

Quarterly News and Report



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Founded in 2004, the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) is a coalition of public and private agencies working together to improve coordination and enhance capacity of services for young children and their families. ECPAC seeks to:

- Improve school readiness
- Increase the quality of early childhood care and education
- Increase availability and affordability of quality child care
- Provide stronger advocacy at the local, state and federal levels
- Position Adams County to take advantage of local, state and federal funding opportunities.

Invest in Our Future Summit October 10, 2006



ECPAC hosted our second annual Adams County Summit on Early Care and Education, entitled "Invest in our Future" on October 10, 2006. It was co-chaired by Adams County Commissioner Alice Nichol and District Attorney Don Quick. A keynote address was delivered by Jared Polis, vice-chair of the Colorado State Board of Education. The address focused on research about the economic returns that can be generated by investment in early childhood programs and explored ways in which to structure private investments in public early childhood programs.

Nearly 160 people attended the early morning breakfast event, including over 30 elected officials representing state government, county government, municipalities, school boards and the judicial system. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, and ECPAC was thrilled to see such a broad level of interest and support at the event. The Summit was made possible through sponsorship from the Adams County Foundation and the Colorado Division of Child Care.

Adams County Council of Governments October 25, 2006

ECPAC representatives were invited to speak before the Adams County Council of Governments at their quarterly meeting on October 25, 2006. ECPAC chairperson, Elizabeth Groginsky, provided the group of elected officials with information about the economic benefits of investing in early childhood education programs, and gave an overview of ECPAC strategies and goals regarding the School Readiness Quality Improvement Project. The group is composed of county commissioners, mayors and city council members from Adams County.

Next ECPAC Meeting November 30, 2006

ECPAC meets the 4th Wednesday of each month from 3-5 p.m. in the Brighton Room at the Adams County Western Services Building, 12200 Pecos Street Westminster. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, this month's meeting will be held on the 5th Wednesday of the month, November 29, 2006 at the same time and location. If you are interested in learning more about ECPAC or considering becoming a member, please do not hesitate to contact us.

UPDATES ON THE ADAMS COUNTY SCHOOL READINESS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

This funding from the Colorado Department of Human Services is allocated to communities throughout Colorado in order to improve the quality of child care facilities – and subsequently the school readiness – of young children who are cared for at facilities that feed into elementary schools receiving low or unsatisfactory academic performance ratings on their 2005 School Accountability Reports. Governor Owens said of the grants, “How well a child does in high school in many ways depends on how well they are prepared for kindergarten and grade school. We cannot let doors be shut for our children because they are not ready to learn. These school readiness grants will make a difference in many lives.” ECPAC will receive approximately \$300,000 each year for the next three years in order to improve school readiness in Adams County.



Based on the results of the 2005 Adams County Comprehensive Early Childhood Community Needs Assessment conducted by ECPAC, the Adams County School Readiness Quality Improvement Project is focused upon:

- Measuring the quality of Adams County ECE facilities and tailoring individual quality improvement plans based upon identified needs
- Increasing the number of ECE providers who have college-level training in early childhood
- Increasing access to early childhood mental health services in child care settings
- Increasing the involvement of families in their children’s early care and education
- Collecting reliable outcome data about participating children that can be used to guide the School Readiness Project.

QUALITY RATINGS: Of the 19 participating child care facilities, ECPAC has initiated the Qualistar rating process at 11 sites. We have received Qualistar ratings for six participating providers – 2 family child care homes and 4 child care centers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: At ECPAC School Readiness sites, 47 child care providers are enrolled in ECE college classes. ECPAC is directly funding tuition and material costs for 16 of these students through our partnership with Front Range Community College and the other 31 students are being funded through School Readiness match funding provided by Adams County Head Start, the Clayton Foundation and other sources. 30 child care providers and 4 directors are participating in a 4-week ACE Connections training – focused on building relationships with families and connecting with children in meaningful ways – through our resource partner Assets for Colorado Youth.



ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: ECPAC has coordinated with our resource partner, Community Reach Center, to hire a Mental Health Consultant to work with all ECPAC School Readiness sites around program structure, pro-social curriculum and classroom problem behaviors. The consultant will be housed within the Early Childhood Services team at Community Reach Center. ECPAC has also initiated the Incredible Years socio-emotional curriculum program at the Mapleton Early Learning Center – 11 classrooms – and Adams County Head Start – 14 classrooms – through our resource partner Invest in Kids.

DATA COLLECTION: ECPAC is moving forward with collection of student outcome data through the Colorado Department of Education Results Matter program. Children in the School Readiness Project will be assessed annually using one of the three Results Matter assessment tools: Creative Curriculum, Work Sampling or High Scope. Many School Readiness sites have already trained their staff to properly use one of these three tools, and we expect that 1273 of the 1410 children in the project (90%) are set to receive an assessment by December 1, 2006.