

Early Head Start for Family Child Care Partnership Week 2012
Day 2

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes: Hello. I'm Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Director of the Office of Head Start.

Shannon Rudisill: And I'm Shannon Rudisill, Director of the Office of Child Care. We want to thank you all for joining us again for our Early Head Start for Family Child Care Partnership Week. Our offices want communities to explore and engage in partnerships to coordinate service delivery across child care and Early Head Start to improve early care and education for at-risk infants and toddlers and their families. Today, Yvette and I are issuing a joint letter to show our commitment to help you engage local partners in building meaningful collaborations to strengthen the early childhood systems in your communities.

Yvette: Our letter offers several innovative approaches for how you can make partnerships between Early Head Start and family child care work for you. These strategies can be useful to Early Head Start grantees interested in implementing the family child care option, and to other communities undertaking collaborative efforts to create seamless early care and education systems. We want you to look at the similarities and differences among standards, benchmarks, and policies relevant to Early Head Start grantees and family child care providers. Early Head Start and Child Care policies and standards can be aligned to ensure that children and families have continuity of services.

Shannon: Leveraging resources is also critical to supporting family child care providers in meeting higher standards. Families with very young children often want their children cared for in a home with a small number of children; and siblings can be cared for together in family child care. But family child care providers frequently work alone and for long hours each day, so finding professional development opportunities at convenient times and in the provider's primary language can be a challenge. Partnerships can help ensure that professional development systems provide opportunities and supports that build a stronger early care workforce.

Yvette: We're sharing photos today from a visit we had with a family child care provider who is implementing the Early Head Start family child care option and also receives Child Care subsidy funds. This community has worked for over 10 years to create a model for blending funds and aligning policies and standards across Early Head Start and family child care to deliver high quality care to infants, toddlers, and their families.

Shannon: We're also sharing photos from our visit with a group of family child care providers who are attending an eight-week course to improve their English speaking skills so they're better prepared to enroll in community college courses as they work to enhance their qualifications. These are just two examples of how communities have put these strategies into action.

Yvette: We're thrilled to continue to share more examples with you over the rest of the week. Don't forget to join us this Friday for a live teleconference where you can ask your questions and get more ideas to bring back to your community.

Shannon: We hope this week is helpful, and we look forward to hearing from you on Friday.