

KECCS Update

March 2008

Early Learning Day at the Capitol

More than 100 early childhood advocates spent Tuesday, February 26, 2008 at the Capitol in Topeka in support of early childhood funding. The focus of Early Learning Day was the collective efforts of early childhood stakeholders and business leaders from across the State. Business leaders Barry Downing from Wichita and Bill Nelson from Kansas City testified before the House Appropriations committee, while early childhood advocates met individually with legislators. A highlight of the day was a lunchtime session featuring Downing and Nelson, as well as Larry Dixon (Assistant Superintendent of Geary County Unified School District) and Lisa Klein (Director of Early Childhood Initiatives for the Kansas Health Institute), in support of funding for early childhood.

Read more about [Early Learning Day on the Kansas Health Institute](#) website and watch the [Kansas Coalition for School Readiness](#) for updates on legislative efforts.

Plan in Action: *Celebrating the National Child Care Teacher of the Year*

Teri Aldrich, teacher for Head Start at the Heartland Programs in Salina, received the highest award - [the Helene Marks Award as National Child Care Teacher of the Year](#) – from the **Terri Lynne Lokoff Child Care Foundation a national nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to improving early care and education.** Aldrich will travel to King of Prussia, PA to receive her \$2,000 award in a ceremony on April 9, 2008. A portion of the award will benefit Heartland Programs.

Just a few highlights of Aldrich's work include:

- Working on HELLP (Head Start English Language Learner Project), a two-year pilot program to learn ideas for teaching English Language Learners and their families;

- Developing a partnership with the Sterling House, a retirement home for senior citizens, instituting monthly visits between residents and Head Start children;
- Supporting staff through the Heartwarmer's committee (named by Teri) that plans events for staff that help build good health habits and good working relationships.

In her winning essay, Aldrich says of her start in Early Childhood Education, “[i]t did not take long for me to find out that my heart was with young children. I enjoyed the positive way that I felt each day after working with preschoolers.” She currently leads Heartland Programs’ Full-Day, Full-Year Preschool program, where she will implement the project she proposed her in National Child Care Teacher Award application to incorporate more “sensory diet” into the children’s day.

Congratulations, Teri, and thanks to all child care teachers across Kansas who help make this the best place to raise a child.

Learn more about the [National Child Care Teacher Awards](#) and take a few minutes to congratulate [Teri](#) on her award as National Child Care Teacher of the Year!

We’re Making Progress!

Agencies and organizations have been sharing exciting news about their programs and activities! Let us know what you have been up to by entering your activities in the [Implementation Tracking Tool](#). In addition to supporting the Plan, you’ll have access to individual agency reports. **Need help getting started?** Contact Rebecca Gillam at keccs@ku.edu or by telephone at (785) 864-7123.

Tips & Tools

- The [Center for Law and Social Policy](#) provides State-by-State Policy Data including reports, policy briefs, and fact sheets on early childhood issues. Check out resources like the [State Infant and Toddler Initiative Profiles](#) or the [Analysis of Fiscal Year 2006 TANF and MOE Spending by States](#).
- [Child Care & Early Education Research Connections](#) promotes high quality research in child care and early education and the use of that research in policy making. Resources available include: [Family, Friend and Neighbor Care](#), [Mental Health and Child Care](#), and [Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems](#).

Upcoming Events, Conferences & Training Opportunities

- **Parents as Teachers Day at the Capitol** is Wednesday, March 5, 2008. This day will give PAT programs an opportunity to talk with state legislators about the importance of Parents as Teachers in our communities. RSVP and reserve display space by contacting: Marita Douglas, douglasm@olatheschools.com. Questions? Contact Cammie Braden, PAT Day Chair, cbraden@nekesc.org; Nancy Keel, KPATA Executive Director, keeln@olatheschools.com; Nancy Rasmussen, KPATA President, nrasmussen@usd259.net.

- Register for the **[Kansas Fatherhood Summit!](#)** The Summit will be held on April 2 & 3, 2008 at the Jack Reardon Center in Kansas City, KS. Parents and professionals are encouraged to attend. This year's Summit is the 6th Annual Statewide Summit – Fathers for a New Generation: Involved for a Better Tomorrow.
- Save the date! **[Blending Teaching and Braiding Funding of Special Education, Head Start and Community Services](#)** will be held on April 25, 2008 at Spiritual Life Center in Wichita. The meeting is for administrators and direct service staff from Head Start, Early Head Start, Part C Tiny-K, Part B Early Childhood Special Education, public and private preschool and mental health partners. You are encouraged to invite your collaborative partners (i.e. home child care providers, Parents As Teachers, other early childhood programs interested in learning more about these unique collaborations)!

The meeting is being coordinated by Head Start Collaboration Office, Kansas SRS Health Care Policy – Mental Health, Kansas State Department of Education, Kansas Department of Health & Environment - Infant-Toddler Services, ACF Region VII Regional Office, and Kansas Inservice Training System.

Registration will be available after January 2, 2008. Contact Peggy Miksch (pmiksch@ku.edu, 785-456-8881) for content questions or Robin Bayless (rbayless@ku.edu, 620-421-6550 ext. 1618) for registration questions.

- Save the date! The spring **Kansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Plan Stakeholder meeting** will be held on May 28, 2008 in Salina, KS. Stay tuned for details!

Do you have an event, conference or training coming up that would benefit other KECCS partners? Let us know, and we will promote it on the KECCS website and in the newsletter, the KECCS *Update*. Send information to keccs@ku.edu or contact Rebecca Gillam at (785) 864-7123.