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Subject: News & Tools from the Institute for Child Success

Bi-monthly digest of tools for Early Childhood Leaders

February/March 2014

Southeast News

School Readiness: Moving Toward a Shared Definition,
Standardized Assessment, and Unifying Language
Gwynne B. Goodlett and Leigh Kale D'Amico
Institute for Child Success
March 2014

ICS has recently published an issue brief and longer white paper--"School Readiness: Moving Toward a Shared Definition, Standardized Assessment, and Unifying Language"-- that argues for a standard, agreed upon definition, description and measurement of school readiness. These documents explain the benefits of a kindergarten entry assessment, essential considerations for selecting an assessment, and typically assessed domains.

The Role and Value of Portable Play Equipment in the Child Care Center
South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health
January 2014

A new report released by the South Carolina Institute for Medicine and Public Health, in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, describes the various benefits of utilizing portable play equipment to engage children in child care settings in active play. Portable play equipment is significantly less costly and research shows that once portable play equipment is added to a center's play areas children have decreased sedentary activity levels and increased light, moderate and vigorous activity levels. The research presented in this report was presented at the South Carolina Early Childhood Research Symposium hosted by the Institute for Child Success last fall.

Few Tweaks Remain Before House Rolls Out Early Learning Bill
CBS - Miami
February 14, 2014

The State of Florida's House Education Committee is ready to roll out a bill that would upgrade the health, safety and teaching standards of Florida's early learning programs. The bill includes the licensing of private providers in the school readiness program, which provides subsidized child care to the children of low-income working Floridians and requires providers to notify parents of health and safety violations and to post citations that result

UPCOMING EVENT

ICS 2014
Annual Awards &
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Hyatt Greenville

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in disciplinary action prominently on the premises. Additionally, the bill mandates that children from 3 years old to school age who are at risk of abuse and neglect be enrolled in an early-education or day-care program.

Children in Poverty Continues to Grow in Tri-County, South Carolina

Prentiss Findlay

The Post and Courier

February 25, 2014

More than 25% of children in Charleston County live below the federal poverty level, and almost 20% are living in areas of concentrated poverty. Between 2008 and 2012, the number of South Carolina children living in poverty has grown 26%, to 288,000, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS Count. To impact the high rate of childhood poverty, early childhood development initiatives are essential; without them children lag behind from the beginning of school.

All NC Child Care Rules Subject to Review

North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation

March 3, 2014

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United Way Partners in the Upstate to Promote Early Learning for Children

Anderson Independent Mail

March 5, 2014

United Ways covering 10 Upstate counties have begun a new public engagement campaign to promote quality early learning experiences for children by helping parents, caregivers and communities provide young children with quality learning opportunities. While individual United Ways have long invested donor resources in early education programs in their communities, Born Learning Upstate S.C. represents the first joint effort between the seven United Ways serving the Upstate region.

News & Tools from Around the Country

Early Reading Proficiency in the United States

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

January 2014

A new data snapshot by the Annie E. Casey Foundation shows that despite improvements over the past decade, 80% of fourth graders from low-income families and 66% of all fourth-graders in the United States are not reading at grade level. The report finds that in South Carolina, there has been a three percent improvement in fourth graders reading below proficient levels from 2003 (74%) to 2013 (72%). Eighty-three percent of lower income fourth grade students in South Carolina are reading below proficient levels, whereas the percentage of higher income students in the

state reading below fourth grade level stands at 54%.

Obesity Is Found to Gain Its Hold in Earliest Years

Gina Kolata

The New York Times

January 29, 2014

A new study of 7,000 children found that those who were obese or overweight by 5 years of age stayed that way, while those whose weight was normal did not become obese. A third of children who are overweight in kindergarten are obese by eight grade. The study shows that efforts to combat the nation's obesity epidemic must start much earlier and focus more on the children at greatest risk.

Early Childhood Education: Lots of Talk, but Not Much Action (Yet)

Laura Bornfreund and Conor Williams

The Atlantic

January 30, 2014

In a report from researchers at the Society for Research in Child Development and Foundations for Child Development argue that large-scale public preschool programs can have substantial impacts on children's early learning. They also contend that quality preschool education is a profitable investment and that the most important aspects of quality in preschool education are stimulating and supportive interactions between teachers and children and effective use of curricula.

2013 State of States' Early Childhood Data System

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative

February 2014

The 2013 State of the States' Early Childhood Data System looks at states' abilities to answer basic questions on young children because the data on them are housed in multiple, uncoordinated systems, managed by different state and federal agencies. The report recommends that states build coordinated longitudinal early care and education data systems and use quality data to inform policies impacting young children. South Carolina reported linking data across some early care and education programs.

Foundations for Social Impact Bonds: How and Why Philanthropy is Catalyzing the Development of a New Market

Social Finance

2014

Social Finance has recently released a white paper "Foundations for Social Impact Bonds: How and Why Philanthropy is Catalyzing the Development of a New Market" to explore how philanthropic organizations have been instrumental in helping to launch the Pay for Success market. This report draws on existing research and interviews with foundation staff and thought leaders, to assess the role that philanthropy has played and will continue to play in developing the PFS market in the United States.

A New Entitlement? The Right to Preschool

David A. Lieb

Associated Press

February 2014

This article examines the interest of both the Republican and Democratic parties in providing state funding to help families afford preschool, which now stands at \$400 million more than before the economic downturn. In

the 2013-2014 school year, funding for preschool programs rose in 30 of the 40 states that provide preschool aid. South Carolina's \$27 million increase was the third largest spending enlargement in the nation. Yet, fewer than half of the nation's 3- and 4-year-olds attend publicly funded preschool programs.

When Even the Starting Line is Out of Reach

Nicholas Krist
The New York Times
February 22, 2014

Nicholas Kristof contends that Americans do not invest nearly enough in helping children in the first few years of life as their brains are developing. If we miss this critical window of development, then adult antipoverty interventions can never be fully effective. Therefore, Kristof argues that we need an integrated set of early interventions, starting with family planning, home visitation programs, and developmental screenings all followed by access to quality pre-kindergarten.

Early Childhood a Bipartisan Topic at Governors' Meeting

Christina Samuels
Education Week
February 23, 2014

During a presentation to a group of governors at the winter meeting of the National Governors Association, Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, described early childhood expansion efforts as inevitable, not merely an aspiration. Also discussed during the National Governors Association meeting was the newest round of Race to the Top grant funding of \$250 million that is geared at supporting early education.

Obesity Rate for Young Children Plummets 43% in a Decade

Sabrina Tavernise
The New York Times
February 25, 2014

Over the past decade, there has been a 43% drop in the obesity rate among children ages two to five, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About eight percent of 2- to 5-year-olds were obese in 2012, down from 14% in 2004. While many researchers are cautious of the findings they are excited with the findings since children who are overweight or obese at three to five years old are five times as likely to be overweight or obese adults.

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