

*2008 Annual Report*

# IRMIC

*Interagency Resource Management Committee*

Early Care and Education  
Programs Are the Building Blocks  
for Our Children's Future



*An Interagency Approach to Coordinate the Delivery of Early Care  
and Education Services in Delaware*



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Dear Colleagues:

The Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC) was established by the legislature in Fiscal Year 1992. There are five members: the Secretary of the Department of Education, who serves as the chairperson; the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services; the Secretary of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families; the Director of Management and Budget; and the Controller General.

The IRMC coordinates the delivery of early care and education services in Delaware through interagency collaboration for services for Children with Disabilities, and offers administrative oversight for the state Early Childhood Assistance Program. The IRMC monitors and supports the implementation of “*Early Success: Delaware’s Early Childhood Plan.*”

On June 24, 2007, House Bill 126 officially codified the Delaware Early Childhood Council, assuring the continuation of the hard work of Ann Wick and the other Council members as they advocate for quality early childhood experiences for all young children and families in Delaware.

This 2008 Annual Report summarizes the work of the programs under the sponsorship of the IRMC. Progress is being made in programs to implement the goals outlined in *Early Success: Ready Families + Ready Early Care and Education programs + Ready Communities + Ready Schools = Ready Children.* It is our mission to ensure that Delaware’s young children are happy, healthy and ready to succeed in school and life.

*Sincerely,*

**Valerie A. Woodruff**  
*Secretary of Education*

**IRMC Members**

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 Department of Education

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## Delaware Early Childhood Council 2007 Members

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# Interagency Resource Management Committee

2008 Annual Report

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**Deborah Amsden (University of Delaware, Center for Disabilities Studies) and Janet Cornwell, Ph.D. (Delaware Early Childhood Center) are the primary investigators in the evaluations conducted for the IRMC.**

## Early Care and Education Workforce Study Retention in the Early Childhood Education Workforce

Why do teachers remain in the field of early childhood education (ECE)? Specifically, what are the effects of age, experience, and education on teachers' responses when asked how long they plan to remain in the ECE field? Only by understanding this question can we hope to recruit a workforce, and craft effective incentives to retain them once hired.

In the fall of 2006, 693 employees in a random selection of child care centers, part-day preschools, Head Start and Early Childhood Assistance Programs (ECAP), and school-age programs had the opportunity to complete an Employee Survey as part of the Delaware Early Care and Education Workforce Study which asked them several questions about their education, experience, and plans to work in early care and education. In addition, 151 family child care providers participated in a telephone interview as part of the Study answering the same questions.

Table 1 below presents the distribution of responses to the question, "How long do you plan to stay in the field of early childhood education?" from the Delaware Early Care and Education Workforce Study. The left-most column presents the possible responses, along with the numerical value assigned to each in parentheses. The remaining columns present the number (f) and percent (P) of respondents giving each response, disaggregated by age group. Note that percent values indicate what proportion within of each response is accounted for by each age. The bottom two rows present summary descriptive statistics (here mean (M) and standard deviation (s) for each group.

**Table 1. Distribution of Responses by Age Group**

Plan to remain...		Age Group (N = 737)					Row Total
		Under 18	19 - 29	30 - 40	40 - 55	Over 56	
Less than 1 yr. (0)	f	1	17	6	1	6	31
	P	4.0%	5.9%	5.5%	0.4%	8.5%	4.2%
1 - 3 yrs. (1)	f	10	54	14	23	12	113
	P	40.0%	18.9%	12.7%	9.5%	16.9%	15.4%
3-5 yrs. (2)	f	2	42	12	30	13	99
	P	8.0%	14.8%	10.9%	12.2%	18.3%	13.4%
more than 5 yrs. (3)	f	12	172	78	192	40	494
	P	48%	60.4%	70.9%	78.1%	56.3%	67.0%
<b>Column Total</b>	f	<b>25</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>737</b>
	P	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<i>Descriptives</i>	<i>M</i>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.29</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>2.68</b>	<b>2.23</b>	<b>2.43</b>
	<i>s</i>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>0.97</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>0.90</b>

### Ready Schools

1. Encourage the Department of Education to form a committee to develop Ready Schools strategies, the tasks should include:
  - Catalogue what districts are doing to connect to EC
  - Existing partnerships between school districts and community EC Programs and families including 21st Century Learning Centers
  - Partnerships between Head Start & ECAPS – work with school districts with children
2. Target efforts to include Family Child Care in quality initiatives

### Economic Contribution of Early Care and Education

*As part of the Delaware Early Care and Education Workforce Study (2006), program directors and family child care providers were asked to describe the economics of their early care and education businesses.*

*Of the approximately 100 program directors surveyed, the average economic contribution made to the local economy by an early care and education program was \$525,500.00 annually. Of the 150 family child care providers surveyed, the average economic contribution made to the locally economy by an early care and education program was \$35,700 annually.*

## Delaware Early Childhood Council 2008 Recommendations

### System Recommendations

1. Engage partners to develop a strategic plan to create a comprehensive early childhood system based on *Early Success: Delaware's Plan for Early Childhood*.
2. Convene a subcommittee charged with developing a system to map the progress of *Early Success*.

### Ready Children

1. Support the development of a comprehensive approach in Early Childhood Mental Health services for behavior problems for families and early childhood programs and involve Nemours Health and Prevention Services and Wesley College's Child Care Health Consultant program

### Ready Families

1. Codify the Family Support Coordinating Council (FSCC) to ensure its sustainability
2. Align the goals of the FSCC and the connection to *Early Success*
3. Expand efforts to ensure that families participate in Delaware Early Childhood Council

### Ready Programs

1. Expand Delaware Stars infrastructure and funding to allow more programs to participate
2. Support the implementation of the recommendations of the Integrated Professional Development task force currently working on connecting the early childhood and K12 professional development systems
3. Support legislation to ensure that child care reimbursement rates (Purchase of Care) are increased to reflect the bi-annual market rate study.
4. Create a subcommittee of the Early Childhood Council to study child care workforce compensation and to make recommendation, based on best practices from other states, on how to improve child care compensation and benefits.
5. Begin planning for a follow-up of the 2002 Child Care Base Line Quality Study.
6. Support the adoption of the Office of Child Care Licensing Family and Large Family Child Care rule revisions.
7. Work with the Office of Child Care Licensing to ensure that licensing rules and regulations are reviewed and revised every five years.
8. Explore using nationally recommended tool for identifying appropriate caseloads for OCCL licensors
9. Explore the development of a system to coordinate all early childhood technical assistant and trainers

### Ready Communities

1. Support the legislative initiatives of the Kids Caucus.
2. Explore obtaining professional guidance to create a consistent universally understood message about the importance of the first five years in preparing children for school and for life.

In terms of both frequencies and descriptives, a trend is clear: as teacher age increases, so too does one's willingness to remain in the ECE workforce.<sup>1</sup> However, the trend does not hold at the upper end of the age spectrum (Over 56), wherein employees may be considering retirement.

Next we considered the role of experience in teachers' responses. Table 2 displays this information in a format parallel to that of Table 1.<sup>2</sup> As in the case of age, one's intent to remain in the workforce increases along with experience.<sup>3</sup> However, comparing the responses of teachers having 5 – 10 years experience with those having 10 or more years reveals no difference in statistical terms,<sup>4</sup> while contrasting responses of teachers having less than 5 years' experience with those having 5 or more years reveals a highly significant difference.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2. Distribution of Responses by Experience**

Plan to remain...	Experience (N = 734)				
		Less than 5 yrs.	5 - 10 yrs.	More than 10 yrs.	Row Total
Less than 1 yr. (0)	f	12	8	10	30
	P	5.8%	3.4%	3.4%	4.1%
1 - 3 yrs. (1)	f	46	29	34	109
	P	22.3%	12.3%	11.6%	14.8%
3 - 5 yrs. (2)	f	38	22	41	101
	P	18.5%	9.3%	14.1%	13.8%
more than 5 yrs. (3)	f	110	177	207	494
	P	53.4%	75.0%	70.9%	67.3%
Column Total	f	206	236	292	734
	P	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Descriptives	M	2.19	2.56	2.52	2.44
	s	0.98	0.84	0.83	0.89

<sup>1</sup> Statistical confirmation of this trend is provided by the high, positive correlation between age group and plans to remain in the work force ( $r = .125$ ,  $p = .001$ ).

<sup>2</sup> In doing so, it is important to note that age and experience are positively correlated with one another ( $r = .443$ ,  $p = .000$ ), and that therefore even when considered separately, as is the case here, the effects of each variable are at least part a function of the effects of the other.

<sup>3</sup> Commitment to the field and experience were positively correlated ( $r = .$ ,  $p = .$ ). Between-group differences in response were statistically significant ( $F = 11.63$ ,  $p = .000$ )

<sup>4</sup> Mean difference between these groups was .035 ( $p = 1.000$ )

<sup>5</sup> Because there was effectively no difference in response between teachers with 5 – 10 years' experience and more than 10 years' experience we would expect that if the responses of the teachers with less than 5 years' experience differed significantly with either group they would do so for both. This was indeed the case: contrasting the least experienced group with the 5 – 10 years group produced a mean difference of .365 ( $p = .000$ ); the complementary comparison with the 10 or more group produced nearly identical results ( $M_{\text{difference}} = .330$ ,  $p = .000$ )

Table 3 presents the distribution of responses by level of education on teachers' plans to remain in the workforce. The table presents responses by aggregated educational level.

**Table 3. Distribution of Responses by Aggregate Education Level**

Plans to stay...		Education Level (N = 824)						Row Total
		some HS	HS diploma	some college	AA	BA	MA	
Less than 1 yr.	f	2	5	17	2	6	0	32
	P	5.9%	2.6%	5.2%	3.8%	4.5%	0.0%	4.3%
1 - 3 yrs.	f	3	24	58	3	23	2	113
	P	8.8%	12.6%	17.9%	5.9%	17.3%	11.1%	15.0%
3 - 5 yrs.	f	6	32	40	7	17	4	106
	P	17.7%	16.9%	12.3%	13.4%	12.8%	22.2%	14.1%
more than 5 yrs.	f	23	129	210	40	87	12	501
	P	67.6%	67.9%	64.6%	76.9%	65.4%	66.7%	66.6%
Column Total	f	34	190	325	52	133	18	752
	P	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Descriptives	M	2.47	2.50	2.36	2.63	2.39	2.56	2.43
	s	0.90	0.82	0.95	0.77	0.93	0.71	0.90

This analysis data reveals no discernable trend.<sup>6</sup> And while the disaggregated data contains statistically significant differences by education level,<sup>7</sup> these differences do not conform to a coherent pattern in relation to plans for the future.<sup>8</sup>

This preliminary analysis of the data related to impact of age, experience and education on plans to remain in the early care and education field, it is possible to formulate three tentative conclusions:

- 1) Targeting retention efforts at 19 – 29 year olds may yield the greatest dividends. Not only are these employees most prevalent within the ECE workforce, but they are already primed towards staying in the field.
- 2) When employees are approaching five years' experience, they may be entering a critical period concerning their future in the field. Perhaps the most definitive statement that these data demonstrate is that once employees have reached 5 years' experience, they intend to remain in the field for a considerable length of time.
- 3) If hiring with an eye towards retention, one might anticipate that some ECE credits, an associate's degree, or a related bachelor's would auger well for retention; our analysis also reveals that a high school diploma is related to longevity in the profession.

<sup>6</sup>Between aggregate education level group differences were not statistically significant ( $F = 1.28, p = .273$ ).

<sup>7</sup> $F = 2.94, p = .000$ .

<sup>8</sup>As education level increased, intent to stay showed no discernable pattern ( $r = .041, p = .258$ ).

opment, while simultaneously thanking early childhood professionals in the City for their hard work and dedication working with young children and families.

## Ready Communities

### Vision 2015 Progress Report / Update

1. In late 2006, Vision 2015 announced that one of the six fundamental components of its plan to create a world-class public education system was to invest in high-quality early childhood education for those with the greatest need.
2. To build momentum for state-wide policy changes in early care services, the Delaware Business Roundtable is investing \$250,000 to support the participation of 15 early care and education programs in Delaware Stars for Early Success.

### Delaware Children's Campaign

1. The Delaware Children's Campaign was born in 2007 after two years of planning by Delaware activists and citizens seeking new solutions to the challenges facing children.
2. In early March the Campaign's poll of 600 likely Delaware voters was finalized. Data gained from the poll helped the organization determine its goals: reducing the infant mortality rate, making quality pre-K education more affordable, and providing more services to young adults leaving the foster care system.

### Delaware Legislative Kids Caucus

In January the Kids Caucus began to draw up a mission statement and started work on a legislative agenda, which included:

1. Increasing Purchase of Care subsidy reimbursement rate to 75% of market rate
2. Creating a "STARS" tiered reimbursement program for agencies receiving Purchase of Care
3. Expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program, based on the Pennsylvania law
4. Codifying the Early Care and Education Council
5. Creating a Child Poverty Task Force

### Early Learning Coalition

1. The Coalition distributed the results of the 2007 Market Rate Study, revealing a decrease in the rate percentage since 2005. The FY 2008 budget was the first in two years where POC rates were not increased through the Joint Finance Committee's budget process.
2. Early Care and Education Advocacy Day was a huge success, bringing to the forefront the issues surrounding funding and quality experiences.
3. Members of the Coalition presented the data to the Kids Caucus and testified at Department and Joint Finance Committee budget hearings.



### Delaware First

1. To support the new child care center regulations that went into effect in January 2007, Delaware First has been engaged in providing formal review of qualifications for center-based practitioners. In 2007, the qualifications of 1,763 center-based practitioners have been reviewed; 1089 have been full qualified for a center position. Three hundred and twenty-nine have been fully qualified as Early Childhood Administrators.
2. Delaware First has partnered with The Family & Workplace Connection to offer Career Advisement services to centers and practitioners. Family & Workplace staff have visited 133 centers and assisted 1675 staff in career advisement and preparation for qualifications review since January 2007.
3. Delaware First is engaged in a strategic planning and management process to integrate early care and education professional development within the Department of Education K12 professional development system. This work will involve 35 State agency and community stakeholders.

### RELATE (Relationships Empowering Learning and Affirming Teaching Excellence)

1. From October 2005 through September 2007, two groups of infant toddler teachers, totaling 19 people, piloted the Building Relationships curriculum.
2. In April and May, 2006 the director's training was conducted. Thirty individuals registered for the training with 21 completing all sessions.
3. The Infant-Toddler Early Learning Foundations were printed and disseminated in English. They were also translated and printed in Spanish with support of the project.
4. The training curriculum developed by RELATE will become a routine offering by Delaware First.

### Office of Child Care Licensing

1. The Office of Child Care Licensing implemented revised Delaware Rules for Early Care and Education and School Age Centers on January 1, 2007. This marks the first update of Center Rules since 1988.
2. In 2007 the process of revising the Family and Large Family Child Care Requirements began. The goal is to have revised Family and Large Family Child Care Rules implemented in mid two-thousand and eight (2008).

### Delaware AfterSchool Alliance (DEASA)

The DEASA Management Committee members and others are working together to: Create a long-term policy voice for afterschool programs, advocate for policies that support high quality programs, support the after school workforce, increase public awareness, build bridges between the public schools and community-based organizations for school-based or school-linked after-school programs, and support family-centered practices.

### Wilmington Early Care and Education Council

1. In 2007 newly developed WECEC Brochures were distributed to all Wilmington center and family childcare centers, and publicized the work of the committee in the areas of Public Will, Family Engagement, and Professional Development.
2. The Wilmington Teacher Resource Center, funded by WECEC, was available to child care providers and students studying Early Care and Education throughout the year.
3. WECEC awarded \$20,000 in scholarships in 2007, helping City providers meet licensing professional development requirements.
4. On May 5, 2007, WECEC co-sponsored a Provider Appreciation Day and EXPO to provide an additional venue for assisting with professional development and resource devel-

## Early Childhood Assistance Program

For the 2006-2007 fiscal year, a total of 843 four year-old children and their families were funded to receive comprehensive services through the Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP).

There are 13 Early Childhood Assistance Programs that are administered by:

- Federally-funded Head Start programs (4)
- School Districts (4)
- Institutions of higher education (1)
- Non-profit community based programs (3)
- For profit early care and education program (1)

*Two ECAP siblings, twins, have truly inspired us as professionals to buff up our networking skills and meet the needs of family. These two vivacious boys have been bounced around from program to program previous to enrollment in our ECAP program. The partnerships which benefited this family were a wonderful blend of family planning, program structuring, staff support, Mental Health Intervention, and school district partnership. Effective this month, the serving school district is providing a paraprofessional to shadow each child while in our care. The paraprofessionals will be developing a behavior modification plan in conjunction with the center's existing plan, as a proactive measure to prepare these children for transition into kindergarten next year. This wonderful collaborative effort provides continuity of care as the center and district address the needs of child and family.*

*– Laurie Beachamp, DTCC Owens Campus ECAP*

*The partnership with Nemours Health and Prevention Services (5-2-1 Almost None) and DTCC Owens Campus ECAP has proven to be a beneficial healthy eating and physical activity program which has enhanced our parent training options throughout the year.*

*– Laurie Beachamp – DTCC Owens Campus ECAP*



## HS/ECAP Outcomes Information for IRMC Report 2006-2007

In 2006-2007, the annual Head Start/ECAP Outcomes Project analyzed data on the 1322 four-year-olds who participated in Head Start or ECAP programs in Delaware. These children attended 13 of the 14 programs offering these comprehensive preschool services for four-year-olds. In describing these children, 650 of them were boys and 672 were girls. Children from a wide variety of racial backgrounds were served in these programs in 2006-2007. Six hundred ninety-three children were African-American (50%), 447 were Hispanic (34%), 130 were Caucasian (10%), and 50 were other ethnicities. (4%)

The languages spoken by these children also covered a wide range. Eight hundred ninety-four spoke English (68%), 403 spoke Spanish (31%), and 19 were listed as speaking other languages (1%).

Of the 1282 four-year-olds served, 59 had Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) (4%). For 540 of the four-year-olds (41%), this was their second year in a comprehensive preschool, having attended Head Start the year before. Two hundred sixty-six children were attending child care in addition to the Head Start/ECAP program (20%).

In Delaware, Head Start/ECAP is a five day a week program for children, with 755 children attending four or fewer hours a day (57%), 419 attending for four to six hours (32%), and 143 for more than six hours (11%). Head Start/ECAP programs operate year round programs, as well as school year programs, with 1098 four year olds participating in the part year programs (83%) and 217 participating in the full year programs (16%).

### Child Outcome Results

All children were assessed at the beginning and end of the year with one of two observational instruments: The *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum* and *Work Sampling for Head Start Developmental Checklist for Four Year Olds*. This study includes a random sample of 347 children. Three hundred and eight children in nine programs were assessed using the *Creative Curriculum* and 39 children in three programs were assessed with *Work Sampling*.

Overall results on the *Creative Curriculum* assessments revealed that the 308 children studied made significant progress. In the fall, children averaged 5.59 skills in the Forerunner category, 20.56 skills at Step 1, 16.97 skills at Step 2, and 5.60 skills at Step 3. When observed in the spring, these same children averaged .34 skills in the Forerunner category, 4.15 skills at Step 1, 16.84 skills at Step 2, and 28.63 skills at Step 3. By the end of the year, children assessed with *Creative Curriculum* had achieved, on average, 57% of the skills overall at Step 3. Children progressed an average of 46% in achieving the skills at Step 3 in 2005-2006. This information is portrayed in the figure to the right.

#### Delaware Family Network

The Delaware Family Network (DFN) is a new initiative combining several family projects, including the Delaware New Scripts Family Inclusion Project and the Parent Leadership/ Partnership Initiative.

#### Ready Early Care and Education

##### Delaware Stars for Early Success

1. In January 2007 fifteen programs representing a variety of settings and types of programs, geographical distribution, and ages of children served were invited to participate in the first phase of Delaware Stars. Significant improvements have been made by all programs. Six have moved up a Star Level, and several are on the verge of taking that step.
2. With input from the participating programs and the technical assistants, the Delaware Stars Design Committee have refined and improved the criteria for each star level, and the Delaware Stars Management Committee has been working to refine the management structure.
3. The plan for 2008 is to bring an additional 60 programs into the system over the course of the year at three set application times. Funding for 2008 is being provided by a public/private partnership including Delaware Business Roundtable, the United Way, state government, SVPDE, JPMorgan Chase, and others.

##### T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®

1. In July 2007 we completed our third year of the program.
2. At the national T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Conference in April 2007, Delaware received an award for our T.E.A.C.H./Apprenticeship Partnership.
3. In 2007 there are 99 T.E.A.C.H. Scholars; 96 in an Early Childhood AA program, 2 in a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA), and one in the Early Childhood Directors Certificate Program. Since its start four years ago there have been 183 T.E.A.C.H. Scholars with two Scholar completing an Early Childhood AA, seven Scholars receiving CDA's, and one completing the Early Childhood Director Certificate.

##### Early Childhood Apprenticeship

Delaware has 140 apprentices in the Early Childhood Apprenticeship program, with 48 in New Castle County, 64 in Kent County, and 28 in Sussex County.

##### Social Venture Partners Delaware

1. Since its inception in 2003, Social Venture Partners Delaware (SVP) has give more than \$2 million toward the improvement of early education in Delaware primarily in Wilmington's inner city. To date SVP has given over 9,000 volunteer hours in pursuit of quality.
2. SVP has had a four-year partnership with the A. I. DuPont Hospital for Children. This partnership began by having residents from the behavioral management program in our centers once a week throughout the entire school year.
3. A resource book covering over 300 topics that have been addressed in the past four years such as eating issues, sleep problems and potty training has been written and distributed in all the early care classrooms in the centers in which SVP has worked.

- In 2007, NHPS continued to work with the four child care pilot sites, which combined serve approximately 750 children. These four sites have become champions for policies and practices that promote healthy eating and physical activity in early care and education settings and as a result, their staff will serve as faculty at the child care collaborative in February 2008.

### Ready Families

#### Division of Public Health and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension

With funds provided by the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant, the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension family and human development specialist developed a family-friendly website that provides a coordinated source of parenting information and community resources available to parents.

#### Family Support Coordinating Council (FSCC)

- FSCC co-sponsored focus groups with the UW statewide to establish program/funding priorities in the area of Strong Families/Strong Children.
- The group is working with the Rodel Foundation and DOE on a task force to establish a common definition of “family involvement” that can be used by schools to guide their practices.
- FSCC sponsored the recently conducted Parent Leadership and Parent/Practitioner Forums designed to enhance the involvement of parents in program planning and evaluation efforts.

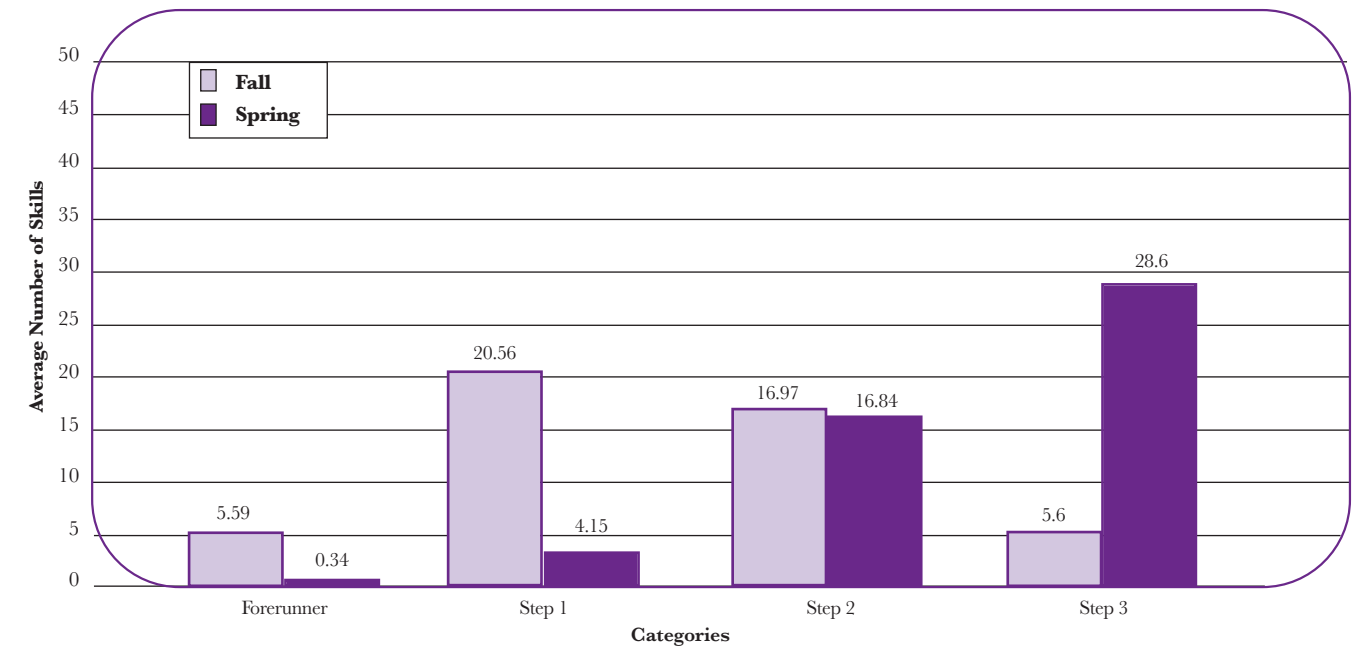
#### Parents As Teachers (PAT)

- Through the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC) grant, PAT will be able to extend PAT home visitation services to an additional 60-100 high risk families and/or families who will not be receiving out of home care before Kindergarten.
- As part of the PIRC, Rodel will be holding an additional Delaware Parent Leadership Institute (DPLI) to support families in their role as leaders and advocates for their families. Families coming from early childhood settings will be provided with information and linked with parent leadership opportunities like the DPLI as their child progresses to kindergarten.
- The Department will be supporting cross training of family support staff from a variety of early childhood programs and kindergarten.



Progress in Overall Skills on Creative Curriculum in 2006-2007

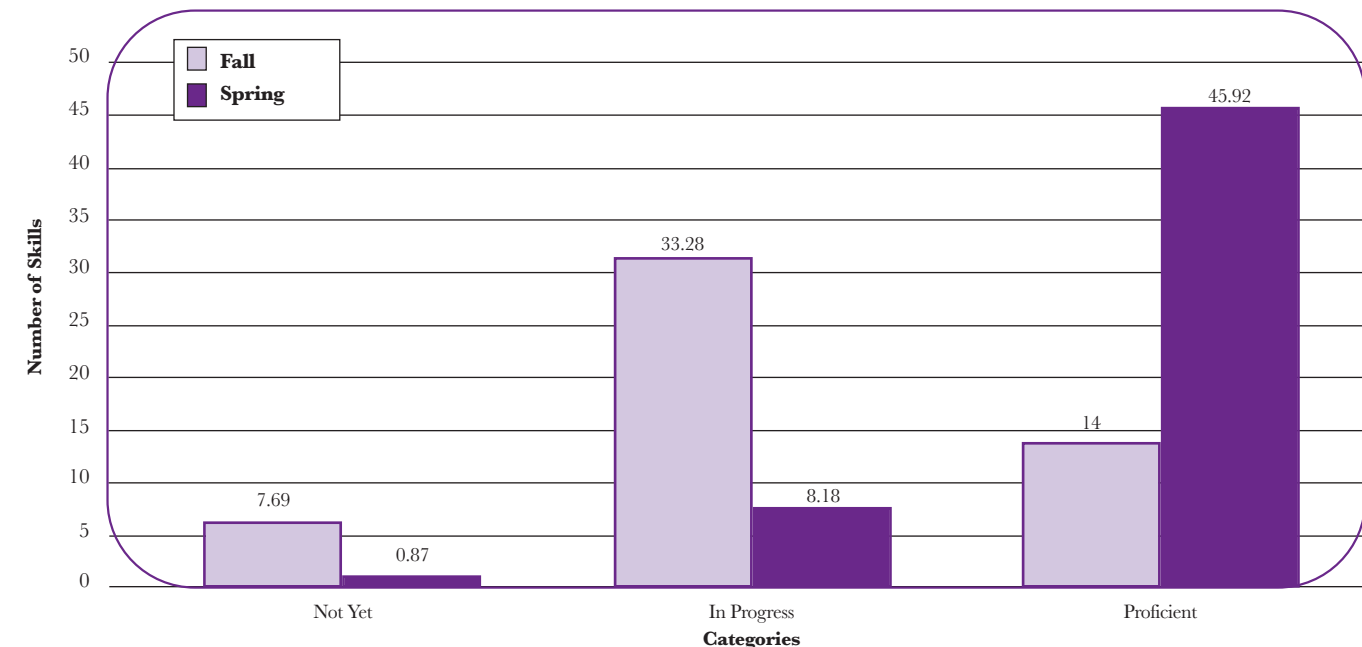
N=308



The 39 children studied who were assessed with *Work Sampling* also made significant developmental progress, as shown on this observational instrument. In the fall, children had *not yet* mastered an average of 7.69 skills overall. They were in process of mastering an average of 33.78 skills overall. They were *proficient* in an average of 14 skills overall. When observed in the spring, these same children were *not yet* performing an average of .87 skills; they were *in process* of mastering an average of 8.18 skills, and they were *proficient* in an average of 45.92 skills. By the end of the year, these children were *proficient* in an average of 83% of the skills assessed on this instrument. They progressed a total of 58% in proficiency during this school year. This information can be found in the figure below.

Progress on Work Sampling in 2006-2007

N=39



## Program for Children With Disabilities

Young children identified as eligible for special services can begin receiving those services at the age of three. In some cases, for children with more severe disabilities, services can begin as early as birth. All school districts in the state provide special education services including speech therapy and other related services for eligible children. Services may be provided at home or in a community setting or they might be provided in a classroom in an elementary school building. The State's target is to, where possible, provide special education services in settings where the child would be if they did not have a disability.

State funds are allocated for the Program for Children with Disabilities. Several districts now have their PCD funds blended with their respective needs based funding formulas. The remaining districts continue to receive funding through a block grant process requiring IRMC approval. Districts may decide to operate the program or subcontract the delivery of those services.



As of March 2007, 955 three-year-old children who have developmental or speech delays and four-year old children with speech delays were eligible for services, under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The review of the data indicated that there were 14 additional children identified in March 2007 than had been identified in March 2006. Although there are individual variations from year to year within districts, no single district has had a significant growth or loss in numbers of children served.

Delaware has begun implementing an early childhood accountability system for children with disabilities 0-3 and 3-5 years of age. The system, called Delaware Building Blocks, stems from a federal initiative that requires states to examine the outcome of children receiving early intervention services, specifically those with Individual Education Programs (IEP) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP). This initiative will provide further evidence of the impact of early intervention services.

The U.S. Department of Education initiative requires states to collect accountability information on the following three outcomes:

1. Percentage of children who demonstrate improved social-emotional skills
2. Percentage of children who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills
3. Percentage of children who demonstrate improved use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Programs use an assessment tool chosen from a set of state recommended assessment measures. The assessment process will focus on obtaining information on children's development through observation of their performance. The intent of the assessment is to obtain a solid understanding of each child's developmental status and progress. Children will be assessed at entry and then again annually to collect developmental information. The data will be collected through a statewide data management system. Data will be analyzed annually and local program and state reports will be issued.

## Delaware Early Childhood Council Executive Summary of 2007 Report to the IRMC

### Ready Children

#### Division of Public Health: Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems

1. Funding through the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant to the Delaware Academy of the American Academy of Pediatrics (DE-AAP), families and pediatricians were surveyed last year to measure the awareness of the medical home concept and determine the need for education of how families could establish a medical home for their children.
2. The DE-AAP hosted provider trainings on newborn screening, cystic fibrous screenings, linking families to community resources, and family-centered care in each of the three counties for medical personnel who provide primary care to children birth to five.
3. The Delaware Medicaid, the ECCS grant, Nemours Health & Prevention Services, the Autism Society of Delaware, and Child Development Watch are collaborating on a statewide policy development pilot related to developmental screening of young children.

#### Division of Public Health: Oral Health

Two sessions were conducted in December 2003- the Oral Health Summit and again in June 2004- the Head Start Oral Health Forum. As a result of these sessions the Delaware Oral Health Coalition was formed. The coalition's membership includes key community local and public leaders that include the Head Start Association and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems who are dedicated to ensuring education, increased awareness and access to oral health for the birth to five population.

#### United Way of Delaware Success By 6®

1. The first goal of Success By 6® is to improve the quality of early care and education. Success By 6® has chosen Delaware Stars, Delaware's quality rating and improvement system, as the means to achieve this goal and is assisting with fund raising and operating as the fiscal agent for Delaware Stars.
2. Success By 6® is beginning to develop its work on a second goal area: to help parents nurture their children's development.

#### Nemours Health and Prevention Services

1. In 2007, NHPS forged a partnership with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in Delaware to identify and implement best practices in nutrition for children under age 12. In consultation with the Delaware Director of CACFP, NHPS developed *Best Practices for Healthy Eating: A Guide to Help Children Grow Up Healthy*.
2. The SNAP (State Nutrition Action Program) group of federally-funded food subsidy programs, which includes CACFP, WIC, Food Stamps, and others, has agreed to spread the 5-2-1-Almost None "formula for a healthy lifestyle" across all of its programs, which combined serve more than 75,000 individuals in Delaware.
3. In the fall, NHPS debuted the *Healthy Habits for Life* curriculum guide for preschool teachers developed as a result of a two-year collaboration among NHPS, KidsHealth and Sesame Workshop, the creators of Sesame Street.



- Of the families who responded to the telephone interview:
  - Over 97% of families indicated that they had overall satisfaction with the services they received;
  - Over 94% of families perceived the program as accessible and receptive;
  - Over 93% of families perceived change in both their child and themselves;
  - Over 93% of families reported a positive perception of family decision-making opportunities.
  - Over 92% of families reported a positive family-program relationship with CDW staff;
  - Over 92% of families reported a positive perception of quality of life;

*I can't say enough about my coordinator. We have a very good communicating, bonding, to the point where she gets as concerned as I am about my son. To me, as a parent, I like to see that in somebody who is helping me deal through a lot of the things that I'm going through with my son. Not just my son but my family. -  
from a New Scripts parent*

Considerable effort has been put forth to ensure the accountability process is linked to intervention so the process does not become a stand-alone testing structure. Each of the assessment tools recommended for use have been analyzed and chosen specifically for its alignment with the state's Preschool and Infant/Toddler Early Learning Guidelines. In this context, practitioners are using assessment tools that measure instruction and learning focused specifically on what is being taught and allows practitioners to further plan and adapt instruction as needed.

The first round of accountability data was collected on children 0-5 with disabilities, analyzed and reported to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in February 2007. The focus of this initial set of data was to determine each state's preparedness to report the required information. The data reported to the OSEP in 2007 is listed below. This data includes all children ages three through five years old and includes children in the Program for Children with Disabilities as well as the four year olds served in their local school district. This data represents children's status at a single point in time and does not reflect data representing progress. Progress information, including more detailed data analysis, will be reported to the OSEP in 2008.

Early Childhood Assessments 2006 - 2007 Initial Assessment Percent of Students by Measure			
Measure	Like Same Age Peers	Not Like Same Age Peers	Total
Social-Emotional	18%	82%	100%
Knowledge and Skills	9%	91%	100%
Behaviors to Meet Needs	22%	78%	100%

## Child Outcomes 2007

### Early Intervention Supports Children in Making Progress

Delaware has implemented an early childhood accountability system for children 0-3 and 3-5 years of age. The system, called Delaware Building Blocks, stems from a federal initiative that requires states to examine the outcome of children receiving early intervention services, specifically those with Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) and Individual Education Programs (IEP). This initiative will provide further evidence of the impact of early intervention services.

Following extensive research completed within the state, an accountability framework was established that impacts all programs providing services to children with disabilities below kindergarten. Child Development Watch, along with early intervention provider staff, began collecting information on children's status as of September 2006.

The U.S. Department of Education has required states to collect accountability information on the following three outcome areas:

1. Children who demonstrate improved social-emotional skills
2. Children who demonstrate improved acquisition and use of knowledge and skills
3. Children who demonstrate improved use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

All children with IFSPs are included in Delaware Building Blocks. Programs use an assessment tool chosen from a set of recommended assessment measures. The assessment process focuses on obtaining information on children's development through observation of their performance. Children are assessed at entry, then again annually, and near when they exit Child Development Watch to collect developmental information. The data will be analyzed annually by regional programs and state reports will be issued.

Considerable effort has been put forth to ensure the accountability process is linked to intervention so the process does not become stand-alone testing. Each of the assessment tools recommended for use have been analyzed and chosen specifically for its alignment with the state's Infant and Toddler Early Learning Foundations. In this context, practitioners are using the guidelines for instruction and assessment tools that focus specifically on promoting developmentally appropriate outcomes that support a child's growth and development.

Extensive training and technical assistance has been provided to early intervention staff. Preliminary progress data will be available in 2008. Continued funding support will be provided the State's federal IDEA Part C grant.

## Birth to Three Early Intervention System

The mission of the Birth to Three Early Intervention System is to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with, or at risk for, disabilities or developmental delays, and to enhance the capacity of their families to meet the needs of their young children. Child Development Watch is the statewide early intervention program for children ages birth to three. Under the leadership of the Department of Health and Social Services' Birth to Three Intervention System, Child Development Watch is a collaborative effort with staff from:

- **Department of Health and Social Services**
- **Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families**
- **Department of Education**
- **Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children and other private agencies** working together to provide early intervention to young children and to connect their families

Child Development Watch has two sites: Wilmington serves New Castle County and Milford serves Kent and Sussex Counties.

The mission of Delaware New Scripts is to promote families as change agents in order to enhance the early childhood experience for Delaware children and families. New Scripts is a group of family members, early intervention practitioners, therapists, health care professionals and educators working to embed the family voice in all aspects of early childhood intervention

## Increasing the Public's Understanding

### Growing Together Portfolio

Part C Birth to Three Early Intervention System develops and distributes the *Growing Together Portfolio* to parents of babies born in Delaware and surrounding hospitals every year. This year 9,267 portfolios were distributed to Delaware families with newborns. The newly revised *Growing Together Portfolio* provides parents with developmental information, health and safety reminders, activities to encourage language and literacy development and a list of resources providing help to new parents. This material is also available in Spanish.

*"I guess you never want your child to have to go get additional services and need them. I think it was a great experience for us. He's doing great now. He's talking a lot. Everybody there was wonderful and kept me in the loop. I think it was a good thing for us to have something like this available for him"*

### Information for Early Care and Education Providers

A *User's Guide to the Growing Together Portfolio for Early Care and Education Providers* was distributed to child care and preschool programs statewide. The purpose of the resource for early care and education providers is to increase providers' resources to assist them in identifying children in their programs who may have developmental delays and how to support families in accessing the Child Development Watch system. The distribution of the *User's Guide to the Growing Together Portfolio for Early Care and Education Providers* is a collaborative effort with Family and Workplace Connection, the statewide information and referral network for child care, and the Office of Child Care Licensing. Approximately 300 of these guides were distributed this year at conferences.

During 2007, several presentations were made to early care and education providers describing how to use the new section in the Users Guide focusing on ways to include more children with special needs in their early care and education programs.

### Grow with Books

The *Grow with Books* outreach effort provides the public libraries with books on the challenges of raising young children in today's society. The *Grow with Books* collection currently has 164 titles and includes books for adults and preschoolers. To increase awareness of the collection *Grow with Books* posters and bookmarks were developed and distributed to all libraries and distinctive *Grow with Books* stickers were placed on the books in the collection for ease of identification. *Grow with Books* began over eleven years ago and is supported by the Part C program and the IRMC in cooperation the Division of Libraries.

### Integrated Services Information Systems (ISIS)

The primary data management tool for Birth to Three Intervention System is the Integrated Services Information System (ISIS), developed via a public/private partnership and supported by Part C federal funds and the IRMC. In addition to tracking all referral, assessment, service coordination and services information for children serviced by Child Development Watch, ISIS also tracks referrals for at-risk children within the Division of Public Health, and other. Child Development

Watch staff also use ISIS to schedule and maintain appointments for evaluations and early childhood outcomes reporting.

### Improvement Plan Priority Areas

Part C's State Performance Plan was approved by the US Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). This is a six year plan with measurable targets and improvement activities in the priority areas:

- Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments with a state focus on inclusive quality childcare
- Effective Early Childhood Transitions
- General Supervision
- Family Involvement, Family Supports, and Family Outcomes
- Comprehensive Child Find
- Early Childhood Outcome System

*"I have seen a remarkable change in my child. I have changed and he has changed ...we all have done so much better"*

## Services to Delaware Children

3,026 children and their families were served this year. The average monthly number of children participating in Child Development Watch was 1,559 children; over 4% of Delaware's children from birth to three years of age received early intervention or periodic assessments and tracking. Child Development Watch's increases can be attributed to Delaware's extensive outreach, including the distribution of the *Growing Together Portfolio*, as well as the high quality reputation of the program among families and physicians.

## Ongoing Program Evaluation

### Family Outcomes

Child Development Watch Family Survey is conducted via telephone interview with a stratified random sample of families based on geographic region, ethnicity, and length of time in the program. The analysis of 158 telephone interviews that were completed by families who had been involved with Child Development Watch for more than 6 months, in the spring of 2007 showed that:

- The highest percentage of families who very strongly agreed with statements during the telephone interview did so regarding the fact that:
  - CDW has inquired about their child's strengths and needs, as well as about their goals for him or her;
  - they have received and understand their family's legal rights within their child's program;
  - they have information they can use on a daily basis with their child to help him/her develop and learn;
  - they have more knowledge of how to best care for their child since being a part of the CDW program.

**\*3,026 children and their families served in 2007**

