



KECCS Update

September 2008

Plan in Action: Kansas Parent Initiative

Through a collaborative effort between the Kansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (KECCS) Plan and the Kansas Strengthening Families Plan, the Kansas Parent Initiative was launched to explore strategies to promote authentic parent leadership and involvement and facilitate positive outcomes. The purpose of the initiative is to:

- gain a deeper understanding of the ways parents define parent involvement and access supports to get the resources they need to nurture their children.
- gain a deeper understanding of how agencies utilize parent input and make programmatic changes in response.
- inform strategies in the Kansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Plan and the Kansas Strengthening Families Plan to involve families at multiple levels.
- inform agency strategies to utilize parent input and deepen parent involvement.

The first step in the planning phase of the work is two pronged: 1) an environmental scan of current status of parent leadership and parent involvement in agencies across the State (data gathered through agency survey), and 2) focus groups to gather input and support from parents in defining future roles and structure of parent leadership and involvement. The work will use a developmental evaluation approach to identify patterns and utilize parent input from the beginning. Following the environmental scan and focus groups, we'll work together to identify methods for engaging parents, including workforce partnerships, virtual social networking, and Parent Cafes.

The Kansas Parent Initiative should help inform our work with parents, parent input in our agencies and programs, and parent involvement at the State level.

If you have questions about the Kansas Parent Initiative or want to be involved, contact Rebecca Gillam at (785) 864-7123 or keccs@ku.edu.

Tips & Tools

- The American Academy of Pediatrics, as part of their Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children project, has released a [tip sheet on sustaining community-based programs](#).
- The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center has compiled comprehensive information about early childhood (birth through age five) developmental screening and assessment instruments, with a focus on social and emotional development. Almost 40 instruments are categorized by whether they address multiple domains of development or whether they focus on social emotional development. Each instrument comes with a description and information about the age range for which it is appropriate, the time needed to administer the instrument, how scoring works, and who should conduct the screening. [This document](#) should be helpful to early childhood special education teachers, early childhood mental health specialists, and pre-k teachers in general.

Upcoming Events, Conferences & Training Opportunities

- The **Kansas Parent Leadership Conference** will be held October 23-24, 2008 at the Museum of History in Topeka, KS. Advocacy Guru, Stephanie Vance will be presenting along with Senator Laura Kelly. REGISTRATION AND MEALS ARE FREE! Additionally: Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) will provide mileage reimbursement (up to \$100.00) to 40 parents whose children attend Title I schools. Individual Head Start Programs will fund transportation and child care expenses for their parents as well as staff expenses. Children's Cabinet will provide mileage reimbursement (up to \$100.00) for 20 additional parents. See the [conference brochure](#) for more information.
- The **32nd Annual Governor's Conference for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect** will be held October 29-31, 2008 at the Airport Hilton in Wichita, KS. Keynote speakers include Jim Hmurovich, Prevent Child Abuse America; Dr. Vince Felitti, Adverse Childhood Experiences Study; and Lisbeth Schorr, Center for the Study of Social Policy. The conference will include all day institutes on October 29th as well as a variety of workshop choices on October 30-31. Registration fees will remain the same as 2007 (\$150 for one day; \$200 for two days and \$250 for three days). Registration materials are available [online](#).
- The **Kansas Head Start Association Annual Conference** will be held November 14, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center in Salina, KS. Ready to Learn: Building Healthy Minds & Bodies will feature *I am Moving, I am Learning* and the "Be Choosy" approach to build strategies for fitness and nutrition. Pre-conference will be November 13. See the [registration brochure](#) for more details.
- The **KECCS Plan Stakeholders meeting** will be held on November 13, 2008 at the Courtyard Marriott in Salina, KS. Join us for plan updates and information sharing. Please RSVP to Dyogga.Adegbore@srs.ks.gov by November 7, 2008.

- *Save the Date!* The **Kansas Fatherhood Summit** will be held April 2-3, 2009 in Wichita, KS. Stay tuned for more information.

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.