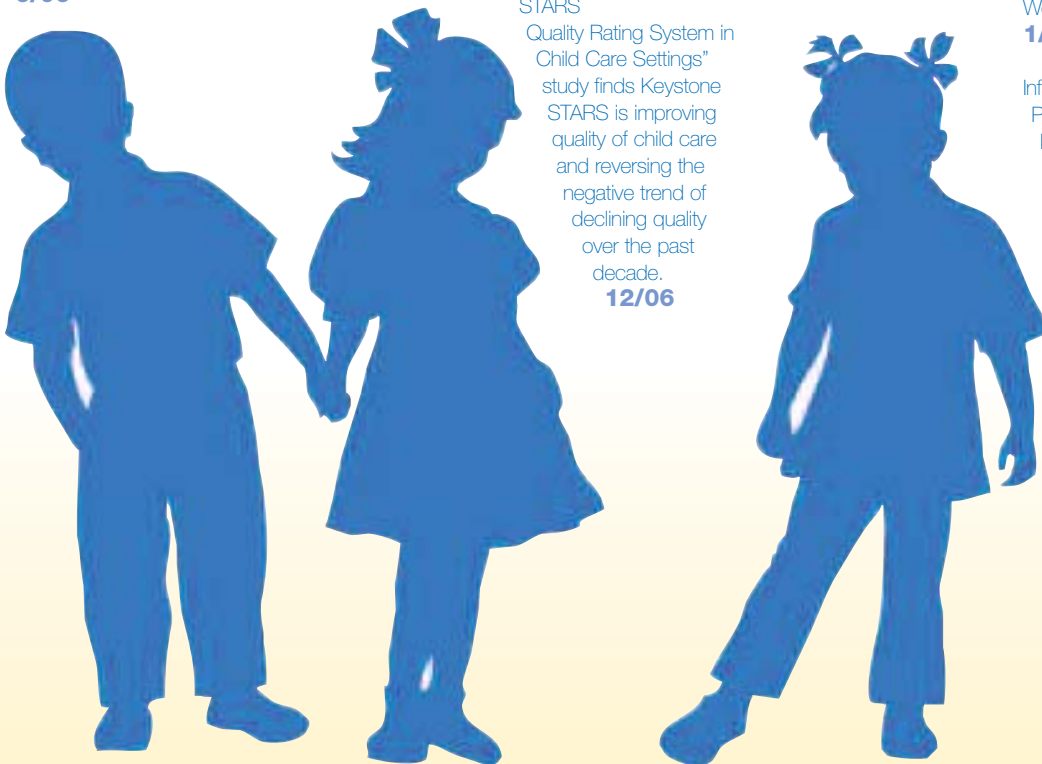
Pennsylvania's Promise for Children campaign launched.  
**4/07**

Pre K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success holds inaugural Executive Leadership Council meeting, co-chaired by PNC CEO Jim Rohr and Governor Edward G. Rendell.  
**4/07**

State Board of Education approves changes to teacher certification requirements, effective January 2013.  
**5/07**

Planning phase for the Early Learning Network begins.  
**5/07**

Unification of Child Care Works subsidy program for all parents under Child Care Information Services agencies completed.  
**6/07**



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We know that quality early education not only touches our young children's lives, it has a significant effect on Pennsylvania's future. If our children do not achieve in school and go on to successful careers, then our economy and quality of life suffers. As Pennsylvanians, we owe it to ourselves to give our young children access to quality early learning opportunities.

Pennsylvania invests in a number of programs, serving more than 300,000 of Pennsylvania's children and families. In order for these programs to truly serve the needs of Pennsylvania's children and families, they need to be of highest quality individually while working seamlessly together as a quality early learning continuum. Since 2003, Pennsylvania has made great progress through the development of the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, statewide implementation of Keystone STARS and creation of the Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality System, development of public-private partnerships, and securing new funding streams for early childhood education.

This year we saw a significant development in Pennsylvania's commitment to a quality early education system through the creation of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning. Part of both the Departments of Public Welfare and Education, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning is an efficient and effective way for Pennsylvania to fully coordinate our programs for birth to age five. This new partnership makes it possible for us to do what's best for Pennsylvania's children and families, while also doing what's most cost-effective for Pennsylvania's taxpayers.

Through the development of a quality early education continuum, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning is increasing access, ensuring quality while building capacity, and building leadership at all levels. By addressing each of these areas, we can help our children, families, teachers and communities reach their promise.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gerald L. Zahorchak in blue ink.

Gerald L. Zahorchak  
Secretary – Department of Education

Handwritten signature of Estelle B. Richman in blue ink.

Estelle B. Richman  
Secretary – Department of Public Welfare

Education

*Improvement*

Hope



# I. OCDEL: Building a Quality Early Education Continuum

**O**ur education begins at birth, and the early years are some of the most important in a child's education.

**A quality early education continuum requires the commitment of everyone who touches a young child's life; from parents, child development experts, early childhood teachers and caregivers, and those who teach the teachers. Knowing that everyone is working toward the same goal of providing positive outcomes for our children makes the hard work worthwhile.**

**What does a quality early education continuum mean for Pennsylvania's children and families?** It means that a family that needs a variety of services can expect those programs and professionals to cooperate with one another and do their best to provide the needed services in the most seamless way possible. It means that an early childhood teacher can partner with parents and talk constructively about their child's development and together identify ways to help their child grow cognitively, socially, and emotionally. It also means that children will have early learning opportunities that prepare them for kindergarten so they can enter

school excited to learn and prepared to achieve.

Children grow and develop in different ways and at different speeds, and it takes a wide variety of services working together to provide every child in Pennsylvania with quality early learning opportunities. The creation of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) in January 2007 is a giant step forward in providing a quality early education continuum for Pennsylvania's young children. OCDEL brings together many early learning initiatives of the commonwealth under one roof, regardless of which Department they are housed. By placing all of these programs in one office, we can make best use of expertise and resources, to better serve the children and families of Pennsylvania.

Some ways that this focus on continuum has made a difference for our children and families:

- Previously, families receiving public assistance went to their County Assistance Office (CAO) for child care assistance and families receiving Child Care Works subsidized child care assistance went to the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies for services. All parents interested in receiving counseling, information on early learning opportunities in their area,

and personalized child care referrals would also go to CCIS agencies. Now, through one door, all families receive a full suite of child care services through CCIS agencies.

- Families receiving Early Intervention Services will experience a smoother transition between the Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention programs as they are now managed under one office (Bureau of Early Intervention Services).
- Early Learning Standards from birth to kindergarten are used by all early learning programs. OCDEL has created a common language and framework of early learning standards from infants to kindergarteners so that teachers, parents, and other caregivers throughout the child's early years can work together to help the child reach his promise. All OCDEL programs, including child care, Head Start, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs are expected to align their learning activities and assessments to the early learning standards.

OCDEL will continue to build a quality early education continuum that provides all young children in Pennsylvania with access to quality early learning opportunities.

Access

*Opportunities*

Thriving



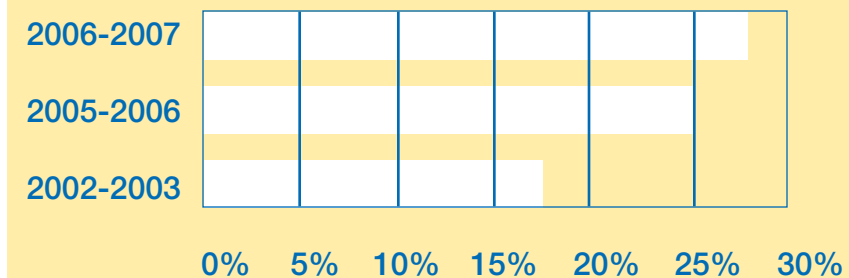
## II. Increasing Access to Early Learning Opportunities for Pennsylvania's Young Children

**B**ased on the Office of Child Development and Early Learning June 2007 "Program Reach and County Risk Assessment" report, children in 70% of Pennsylvania's counties are at moderate to high risk of school failure due to risk factors such as low income, poor academic performance, and education level of the mother. In every county, there are children affected by such risk factors that damage their chance of academic achievement. Access to quality early learning opportunities for these children can have a huge impact on their readiness for school and academic success.

Access to early learning programs is also vital if we want our families to reach their promise. In approximately 61% of households in Pennsylvania with young children, all parents work. More than one-third of children under age five in Pennsylvania (36.9%) live in families earning 200% of the federal poverty level or less. If we expect these families to thrive, they need access to reliable early learning programs and quality early learning opportunities for their children.

OCDEL continues its commitment to increasing access to quality early

PERCENTAGE OF 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS WITH ACCESS TO PUBLICLY-FUNDED QUALITY EARLY EDUCATION\*



\*based on the percentage of 3 and 4 year olds with access to Head Start, STAR 3 & 4 programs, Preschool Early Intervention and state-funded pre-k.

learning opportunities. In 2002-2003, 18% of Pennsylvania's 3 & 4 year olds had access to quality early education programs in Keystone STAR 3 & 4 programs, Head Start, state-funded pre-kindergarten and preschool Early Intervention. In 2006-2007, 28% of 3 and 4 year olds had access to these programs. Twenty-six percent (26%) of all children from birth to age five had access to publicly funded early childhood programs (including Pre-K Counts Public/Private Partnership, Keystone STARS, Head Start State and Federal, and Accountability Block Grants for Pre-K).<sup>1</sup>

Through certification of child care facilities, Child Care Works, Early Intervention and family support programs, OCDEL is increasing access to early learning opportunities for all of Pennsylvania's young children.

### Certification of Child Care Facilities

More than 350,000 children in PA receive child care from certified or registered child care programs at some point in their lives. Pennsylvania's Certification Services Bureau certifies child care centers and group child care homes and registers family child care homes in Pennsylvania to make sure that they meet basic health & safety standards in areas such as health, safety and reduction of risks to children.

#### Achievements in 2006-2007:

- A pre-certification orientation video for prospective child care center and group child care home providers was introduced.

#### Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:

- Certification and inspection information will be collected

<sup>1</sup> "Program Reach and County Risk Assessment: State Fiscal Year 2006-2007," Office of Child Development and Early Learning. Available at [www.pde.state.pa.us/early\\_childhood/](http://www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/), click "Early Childhood Research"

**As of June 30, 2007**

	<b>Number of Facilities</b>	<b>Child Enrollment Capacity</b>
Child care centers	4,001	318,145
Group child care homes	805	9,535
Family child care homes	4,105	24,630
Total	8,911	352,310

**FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007**

	<b>New Applications Received</b>	<b>New Facilities Opened</b>	<b>Facilities Closed</b>
Child care centers	460	343	220
Group child care homes	161	101	61
Family child care homes	680	488	549
Total	1,301	932	830

and managed electronically, making provider certification information available in almost real-time.

- Existing and prospective providers can apply for or renew a certificate or registration online.
- A new pre-registration orientation video and orientation for family child care programs will be developed to orient prospective family providers to the certification process and regulations.

**Child Care Works**

Child Care Works offers financial assistance to eligible families to help them afford their child care costs. Child Care Works can be the difference between self-sufficiency and improving their family's quality of life or depending on public assistance and supports just to get by. Research has shown that families with access to child care assistance are up to 15% more likely to

be employed, stay off welfare, and have higher earnings. Child care costs for working, low-income families are extraordinary, rivaling the cost of housing and utility costs combined. A rich body of research literature demonstrates that programs such as Child Care Works and Keystone STARS may be considered economic development initiatives since they support continued workforce participation for those who benefit from these government financed efforts.

Child Care Works is delivered through 59 Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies statewide. In addition to determining eligibility of families for child care assistance and enrolling providers in Child Care Works, parents receive counseling on choosing quality early learning opportunities for their child as well as referrals to early learning programs in their area that best meet their needs. CCIS agencies

serve thousands of parents each year through parent counseling and applying for Child Care Works financial assistance.

*2006-2007 Achievements:*

- Of the 212,112 children receiving Child Care Works assistance, 58,804 children live in families receiving cash assistance who are working or participating in job training; 63,194 children live in families who recently left the temporary cash assistance program and are now working, and 90,114 children live in low-income families whose income is less than 235% of the federal poverty guidelines based on size and income.
- Approximately 10,000 more children each month received Child Care Works than in 2005-2006.
- Families on temporary cash assistance who previously received Child Care Works assistance through their County Assistance Office (CAO) now receive services through their CCIS agency.
- There has been a steady increase of families choosing regulated child care versus unregulated care.

*Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- An online child care Provider Search will be available for the general public to access information on child care, search for potential providers, and view certification history.
- The child care subsidy reimbursement rates to providers in nearly every county will be adjusted to address the effect of the minimum wage increase on child care program operations costs, which will have positive effects on center, group and family child care homes serving subsidy children.

- Child care programs participating in Keystone STARS at the STAR 2 level or higher will receive a “subsidy add-on” to the Child Care Works subsidy they receive for serving a Child Care Works child. The subsidy add-on is another incentive for continuous quality improvement through the Keystone STARS program and helps to more appropriately reimburse child care programs offering higher quality early learning opportunities through Keystone STARS.

### Early Intervention

Early Intervention provides services and supports to children with disabilities/developmental delays and their families. Early Intervention builds upon the natural learning occurring in a

child’s early years and promotes collaboration among parents, service providers, early childhood educators and others involved in the child’s life. Early Intervention has as its cornerstones those philosophies that support:

- Families’ independence and competencies;
- Respect of families’ strengths, values and diversities; and
- Services and supports for children that enhance daily opportunities for learning are provided in typical early childhood settings.

Providing children with disabilities and developmental delays access to quality early learning opportunities requires flexibility and the cooperation of caregivers, teachers, and families.

OCDEL takes the lead in this collaboration by having PA’s Early Intervention system within the same office as all other early childhood serving systems.

### *Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- 29,848 children received services in Infant/Toddler Early Intervention (0-3) and 41,772 children received services in Preschool Early Intervention (3-5)
- A more seamless system for parents accessing Early Intervention Services was facilitated by joining the Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention programs under one office.

### *Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

- Development of common processes and documents for





both programs so that parents, teachers and other service providers can literally be “on the same page” when discussing and evaluating what’s best for the child’s development from birth through age five. Specifically there will be a common individualized service and education plan and a common evaluation report for both Infant/Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention programs.

- The monitoring of both the Infant/Toddler and Preschool programs will be conducted using a new tool that encompasses the federal and state regulations for both programs. By aligning the requirements of both programs in the same document, staff can learn first

hand how the programs have much in common with very similar regulations.

- Implementation of the Early Learning Network. This statewide data system, beginning with Early Intervention, will gather the amount and type of progress that children are making as a result of participating in OCDEL’s early childhood programs. The information will help inform OCDEL and the early learning community as they work to improve the quality of early learning across the commonwealth.

#### **Family Support Programs**

In order to help our young children reach their promise, we need to help families reach their

promise as well. Young children learn best when they have proper health and nutrition, a safe and stable family and home life, and activities that stimulate creativity, curiosity, and all the skills they will need to succeed. OCDEL’s family support programs such as the Children’s Trust Fund, Pennsylvania Nurse-Family Partnership, and Parent-Child Home Program give our vulnerable families access to quality early learning opportunities for their children and a support network as they handle the challenges of a young family.

#### Children’s Trust Fund

Pennsylvania’s Children’s Trust Fund (CTF) is teaching parents and early childhood teachers ways to strengthen families and build protective factors (such as parenting skills and resilience in times of stress, social connections and support network, and knowledge of child development) in an effort to prevent child abuse and neglect before it begins. Grants are awarded to community-based programs through funds generated from a \$10 surcharge on applications for marriage licenses and divorce complaints. A 15-member board comprised of public and legislative members appointed by the Governor administers this fund with support from OCDEL.

In 2006-2007, the CTF Board shifted its grantmaking focus for the first of three years on strengthening families with infants, toddlers and preschool-age children within early education settings that includes a parent education model or curriculum component. Priority was given to programs enrolled in or working collaboratively with Keystone STARS programs.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- In 2006-2007, 31 CTF grantees served approximately 2,500 families and 190 early childhood education practitioners.
- In March 2007, Friends of the Children's Trust Fund was established as a nonprofit supporting organization to the CTF Board for the purpose of fundraising and soliciting private and federal dollars to supplement state investment.
- The CTF Board became part of the national Strengthening Families Initiative by joining a Learning Community of 20 states.

*Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

- The CTF Board will work in collaboration with the Southeast Regional Key to implement a State Partnerships for Prevention grant from Zero to Three, which provides a training of trainers to 40 early care and education staff throughout the state in the "Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect: Parent-Provider Partnerships in Child Care" curriculum.

Nurse-Family Partnership

The Pennsylvania Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps children and families reach their promise by giving first time mothers the supports necessary to provide an excellent start for their children. This research-based, nurse home visiting program helps low-income, first-time parents experience healthy pregnancies, learn how to take good care of their babies, and make plans for the future. Home visits by registered nurses promote the physical, cognitive and social-emotional development of the children and provide general support as well as instructive parenting skills to the

parents. Services are provided to families prenatally until the child reaches two years of age.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- 3,947 families were served through 23 NFP programs in 39 counties.
- NFP programs were offered in two new counties, Cambria and Bradford.
- NFP programs accessed Medical Assistance billing for the first time.

and home visitation program for families with infants and toddlers. A home visitor models for parents how to read and play with their children to promote positive parent-child interaction, literacy development, and a language-rich home environment. PCHP reinforces the parent's role as their child's first and most important teacher and provides them with the guidance and supports to promote quality early learning opportunities for their



*Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

- Approximately 4,000 families will be served through 24 NFP programs in 39 counties.

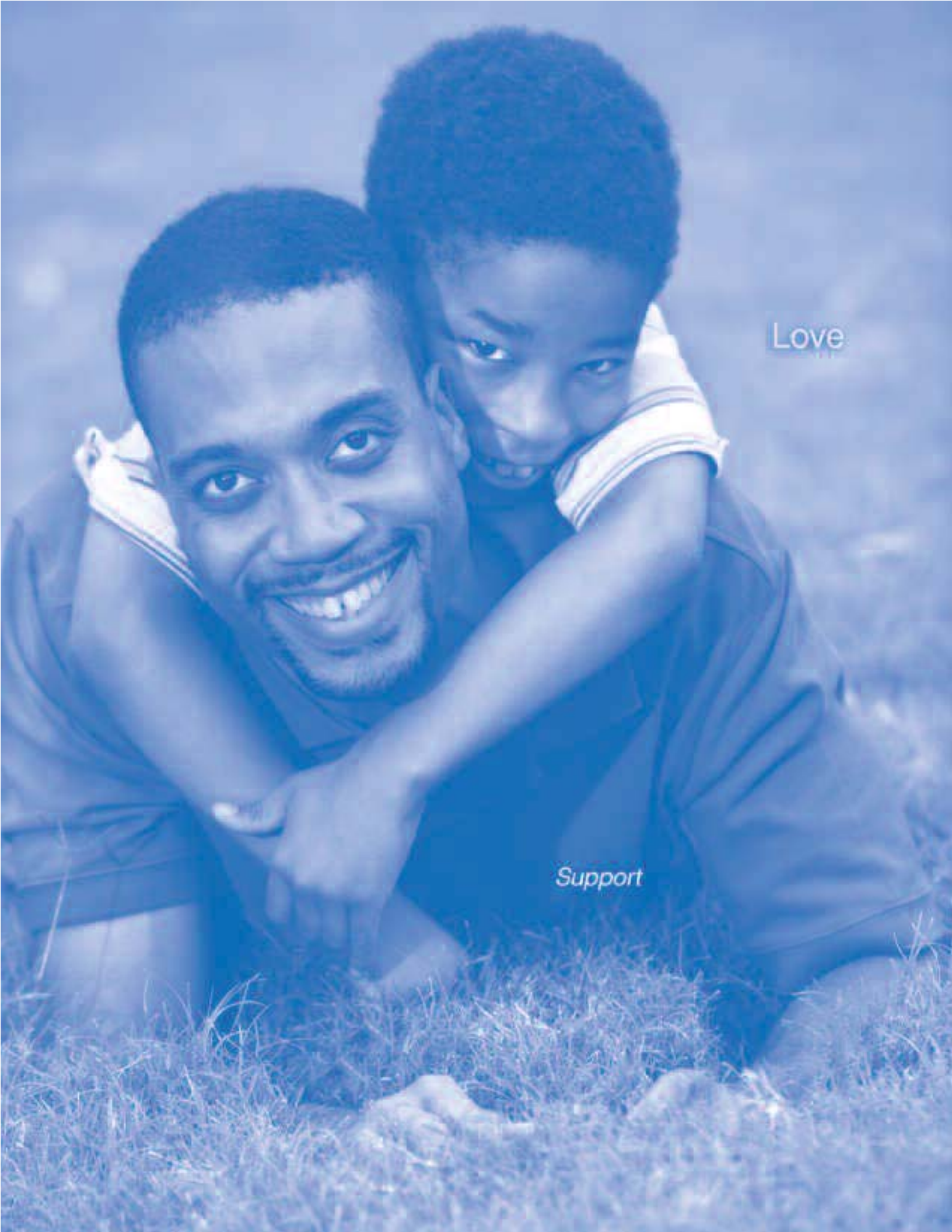
Parent-Child Home Program

The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) is a nationally-replicated, research-based early literacy

children. Home visitors provide half-hour home visits twice a week for two years.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- 1,505 children were served through 28 PCHP sites in 23 counties.



Love

Support

### III. Ensuring Quality While Building Capacity

**I**f we want to achieve the positive effects that research tells us are possible from quality early education, we need to ensure that the programs meet quality standards. Quality is the key and is obtainable with the right effort and the right resources. In fact, studies have shown that for every \$1 society spends on high quality early education programs, it saves \$7 in future expenses in special education, delinquency, crime control, welfare and lost taxes.<sup>1</sup>

High standards can only be achieved, however, if our early education system also includes the necessary supports in professional development, technical assistance, resources and funding.

Improving quality while building capacity requires quality standards for teachers and programs, support structure to make it possible to meet standards, and assessment and accountability to ensure our investments are on track.

#### Early Learning Standards

OCDEL has worked to establish a common language for quality regardless of the type of early learning environment (home,

school, community-based program) that transcends from birth through kindergarten.

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards for Infants and Toddlers, Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten outline the cognitive, social, and physical skills that a child should develop throughout the course of the year and provide guidance for activities to support this development in the classroom and at home.

The standards can be used by early childhood teachers, parents, home visitors, and others that work with young children to promote quality early learning opportunities. Although they are not designed to be used as a curriculum or assessment tool, they can guide parents and practitioners as they choose appropriate learning activities and assessment tools for young children. Standards can help all of those involved in a young child's life work together to provide the best opportunities for that child.

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards are a foundation for quality expectations in Pennsylvania's early education initiatives such as Keystone STARS, Pre K Counts Public-Private Partnership, Early Intervention and Head Start. The Early Learning Standards for Pre-Kindergarten were also integrated

into "Kindergarten, Here I Come!" calendars with helpful learning activities that parents can do with their children at home.

#### *Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- Early Learning Standards were printed in a user-friendly full color booklet with attractive posters that address each key learning area. These new booklets make the standards much easier to use and share with others. Additional copies can be ordered at: [fulfill@wavelinedirect.com](mailto:fulfill@wavelinedirect.com)
- Infant/Toddler Early Learning Standards were published and distributed to early learning programs throughout the commonwealth.
- A task force was convened to begin work on first and second grade standards that will link to kindergarten and the third grade academic standards.
- Over 150,000 copies of the companion guide for families, "Kindergarten, Here I Come," were distributed. These guides are designed to provide families with at-home activities that will support children's preparation for kindergarten.
- Began work on aligning the early childhood's learning standards across the early education spectrum, for infant-toddler, pre-school and kindergarten.

#### *Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

- Early Learning Standards for

<sup>1</sup> (Reynolds AJ, Temple JA, Robertson DL, and EA Mann. 2002. Age 21 cost-benefit analysis of the Title I Chicago Child-Parent Centers. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 24, 267-303.)



1st and 2nd grade will be drafted to complete the early education continuum of standards.

- Completion of a series of training videos for early childhood providers that will enable site directors to offer in-depth study of the learning standards for early childhood.

### Teacher Certification Regulations

Since 2005, the Pennsylvania Department of Education has been working with the early childhood and higher education communities to craft teacher preparation and certification practices that will better prepare our teachers for serving Pennsylvania’s young children.

The intent of revisions to Pennsylvania’s teaching certification regulations was to 1) assure opportunities for teachers to gain deeper knowledge of child development, teaching skills and content appropriate for the age group they are teaching; and 2) assure opportunities for teachers to effectively teach all learners – racially and ethnically diverse students, students with disabilities, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students.

In May 2007, the State Board of Education approved changes to the structure of teaching certificates in Pennsylvania beginning January 2013. The final form regulations will be sent to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) for approval and implementation during the FY 2007-2008 year.

Key aspects of the changes:

- By January 1, 2011, all teacher education programs must include nine credits or 270 hours of instruction and field experience in accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting, including instruction in literacy skills development and cognitive skill development for students with disabilities. At least three credits or 90 additional hours must address the instructional needs of English language learners.
- January 1, 2013 is the effective date for issuing the new certifi-

cates – see chart below.

- Community programs providing pre-kindergarten services on behalf of school districts must also use teachers who have an Early Childhood Education certificate, within five years of the effective date of the regulations (the date of publication in the PA Bulletin) or within five years of the date of the contract.

*Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

Note: Amended Regulations were passed by IRRC and entered into law in September, 2007

- A state-wide committee composed of a diverse group of stakeholders has been convened to develop guidelines for higher education to implement the Early Childhood Education Certificate.

### Pre-kindergarten Amendment to State Board of Education Regulations

In December 2006, the State

Current Structure		Structure as of January 1, 2013	
Early Childhood Education	Nursery Kindergarten Grades 1-3 or Ages 3-8	Early Childhood Education	Pre-kindergarten Kindergarten Grades 1-4 or Ages 3-9
Elementary Education	Nursery Kindergarten Grades 1-6 or Ages 3-11	Elementary/Middle Education	Grades 4-8 or Ages 9 through 14
Special Education	Nursery through Grade 12 Up to Age 21	Special Education PK- Grade 8  Special Education Grades 7-12	Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, Grades 1-8 or Ages 3-14 with dual in Early Childhood Education, Elementary/Middle Education or Reading Specialist  Grades 7-12 or Ages 11 through 21 with dual in Secondary Education or Reading Specialist

Board of Education released regulations relating to pre-kindergarten. The amendments to Title 22, Chapters 4, 11 and 12 establish standards for pre-kindergarten programs for both public school-based pre-kindergarten programs and community-based pre-kindergarten programs partnering with public schools.

Some elements of the regulations include:

- Development of a strategic plan, including needs assessment, coordination with other agencies in the community serving children with special needs, parent involvement, and pre-k to K transitioning;
- The Secretary of the Department of Education will provide academic standards and issue guidance to school districts on developmentally-appropriate curriculum, instruction and assessments for pre-kindergarten; and
- Teacher education requirements for community-based programs providing pre-kindergarten programs for the school district.

These new State Board of Education regulations for pre-kindergarten were a crucial part of the development of quality expectations for Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts which will be implemented in 2007-2008.

### Keystone STARS/ Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality

Started as a pilot program in 2002, Keystone STARS/Early Learning Keys to Quality is a continuous quality improvement program and rating system for child care in Pennsylvania. Keystone STARS has been proven in a study by the University of Pittsburgh and

Penn State University to improve the quality of child care across the state and has reversed a 10-year trend of declining quality in child care.<sup>1</sup>

Through program standards, supports and assessment, Keystone STARS/Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality is improving the quality of child care across Pennsylvania.

#### Keystone STARS

Keystone STARS provides early learning programs with a STAR

1 – STAR 4 level based on research-based standards for quality, such as staff qualifications and professional development, learning activities, working with parents and the community, and best business practices.

By meeting Keystone STARS program standards, child care and Head Start programs can earn a STAR 1 to STAR 4 rating for program quality.

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Keys to Quality system provides

Estimated Number of children  
Receiving care in STARS' Programs (2006-2007)

Region	Estimated Number of Children Receiving Care in STARS' Programs
Central	14,699
Northeast	26,365
Northwest	13,563
South Central	23,750
Southeast	38,612
Southwest	21,139
Total	138,128

Program Participating in STARS by STAR Level (2006-2007)

Region	Start with STARS	STAR 1	STAR 2	STAR 3	STAR 4	Total
Central	111	208	80	19	27	445
Northeast	163	253	141	42	66	665
Northwest	126	191	86	24	38	465
South Central	158	320	91	18	65	652
Southeast	237	360	203	51	143	994
Southwest	175	205	61	21	83	545
Total	970	1,537	662	175	422	3,766

<sup>1</sup> "Evaluation of Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Quality Rating System in Child Care Settings," December 2006, available at <http://www.pakeys.org/stars/KeystoneStarsEvaluation.aspx>

professional development, targeted financial and technical assistance, and evaluation to help early learning programs move up the quality ladder.

Keystone STARS also provides families with a tool to gauge the quality of early learning programs. As programs earn higher STARS levels, they are improving the quality of the early education each child receives.

#### *Achievements in 2006-2007*

- In a December 2006 study conducted by the University of Pittsburgh and Penn State University (“Evaluation of Pennsylvania’s Keystone STARS Quality Rating System in Child Care Settings”) Keystone STARS has been proven to improve the quality of child care across the state and has reversed a 10-year trend of declining quality in child care.
- More than one-third (37%) of programs enrolled in Keystone STARS on 7/1/06 moved up at least one STAR level during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.
- The first STAR 4 was awarded to a Head Start program.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- A provider survey will be distributed to child care providers to provide feedback about Keystone STARS.
- The STARS advisory committee will host a “Listening Tour” throughout the commonwealth to gain feedback from the community on STARS policies and practices.

#### Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality

An important support system for early learning programs is the Pennsylvania Early Learning

Keys to Quality system, which consists of the Harrisburg-based Pennsylvania Key and six Regional Keys. In addition to supporting early learning programs participating in Keystone STARS, the PA Keys to Quality System is working to build a higher education and continuing education system for early childhood professionals; promoting collaborations between Head Start, school districts, and child care programs; and providing independent assessment of early childhood classrooms.

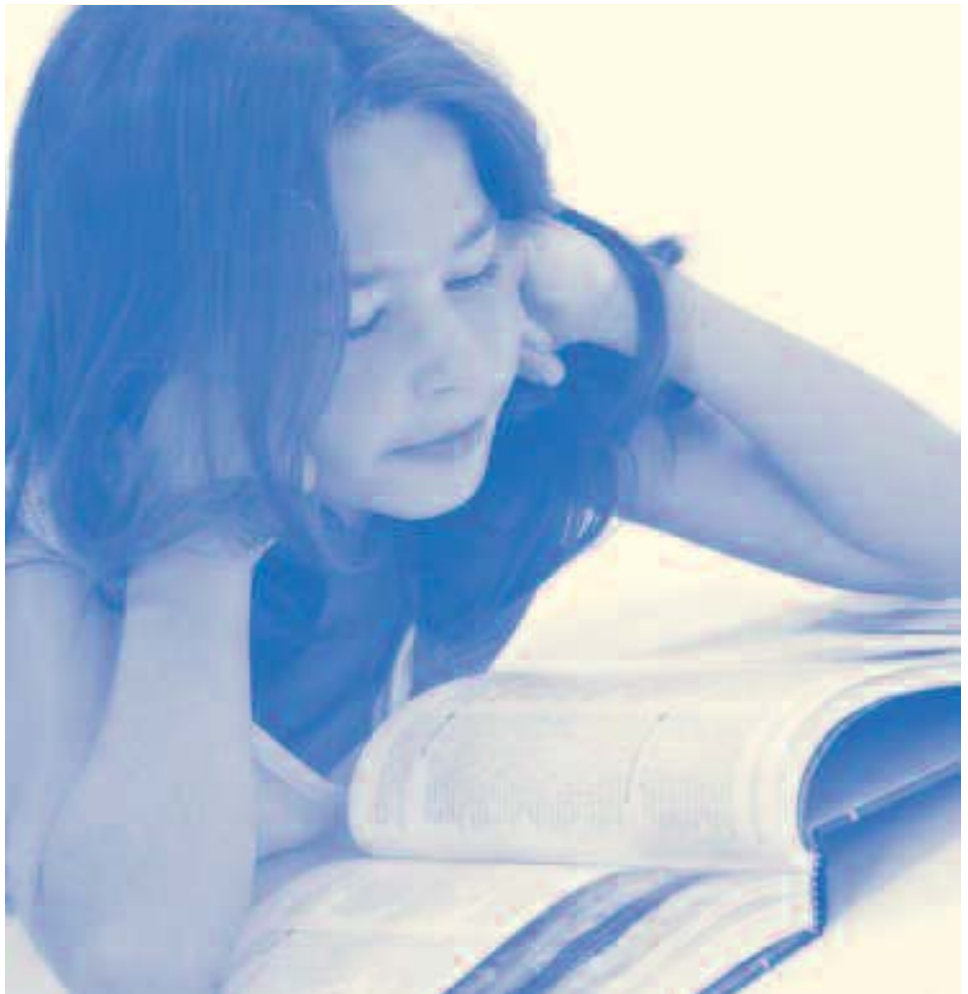
#### **Raising the Bar on Education for Early Childhood Professionals**

The PA Keys to Quality system supports initiatives that help early childhood directors and teachers make smart career

choices and make early childhood education a lifelong profession. As early education receives greater recognition, expectations of early childhood professionals also rise. In order to have a quality early education program, you need quality management and quality teachers. Because each professional’s needs are different, there are a variety of ways that a practitioner can gain the education they need to provide quality early learning opportunities to the children in their programs.

The PA Keys to Quality system has taken several steps to professionalize the early childhood field:

- Creating of the Early Learning Keys to Quality Career Lattice to define career pathways for early learning and school-age



program professionals. In 2006-2007, Levels 2 and 3 have been revised and updated to include ECE college credits.

- Developing the Pennsylvania Quality Assurance (PQAS) system, which certifies individuals to provide quality professional development opportunities for early childhood practitioners in Pennsylvania.
- Working to promote smooth articulation of college credits from 2 year to 4 year colleges. Through its Professional Development Advisory Committee, the PA Key/OCDEL is working with 2-year and 4-year higher education institutions to promote regional and state-wide articulation agreements so that early childhood professionals with Associate's degrees can more easily matriculate to a 4 year institution to complete their Bachelor's degree in early childhood education.
- Supporting Child Development Associate (CDA) credential programs at Pennsylvania colleges and professional organizations. For students in high school or Vo-Tech schools, OCDEL and the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) have created the Child Care Development Associate (CDA) Ready Certificate.
- Creating the Pennsylvania Director Credential to provide a standard by which to measure program management, fiscal and leadership abilities of directors and administrators of early childhood and school-age programs. The Pennsylvania Director Credential is one of 12 states' director credential program approved by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

- Creating the Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential (SAPC), modeled after the Child Development Associate (CDA), to promote quality services for children and families by providing specific standards, professional development, and evaluation of school-age practitioners.
- Providing financial support to early childhood professionals in child care and Head Start programs who want to earn college degrees or other professional development through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood PENNSYLVANIA scholarship program and Pennsylvania Professional Development Refund Voucher
- Facilitating Mind in the Making (MITM) institutes, created by the nationally recognized Families and Work Institute, which is a 12-part series that illustrates research in action and demonstrates how to engage children emotionally, socially, and intellectually through interesting activities.
- Establishing Pennsylvania's Regional School-Age Child Care Projects to provide professional development and technical assistance to both public and private after-school programs across the state.
- Providing extensive and nationally-recognized free distance education materials to all early childhood professionals through Better Kid Care (BKC).
- Providing technical assistance on health & safety issues through the Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS).

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- The Ages and Stages screening



tool was introduced and implemented in Keystone STAR 2 and above programs.

- The Work Sampling assessment tool was introduced to early learning programs with professional development opportunities on using the tool in their programs.
- In order to help practitioners, instructors and others in the ECE community understand the changes to the professional development system, a toll-free help line was created. More than 8,400 calls were answered with an average of 700 calls per month in 2006-2007.
- Two Articulation forums were held in which 44 higher education institutions participated and developed future plans for program-to-program articulation
- 1,113 early childhood professionals earned or renewed CDA credentials.
- A total of 196 childcare directors were awarded the Director Credential in 2006-2007, a 79% increase over the previous fiscal year.
- 1,530 practitioners utilized T.E.A.C.H. scholarships for their professional development; 540 were new scholarship recipients in the program.
- 10 teachers from the pilot cohort completed the assess-



ment process and received their Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential.

- 1,300 vouchers were awarded for college credit; 600 practitioners received vouchers for coursework toward Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. 700 vouchers were awarded for CDA courses; 777 vouchers were awarded for CDA assessments.
- Nearly 1,200 early childhood practitioners from 79 early learning sites participated in Mind in the Making, impacting approximately 5,400 children.
- 565,030 early childhood practitioners and administrators accessed BKC's Internet-based educational and professional development materials.
- 9,949 practitioners successfully completed ECELS self-learning modules, which is an increase of 92% from the previous fiscal year.

*Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- In order to make it easier for a teaching student to apply credits from a two-year degree program to a four year degree program at a different higher education institution, OCDEL, the PA Key and the Pennsylvania System of Higher Education (PASSHE) will partner to provide grants to teams of higher education institutions to develop regional articulation agreements for Early Childhood Education programs at each institution.
- Establish and/or expand mentoring and coaching opportunities to over 1,200 practitioners enrolled in CDA courses statewide.
- A 50% increase in the number of Director Credentials awarded expected.
- 50 school-age practitioners will be awarded the Professional School Age credential.
- 44 additional T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to be awarded to professionals working in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts classrooms in child care or Head Start programs.
- Estimate 2,000 vouchers to be awarded for college credit and 800 vouchers to be awarded for CDA assessments.
- More than 2,800 practitioners and an additional 11,000 children will be impacted by the MITM project.
- The Pennsylvania School-Age Projects will be fully integrated with the Regional Keys.
- ECELS will work with the Regional Keys to help them implement Child Care Health Consultation in each region across Pennsylvania.

### ***From a Childcare Program Director***

*“T.E.A.C.H. has allowed for greater self-esteem, professionalism, increase in salary and greater child development knowledge. The program has definitely benefited my staff and the centers as a whole. I recommend T.E.A.C.H. to all child care programs.”*

### **Building Collaborations Among Head Start, School Districts and Child Care Programs**

A quality early education continuum requires the cooperation and participation of all early education programs. The Head Start State Collaboration Office, housed at the Pennsylvania Key, works to facilitate a coordinated approach to planning and service delivery: Child Care, Public Education, Children with Special Needs, Family Literacy, Welfare, National and Community Services, Homelessness, and Health Care. In collaboration with OCDEL, regional specialists provide technical assistance and are community resources for all Pennsylvania initiatives to early childhood programs.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- The team of regional specialists will expand and provide supports, monitoring and technical assistance to Head Start, School districts, Child Care, and licensed nursery school participating in Head Start, Accountability Block Grant pre-kindergarten programs, and/or Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts.

### **Providing Independent Assessment of Early Childhood Classrooms**

In order to ensure and support

continuous quality improvement in classrooms serving young and school-age children, the Early Learning Keys to Quality systems provides independent Environment Rating Scales (ERS) assessments of Head Start and Keystone STARS programs.

The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are nationally-recognized tools to assess the quality of an early learning and school-age program. There are four ERS scales: Early Childhood (ECERS-R), Infant-Toddler (ITERS-R), Family Day Care (FDCRS) and School-Age (SACERS). The scales rate the various interactions that go on in a classroom between staff and children; staff, parents, and other adults; among the children themselves; and the interactions children have with the many materials and activities in the environment; as well as those features, such as space, schedule, and materials that support these interactions.

In Pennsylvania, providers participating in Keystone STARS may access professional development on the ERS, which provides an overview of the indicators of child care quality and prepares providers with the skills necessary to use the rating scale self-assessment tool.

Programs applying or renewing a Keystone STAR 3 or 4 level or participating in the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP) are required to have an ERS assessment in one-third of the classrooms in the program.

#### *Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- 2,625 practitioners attended 159 ERS workshops conducted around the state.
- Assessors performed 576 ERS

assessments in Keystone STARS and Head Start classrooms throughout the state, which represents a 32% increase in assessments from 2005-2006. Additional assessments were conducted in group and family child care programs.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- In addition to Keystone STARS and Head Start classrooms, assessors will begin performing ERS assessments for Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts classrooms in school district, head start, child care and nursery school classrooms.



### **Public-Private Partnerships**

A quality early education continuum requires support and participation of both the public and private sectors. OCDEL encourages partnerships with the foundation and research communities to develop pilot projects that may be replicated state-wide and conduct research to reinforce the benefits of quality early education.

#### Pennsylvania Build Initiative

The Build Initiative is a multi-state partnership that helps states construct a coordinated early care and learning system that responds to the needs of young children from birth to five

and their families, so that children are safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed in school. It is supported by an Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative made up of 15 leading philanthropies. Pennsylvania is one of five states selected to participate in this national initiative.

Build serves as a catalyst for change and a national resource on early learning. As a partner in Build, Pennsylvania receives grant money and technical assistance to support early childhood system building. Pennsylvania Build has supported OCDEL's work to create a quality early education continuum with work on subsidized child care rates policy, creating a professional development system for early learning practitioners and creating early childhood facility capi-

tal financing opportunities. In addition to sponsoring research and publications such as the OCDEL annual report and biweekly Build ECE News, the Pennsylvania Build initiative is a co-sponsor (with the Pennsylvania Key) of the "Pennsylvania's Promise for Children" public awareness campaign.

#### Pre K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success

Pre K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success is a public-private initiative created in 2004 that facilitates local pre-kindergarten partnerships among school districts, community-based providers and Early Intervention. The Public-Private Partnership provides quality supports to 30 communities so that they can solidify

partnerships and provide quality pre-kindergarten in all settings. Through Pre K Counts coordinators, coach/consultants, and professional development activities, school district and community partners (such as child care, Head Start, Early Intervention) align curriculum to Pennsylvania early learning standards, share professional development opportunities, involve parents in their child's development, and educate business, education, legislative and community leaders about the value of quality early education to their community's future.

Through a four year study by the UCLID Center at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, the Public-Private Partnership will identify components of local pre-kindergarten partnerships that are most successful in preparing children for school and for life. With these results, we can share best practices of Pre K Counts partnerships that can be replicated in other communities across the commonwealth.

Through its Executive Leadership Council co-chaired by Governor Rendell and PNC Bank's CEO Jim Rohr, more than 100 business, education and community leaders have become children's champions, expressing their support for quality pre-kindergarten opportunities for every child in Pennsylvania.

The successes of the Public-Private Partnership helped to inform the program component of the Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts program initiated in September 2007.

Funders of the Public-Private Partnership include Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Commonwealth of



Pennsylvania, Grable Foundation, Heinz Endowments, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Richard King Mellon Foundation, William Penn Foundation and Raymond John Wean Foundation.

#### *Achievements in 2006 – 2007*

- Seven (7) new planning grants and 19 implementation grants were awarded, creating 26 Pre K Counts partnerships (Three partnerships include multiple school districts) impacting more than 7,000 children.
- Through this project nearly 1,000 children with special needs will receive services in inclusive settings.
- According to an independent evaluation, after six months, children in Public-Private Partnership programs showed significant developmental progress in all functional domains of the Basic Schools Skills Inventory that exceeded maturational expectations.
- The Executive Leadership Council held its inaugural meeting in April 2007 which included approximately 85 business, education and community leaders and highlighted remarks by Dr. Steven Barnett, Executive Director of the National Institute of Early Education Research, Senator Bob Casey, Jr., Governor Edward G. Rendell and Mark Schweiker, former Governor and President of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- 27 implementation grants will be awarded.
- Results of the UCLID Center's Child Outcomes Study for children participating in Public-Private Partnership programs from 2005 to 2008 will be published.

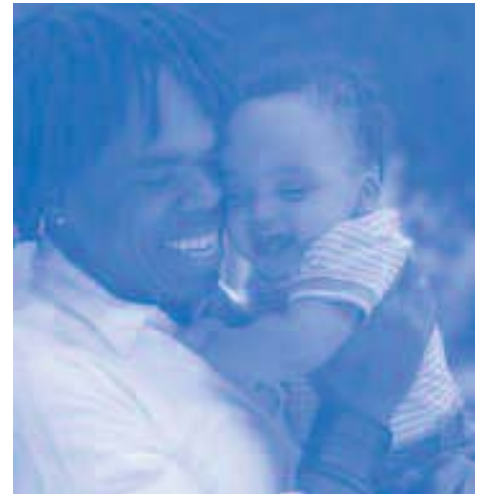
#### Early Childhood Mental Health Project (formerly Infant-Toddler Mental Health Project)

Started as a pilot project in Spring 2006 in three Regional Keys (Northwest, Southwest, and South Central regions) in collaboration with the Heinz Endowments, the Early Childhood Mental Health Project (ECMH) provides supports for the teachers, parents and caregivers of children whose social emotional development may not be progressing on par with their peers. ECMH Specialists assist teachers and parents to understand the importance of early childhood mental health, and recognize and address mental health challenges as they relate to specific children and their needs. Within the ECMH project, practitioners and specialists work together closely, observing children and program practices, and developing strategies to enhance the practitioners' capacity to create a learning environment which promotes positive behaviors. An important goal of the project is to reduce the number of expulsions of young children from child care programs due to problem behaviors.

The ECMH project has also built collaborative relationships with other agencies and organizations serving young children including Early Intervention, Early Head Start, Mental Health, Child and Adolescent Service System Program Coordination, Health, Community Engagement Groups, and United Ways.

#### *Achievements in 2006-2007*

- 74 children were referred for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. Of those children referred for services,



41% were referred to Early Intervention, 5% were referred for further mental health programming; and 18% of the programs were referred for STARS Technical Assistance.

- A positive working relationship has been established between OCDEL/PA Key and the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). This relationship is enabling further professional development opportunities for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants as well as the Mental Health CASSP Coordinators.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- The ECMH project expands statewide to include specialists at all six Regional Keys.
- Approximately 300 children will be served.
- A child psychiatrist will provide clinical consultation to the ECMH team in collaboration with the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services in DPW.

#### Early Learning Network

OCDEL has made great strides to establish quality standards and supports for early learning programs throughout the state, but in order to ensure success,

we need to document positive outcomes for children.

Previously, there has been no central resource on how our young children benefit from OCDEL programs. The Early Learning Network (ELN) will give Pennsylvania a way to track the benefits of our investment in quality early learning opportunities through the most important indicator- our young children's healthy development, school readiness, and school success.

The Early Learning Network will collect information about indicators of child outcomes including family demographics as well as details on classrooms, teachers, and publicly funded programs.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- The Planning and Assessment project of the Early Learning Network began in May 2007 with financial support from the William Penn Foundation to 1) understand and document the business needs across ELN programs; 2) analyze current information systems and document information gaps; and 3) evaluate the costs and benefits of meeting the needs for a comprehensive early learning network.

*Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- With support of the Heinz Endowments, the Grable Foundation and the William Penn Foundation, the ELN system design will begin including technology design, reporting and data requirements.

**Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP)**

Head Start is a program which began at the federal level to

break the cycle of poverty by providing comprehensive early learning and health services to young children who live in poverty. A cornerstone of the Head Start program is its Performance Standards which address quality expectations of the program as well as providing additional services to the family.

In 2004 Pennsylvania created the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program to provide state funding so that more eligible



children could receive Head Start services. Head Start programs have joined with school districts and child care programs to provide Head Start services, shared professional development opportunities, additional support to children transitioning into public school, supportive services to families and children, as well as developmental and health screenings, evaluations and assessments.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- HSSAP programs served 5,790, an increase of 1,115 children from 2005-2006.
- 2 new agencies participated in HSSAP.

- A total of 57 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties were served by HSSAP programs.

*Looking Ahead to 2007-2008:*

- HSSAP programs working in collaboration with Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts sites to share successful strategies at the local level.

**Education Accountability Block Grants**

Initiated in 2004-05, the Accountability Block Grant

(ABG) provides Pennsylvania school districts with financial support toward 11 proven strategies to improve student achievement. Of 11 options for districts, three are specifically focused on early childhood. School districts are able to:

- establish, maintain, or expand pre-kindergarten
- establish, maintain or expand full day kindergarten
- reduce class size in kindergarten through third grade to 17 or fewer students/classroom.

School districts have shown strong commitment to early childhood by investing two thirds of ABG funding to these three early childhood options.

*Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- ABG funding increased \$50 million to a total of \$250 million for 2006-2007.
- Through ABG funds:
  - 4,158 students were impacted by Pre-kindergarten (\$15,594,693)
  - 54,849 students were impacted by Full Day Kindergarten (\$143,312,914)
  - 22,519 students were impacted by Class Size Reduction (\$16,562,856)

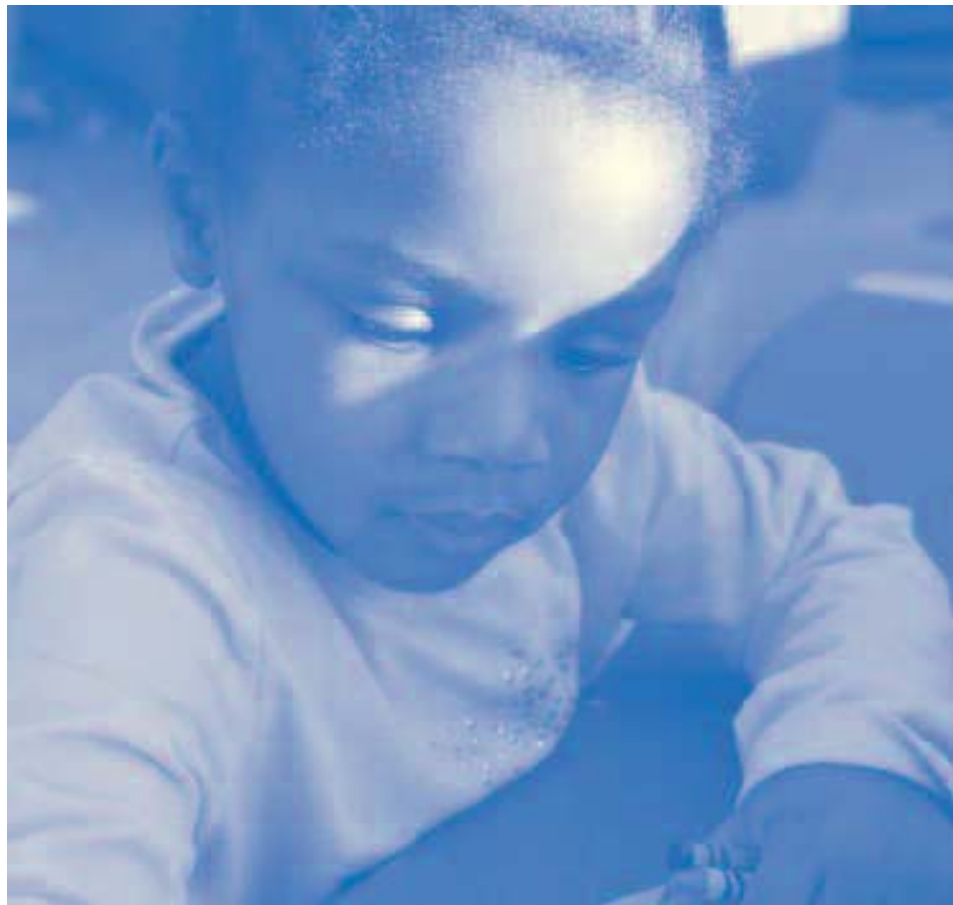
### III. Building Leadership at all Levels

**A** quality early education continuum can only become part of our educational system if every segment of the community becomes a part of the process.

Just as each child is unique, we need diverse input, opinions and resources to make a quality early education continuum possible and sustainable for Pennsylvania's children. Everyone makes a contribution, from the policymakers who consistently vote for early childhood education to the teacher who works day in and day out to help a child reach his promise. OCDEL is dedicated to helping everyone learn to lead from every level.

#### **Pennsylvania's Promise for Children**

Pennsylvania's Promise for Children is a coordinated statewide campaign to increase public awareness of the value of quality early learning and to convince every Pennsylvanian that they share responsibility for providing our young children with quality early learning opportunities. By creating the base of broad public support for quality early learning, we can more effectively build support for individual early education initiatives.



Through the website, brochures, posters, and other materials, Pennsylvanians learn how they can help fulfill Pennsylvania's Promise for Children by promoting early learning in the young children in their lives and speaking out for investment in quality early education. Pennsylvanians can sign PA's Promise for Children declaration to add their name to the score of others who value quality early education for Pennsylvania's young children.

The campaign is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Build Initiative and the Pennsylvania Key in

cooperation with OCDEL.

#### *Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- Website launched in April, [www.papromiseforchildren.com](http://www.papromiseforchildren.com).
- Fact sheets and postcards distributed throughout the commonwealth.

#### *Looking ahead to 2007-2008:*

- Anticipate several thousand of Pennsylvanians to sign the PA Promise for Children declaration.
- Posters highlighting OCDEL programs distributed by Community Engagement Groups throughout all 67 counties.

## Early Childhood Community Engagement Groups

Early Childhood Community Engagement Groups (CEGs) are located in each county to convene everyone interested in quality early learning to educate the community about the issues of early education, promote the importance of high quality programs, identify gaps in service, and explore additional funding sources to address unmet needs. The 58 Community Engagement Groups are sponsored by a wide variety of parent organizations including United Ways, Intermediate Units, child care consortiums, community action programs, child and family councils, health related organizations, and community agencies. Community Engagement Groups serve all 67 counties.

The work of the CEGs focuses on educating and fostering relationships with parents, government, businesses, schools, and the early learning community about quality early learning; and facilitating linkages between schools, early learning programs, and other stakeholders to promote the smooth transition of children from preschool to kindergarten. CEGs also publish an annual Community Report Card that highlights early learning opportunities in their county. CEGs are an excellent opportunity for individuals interested in quality early education to build local networks and become champions for children in their community.

### *Achievements in 2006-2007:*

- Public outreach activities targeting parents, government, business, schools, media and the early learning community resulted in 969 events that engaged over 553,730 people

in messaging and discussion about the importance of quality early learning.

- Over 100 community engagement coordinators, school district personnel and selected team members participated in a state workshop with nationally recognized experts on kindergarten transition planning and activities.

### ***Michelle Kiernan, parent, from Susquehanna Community School District:***

*"... I cannot emphasize how pleased I am by [my son's] progress and achievements, both socially and academically. In our increasingly competitive world, our children benefit greatly from programs such as [full day kindergarten] in their formidable years. Having such a positive experience has reinforced our decision to enroll our younger daughter as well..."*

- CEGs have reached out to over 70% of the school districts to engage them in various levels of activity to link schools, families, children and communities.
- Volunteers contributed over 13,920 hours to community engagement work.

### *Looking ahead to 2007 – 2008:*

- CEGs will continue to facilitate linkages between school districts, early learning practitioners and other community stakeholders for the purpose of developing a community action plan to support successful kindergarten transition. 70% of the districts are expected to engage in transition activities and 40% are expected to have transition teams or plans in place. Approximately 23 CEGs will be awarded competitive grants to develop transition

teams among select Title 1 elementary schools and early learning programs.

- CEGs will be the county point of contact for distributing Pennsylvania's Promise for Children messaging and materials.

## Advisory Committees

OCDEL solicits the support and input from a variety of stakeholders vested in providing a quality early education continuum through its series of advisory committees. The work and recommendations of each committee is valuable in developing goals, policies and action plans for OCDEL programs and initiatives.

The following advisory groups convened in 2006-2007:

- Child Care Certification
- Regulation Work Group
- Children's Trust Fund Board
- Committee for Cohesive Early Intervention
- First and Second Grade Early Learning Standards Task Force
- Head Start Collaborative
- Project Advisory Committee
- Infant/Toddler Standards Development Committee
- Keystone STARS Advisory Committee
- OCDEL Advisory Committee
- PA Early Learning Keys to Quality – Professional Development Advisory Committee
- Parent Advisory Council
- Project T.E.A.C.H. Advisory Committee
- School Age Advisory Committee
- State Interagency Coordinating Council
- Subsidized Child Care Advisory Committee

Children Served by Select OCDEL Programs		FY 02-03	FY 06-07
ABG Class Size Reduction (K-3rd Grade)		Did not exist	23,213
Child Care Works			
	TANF	33,939	32,669
	Former TANF	20,000	32,165
	Low Income	45,908	57,250
	TOTAL (monthly average)	99,847	122,084
Early Intervention			
	Birth to 3 Program	22,020	29,848
	3 to 5 Program	33,726	39,477
Full Day Kindergarten			
	ABG funded Full Day Kindergarten	Did not exist	55,098
	ABG funded Full Day Kindergarten Supplement	Did not exist	Did not exist
	All Full Day Kindergarten <sup>1</sup>	42,015	69,287
Head Start			
	Federal Head Start	30,986	35,372
	Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program	Did not exist	5,779
Keystone STARS			
	Estimated Children in Keystone STARS	45,745	138,128
Nurse-Family Partnership		3,092	3,947
Pre-K			
	School Based Pre-K and K4 <sup>2</sup>	2,684	10,456
	ABG funded Pre-K	Did not exist	4,287
	PA Pre-K Counts	Did not exist	Did not exist

<sup>1</sup> Total children in school-based full day K from ABG, ABG Supplement and other funding sources

<sup>2</sup> Total children in Pre-K minus ABG Pre-K

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
Edward G. Rendell, Governor