

School Readiness Indicators Initiative: Making Progress for Young Children

Fifth National Meeting

**December 2nd – 4th, 2003
Boston, Massachusetts**

Participating States:

Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maine, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin

Purpose:

This is the Fifth National Meeting of the 17-state School Readiness Indicators initiative which aims to use child well-being indicators to improve school readiness and ensure early school success. Over the first two and a half years of the Initiative, states have worked individually and collectively to develop comprehensive sets of measures to monitor the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and economic well-being of young children. Between now and the final national meeting of this initiative in May of 2004, states will select a set of indicators that reflect state policy goals and state investments in programs and policies for young children and families as well as child outcomes. States will also put in place communications strategies to share their selected set of indicators with policymakers, opinion leaders, and the public in order to improve school readiness in their states.

Meeting Objectives:

- To share state strategies and plans for the final six months of the initiative, including ideas for written indicator products, progress in collecting and analyzing data, communication strategies for the release of school readiness indicators, and plans to continue to build an early childhood agenda in the state.
- To explore and develop policy strategies for early childhood programs and systems.
- To consider information from the Birth to Three Indicators Residency Roundtable as states develop their set of school readiness indicators.
- To highlight data successes and to share ideas for solving data challenges in critical policy areas.
- To provide opportunities for participants to meet in state and cross-state teams to apply information from experts and initiative colleagues to their own state work.

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the David and Lucile Packard Foundation,
the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation and the Ford Foundation.
The 17-state initiative is managed by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.
www.GettingReady.org*

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December 2-4, 2003
Boston, Massachusetts***

Final Agenda

Tuesday, December 2, 2003

1:30 – 2:00 **General Registration**
Salon D Foyer

2:00 – 2:15 **Welcome and Opening Remarks: “Putting the Pieces Together”**
Salon DEFL *Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT*

2:15 – 2:30 **Orientation to the Meeting**
Salon DEFL *Jolie Pillsbury, Facilitator*

2:30 – 3:00 **Findings from the Birth to Three Residency Roundtable**
Salon DEFL *Theresa Hancock, Policy Associate, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT*

3:00 – 3:15 **Break**
Salon D Foyer

3:15 – 5:00 **Keynote: From Neurons to Neighborhoods: What Policymakers Should Know About Child Development**
Salon DEFL *Jack Shonkoff, M.D., Dean of The Heller School for Social Policy and Management; Brandeis University*

Dr. Jack Shonkoff is an experienced pediatrician, researcher and professor with a long history of contributions in the national public policy arena. Dr. Shonkoff will reflect on the major highlights and recommendations from the groundbreaking report, *Neurons to Neighborhoods*. He will share insights into the progress and challenges in early childhood policy since this groundbreaking report was released by the Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine. The convergence of advancing scientific knowledge and changing circumstances for young children and their families calls for a fundamental reexamination of the nation's responses to the needs of young children and their families, many of which were formulated several decades ago and revised only incrementally since then. It demands that scientists, policy makers, business and community leaders, practitioners and parents work together to sustain policies and practices that are effective and to generate new strategies to replace those that are not achieving their objectives.

5:00 – 6:00 **Evening Reception**
Palm Garden Room

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

8:00 – 8:30

Salon D Foyer

Breakfast

8:30 – 9:00

Salon DEFL

Technical Assistance

Charles Bruner, Child and Family Policy Center

Theresa Hancock, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

Jessica McMaken, Education Commission of the States

Mr. Bruner will report on the Finance and Kindergarten Assessment meetings sponsored by the State Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network (SECPTAN) as well as highlighting new products. Ms. Hancock will share technical assistance opportunities to support the work of the School Readiness Indicator states. Ms. McMaken will discuss ECS's conference call series on No Child Left Behind.

9:00 – 10:00

Salon DEFL

Making It Stick: Communications Strategies for Policy Change

Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

Jolie Pillsbury, Facilitator

Ms. Bryant will share thoughts on how to connect the School Readiness Indicators to the state policy agenda, package information, and release SRI work for best impact. A facilitated discussion will explore how to effectively use communications strategies to make progress in moving an early childhood agenda in the states.

10:00-10:15

Salon D Foyer

Break

10:15 – 11:45

Salon DEFL

State Team Time

States will use the time to make continued progress on identifying policy goals, selecting indicators, identifying data sources and shaping a communication strategy for their School Readiness Indicators product. A facilitator for the state team meeting is available upon request.

12:00 – 1:15

Palm Garden Room

Luncheon Speaker

Turning Data into Policy: Doing What It Takes To Get It Right for Kids

Christine Ferguson, Commissioner of Public Health and Interim Commissioner of Health Care and Policy; Massachusetts Department of Health and Human Services

Ms. Ferguson will share her candid views on how to build an early childhood system, including her perspectives on the use of data in policymaking and on doing what it takes to get it right for kids. Commissioner Ferguson has more than 20 years experience in health care policy and administration at both the state and federal levels. She has had an influential role in system building from many vantage points – as Senior Staff to U.S. Senator John Chafee, as Director of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services and currently as Commissioner of Public Health in Massachusetts. Her work has influenced many child-serving systems, and she has been nationally recognized for her leadership in both health care and child care.

1:15 – 1:30

Salon D Foyer

Break

1:30 – 3:00
Salon DEFL

Case Study: North Carolina Smart Start

*Karen Ponder, Executive Director, North Carolina Partnership for Children
Donna Bryant, Senior Scientist and Associate Director, Frank Porter Graham
Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Smart Start in North Carolina is a premier example of a decade's worth of state investment in early childhood development that combines several key principles of importance to the 17 School Readiness Indicators states: a clear policy agenda, effective use of data, and a sophisticated communications strategy. Ms. Ponder and Ms. Bryant will present a case study that highlights successes, lessons learned, and possibilities for the future, followed by a facilitated discussion.

3:00 – 3:15
Salon D Foyer

Break

3:15 – 4:15
Salon DEFL

State Team Time:

A Treasure Hunt for Early Childhood Policies that Promote School Readiness

This session will be an opportunity for participants to work within their state teams to consider the specific policy options contained in the set of *Policy Matters' Discussion Papers*, with particular attention to those that are relevant to their state's early childhood policy agenda. This work will be important preparation for a deeper presentation on policy options to be held on Thursday morning.

4:15 – 4:30
Salon DEFL

Summary Comments/Teams Report Out

Jolie Pillsbury, Facilitator

4:30 – 5:00

Evening on Your Own

Thursday, December 4, 2003

8:00 – 9:00 **State Team Coordinator Breakfast**
Salon DEFL

8:30 – 9:00 **General Breakfast**
Salon D Foyer

9:00 – 10:30 **Policy Development Strategies**
Salon DEFL
Thabiti Anyabwile, Policy Matters, Center for the Study of Social Policy
Respondent: Suzanne Clark Johnson, Executive Director, Voices for Virginia's Children

Mr. Anyabwile will discuss the research base for evaluating and developing state policy goals to improve school readiness. He will facilitate a discussion of the set of policy strategies identified by Policy Matters based on work with state policymakers, child advocates, and the research community.

Ms. Johnson will share her work with the new Governor of Virginia to develop a set of policy strategies for young children. She will reflect on how the Policy Matters framework can be a resource to state agency staff and child advocates.

10:30 – 11:00 **Break and Hotel Check-out**

11:00 – 12:00 **Accessing Difficult Data Sources:**
Salon DEFL **Can This Indicator Be Saved?**

Facilitated Discussion

States will highlight key indicators that have been especially important to the policy discussion in their state. States will share examples of tough data issues and gain ideas on how to solve them. Participants will come prepared to share:

- One or two examples of an indicator success story.
- One or two examples of indicators which are important to their policy agenda but where the data are difficult to obtain or to analyze.

12:00 – 1:00 **Lunch, Wrap-Up and Next Steps**
Salon DEFL
Jolie Pillsbury, Facilitator
Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT