

Appendix H

STATE TASK FORCES, COUNCILS AND COALITIONS CONVENED TO ADDRESS CHILD HEALTH OR QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

ABCD Stakeholders' Committee has merged to become the:

AR Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (AECCS) Partnership Council

Staffed by Martha Hiett of the Department of Human Services- Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.

The purpose of this Council includes:

- Provision of a communication forum with an early childhood focus.
- Interaction with/coordination of strategies and action steps from related early childhood initiatives, including ABCD (Assuring Better Child Health Development).
- Building consensus around early childhood policies and priorities, including AECCS' areas of concern: early care and education, family support, parenting education, medical homes, and social-emotional health.
- Guiding the implementation of AECCS' plans, which seek to ensure that all children are healthy and ready to learn by the time they enter school.

Contact Mrs. Hiett at 501 683-0976 or Martha.Hiett@arkansas.gov

Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap

Arkansas Department of Human Services' Division of Behavioral Health is being funded by the Open Society Institute under their Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap grant program to implement financial and other strategies to increase addiction treatment services so to increase the access to quality treatment for the many Arkansans who go unserved today. Jay Bradford is the program director. The start date is expected to be September 1, 2008. Partners include government and private entities—including Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, UAMS, and Paschall Strategic Communications as subcontractors. There will be an advocacy and communications campaign built around key financial strategies.

Contact: Cynthia C. Crone at 501-682-9911 or CroneCynthiaC@uams.edu

The Finish Line Coalition

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families has convened a coalition of organizations interested in giving access to health care to all children in AR. The initiative aims to enroll more children in ARKids First who are currently eligible for, but not currently in, the program. In addition, the project will educate Arkansans about the importance of expanding health care coverage to those children who currently don't qualify and whose families can't afford to insure them.

Contact: Elizabeth Burak at 501 371-9678 or eburak@aradvocates.org

The Arkansas Children's Behavioral Health Care Commission

Judge Joyce Warren chairs the commission which will provide advice and guidance to the Department of Human Services and other state agencies providing behavioral health care services to children, youth and their families on the most effective methods for establishing a system of care approach. Representatives of families/youth, community partners, service providers, and state agency leaders were selected to serve on the Arkansas Children's Behavioral Health Care Commission by Governor Mike Beebe.

Contact: Dawn Zekis at 501 683-0173 or Dawn.Zekis@arkansas.gov

Arkansas State Leadership Workshop on EPSDT: Advancing a Collaborative Action Agenda to Improve Child Health

Assuring Better Child Health Development Stakeholders Committee

Both of these efforts have been staffed and coordinated via the Department of Human Services- Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and have completed their initial work. Both focused primarily on providing better services and coordination of services for children under the age of five. However many of their recommendations apply for all ages of children and can be applicable to systemic issues that challenge delivery of services to any age group. To find out more about these two groups and their work products:

Contact: Martha Hiatt at 501 683-0976 or Martha.Hiatt@arkansas.gov

The Governor's Task Force on Best Practices for After-School and Summer Programs

The goal of the task force was to develop policy recommendations that support programs in a wide range of settings, including, but not limited to school districts and community and faith based organizations, by providing opportunities for children and youth to engage in quality after-school and summer programs across the state. The members just concluded their work and released their recommendations in August 2008. The group was co-chaired by Lynn Carver of Springdale and Patricia Wright of Arkadelphia.

Contact: Paul Kelly at 501 371-9678 or Paul.Kelly@aradvocates.org