



# WEST VIRGINIA Early Childhood Planning TASK FORCE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2013 • 12:00 NOON - 3:00 PM  
CHARLESTON AREA ALLIANCE • 1116 SMITH STREET • CHARLESTON

## **West Virginia Early Childhood Planning Task Force Meeting Summary – Wednesday, August 28, 2013**

### Task Force Members Present:

Secretary Bob Kiss, Task Force Chairperson  
Michelle Foster, Kanawha Institute for Social Research & Action  
Secretary Kay Goodwin, WV Department of Education and the Arts  
Lloyd Jackson, Jackson Gas  
Arthur Rubin, DO, WV School of Osteopathic Medicine  
Justin Seibert, Direct Online Marketing  
Rachel Tompkins  
Tanjia Willis-Miller, Jackson Kelly Attorneys at Law

### Task Force Resource Team Members Present:

Bruce Decker, Collective Impact  
Gretchen Frankenberry, Early Childhood Advisory Council  
Barbara Gebhard, ZERO TO THREE  
Julie Pratt, Project Director, Early Childhood Planning Task Force  
Kim Tieman, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation (via phone)  
Jenny Lancaster, Project Assistant, Terzetto Creative, LLC

### Guests Present:

Pat Getty, Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation  
Kim Hawkins, WVDHHR Division of Early Care and Education  
Pam Roush, WV Birth to Three  
Traci Dalton, Head Start State Collaboration Office  
Melisa Williams, Thomas Memorial Hospital  
Alyson Clements, WV Center on Budget and Policy  
Sara McDowell, Big Brothers Big Sisters

### Meeting materials:

The handouts and presentations referenced in this summary are posted on the WVEPTF website ([www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org)) on the Task Force page.

### Introductions, approval of July 31 meeting summary, future meeting dates and times

*Task Force Chair Bob Kiss* opened the meeting.

- A motion to approve July 31 meeting minutes was made by Secretary Kay Goodwin, seconded by Rachel Tompkins, and approved unanimously.
- Julie Pratt reviewed Meeting Schedule handout and noted that the November retreat will be held for a full day on November 21 and half day on November 22. The group agreed to hold the meeting at a Charleston location. A final meeting will be held in Charleston on January 10, noon to 3:00, to finalize the plan.
- During the July Task Force meeting, members discussed the possibility of visiting local EC programs. Julie investigated some options, but they won't be feasible within our timeframe. A possible alternative would be to attend an upcoming focus group in Nicholas County.

### Public Comment

*Alyson Clements, WV Center on Budget and Policy*, reported on the "Our Children, Our Future" campaign and the effects of sequestration on Head Start Services, including 461 fewer West Virginia children served by Head Start. (See handout at [www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org).) There will be a vigil for the Head Start seats that have been lost on September 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Robert C. Byrd Federal Building.

### Planning Progress Report

*Julie Pratt* reported that the planning process is on track and on time. She reviewed the Combined Summary from July Study Group Meetings and a draft Table of Contents for the Plan. (See documents at [www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org).) Lloyd Jackson asked that we also provide a document to the Governor that addresses the specific issues that the Executive Order requires the Plan to address.

*Bruce Decker* provided an update on Collective Impact's research on current investments in early childhood programs in West Virginia, which includes the number of children and families served, participation rates, expenditures and revenue sources, and estimated costs to address service gaps.

Bruce also reported on the extensive public input being collected through the online survey (462 responses to date) and 20 stakeholder discussions being held across the state. Forty percent of the respondents are parents, relative caregivers, or expectant parents of young children, and about half work for local programs that provide direct services to young children and their families. All but five counties are represented in the responses to date. The survey will remain open until September 13. (See preliminary survey findings at [www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org).)

Task Force members asked for the following cross-tabulations when the final results are compiled:

- Cross tab Question 15 with Question 17 – do people who have a hard time finding services also have concerns about quality of the program or service?
- Cross tab by income level, using Medicaid and CHIP participation as income indicators.
- Cross tab Question 17 and Question 1 with demographics

### Discussion: Setting Priorities and Weighing Trade-Offs

*Barbara Gebhard* led a discussion on setting priorities and weighing trade-offs. (See handout at [www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org).) Comments and questions from Task Force members included the following:

*Question B: More or better? What should we do when we don't have enough local programs for the families who need them, and people are forced to travel long distances or, in some cases, go without? What should we do when the quality of programs meets basic standards, but falls short of helping young children fully develop their potential? And what should we do when there aren't enough resources to assure both access and quality?*

- Do we have sufficient capability to measure quality?
- We need to understand more about QRIS and how the state would gradually move ahead on that kind of process. We need help from Quality Study Group on that.
- We need to agree on what those core quality standards are.
- How can we use data on 4-year-olds entering Pre-K to develop a set of outcome indicators about where we want children to be by the time they start school?
- It's easier to start programs and then work on increasing quality, rather than waiting until we've achieved our quality standards before expanding.
- We need to get foot in the door; access is important, drives quality.
- We need to ensure baseline standards – safety, etc.
- Where do formal credentials matter? E.g., in home visitation, it doesn't seem like staff need a string of degrees, but experience and training specific to the job.
- Don't lose sight of the parents. We need to have programs for parents; develop peer support relationships; find good parents to reach other parents.
- Parents are a crucial factor; many kids are coming from homes where education isn't valued.
- How much do we focus on the formal early care and education system vs. informal parent education and support? Answer is both/and.
- The point about increasing informal networks is important – deft touch for entities/state to do that; churches are an incredibly important part of that informal network for children/families.

*Question C: Universal or targeted programs? Which programs should be available to all young children, whether their families have high or low incomes, and what is government's role in funding those programs? If we don't have sufficient public funding to serve all young children, who should come first? How can we address the stigma associated with poverty and disability, which keeps some families from participating in certain programs?*

- I tend to go toward more universal, would rather make sure everyone is aware of the services and help those who want to be helped regardless of where they come from.
- Difficult for people to identify what their needs are; all children should be given same start.
- I lean toward universal, although it is incredibly expensive; people who are more educated tend to ask for it, while less educated don't ask; targeting programs.
- A well prepared child is less costly to society; if you don't make it universal, then you are aggravating a situation
- Scarce resources are an issue. Make the very earliest things universal (pregnant women, drug dependent babies; etc), then some things not.
- We need middle ground. If we don't have enough money (and we don't), then we need to be cautious. We should make services available as much as we can – if people can pay for them, people should pay for them, and people who can't pay can still have access.

*Question E: Require or incentivize? What are our hopes and expectations for early childhood programs and for parents/caregivers in meeting the needs of young children, and how can we best achieve them? What expectations do we, as a society, feel are non-negotiable? What should we do to require and/or attract programs and parents to follow what we consider "best practices" during pregnancy and early childhood?*

- We should incentivize as much as possible.
- Invite rather than incentive; impressed with voluntary home visiting programs.
- Support models that have very good outcomes; need a gate/entry point into whatever services we provide
- We couldn't make the 4-year-old Pre-K program mandatory; we can talk about making programs mandatory, but it isn't going to pass.
- Requiring isn't going to fly, and invites reaction.

Panel Presentation on Head Start, Child Care and Birth to Three

*Traci Dalton, Director, Head Start Collaboration Office, DHHR*

*Kim Hawkins, Director, Office of Early Care and Education, DHHR*

*Pam Roush, Director, WV Birth to Three, DHHR*

Each person presented on her program and responded to the following questions:

1. In a nutshell, what is the mission of your program, what services does it provide, and what impact does it have on young children and their families?
2. What's the vision for your program 10 years from now, and what could WV do in the next 1-3 years to have the greatest impact in moving us toward that vision?

Presentations are posted at [www.wvecptf.org](http://www.wvecptf.org).

Other comments:

- Gretchen Frankenberry reported that the Race to the Top application was released this morning. The Early Childhood Advisory Council has not received a directive from the Governor's Office to write the application. Chairman Kiss said he would set up a meeting with Hallie Mason about the application and asked Julie to provide him a list of people who should be involved in the meeting. *(Note: The meeting was held on September 6, and a decision was made by Governor Tomblin to not submit an application due to the state's revenue shortfall, the ongoing cost to state after grant ends, and the desire to consider the full Plan that will be submitted by the Task Force before proceeding. The Governor may consider an application in future if the grant opportunity is offered again.)*

Next Task Force Meeting:

Friday, October 4, 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm, Charleston Area Alliance

Meeting summary prepared by Jenny Lancaster