
CONNECTIONS

Spring 2007

Volume 2, Issue 3

Highlights:

- Community Resources
- Whole Child Project
- Building Partnerships
- Central Directory
- OEL Personnel Updates
- Upcoming events



In This Issue:

Features

Community Resources	1
Whole Child Project	1
Traumatic Events: Tools & Tips	2
School Readiness Success story	9

Columns

Coordinator's Corner	2
Department Updates	3, 10
EFS Technical Assistance	5
Inclusion Forum	6

Community Resources: "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" *by Lisette Levy*

"It takes a village to raise a child."

This African proverb accentuates the importance of the role community agencies play in helping families in the wonderful but complex endeavor of raising children. It takes cooperation and involvement from parents, families, educators, and community agencies to raise a child. The objective of this cooperative effort is to encourage and support families in their parenting role, to identify the needs of families, and acknowledge the existence of gaps in services.

More and more families now depend on the community resources and services available to them. In part this

is because the past 50 years of social change have made it more difficult for individuals to establish or maintain social connections in their communities. Technological innovation, changes in women's roles in the workforce, changes in family composition, and increased geographical distances between family members have resulted in substantial changes in the makeup of most communities. These societal shifts have many families no longer benefiting from the resources of extended family, friends or neighbors to turn to for advice, company or support in their everyday life.

(Continued on page 4)

Focusing on the Whole Child Project in Leon County *by Courtnie Wheeless*

In September of 2000, The Lawton Chiles Foundation selected two pilot communities in the state of Florida to initiate the Whole Child Project. The mission of the *Whole Child Project* is to assist Florida's communities in building comprehensive, integrated, community-based systems to enable infants, young children and their parents to lead productive, rewarding lives by recognizing the first five years of life are critical to the overall development of a child. In January of 2004, The Lawton Chiles Foundation designated Leon County a Whole Child community. This project focuses on creating a comprehensive community network of services and

agencies to provide Leon County families access to assistance in a variety of areas: Physical & Mental Health, Safe & Nurturing Environment, Economic Stability, Quality Education, Social Interaction & Competence, Spiritual Foundation & Strength. Since the inception of the Whole Child Project a total of five counties have joined this innovative initiative: Manatee, Leon, Palm Beach, Osceola, and Sarasota.

Leon County families can access the Whole Child project via the Internet at www.wholechildleon.com

(Continued on page 4)



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Coordinator's Corner

by Gerie Nasche

Spring in Tallahassee provides us with a glorious array of flowers blooming along with clouds of pollen that turn almost everyone into an allergy sufferer! Along with the seasons, the world of Child Care Resource & Referral seems to be constantly changing. During the recent "Voices" Regional Trainings, we met many new CCR&R Coordinators and Specialists and learned more about the variety of service delivery models currently in practice around the state. Some Early Learning Coalitions provide direct services to families, some Coalitions contract for CCR&R, School Readiness, and VPK services and many operate somewhere in the middle. Whatever type of service delivery model in place in your area, CCR&R Specialists are hard at work, providing child care resource and referral services to families in Florida.

Staff members at the CCR&R Network Office are always available to answer questions and provide technical assistance to CCR&R Coordinators around the state. If you have a particular question or concern about some aspect of Child Care Resource & Referral, Enhanced Field System (EFS), School Readiness, Voluntary Prekindergarten, or Inclusion, please let your Coordinator know so she/he can bring it to our attention. One of the parts of our jobs we most enjoy is providing technical assistance and we are happy to respond to your questions.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming Early Learning Quality Initiative Symposium, May 16-18 in Daytona Beach. Attendance at the Pre-Conference and Symposium is required for the Child Care Resource and Referral Coordinator and at least one Child Care Resource and Referral Specialist. There are some exciting workshops and speakers planned for the symposium and we hope many of you will be able to attend. Don't forget your

Traumatic Events: Tools & Tips for Children

Adapted from National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies

In the wake of the most horrific school shooting in the history of the United States at Virginia Tech on April 16, children throughout the country may feel anxious about their own safety at their own school. In addition, many children and families may be directly affected by personal tragedy.

Over the next several weeks, there is likely to be a great deal of media coverage about this incident.

Therefore, whether a family has been directly affected or whether they have watched the coverage of the tragedy on television or seen the pictures and read the stories in the newspaper, the incident of April 16 affects us all.

To help families at this time, NACCRRRA has created a special area on our web site to provide resources for helping children and families, caregivers, and school personnel cope with this tragedy as well as resources for recognizing the early warning signs which may lead to youth violence.

Please visit our website at http://www.naccrra.org/parent/traumatic_events/ to access tools that can help during this time. And, please feel free to share this link with your network. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families affected by this terrible incident.

Policy Update

by Ceci Bell

March 6th marked the beginning of the 2007 Legislative Session. Bill activity includes revisions to the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) and structure of the Office of Early Learning and creation of a child care/quality rating system. To keep up to date on all of the legislative happenings, visit the Florida Senate (<http://www.flsenate.gov/>) and Florida House (<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/>) websites where you may track the progress of bills that interest you, use keyword searches to locate other proposed bills and listen to live proceedings through video streaming.

The Office of Early Learning (OEL) Policy Unit is updating the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan for 2008-2009, a two-year plan that will be submitted to the federal Child Care Bureau for approval at the end of June.

The following rules will be adopted in May/June:

- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program Amended Rules,
- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program Pilot for Child Registration,
- Voluntary Prekindergarten Improvement Process.



Head Start State Collaboration and Community Partnership Update

by Lilli Copp

The purpose of the Head Start-State Collaboration Office is to create partnerships that support the development of multi-agency and public/private collaborative action to:

1. **Assist in building early childhood systems** and access to comprehensive services and support for all low-income children;
2. **Encourage widespread collaboration** between Head Start and other programs and services (including health care, welfare, child care, education, family literacy, community services, services to children with disabilities and homeless children) and;
3. **Facilitate the involvement of Head Start in State policies, plans, processes and initiatives** affecting the Head Start target population and other low-income families.

We prompt system and policy changes that benefit low income families and children by:

- Assisting in developing collaborative initiatives, structures, and mechanisms; and
- Creating linkages between Head Start and other state initiatives, service systems, and our 8 priority areas.

Examples of state level partnerships with the Florida Head Start State Collaboration Office are as follows:

- Memorandum of Understanding for Strengthening Families with the Florida Department of Children and Families, the Florida Head Start Association, the Florida Department of Community Affairs Community Services Block Grant Program, and Florida Community Action Agency, Inc.
- Memorandum of Agreement (Draft) with the Agency for

Workforce Innovation – Office of Early Learning, the Florida Head Start Association, the Early Learning Coalition Executive Directors, and the Region IV Administration for Children and Families – Head Start.

- Participation on the Expanding Opportunities Florida Early Childhood Interagency Inclusion Team, the Florida Head Start Association Research Committee, the Florida Association of Infant Mental Health Strategic Planning Team, the Healthy Families Board, the Child Abuse, Prevention and Treatment Act Task Force, the Florida Association for Community Action, the Florida Department of Education Homeless Education Needs Assessment Committee, the State Oral Health Improvement Plan and Early Childhood Caries Committees, and Whole Child Leon.

Examples of local Head Start grantee partnerships include:

- Participation on Local Early Learning Coalitions, Healthy Start Boards, Community Action Boards, Children's Services Councils, School Health Advisory Councils, local Workforce Boards, and Disabilities Services Councils.
- Head Start Programs partner with private businesses, universities and community colleges, private foundations and child care related industry sponsors.

Each partnership, whether at the local or state level, increases our individual and collective ability to influence a complex system of factors that creates child and family well-being for the Head Start target population and other low-income families.



Families function well when a network of services and resources are available

Whole Child *(continued from page 1)*

and complete a family profile. This confidential profile will search the database and match families to services that most closely meet their needs. If families would like assistance they can contact a Whole Child Advisor, an individual who is trained to help families implement their Whole Child Plan.

This dedicated project has not only given Leon County a valuable resource database for residents but other initiatives including:

- Creating a Quality Rating System in partnership with the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend;
- Developing resources for nurturing a child's spirit including a spirituality book list, activities, and places to experience;
- Expanding access to dental care for pregnant women and infants;

- Providing financial education, literacy and a benefits package for families in conjunction with United Way of the Big Bend's Believe, Earn, Save, Thrive (BEST) initiative; and
- Developing a safe and nurturing environment (neighborhood) policy.

Since the inception of the Whole Child Project in Leon County over 500 community partners have come together to become part of this mission. These partners include agencies such as, the Leon County Health Department, the Refuge House, the Dick Howser Center for Childhood Services, Literacy Volunteers of Leon County, and Workforce Plus, just to name a few.

For more information on the Whole Child Project, please visit them on the web at www.wholechildleon.com or www.wholechildproject.org.

Village *(continued from page 1)*

Living in a community where social interactions are predominantly with others who are also struggling to cope with life's pressures, is less likely to produce favorable social outcomes.

Families function well when a network of services and resources are available. The services and resources that you provide empower families and children ultimately benefit from your expertise and service.

Children thrive and succeed in life when a mixture of social support, few stressful life events, positive life expectations, and ongoing opportunities for positive connections from families, schools, and community agencies are available to them. When families need support to endure life's burdens, your agencies make a definite impact on children in a number of positive ways. Community leaders continue to look for ways to support parents in taking care of themselves, and in nurturing their children, motivating their children to learn, and advocating for their children's best interests.

The community has always been an important influence on families and children, but even more assistance from the community is needed in order to ensure children's success in life. Young people need and deserve a personal one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use after graduation, and a chance to give back to peers and community.

As local partners continue to search for new ways to form alliances, to bond together, and to assist families. As a result, we see the benefits for Florida's children.

Using the Subsidy Radio Button to Conduct a Search for School Readiness Providers

by Jamie Witzman

When Child Care Resource and Referral Specialists work with School Readiness families it is important that the search for providers only include those that accept School Readiness payments. Parents are sometimes embarrassed when they contact a provider and are told “We don’t accept that!” Contacting child care providers that do not accept School Readiness payments is usually a waste of the parent’s time and can be a waste of money if they visit in person. It is essential that the provider referral listing given to all families be as accurate as possible.

Child Care Providers may also be burdened by receiving phone calls from parents that are not going to enroll in their program. On occasion, child care providers contact the Child Care Resource and Referral office requesting that their name not be listed in the provider database or refuse to complete the annual provider database update hoping to prevent receiving these calls. It is essential that all providers, including those that do not accept School Readiness payments, be listed in the Enhanced Field System (EFS).

It can be very time consuming for a specialist to conduct a search for providers accepting School Readiness payments without the appropriate use of the subsidy radio button (see screen shot below). Setting up the Enhanced Field System to streamline this process will save the staff and customer time. Ideally, a specialist should have the capability to select the radio button to conduct the search for School Readiness providers. To ensure this radio button can be used appropriately, the following steps must be taken:

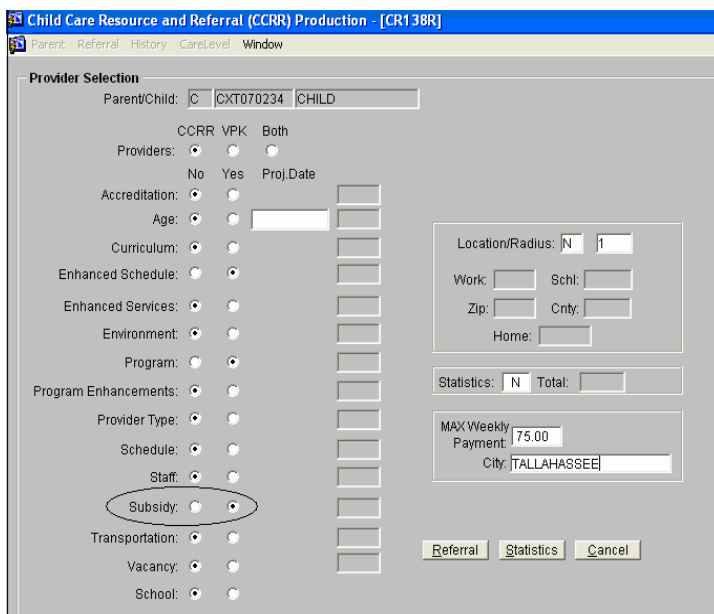
1. Add all codes listed in the PRSU (Subsidy) table to the PREV (Environment) table:

PRSU TABLE

Code	Description
EMP	Employer Contract
IVA	School Readiness Contract
MED	Medicaid Provider
MULT	Multi-child Discount
NEG	Negotiated Rate
PCO	Parent Co-op
SCHL	Scholarships Available
SSF	Sliding Fee Scale
UW	United Way
VOUC	School Readiness Voucher Certificate

2. In the CCRR side of EFS, bring up each provider listed in EFS but not accepting School Readiness funding.
3. Go to Detail>Price>Subsidy Options.
4. Delete any subsidy options listed in this table.
5. Go to Detail>Quality>Environment
6. Add the codes the provider had listed on the subsidy options screen to this screen.

Although the above steps will take some time, this process can save time and energy for families, providers, and Child Care Resource and Referral staff. For additional assistance or detailed instructions including screen shots, please feel free to contact our office at: 1-866-357-3239.



Florida's Central Directory:



Information & Referral on Services for Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs

Families of children with identified or suspected disabilities should always be referred to the Florida Directory of Early Childhood Services, also known as Florida's Central Directory. The Central Directory has been housed and managed at the Children's Forum since 1992, and has provided advocacy support and disability information to thousands of families and providers. The Central Directory's database contains a wide range of information on community services, counseling, diagnosis/evaluation, early intervention, education and training, equipment, medical screening, special education services, support groups, and therapies for children and youth, birth to 21 years. The Central Directory toll-free line is also utilized as the electronic link for callers to be connected to State and Local Department of Health/CMS/Early Steps Offices, State and Local Department of Education/Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS), and the Office of Early Learning Inclusion Contacts. A Resource Specialist is available to answer calls from 8:00am – 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The Central Directory toll-free number is 1-800-654-4440.

**For more information, contact
ialong@centraldirectory.org
 or visit
www.centraldirectory.org**

Inclusion Forum by Amanda Moore

I am a passionate advocate for all individuals with disabilities to have the right to live, work, learn, and play in their natural settings. I say “hello” to the group home residents I see on outings at the mall. Newspaper and television stories on Special Olympics, accessible playgrounds, and Buddy Walks grab my attention. I get angry when I hear words like “retarded” and “spastic” used tactlessly. I have trained many providers to talk openly and freely about disabilities with typically– developing children.

So it is difficult to describe why I was embarrassed to take my baby girl to a restaurant the day she was prescribed eye-patch treatment for her “lazy eye.”

At six months of age, my husband and I noticed her right eye had a tendency to drift outward when she was looking in the distance or concentrating. Because we have a niece that was diagnosed with strabismus (the medical term for lazy eye) as an infant, family members were quick to point out that there was something wrong with Emma's eye. At her nine-month checkup, we alerted the doctor to it and he promptly referred us to a pediatric ophthalmologist, who confirmed that her right eye intermittently drifts out, though it is more common for babies with this condition to have an eye that drifts *in*. His treatment was to place a patch on her “good” eye for two hours every day, to make the other eye work harder.

After a stressful afternoon discussing with my husband the possibility of surgery if the patch was ineffective, neither of us felt like cooking dinner that evening. “Why don't we just order in?” I suggested. I couldn't admit that I was afraid to take Emma out in public and have people stare at her patch. Then I realized: what a selfish and hypocritical thing to think!

Our family survived the trip to the restaurant without any blatant stares or insensitive questions. We've made trips to soccer games, department stores, friend's houses, and everywhere else you would take a child with an eye patch, or a wheelchair, or a g-tube, or any other special equipment. No one has gasped in shock, stared rudely, or caused Emma emotional distress.



Most folks will politely inquire “What's wrong with her eye?” We smile and respond, “Oh, nothing—that's her good eye!”

While my daughter's eye patch is a minor inconvenience compared to the moderate and severe disabilities many families face, I have learned that most parents prefer a question over a stare. It provides for an opportunity to educate others on a child's unique abilities and characteristics. *Would society be better prepared to embrace community inclusion for all if everyone were able to openly discuss the nature of disabilities?* In closing, I would also like to remind readers of the importance of early intervention. Though it's still too early to know if our daughter will need eye surgery, we know that by immediately sharing our concerns with our pediatrician, we avoided feeling helpless down the road when the critical stages of optic development have passed.

Now I'll go home to deal with our other challenge: how to keep the patch on a baby for two hours without her peeling it off and putting it in her mouth.

*We don't see things as they are,
 we see them as we are.*

~ Anaïs Nin

The Lead Alert Network

Adapted from *The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (FL CLPPP)*

Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system in the body. Because lead poisoning often occurs with no obvious symptoms, it frequently goes unrecognized. Lead poisoning can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems, seizures, coma, and even death when high levels are found in the body.

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (FL CLPPP) regularly issues consumer product alerts/recalls at this website: <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/Lead/faq.htm>

As services providers it is our duty to:

- Inform clients, family members, and neighbors with young children of these alerts.
- Provide a copy of the alert to pediatricians and health care providers.
- Post pictures of recalled items at childcare centers or other places visited by families with young children.

Please be aware of these sources and help advise parents and caregivers of the potential danger of these products. Childhood lead poisoning is completely preventable. Some potential sources of lead include:

- Lead-based paint
- Lead contaminated household dust
- Lead contaminated soil
- "Take Home Lead:" Lead dust carried home from hobbies or occupations that involve lead
- Imported consumer products such as pottery, mini-blinds, or costume jewelry.
- Non-western home remedies or folk remedies

Family Support Services

by Karen Moon

The purpose of family support services is to assist the families that we serve on the road to self sufficiency. This quarter, two community resources are highlighted that assist parents and families to economic self sufficiency.

Adult Education Services:

Associated with almost all community colleges in each county is an Adult Education office. Adult Education offers adults the opportunity to complete their high school education, and obtain their General Education Diploma, and test in adult basic education. These offices also offer English as a Second Language classes, college preparation, family literacy, and job-related life skills. Classes are offered at varying times of the day or evening to accommodate adult learners.

To obtain more information about adult education services in your area, go to the Florida Department of Education website at: <http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/directories.htm>.

Community Action Agencies:

Community Action Agencies were created in 1964 to wage "an unconditional War against Poverty in America." For many of the formative years, three separate organizations in Florida fought together with the mutual objective of protecting the poor and disadvantaged. These were the Community Action Agencies Association, the Florida Concern for Children (Head Start), and the Equal Opportunity Officers Association.

Community Action Agencies offer a variety of services and resources to low-income families from assistance with utility bills to job training

courses. To locate the agency in your county, please visit www.faca.org.

In 1981, the Florida Association for Community Action (FACA) was incorporated as a united federation of Community Action Agencies, Head Start programs, Weatherization programs, and concerned citizens. (Source: www.faca.org).



W A N T E D

We are looking for stories, questions and best practices from the field to publish in the *Connections* newsletter. If you have a story you would like to share or a question you need an answer to, please e-mail them to Lisette Levy at:

Lisette.Levy@awi.state.fl.us

Community Partnerships: Making a difference

Early Learning Coalition of Broward County

In order to render the early care and education system effective, the Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc. recognizes the importance of building and sustaining strong collaborations within the community. As part of the Coalition's resource development initiative, the Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc. formed a Community Relations and Resource Development Committee (CRRD), comprised of business members, providers and representatives from community-based organizations. The CRRD Committee comes up with new ways to raise awareness about the Coalition, while garnering community support and partnerships. For the past two fiscal years, the CRRD committee has proposed the *Spring into Health Fair* as its large fundraising/community awareness event.

A partnership package is developed to obtain sponsorships and contributions to underwrite the cost of the event, as well as to raise money. The partnership package is widely distributed through e-mail blasts, providers and Board contacts. Service providers and exhibitors are actively sought to participate in the event.

Community partners for the event currently include: Broward County Health Department, Family Central, Inc., Broward County Child Care Licensing and Enforcement, Town of Davie Police Department, Children's Services Council of Broward County, Broward County Public Schools, and Young at Art Children's Museum.

The *Spring Into Health Fair* continues to serve as an innovative

way in which the Early Learning Coalition of Broward County, Inc. can increase awareness about unmet needs in school readiness, while bringing together families, social service agencies and local businesses.

For more information about the Coalition's events, please visit www.elcbroward.org or call (954) 377-2188.



Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County Building a Community Infrastructure

The Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County places a high importance on building a strong community infrastructure. To do this effectively, the Coalition implemented a 3-5 year strategy, beginning in fiscal year 2002-03, that included the following steps:

Identify desired accomplishments within the community – the Coalition wanted to increase awareness within the community about school readiness and what it means to be school ready, and to increase involvement from the community in school readiness issues and opportunities.

Analyze Osceola County demographics – the Coalition analyzed Osceola County demographics and the School Readiness program statistics, including the provider makeup by category of care and child distribution within the categories of care, overall percentages of children in each billing category and School Readiness assessment scores as compared to the State of Florida average.

Identify key stakeholders in the community, - the Coalition identified the stakeholders: a) parents, b) early learning providers and c) the civic/business community.

Set goals for each of the stakeholder groups – the goals were to build awareness and to educate the

stakeholder groups regarding school readiness and to increase their involvement in addressing school readiness issues and opportunities.

Develop and implement service delivery methodologies – to address the challenges and maximize the opportunities for each stakeholder group.

By designing and implementing initiatives that addressed the goals of each key stakeholder group, the Early Learning Coalition of Osceola County has successfully built a strong community infrastructure that will “Build a Bright Future for Osceola's Children”.



Early Learning Coalition of North West Florida

The Teddy Bear Bag Project began almost a year ago when the Coalition found that one-third of its 4,000 children were at risk of being removed from their homes. Along with The Department of Children and Families (DCF), Big Bend Community Based Care and local law enforcement agencies, the Coalition teamed up to help ease the fear these children have when it becomes necessary for child protective investigators (CPIs) to remove a child and his siblings.

When drug abuse and paraphernalia is a factor, CPIs must act quickly to ensure the health and safety of youngsters, and shelter them elsewhere. Because of the threat of contamination from harmful chemicals, children cannot bring personal belongings such as clothing or toys.

The Coalition wanted DCF child protective investigators to have something that would allow them to begin to meet the most basic needs of the children in their care. However,

(Continued on page 9)

Community Partnerships: Making a Difference

(Continued from page 8)

state funds to purchase blankets, toothbrushes or toys were limited. Thus – the concept of the Teddy Bear Bag Project was born. In addition to the comfort of a teddy bear, the children are given a backpack with an oversized T-shirt, a toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, mirror, special book, journal, something to write or draw with, and a blanket. Chambers of Commerce, local businesses and service clubs, as well as churches and schools, have also provided items for the Project.

On March 22, 2007, Channel 13 in Panama City sponsored a telethon to raise money for the Teddy Bear Bag Project for next year. During the program, news accounts about the horrific dangers of methamphetamines were broadcast to raise public awareness. The telethon was a huge success raising over \$3000 in cash and donations to complete the Teddy Bear Bags and another \$4,000 has been raised throughout the Coalition's seven counties. This community-based service project is a great example of what can be accomplished across the state when Early Learning Coalitions, business leaders, communities, and local and state agencies partner together.



School Readiness helps! Letter submitted by Ms. S. Holmes, LPN

My name is Shantae Holmes. I am a proud single parent of 4 boys, ages 3-18. The reason I am taking the time to write this letter is because I want to share with the public how the Child Care Resource and Referral Office in Deland, Florida inspired and assisted me in fulfilling one of my long term goals and dreams to become a nurse. I was blessed with the privilege to receive assistance from 8/16/99 to 9/30/06. When I first started receiving school readiness services I was a Certified Nursing Assistant working for an agency in various Long Term Care Facilities throughout the Daytona Beach area.. Even though I gained successful employment, my heart's desire was to go back to school to further my education in order that my kids and I could live comfortably. Having the benefits of school readiness program made it possible for me to go back to school while the assistance of child care services. As a recipient of school readiness services they went beyond what I expected. The case managers I had throughout the term of my services were so caring, kind, and professional.

There is one case manger I will always "Thank God" for: Mrs. Althea McKenzie. Mrs. McKenzie always went beyond the call of duty each time I met with her and even on the occasions when I would just pick up the phone and call her, she would always offer words of hope and encouragements. It was through her

patience, concern, and compassion that I had the strength to come out of an unhealthy and abusive relationship and strive to become a nurse and graduate December 2005, by utilizing the benefits offered to me. After I relocated to Deland, Mrs. McKenzie never lost touch with me, she continued to keep in touch with me through my educational career after I graduated. She also assisted me with choosing an appropriate day care facility where my 2 small sons; ages 3 and 7 would feel safe, comfortable, adjust to the relocation, enhance their educational growth and cognitive skills in Deland, Florida at their child care provider.

These are just a few of the many positive and great benefits that school readiness services brought to my life.

I could go on and on but the true factual evidence is that school readiness does make a difference in the many people lives who require their assistance. Without school readiness many parents and children would be helplessly lost. I am God's living witness that their services do work in changing lives. Thank you to the many different people at the Child Care Resource and Referral Office in Flagler and Volusia Counties that made a difference in my life. If it had not been for you all, I would not have been able to compose this letter.

Office of Early Learning Personnel Update

Brittany Birken has been selected as the new **Executive Administrator of Operations**. We are truly excited to have someone with her educational, professional, managerial and leadership skills in this important position.

Gerie Nasche has been promoted to the position of CCR&R Program Supervisor. She will be overseeing the CCR&R program at the State Network Office.

Michele DiMonaco has been promoted to the position of Policy Supervisor. She will be overseeing policy development and approval, legislative responses, and the state and coalition plans.

Courtne Wheelless has temporarily joined the Child Care Resource & Referral team and is assisting that team on several resource & referral and outreach initiatives.

Fred Bruneau Coalition Analyst, was recently recognized in Tallahassee for **35-years of great service** to the State of Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation.

Congratulations to one of our own staff, **Karen Moon!** Karen was given the prestigious honor of being selected for the NACCRRA (National Association for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies) Leadership Development Program. This is the first year for the program and only six individuals were selected. The application process was very rigorous and the program involves a three-year commitment on Karen's part that includes a one-month internship at another state network and a one-month internship at NACCRRA.



Upcoming Events

State Conferences:

2007 Florida Early Learning Symposium
May 16—18, 2007
Daytona Beach, FL
www.ftas.org

One Goal Summer Conference
July 18—20, 2007
Tampa, FL
www.onegoalsummerconference.org

Early Childhood Association of Florida Conference
September 27—29, 2007
Orlando, FL
www.ecaoffl.org

National Conferences:

NACCRRA

Professional Development Institute
May 21—25, 2007
Las Vegas, NV

Leadership and Management Institute
June 18—22, 2007
Miami, FL
www.naccrra.org

INFORMATION

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We're on the web!
www.flready.org