

**Healthy North Dakota Early Childhood Alliance (HNDECA)
Stakeholder Committee Meeting
April 23, 2009 Meeting Summary**

Proposed Meeting Goals:

- To receive updates on the status of the ECCS grant;
- To receive information about logic models, databases, data collection and project evaluation;
- To receive information regarding the HNDECA informal needs assessment;
- To discuss legislative outcomes;
- To review and revise the HNDECA Work Plan;
- To organize a schedule and tasks for the upcoming year; and
- To identify next steps in planning.

Meeting Participants: Earleen Friez, Jody Bettger-Huber, Cyndee McLeod, Vanessa Hoines, Richard Rathge, Helen Danielson, Sarah Myers, Bobbe Shreve, Cheryle Masset-Martz, Linda Reinicke, Carlotta McCleary, Roxane Romanick, Kathy Lampman, Kay Larson, Suzie Godsell, Sue Burns, Tricia Keifer, Devaiah Muccatira, Linda Ehreth, Laura Duppong and Lyn Hendrickson.

Facilitated by: The Consensus Council

Welcome, Introductions and Process Review: Participants were welcomed to the meeting and provided self-introductions. Participants reviewed and affirmed the use of consensus as the rule of decision and reaffirmed the ground rules for discussion as follows:

1. It's our show.
2. Everyone is equal.
3. No relevant topic is excluded.
4. No discussion is ended.
5. Respect opinions.
6. Respect the time.
7. Silence is agreement.
8. Non-attribution.
9. Keep the facilitator accurate.
10. Have fun!

Professional Education and Presentations: Participants received a report from Cheryle regarding the status of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant as submitted to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in March, including the following points:

- The grant is anticipated to be in the same amount as previous years, \$140,000 for one year
- The grant funds will be allocated to staff at the ND Department of Health (NDDoH), meeting supplies and facilitation, travel expenses for staff and

stakeholders, program evaluation and epidemiology, with at least \$22,000 available for grants/mini-grants

- In the current grant year, HNDECA funds have been used for all of the above-mentioned categories as well as providing support for the Frameworks training and the event featuring Dr. Bruce Perry
- Cheryle will become a part-time employee as of May 1 and will no longer be working on the Oral Health program
- Cheryle has been tracking over 30 legislative bills related to early childhood issues this legislative session
- Cheryle will be needing assistance from stakeholders in design of HNDECA marketing materials that will contain a snapshot of the state plan
- Cheryle, Cyndee McLeod and Jody Betgger-Huber will be attending the national Smart Start conference in May
- There is a need for a thorough review of the HNDECA membership to be sure that the list is up-to-date and in order for all stakeholders to be connected to the right/preferred subcommittee
- There will be a needs assessment conducted this year in collaboration with the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant Program
- All HNDECA subcommittee meetings have now been scheduled (all will take place in meeting rooms at the State Capitol) and participants will also be notified by email as to the dates and times which are as follows:

Parent Education: May 20: 1:00 to 4:00: Sakakawea Room

Early Care & Education: May 21: 9:00 to 4:00: Sakakawea Room

Access to Health Insurance & Medical Home: May 27: 1:00 to 4:00: Red River

Family Support: May 28: 9:00 to noon: Sakakawea Room

Mental Health: May 28: 1:00 to 4:00: Sakakawea Room

Participants received reports from Dr. Richard Rathge regarding the following:

- Overview of Logic Models & Their Uses for HNDECA
- Development of a Centralized Database by KIDS COUNT
- Data Collection Efforts and Projects

The Power Point presentation and handouts are available on the ECCS section of the NDDoH website at: www.ndhealth.gov/eccs

Legislative Outcomes Discussion: Participants held an informal discussion regarding passed and failed legislation as well as some bills still undecided. Regarding strategies for success, the following elements were identified:

- Contacts and testimony from parents was effective with legislators; they would rather hear from a constituent than a paid staff person or lobbyist
- The use of well developed, well framed, professional looking educational material was important in raising the credibility of the effort
- With respect to childcare issues, it seems that parents are not considered a viable voice by legislators
- The best voices to promote childcare issues are economic developers

- It is effective to “bundle” services that childcare can provide (education, health, behavioral) for one price per family (or group of families) rather than trying to explain/quantify each service
- There was effective bill tracking and routine communication from groups like the Children’s Caucus, NDAEYC, Legislative Working Committee’s and others
- There is great success in forming strong relationships with individual legislators to assure their understanding of the issues and to build them into champions for the cause
- The Children’s Defense Fund now has a presence in ND which was helpful during the session and will be helpful into the future
- There was good, strategic use of current events and problems (closing of childcare centers in Fargo) to raise visibility and credibility of the issues with legislators from those districts; current events capture the attention of the public and, in turn, legislators

HNDECA Work Plan: Incorporating the Logic Model: Based on the information provided in the educational presentations, participants discussed methods by which the “old” work plan could incorporate/morph into a more easy-to-use, less overwhelming tool. The following ideas were shared:

- HNDECA could be seen as the main data collectors; the “go-to” group for any person or agency seeking credible information about early childhood
- The HNDECA work plan can become the “state plan” and be used more as an internal document from which to work on goals into the future
- HNDECA could use a more linear, sequential approach; develop a timeline where later activities build upon those that were accomplished earlier
- HNDECA could work to evaluate legislative outcomes based on HNDECA goals
- HNDECA could work to impact the soon to be formed Governor’s Early Learning Council to assess the selection process, assure broad representation and inform the group about the five core elements of HNDECA
- HNDECA could adopt a small number of high-level, crosscutting; visionary goals for the coming 3 – 5 years and focus on those, while continuing to attach current work plan activities to them.

It was agreed that HNDECA shares the following value about the whole of its work:

HNDECA, while recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of all children and families, will promote a focus on services getting to the children identified as most vulnerable.

It was also agreed that the four following high-level, cross-cutting, visionary goal statements will lead HNDECA through the next three to five years:

1. HNDECA will promote the development of a seamless and integrated early care and education system for children ages 0 – 8.
2. HNDECA will promote comprehensive health care coverage for all North Dakota children.

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3. HNDECA will promote connectivity and information for all of the early childhood community across North Dakota.
4. HNDECA will promote services and education for children, prenatal through age 3, and their families.

Organizing for the New HNDECA Grant Year: Since all of the subcommittees will meet in May, it was agreed that the Stakeholder group would meet again sometime after July 4th to review the products of the subcommittees work. Cheryle will provide potential dates for that meeting and request responses. The subcommittees will cover the following essential tasks at their May meetings:

- Identify the top 3 key priorities for the work of the group;
- Compare these priorities to the overall goals developed today;
- Complete the logic model for these goals;
- Identify any missing goals, data or stakeholders;
- Identify outcome/performance indicators; and
- Complete the needs assessment per Cheryle's instruction.

It was also agreed that the following HNDECA members would serve, with Cheryle, on an ad hoc committee to develop the state plan, marketing materials:

Kay Larson
Vanessa Hoines
Linda Ehreth (nominated while absent)

Summary Comments: Participants were asked to share a summary comment or phrase regarding the meeting progress or outcomes. The comments are:

- Thank you for letting go of the old plan.
- I am ready to go to work.
- I'm excited about the future data projects.
- Less will be better; less is more.
- I look forward to making sense of all the data and using it to fill in the gaps.
- We filled some potholes today.
- I am extremely excited that we are becoming more integrated and focused.
- Simple is elegant; it's not a new direction but a new mode of travel.
- Full speed ahead.
- Get 'er done.
- Dr. Rathge loves the data and is able to take the abstract and have it make sense to the rest of us.
- This feels like a fresh start.
- We are using our common strength to create a learning, healthy environment for children.
- HNDECA's got its groove on!

The meeting was adjourned by consensus of the group.