

## Attachment 2.1.3

### **South Dakota Plan for Early Childhood Coordination**

Over five years ago, the South Dakota Alliance for Children was formed to help fulfill the Department of Social Services, Division of Child Care need to have a statewide coordination/advisory group. In the past year changes were made to make the Alliance more member-friendly for all involved.

On May 7, 2008 State Technical Assistance Specialists with the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), Susan Rohrbaugh (Region 5) and Patti Russ (Region 8), provided the Alliance members training on "Fundamentals of Collaborative Leadership." This is one of several core modules available through a new NCCIC initiative called PACT.

The Alliance has now changed to become a statewide 'network' of organizations, agencies & individuals interested in child care, early childhood and school-age issues. A committee was formed by volunteers to help plan speakers, presentations, set agendas, etc. for each meeting. The goal is for the Alliance meetings to become a forum for all interested members to seek input, share information and give updates about their program or an upcoming project/initiative. A guest speaker on a special topic of interest will be secured for a portion of each meeting.

The Division of Child Care will be the central point of contact and responsible for hosting two Alliance meetings a year in early spring and late fall. Meetings will be held in conjunction with other meetings to cut down on travel and meeting overload, when possible. In addition, information on issues/topics of interest as they come available will be provided via e-mail updates. This is an opportunity for all to share information about meetings, conferences, upcoming grants, etc. It is also an opportunity to ensure coordination across all early childhood programs and to avoid duplication of services.

Goals of the new 'Alliance - Reinvented' would also help to: 1) target emerging issues, 2) lift up those issues and provide awareness to stakeholders and policymakers, and 3) serve as a means to encourage all members to work collaboratively on issues or projects that may not be accomplished alone.

Other goals for the Alliance remain the same which include enhancing the stability and quality of the child care and early education workforce; increase awareness of child development and the importance of quality child care and

early education; enhance the quality of family child care services; establish adequate and stable funding for child care and early education; support healthy development of children in early childhood and out-of-school time settings; increase availability and quality of infant/toddler care; increase quality of care and education for 3-5 year olds and increase quality and availability of out-of-school time programs for k-8<sup>th</sup> grade youth.

Membership includes but is not limited to the following organizations:

- Department of Education – Part B & C, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Program, Headstart Collaboration office and the State Library;
- Department of Human Services – Division of Mental Health and Council on Developmental Disabilities;
- Department of Social Services – Divisions of Child Care and Child Protection;
- Organizations include various associations such as SD Association of the Education of Young Children, SD Head Start Assn. and Head Start programs, SD School-age Care Alliance, Family Child Care and Child Care Center Directors.
- Tribal representation includes tribal child care program administrators and child care directors from the various reservations, including Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River and Yankton Sioux Tribes, with all tribal child care coordinators invited.
- Resource and Referral agencies and representatives from higher education are included as well as advocacy organizations such as SD Voices for Children.

Note: South Dakota has not received the Early Childhood Comprehensive Services Grant.