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October 28, 2014

2015 Early Childhood Common Agenda to be Announced

Policy Forum Scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 18

Children's Trust of South Carolina, in collaboration with Institute for Child Success and United Way of South Carolina, will announce the updated and expanded [South Carolina Early Childhood Common Agenda at a policy forum on Tuesday, Nov. 18](#). While South Carolina has made significant investments in recent years, including expansion of early education services and voluntary maternal and infant home-visiting programs, a more concerted and focused effort is needed to help our state's youngest citizens succeed.

Jim Squires, senior research fellow at the National Institute for Early Education Research, will speak on the importance of effective, equitable policy in early care and education. State policy leaders who led the work within the policy contexts of quality, assessment, and evaluation, racial/ethnic disparities, geographic disparities, business/economics and sustainability will present the updated 2015 South Carolina Early Childhood Common Agenda.

Lunch will be provided at no charge.

DSS Senate Oversight Committee Hears from National Experts

On October 14, the committee heard from two national experts in child welfare reform. Their comments will be taken into consideration as the DSS Senate Oversight Committee completes their final report and recommendations to the General Assembly prior to the start of the 2015 legislative session.

David Sanders, Ph.D. is executive vice president of systems improvement at Casey Family Programs and serves as the chairman of the federal Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect.

David Sanders

Bryan Samuels is the executive director of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and former commissioner of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families at the U.S Department of Health and Human Services.

Leadership of Children's Trust attended the hearing and was instrumental in working with The Duke Endowment and Casey Family Programs to bring the presenters to South Carolina.

Both spoke to nationwide child welfare efforts happening in states across the country. The archived video of their testimony should be available soon on the Senate General Committee website.

Bryan Samuels

Sign MIECHV Letter of Support to Congress

Organizations Have Opportunity to Voice Support for Home Visiting Funding

The national Home Visiting Coalition and other leading stakeholders are inviting organizations to sign a letter to congressional leaders urging Congress to enact legislation extending funding at its current funding level for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV program) before March 2015. They are seeking support from local, state, tribal and national organizations.

The MIECHV program provides funding to states to implement and expand evidence-based home-visiting programs that have been proven to improve the health, education and economic self-sufficiency of low-income children and families. MIECHV funding is currently set to expire in March 2015. If Congress fails to extend funding, programs may be forced to curtail or eliminate home visiting services for needy families. In addition, the infrastructural improvements that states and tribal communities have made to build effective systems of care to support home-visiting initiatives may be curtailed.

To sign on, email nationalhomevisiting@gmail.com and provide the following information:

- The name of organization as is should appear on the letter. With the exception of elected officials, individuals are not being solicited to sign the letter;
- Identify if organization is state-based, tribal, or national (and please provide the name of the state and/or tribe);
- Provide contact information for the individual who has authority to sign the organization on the letter; and
- Elected officials should provide their names and the office they hold.

The deadline for signing is Friday, Nov. 7.

Children's Trust Challenges Citizens to #StepUpForKids

Show Support for Child-Based Decision Making

Children's Trust is proud to be a Step Up For Kids partnering organization with Every Child Matters to raise awareness among voters and political candidates on issues of importance to America's children, such as access to early care and learning, after-school programs, poverty, health care and child abuse and neglect.

Please use the hashtags #StepUpForKidsSC and #VoteForSCKids .

Attendees at Home Visiting Summit participate in the Step Up For Kids photo booth.

General Election Coming Tuesday, Nov. 4

South Carolina State Election Commission works to ensure every eligible citizen has the opportunity to register to vote, participate in fair and impartial elections and have the assurance that their votes will count. For the latest information on the upcoming elections, including polling locations, candidates and sample ballots, please visit scvotes.org.

Voters Will Determine if Charitable Raffles Will Become Legal in SC

The first constitutional amendment on the ballot will ask voters to legalize raffles held by recognized nonprofits for charitable purposes. Seeking a "yes" vote on the amendment, this effort is supported by the [South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations](#) (SCANPO) and was recently endorsed by the Charleston [Post and Courier](#) and the [Greenville News](#). For more information, visit the [SCANPO raffle webpage](#).

Committee on Children Schedules Public Hearings

Children's Trust to Testify at Nov. 13 Hearing in Columbia

To identify issues and [research](#) policy solutions related to child well-being, the South Carolina Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children is conducting public hearings in Greenville on Nov. 10, Columbia on Nov. 13, and Charleston on Nov. 19.

These hearings will inform the work of the Committee on Children's annual report provided to the Governor and General Assembly. The report will offer recommendations for policy and [legislation regarding children's issues](#).

All citizens and persons representing organizations for children are invited to testify. The public is also invited to submit written testimony.

Child Welfare from Across the Country

Federal Commission Begins Deliberating in Effort to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities

The commission met as a group for the first time discuss their findings after a series of hearings held across the country, most recently in Vermont. Their work will recommend national strategies to be delivered in a report to President Obama and Congress. The Commission focused on the following questions at their meeting:

1. What are the purposes of counting child abuse and neglect fatalities?

2. What data on child abuse and neglect fatalities are currently collected?
3. What are the limitations and economic impact of our current data collection efforts?
4. What strategies could be implemented to improve the counting of child abuse neglect fatalities?
5. Does defining child abuse and neglect fatalities needs to be standardized?

According to Dr. David Sanders, chairman of the commission, "We are beginning our deliberation process with a focus on counting, because we all agree that we cannot solve a problem this complex until we agree it exists. And that begins by defining exactly what constitutes a child abuse or neglect fatality. When we understand how these deaths occur, we can develop more effective strategies to prevent them."

Child Welfare Spending Declines

State Child Welfare Policy Database Includes South Carolina Resources

For the first time in nearly 20 years, total spending on child welfare in the U.S. has declined. A new report summarizes [key findings](#) from a national survey of states' child welfare expenditures. Child welfare agencies use federal, state, and local funds to provide services to prevent abuse and neglect, preserve families, protect children and place children outside of their homes when necessary.

South Carolina 2012 expenditure information is available.

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Policy Post is published by Children's Trust of South Carolina.

We invite you to join with us to strengthen and support public and private prevention efforts that keep South Carolina's children safe.

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