

## **Community Collaboration for Four-Year-Olds**

### **Vision Statement:**

All four-year olds in our community have access to a quality early learning experience.

### **Goal:**

Our goal is to create collaborative models of care/education available to four-year olds in our community.

### **Belief Statements:**

- ❖ The entire community is responsible for growing our children.
- ❖ Families differ in the amount of support they want in raising their children.
- ❖ Families know what is best for their children.
- ❖ Children enter school at different levels of development.
- ❖ Children should enter school with the maximum positive learning experience which can be provided in a variety of ways, (i.e. at home, preschool, Head Start, Daycare)
- ❖ Children need continuity of care from responsive caregivers.
- ❖ Some families are not aware of the options/resources available.
- ❖ Options/resources are not accessible to all families.
- ❖ Barriers to program access need to be minimized.
- ❖ Quality care/education can be provided by people with different backgrounds and training.
- ❖ Transitions for four year olds should be minimized.
- ❖ Children learn in a variety of environments.
- ❖ Children's style of learning vary.
- ❖ The environment should support a variety of ways to learn.
- ❖ Parental involvement enhances a child's growth and development.

### **Rationale:**

Why provide a voluntary four-year-old preschool program?

The purpose is to give every four-year-old in our community a developmentally appropriate learning experience in a quality group setting and provide a support system to their family.

The curriculum will focus on language experience, social competence, and self-confidence in an environment that helps children grow as individuals. Active, exploratory learning is encouraged and supported by a team of early childhood professionals.

By providing every family access to a blended system of high quality, comprehensive early childhood programming, the Community Collaboration for Four-Year-Olds would address these issues:

- fragmented service delivery
- duplication of services
- gaps in services
- categorizing and labeling children
- children shuffled between programs and providers
- difficult access to services at affordable costs
- inconsistent quality of services

**Membership:**

Jim Vermeul, HeadStart  
Jayne Rifenberg, La Crosse Daycare  
Betty Freybler, Family Child Care Providers  
Deb Suchla, Family Resource Center  
Julia Herwig, Wisconsin HeadStart State Collaboration Project  
Mark White, Hintgen Principal  
Jane Morken, North Woods Principal  
Marlie Bendiksen, State Road Principal  
Jerry Kember, Assoc. Supt./Instruction  
Mary Mick, Teacher  
Anna Fleming, Coulee Catholic Schools  
Barb Morrison, Parent Representative  
Diane Ladwig, Director, Lutheran Child Care & Regional Delegate to WI Child Care Admin Association  
Deb Mirr, Head Start Parent  
Steve Ross, Supervisor Special Education  
Doug Mormann, County Health Services

11/7/2001

## Model Development Ideas

<b>Operations:</b>	2-1/2 to 3 hour public school/4 hour Head Start open 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. length of school day
<b>Locations/ Facilities:</b>	Child care public school Head Start family child care retirement centers pre-school geographic clusters (north, south, central) one facility with multiple programs WWTC
<b>Staff:</b>	broad range employ full day (include time w/kids, planning, parents) need coordinator to oversee multiple sites program support position one staff DPI certified joint training include transition time for staff for communication and collaboration
<b>Activities/ Curriculum:</b>	child centered hands on developmentally appropriate
<b>Funding:</b>	access child care subsidy, Head Start, public schools, blend funding to share costs and create comparable salaries
<b>Parent Involvement:</b>	place for parents resources, coordinate parent education and referrals develop common forms, releases
<b>Services:</b>	transportation nutrition
<b>Partner Agencies:</b>	variety depending upon neighborhood shared beliefs/values common standards/quality shared communication child care - public school - Head Start - health - family child care - private school - Family Resource Center
<b>General:</b>	respect, trust quality everything on-site

community building  
on-going work on details/continued committee  
infant care needs (what happens <4)  
not every center would have same services  
Family Resource Center might support coordination role  
parental choice of location/level of service  
can all siblings be at same site?  
inclusion  
involve YMCA and Surround Care

**Proposed Models:**

school staff  
school site

school staff  
non-school site

contracted staff  
non-school site

common standards

set criteria

**IDEALS**

One Facility

- preschool on site
- day care on site
- WIC/immunizations on site

## Area Governing Boards

- release of information
- common paperwork for parents

Respect - Trust - Quality

Minimum Transition

Good Nutrition

Teachers - school district, two year, Head Start

Settings - North, Central, South neighborhoods

school - 2-1/2 hour bussed home on child care

non-school, i.e. school sends two hr. teacher to child care

blend \$

Include all common facets

- nutrition- breakfast/lunch/snack
- financial support
- school
- county
- WIC in School District of La Crosse

Nurturing/safe environment

Child oriented curriculum (true preschool)

Parents must be involved in kid's life, education

Transportation is necessary in many cases.

**Community Collaboration for Four Year Olds  
Tuesday, December 7, 1999**

**GROUP I**

Ideas

WWTC

- training center
- school district - WWTC students

Head Start

- blend all kids

Elderly centers

- preschools in facility

Ideals

One facility

- preschool on site
- day care on site
- WIC/immunizations on site

Area governing boards

- release of information
- common paperwork for parents

Respect - Trust - Quality

Minimum Transition

Good Nutrition

Continue meetings after implementation of four year olds

Teachers

- school district
- two year
- Head Start

Settings

- North, Central, South neighborhoods
- school - 2-1/2 hour bussed home or child care
- non school - criteria, bid for service, i.e. school send two hour teacher to child care, blend dollars
- if blend - need lots of community building activities

Include all common facets

- nutrition - breakfast, lunch, snack
- financial support
- school
- county
- WIC in school

\*If blend - need lots of community building activities

Nurturing/Safe Environment - child oriented curriculum (true preschool)

Parents must be involved in kid's life, education.

Transportation is necessary in many cases.

## Possibilities

more openings for birth-3, if four-year-olds are in preschools

## **GROUP II**

### Public School/Head Start Model

- 2-1/2 to 3 hrs. (public school)
- 4 hrs. Head Start
- Maximize resources to provide a full day
- Facility open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (ideally)
- Length of school day (minimal)
- Need for third agency to extend the day
- Number of HS families not receiving child care subsidies
  - Limiting or eliminating transitions would help
- Organize four year old centers geographically
  - Determine where the kids are
- Use any combination of agencies/family child care that works, i.e. HS/Red Balloon Center, Buchner/Jefferson/Summit/Ellens CC/Franklin; Lutheran/Hamilton/Hintgen
- Neighborhood centers
- Not every center may have all the same services and agencies involved.
  - long term goal to make salaries commensurate with level of training.
  - sharing staffing and facility needs may reduce costs for some agencies which could be put toward salaries (long term goal)
- Coordinator position for several centers
- Collaborating partners need to have commonly shared values and beliefs about children and adults. This is required for day to day operations.
- Staff will need time to transition and communicate with one another.
- It would be best for staffing if teachers were employed for a full day so that all their time wasn't only face to face with children.
- Each center could have its own "flavor" but with a common standard for all.
- Parents need a place to congregate.
- Shared staff development provided for all partners.
- Parent communications/information is shared among all partners.
- Parental choice exists in terms of :
  - which location
  - how much service (what and how long)

## **GROUP III**

What will children experience?

- hands on learning experiences in a DAP environment.
- minimal transitions

Who will the teachers be?

- at least one must meet DPI certification. Can this be, i.e. Center Director to oversee program? Program support person?

What settings/facilities?

- options - preschool classroom, childcare setting, Head Start

What organizations/programs involved?

- public schools, family child care, H.S. group child care, private schools, family residence, health care.

What will parents experience?

- smooth transitions
- parenting education and support
- referral services

**Additional Information Needed**

Can the district contract for services and still count children as enrolled?

Can schools contract with religious private schools?

Does a certified person have to deliver the instruction?

Who can the district employ?

**Public Information**  
**Community Feedback**  
**12/14/99**

Reviewed Program/Service Indicators stressing agency collaboration and parental involvement.

- How can center get on a list to be a site?
- Options for only few days a week?
- Want choices in the situation for parents.
- Chronological age shouldn't be only deciding factor. Four is not a magic age.
- Fears young parents will choose district programs when they question their judgment.
- Only aid the parents - not doing the parent for them.
- Question on parental volunteers.
- Day care turnover of staff is a concern. School district contracts keeps people a year.
- Wish more parents of younger children would be involved.
- Enrollment figures?
- Transportation for taking children from small child care provider to a program. esp. when a family has a younger child.
- Will have pool over funding and will it be hard.
- Format of federal requirements so she can direct questions within that.
- We need to make sure everyone has enough information.
- Mention of need for young children coming from needy homes need this!
- Can't do socialization as a stay at home mom which kids need.

Community Collaboration for Four Year Olds  
March 22, 2000  
Minutes  
1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

In attendance: Jim Vermeul, Mary Mick, Jayne Rifenberg, Marlie Bendiksen, Mark White, Jane Morken, Jerry Kember, Anna Fleming, Barb Morrison, Diane Ladwig.

**Communications**

Three newspaper articles were shared with the committee. One Tribune editorial supporting the preschool option for families and two letters to the editor regarding childcare providers in La Crosse.

**Current Status**

Diane reported that they simply didn't have the time to appropriately write the grant they had hoped to do. We all understood and appreciated the circumstances.

**Board Questions**

We reviewed and answered the questions posed by the School Board at their March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. (Copy attached.) These will be shared with the Board prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Jerry shared that Julie Vollmer called him and suggested that he write a guest editorial explaining why we were recommending a four-year-old program. We had different opinions on whether to do this or not. Jerry will make the final decision, however, if he writes one it will be representative of all of us.

**Board Meeting Plans (April 3<sup>rd</sup>)**

It was decided that sending answers to the Board in advance should eliminate or limit additional questions. Further clarification of financing Phase I of the four-year-old preschool program will also be shared. The committee agreed to be in attendance (again). Note: The Board meeting was moved up to 6 p.m. on April 3<sup>rd</sup> because of the NCAA Basketball National Championship game.

**Funding Recommendations**

The committee identified all anticipated expenses and revenues to fund a preschool program for 270 four-year-olds. Jerry will meet with Woody to review the budget.

The result of our work and revisions that resulted from meeting with Woody are attached.

**Another Look at Report Forms**

Jayne agreed to contact Carole Kohler about doing a trial application for Model II. Marlie agreed to ask Debbie Dallenbach to do one for Model III. Jerry will send the forms we revised for these models at this meeting to Jayne and Marlie. We will request that these forms be completed by April 3<sup>rd</sup> so that we can learn from this work and revise the forms as need at our April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

A letter soliciting partnering agencies to join our collaborative effort will be mailed if the Board approves the implementation of Phase I. Jerry will develop a draft of this letter and present it for our consideration on April 4<sup>th</sup>. He will also contact Deb Suchla about supplying mailing labels for all La Crosse child care providers who should receive this invitation.

### **Contract Development**

A subcommittee was created to begin work on contract development. Jim, Deb S., and Jerry agreed to serve on this committee. If the Board approves implementation of Phase I this team will schedule a time to begin their work.

### **Important Dates**

If the Board approves implementation of Phase I on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the following schedule will be followed:

April 18<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 - 10 a.m. - Request Form Workshop in Hogan Room 207. Note: A regular meeting of our committee will follow the workshop.

May 1<sup>st</sup> - Deadline for submission of request forms.

May 9<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. Interview possible collaborating partners who applied by May 1<sup>st</sup> and met the necessary criteria.

### **Meeting Dates**

Future meetings will be from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Room 206 at Hogan on the following dates:

Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>

Adjourned.