

## Report for the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood

April 2015

**Partner Group:** Missouri Head Start-State Collaboration Office (MHSSCO)

**Liaison to the Board:** Stacey Wright, Director

- ✓ MHSSCO supported two (repeat) 4-hour sessions February 19 and 25th on the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework training: *Strong Parents, Stable Children: Building Protective Factors to Strengthen Families* curriculum developed by Dr. Dave Schramm and his staff at University of Missouri Extension. Fifty-three participants (53) from across Missouri representing HS/EHS and Project REACH attended the Training of Trainers sessions. The sessions provided participants with a good understanding of the protective factors and how they apply to different groups such as; businesses, faith based leaders, health care providers, and parents. Strengthening Families™ is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors:
  - Parental resilience
  - Social connections
  - Knowledge of parenting and child development
  - Concrete support in times of need
  - Social and emotional competence of children
  
- ✓ The MHSSCO entered into an interagency agreement with Dr. Louis Manfra, Assistant Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, University of Missouri to design and conduct a study on Head Start-Local Education Agency Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs). The purpose of this qualitative survey-based study was to gather information about the effectiveness of the Head Start-local education agency (HS-LEA) collaborations, the qualities of effective/ineffective collaborations, and the benefits of these collaborations for children and families as well as Head Start programs. A total of 28 Missouri HS directors were invited to complete the survey. Seven directors (25%) provided consent to be a participant in this study. Six participants completed the entire survey; one completed only the first part of the survey. Based on the responses we received, it was clear that half of the respondents held a generally positive view of their collaborations and half of the respondents held a generally negative view of their collaborations. Therefore, we believe that the data collected from Missouri HS directors spans the range of views pertaining to HS-LEA collaborations in Missouri. More in-depth findings and recommendations will be available once the final, full-report is reviewed by the lead agency.
  
- ✓ The MHSSCO, Missouri Head Start T/TA System, the Missouri Head Start Association and the DESE partnered to support the 2015 Head Start: A Critical Link in the Early Childhood System event. This year's event entitled "Head Start-Working Collaboratively to Promote School Readiness in Children Experiencing Homelessness" took place February 20, 2015. Twenty-four (24) individuals representing Family Engagement Specialists, Health, Mental Health & Disabilities,

Education Coordinators and Representatives of Local Education Agencies registered for the event. Participants:

- Enhanced their knowledge on research that explores the impact of homelessness on young children's school readiness and academic achievement in school settings;
  - Discussed the McKinney-Vento Act and strategies on how McKinney-Vento Liaisons and EHS/HS programs can coordinate efforts, access resources, and connect homeless children and families to high quality early learning programs; and;
  - Shared examples of local collaborations supporting families experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ In light of the recently awarded federal [Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership](#) (EHS-CC) grants aimed at improving the quality of existing child care programs and expand access to high-quality care for infants and toddlers, a series of in-person EHS CC orientations will be occurring throughout the country during the months of April and May. The EHS-CC Partnership orientation experience includes three components: pre-orientation activities, regional orientation conferences, and post-orientation activities. The MHSSCO will be joining the regional face-to-face orientation in Dallas, Texas April 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. In addition to EHS-CC grantees and Head Start State Collaboration Offices, Regional Staff from the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care, TA providers, and State Child Care Administrators will be participating. The purpose of the MHSSCO attending these orientations is to facilitate and enhance collaboration, cooperation, communication, and coordination between OHS and OCC in the provision of EHS-CC Partnerships. As Collaboration Directors, our role in supporting partnering through strong state systems work will assist grantees in providing comprehensive quality early care and education services for family and children with low incomes.