



Collaboration
for Early Childhood
Care & Education

Highlights

Investing in Oak Park's Future: A Strategic Plan for the Partnership for Human Development serves as the organizing framework for the Collaboration for Collaboration's work. With more than 40 agencies participating, the Collaboration works to overcome the fragmentation and scarcity of services endemic to the early childhood field by leveraging and integrating all of our community resources to better meet the needs of the youngest children and their families. Our key initiatives include the advancement of Professional Development, Parent Information and Support, Developmental Screening and High Quality Preschool for All and Head Start Programs. It also establishes clear measurements to assess our progress. The Collaboration has made substantial progress towards the implementation of this systemic approach. The following are highlights from the past year.

Collaboration Accomplishments

- Increased professional development activities at 12 child care centers and preschool sites. Program offerings include a 12 workshop series for each of two years (2010-2011 and 2011-2012) focused on developmentally appropriate practice.
- Supported the creation of professional development plans at 12 sites, and provided professional development advising. As a result, 27 early learning providers enrolled in college level courses earning a total of 192 credit hours. This represents an increase of 22% in the number of staff in targeted centers raising their educational qualifications in early childhood.
- Provided mentoring and technical guidance to five full-day, full year child care centers to support their participation in the Illinois Quality Rating System to achieve a star level score to raise their child care reimbursement rates from the state. Four centers achieved a two star rating.
- Conducted hearing and vision screenings for more than 1,100 children.
- Developed a referral and communication process for pediatricians and family practice physicians to use for children who may have developmental delays. Participated in the development of a Standardized Referral Form for Early Intervention and a follow-up communication report for physicians, child care and school providers, and social service agency staff to use. Secured the adoption of the use of this form by Child Family Connections (CFC) 7, the state Early Intervention service center for the West Cook Region -- a key step to increasing screenings and rates of referral by physicians in local practices.
- Published and distributed a Developmental Referral and Services Directory for physicians and child care and preschool staff. Made the Directory available on our web site.

- Identified and enrolled 78 children in publicly funded preschool programs and Head Start program for at-risk children who would have missed this opportunity without the Collaboration's outreach and coordination efforts during school years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.
- The three Preschool for All programs, Head Start, and District 97's Early Childhood Special Education program agreed to use the same assessment tool tied to the Illinois Early Learning Standards, Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System (TSG)[™]. The Collaboration provided orientations and training to 44 different staff members to support the implementation of TSG[™]. Technical assistance and trouble shooting was also provided on and off-site.
- Completed the development of a database that will support the work of the publicly funded preschool and CEDA Head Start and monitor program impact on participating children.
- Drafted and reached agreement on an Interagency Data Sharing Agreement to support the work with the publicly funded preschool programs and Head Start.
- Hosted the largest Symposium in our history. *We Can Work it Out: Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children* was held in February 2011 with over 400 people attending. More than 300 people participated in our latest Symposium: *Wild About Wellness: Growing Healthy Children in Mind, Body and Spirit*.
- Launched a new web site in January 2011 full of information for parents, early childhood care and education providers and health care providers. Take a peek at www.collab4kids.org.
- Produced the 2012 Edition of the Early Childhood Resource Directory.
- Inaugurated an individual giving campaign raising more than \$60,000 annually.