



The Montgomery County Early Care and Education Congress

FY 2008 Action Agenda Update

*Healthy, Happy, Learning Every Day:
The Future of Early Care and Education in Montgomery County*

Goal 1: Everyone in Montgomery County will understand the need to support school readiness and their role in preparing children for school.

Rationale: When people understand the value of early care and education to learning and life, they will support activities and programs that promote school readiness.

1 Engage and Empower Parents and Caregivers

Early Childhood Public Engagement:

- ◆ 100 parents, advocates, legislators and early care and education providers attended the initial Early Care and Education Congress, and 239 individuals' submitted comments on the Draft Action Agenda that was introduced.
- ◆ 2,227 packets of information on early childhood resources, including health, child care, pre-literacy and family supports, were distributed to new parents and parents-to-be in English and Spanish.
- ◆ 2,875 children were served through ChildLink, where callers can get information and resources for young children as well as linkages to more intensive services. 99% of families that were reached after referral for more intensive services reported that they were successfully linked. 47% of the ChildLink callers required bilingual services.
- ◆ 776 parents and caregivers attended multicultural early literacy "Learning Parties" in community-based settings.
- ◆ Parents, caregivers and interested community members received 18,440 pieces of early childhood literature at 72 different community events through Early Childhood Integrated Outreach efforts.
- ◆ 2000 parents and young children participated in MOYC events at Westfield Wheaton and Lakeforest Malls

Library Services:

- ◆ 68,138 library patrons, mostly families and young children, attended 1,773 preschool programs geared towards developing literacy skills in the preschool population.

Recreation and Leisure:

- ◆ 7,766 children ages six months to five years participated in county-wide Tiny Tot classes, Little People Centers and other summer specialty programs.
- ◆ 5,929 children age's three to five participated in Aquatic's Swim Lessons.

2 Educate and Obtain the Commitment of Policy Makers and Business Leaders

- ◆ 100 parents, advocates, legislators and early care and education providers attended the initial Early Care and Education Congress; and 239 individual's submitted comments on the Draft Action Agenda that was introduced.
- ◆ 2nd Early Care and Education Congress held October 2008 with participation and presentations from local and State Policy Makers and Business Leaders
- ◆ Montgomery County Council established the Universal Preschool Implementation Workgroup to provide recommendations to develop high-quality, voluntary preschool, early child care and education programs for all County 4-year olds.
 - Investing in the Future: A Balanced Approach Toward Preschool Expansion in Montgomery County, Maryland (released/presented March 27, 2009)
- ◆ Montgomery County Council, Montgomery County Public School presented Resolutions honoring MOYC April 2009

Goal 2: All children, birth through age 5, will have access to high quality and culturally competent early care and education programs and health services that meet the needs of families, especially low-income families, families with children with disabilities and English language learners.

Rationale: The data show that children who participate in high quality early care and education programs and services are more ready for kindergarten than those children who do not participate in high quality programs.

1 Improve Early Childhood Program Effectiveness

Child Care Health, Mental Health Consultation, Training and Quality Enhancements:

- ◆ 1,794 children in 40 child care programs benefited from on-site Early Childhood Mental Health consultations.
- ◆ 324 child care providers and parents consulted with mental health consultants by telephone.

2 Promote Access to High Quality Programs by Eliminating Barriers

- ◆ 61 Head Start children received full-day wrap around child care, including 17 who received summer services.

LOCATE Child Care:

- ◆ 1,915 families were provided with child care counseling and referrals to assist them in finding care for 2,489 children, including 522 (20%) who reported speaking English as a second language.
- ◆ 1,199 families were referred to child care subsidies, and 177 additional families who were already receiving subsidies were served in LOCATE.
- ◆ 47,466 searches for child care for an estimated 10,000 children were conducted by parents using the online LOCATE database service.
- ◆ 601 families were contacted for follow up information on child care needs, the quality of LOCATE services and outcomes of their child care search, with 50% indicating they had found care after two months.
- ◆ 750 child care programs updated their information in the LOCATE database, representing 50% of regulated programs in Montgomery County.

Child Care in Public Space:

- ◆ 7,670 child care slots are available in Montgomery County Public Schools and other County-owned public spaces.

Child Care Subsidy Programs:

- ◆ 935 children ages 0-5 were served by the Purchase of Child Care Program.
- ◆ 212 children ages 0-5 were served by the Working Parents Assistance Program.

Home Visiting, Parent Education and Family Support:

- ◆ 139 families and 158 children received services at the Mental Health Association's Families Foremost Center, including home visiting and onsite parent education, adult education, employment readiness and family literacy.
- ◆ 69 participants with 96 children were served in the Mental Health Association's MOM's Program, which provides mentoring and other supportive services to pregnant and parenting young women between the ages of 12 to 24.
- ◆ 145 families with 148 children at risk for child abuse received home visiting and comprehensive family support through the Family Services, Inc. Healthy Families Montgomery. An additional 164 families were screened for risk factors and received appropriate community referrals.
- ◆ 19 children birth to four participated in the Even Start Literacy Program at Gaithersburg Elementary School, and another 7 children kindergarten through grade three were also served. This grant ended on June 30, 2008.
- ◆ 119 children birth to age three from families under the federal poverty level received services from Family Services, Inc, Early Head Start. An additional 5 pregnant mothers received services.
- ◆ 68 children birth to age three and their families from Montgomery County received services through the Early Head Start Program at the Reginald S. Lourie Center for Infants and Young Children.
- ◆ 268 families with 433 children were served in the four Parent Resource Centers operated by the Housing Opportunities Commission.
- ◆ 418 children were served by the Gaithersburg Judy Center Partnership Programs for children birth to five years of age. Of this number, 150 children aged birth to three received a range of services including developmental screening, literacy enrichment, preschool scholarships and child care.

Home Visiting, Parent Education and Family Support *con't.* :

- ◆ 303 children and families were served by the Silver Spring Judy Center Programs and services. Of this number, 86 children received an array of direct services, including developmental screenings, family literacy activities and child care services.
- ◆ 30 socially and linguistically isolated children and families received home visiting services through the Family Services, Inc., Help Me Learn Program to enhance their school readiness.

Early Intervention and Pre-Kindergarten Services for At-Risk Children:

- ◆ 2,255 referrals were made to the Montgomery County Infants and Toddlers Program, 3,632 families were served.
- ◆ 617 four year olds and 94 three year olds were served in community-based and MCPS Head Start.
- ◆ 2,142 four year olds were served in the MCPS Pre-K Program.
- ◆ 1,720 referrals were made to MCPS Child Find for three to five-year-olds, and 864 children received developmental screenings.
- ◆ 163 referrals were made for MCPS speech and language assessments for three to five-year-olds, and an additional 96 children were referred for bilingual developmental assessments.
- ◆ 1,821 three through five-year-olds received special education services through Montgomery County Public Schools as reported to Maryland State Department of Education for the 2007 report.
- ◆ 17 children and their 37 parents/guardians received early childhood education and social emotional intervention services for five mornings a week through the Therapeutic Nursery Program at the Reginald S. Lourie Center for Infants and Young Children.
- ◆ 169 children five years old and under and their families were served through the Parent Child Clinical Services Program at the Reginald S. Lourie Center for Infants and Young Children.
- ◆ 60 children ages 2 to 5 years old were served in CentroNia's program targeting low income families with limited English proficiency. Ninety percent of parents participated in activities, workshops, parent conferences and field trips. CentroNia supported 62 families's efforts to access Child Care Subsidies.

- ◆ 30 children from low-income families with Limited English attended La Escuelita de Centro Familia aligned with MCPS Pre-Kindergarten curriculum. 26 parents received 15 hours of training in early childhood education and family literacy.

3 Promote Access to Health Care for Pregnant Women and Young Children

Child Care Health, Mental Health Consultation, Training and Quality Enhancements:

- ◆ 124 on-site visits to child care centers were provided by the Child Care Health Nurse, and 261 telephone consultations were given to child care providers.
- ◆ 142 pregnant and post partum women were referred to SMILE, the African American Health Infant Mortality Reduction Program. A total of 188 infants were served.
- ◆ 238 high risk infants were triaged by DHHS nurses for case management.
- ◆ 3,763 maternity clients and 2,629 children received case management through DHHS Health Services
- ◆ 5,327 universal assessments of newborns in the hospitals were provided through Family Services, Inc. Baby Steps, and Healthy Families Montgomery. Nurses also provided 15 home visits and 768 telephone consultations.

Early Intervention and Pre-Kindergarten Services for At-Risk Children:

- ◆ 37 referrals from ChildFind screenings were made for short-term consultation with the Developmental Evaluation Services for Children clinical psychologist.
- ◆ 334 referrals were made to the Developmental Evaluation Services for Children for in-depth assessment of suspected developmental delays or disabilities; 46 of these children also received audiological assessments of their hearing status.
- ◆ 420 Head Start/Pre-Kindergarten families were linked to health care providers; 930 dental screenings, toothbrush prophylaxis, topical fluoride and oral health education were provided to Head Start and high risk PreK students. All families with children enrolled in Head Start/PreK classes received nutritional information through Color Me Healthy newsletters and classroom presentations.

Goal 3: All professionals, who work with children birth to age five and their families, will be appropriately educated in promoting and understanding a comprehensive approach to the development of the whole child, including physical, social emotional and cognitive well-being as a basis for school readiness.

Rationale: Early experiences, environment and healthy development determine whether a child’s brain will provide a strong or weak foundation for all future learning. Programs and policies that ensure a well trained and highly skilled early care and education workforce are imperative. The need for ongoing, relevant training and professional development for early care and education staff, health practitioners and families is constant, and the demand for high-quality professional development and training far outweighs the supply.

1 Strengthen the Professional Development System for Those Working with Young Children

Child Care Health, Mental Health Consultation, Training and Quality Enhancements:

- ◆ 16 family child care providers serving 44 children received 18 hours of Core of Knowledge training and on-site technical assistance and support through Centro Familia’s Listos Para la Escuela program.
- ◆ 150 child care training workshops for nearly 3,005 participants were offered to child care providers through the Montgomery County Child Care Resource and Referral Center (MCCCR&RC), including 46 English as a Second Language classes and 11 classes in Spanish.
- ◆ 540 family providers and 571 staff from center-based programs participated in one or more training offered by MCCCR&RC, representing an estimated 53% of the family child care workforce and 19% of the center-based workforce.
- ◆ 2,187 technical assistance services were provided through MCCCR&RC’s Resource Library and new technical assistance line.
- ◆ 12 family providers participated in Maryland Child Care Credential Forums or Roundtables through MCCCR&RC.
- ◆ 24 child care providers who have achieved a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree were trained as advisors and linked to CDA candidates through MCCCR&RC.
- ◆ 17 providers received scholarships for CDA courses, 69 for courses leading towards an AA degree in Early Childhood at Montgomery College and 1 for courses leading towards a BA degree in Early Childhood.

Child Care Health, Mental Health Consultation, Training and Quality Enhancements *con't.*:

- ◆ 54 center and family child care participants serving low-income and immigrant populations received ongoing training and support as part of the Pre-K Child Care Curriculum Partnership Project and 36 received English as a second language instruction.
- ◆ 40 child care providers earned professional units towards their Maryland Child Care Credential by volunteering over 500 hours with the MCCR&RC.
- ◆ 42 child care centers received support for program accreditation.
- ◆ 137 Spanish Speaking, child care providers received 382 hours of Core of Knowledge training through Centro Familia.
- ◆ 85 MCPS Head Start classroom teachers, para-educators, preschool health nurses, child care center teachers, and family child care providers received training in the Head Start *I am Moving I am Learning* program module, a national initiative to improve children's health, nutrition, learning readiness, and overall well-being. The training offered a research based, developmentally appropriate program for preventing and reversing obesity in preschool children, training staff in encouraging preferences for healthy nutrition and increased activity, teaching prevention of obesity and cardiovascular disease through movement, healthy eating and physical activity. This activity will provide ongoing benefits to the 648 Head Start children as well as at least an additional 350 children attending Head Start Child Care partners' programs.



As a parent, child care teacher, business owner, policy maker, advocate, administrator, mental health professional, family service worker, health care provider, home visitor, or simply an interested party in making a difference for Montgomery County's very young children you play a significant role and have tremendous influence...

Please take a moment to consider what you can do to ensure that all children are "Happy, Healthy and Learning Everyday"!

The Early Care and Education Action Agenda has three main goals:

1. Everyone will understand the need to support school readiness and their role in preparing children for school.
2. All young children will have access to high quality and culturally competent early care and education programs and health services that meet the needs of families, especially low-income families, families with children with disabilities and English Language Learners.
3. All professionals who work with young children will be appropriately educated in promoting and understanding a comprehensive approach for the development of the whole child, including physical, social-emotional and cognitive well-being as a basis for school readiness

Where do you fit in?

Questions, e-mail the Congress Steering Committee at MCECECongress@gmail.com