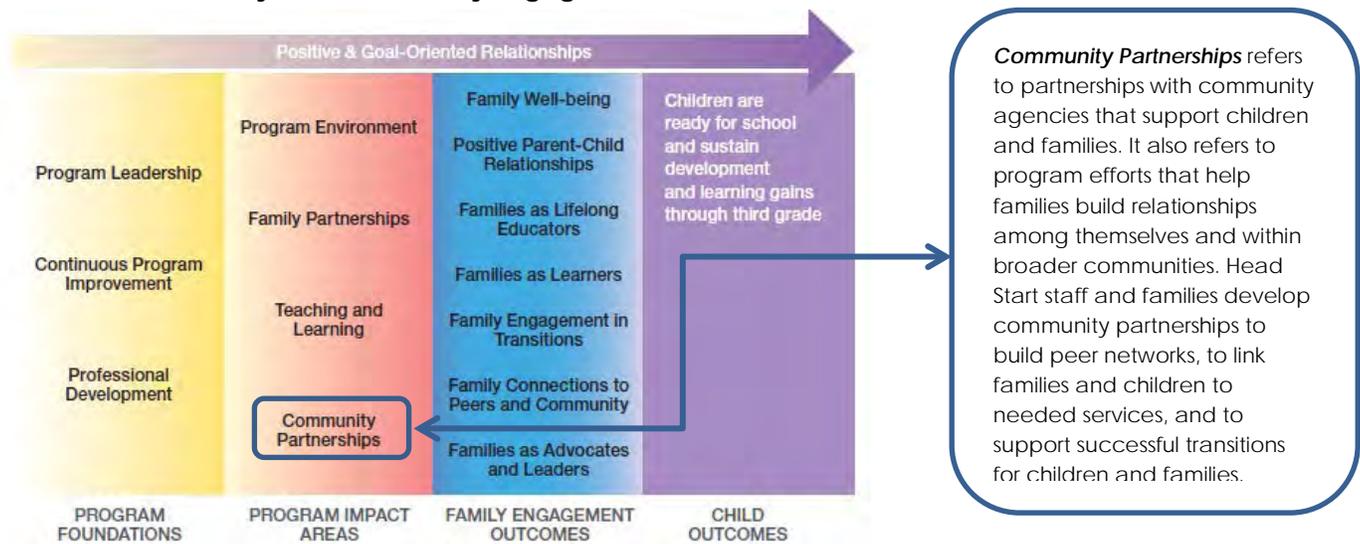


Community Partnerships: Head Start/Early Head Start and Child Welfare

These resources can support Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs to build more effective partnerships with Child Welfare agencies. The overview and resource list are intended to help program staff understand how important HS/EHS and child welfare agency partnerships are for children’s learning, development and well-being. Your program may use the reflection and planning worksheet to assess the quality of your partnerships and to implement best practices.

Community partnerships between HS/EHS and Child Welfare agencies work best where there is a clear shared vision and purpose, supported by strong leadership, intentional planning and communication, and consistent involvement of each agency over time. A successful partnership requires an investment of time, effort, and human and fiscal resources. When our programs work well together, it is a win-win for Head Start/Early Head Start and child welfare agencies, and most importantly for children and families.

OHS Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework

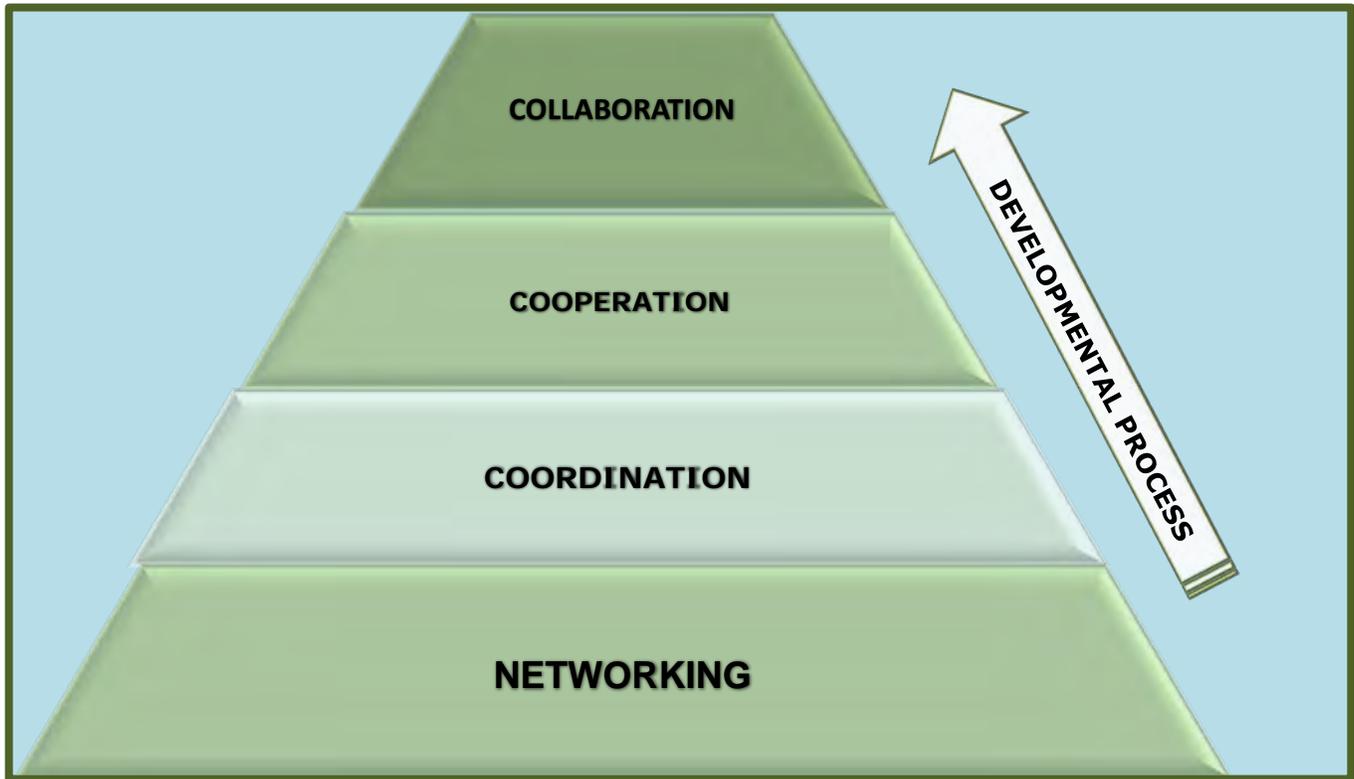


Positive relationships with families guide our work and are crucial to building strong partnerships. The same is true of community partnerships. Successful community partnerships are dependent on strong relationships that are built on trust, equality and commitment within the group and a shared focus on a common goal.

Understanding collaboration offers an opportunity to strengthen our HS/EHS and child welfare partnerships. The Developmental Continuum of Collaboration describes the levels of collaboration and partnership between HS/EHS and Child Welfare Service (CWS) agencies. Your partnerships may fall along a continuum based on the level of commitment, time and trust involved – from networking to coordination. Effective partnerships are formed through an ongoing development process in the context of the relationships amongst partners, families, and community stakeholders. See below for descriptions of each level of the Developmental Continuum and examples in HS/EHS and CWS programs.

Children whose families are served by the child welfare system tend to be developmentally vulnerable due to trauma stemming from early abuse and neglect and from common co-occurring challenges related to prenatal drug exposure, prematurity, low birth weight, poverty, homelessness, parental depression and other mental health difficulties. The comprehensive services offered by Head Start and Early Head Start programs can be a critical support for children who have had some of these experiences.

Community Partnerships: The Developmental Continuum of Collaboration



LEVEL OF PARTNERSHIP	EXAMPLES
<p>Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies work together to create a new or enhanced project or program with a commitment to a common mission Resources pooled or jointly secured & products shared 	<p>Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Welfare Services (CWS) and HS/EHS agencies work together to create a new program for substance-abusing mothers of young children with each agency playing a specific role Joint case management, administrative, and supervisory functions
<p>Cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies maintain independence while working together toward a common goal Agencies share resources and/or facilities Formal systems are in place to share information 	<p>Cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HS/EHS and CWS have joint case planning meetings to address families' needs and to share information regarding follow-through with families HS/EHS program provides space for supervised visitation performed by CWS staff or contractor.
<p>Coordination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are informal; agencies work to align their respective services Agencies have worked together on short-term projects Resources as well as information are occasionally shared 	<p>Coordination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CWS provides annual training for mandated reporting on child abuse and neglect to HS/EHS providers Early childhood agency provides case management services to CWS-involved families with young children
<p>Networking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both programs have exchanged information and are aware of early childhood and child welfare services available in the community Agencies discuss common concerns 	<p>Networking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HS/EHS program informs CWS when there is an opening in their program

Community Partnerships: Sample Outcomes and Activities

Community partnerships are multi-directional and can change based on a variety of influences in your program and community. Agencies may shift focus, families' needs may change and funding may affect level of services. Community partners have to continuously evaluate goals and respond based on desired outcomes. To be effective, programs may need to revisit earlier stages to rebuild strong partnerships.

Sample Outcomes for HS/EHS and Child Welfare Partnerships

- ✓ Children and families experience coordinated services and continuity of care;
- ✓ Head Start and DCF have improved working relationships;
- ✓ New resources and strategies are created for achieving child and family goals;
- ✓ Children experience fewer placements; and
- ✓ Children and families increase strengths and resiliency.

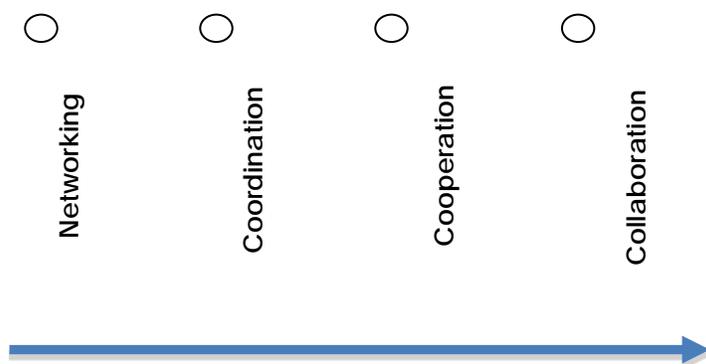
Sample Activities that Contribute to These Outcomes

- ✓ Build a relationship between agencies that focuses on common values and building trust
- ✓ Create efforts to connect at multiple levels in both agencies (direct service and supervisory staff)
- ✓ Designate a "point person" at HS/EHS and at CW, to handle referrals and coordinate services
- ✓ Engage in case collaboration that can include joint staffing, joint case planning, joint home visitation
- ✓ Co-locate services so that CW staff person onsite at HS/EHS programs or vice versa
- ✓ Shared trainings for HS/EHS & CWS workers
- ✓ Establishing a Memoranda of Agreement between agencies

Community Partnerships Reflection and Planning Worksheet

You may use this worksheet with your team to reflect on your HS/EHS and Child Welfare collaboration as part of your goal setting and planning efforts. Inviting community partners to answer these same questions can build a foundation for planning and implementation.

1. Who are the potential Early Childhood or Child Welfare partners in our community? What partnerships already exist and what role does HS/EHS play? What are the current strengths? What do we see as the current gaps?
2. What are our program's goals for partnering with other agencies? What are the desired outcomes/results of our collaboration?
3. Where is our program currently on the Developmental Continuum of Collaboration in connection with the Early Childhood or Child Welfare programs in our community? Where we would we like to be?



4. What ideas do we have to strengthen the partnership between my program and early childhood or child welfare programs in our community?
5. What challenges do we need to address in order to implement these ideas? What has worked with other agencies/partnerships in the past?
6. How will we measure our progress? How will we know we have achieved our desired outcomes?



7. What are next steps we can take?

EARLY CHILDHOOD-CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP || RESOURCE LIST

JOINT LETTERS/INFORMATION MEMORANDUMS:

These letters and memorandums were sent directly to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegate agencies, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies, and state and local child welfare agencies as a way to reinforce the commitment that early childhood programs and child welfare agencies have of working together to support some of our country's most vulnerable children and families. The purpose of providing this information is to improve young children's access to comprehensive, high quality early care and education services and to ensure continuity for children in early childhood settings.

Head Start and Child Welfare Partnerships:

Partnering with Families Involved in the Child Welfare System. Prepared by Federal Early Childhood/Child Welfare Partnership in collaboration with the Office of Head Start. Issued: July 2010.

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/IMs/2010/resour_ime_004_071910.html

Child Welfare and Head Start Partnerships:

Partnering with Families Involved in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs Information Memorandum. Prepared by Federal Early Childhood/Child Welfare Partnership in collaboration with the Children's Bureau. Issued: January 2011.

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/im/2011/im1101.htm

Child Welfare and Child Care Partnerships:

Partnering with Families Involved in Child Care Subsidy Programs. Prepared by Office of Child Care in collaboration with the Federal Early Childhood/Child Welfare Partnership. Issued: April 2011.

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/guidance/current/im_child_welfare/im_child_welfare.pdf

Joint Statement *To state child welfare leaders, child care directors, and Head Start directors.* Prepared by Federal Early Childhood/Child Welfare Partnership in collaboration with the Administration for Children and Families Issued: April 2011.

<http://images.magnetmail.net/images/clients/TransMgt/attach/Joint Letter on CW ECE Linkages.pdf>

RESEARCH BRIEF/REPORTS:

This research brief links current research to partnerships between early childhood and child welfare programs. It outlines the need for and challenges of these partnerships.

Early Childhood/Child Welfare Service Partnerships: The Challenges and the Potential.

Prepared by: James Bell Associates Research Brief. November 2011.

http://www.jbassoc.com/reports/documents/ec_cws%20research%20brief%2012_12_11.pdf

These reports were commissioned to summarize and analyze the original work of the Early Head Start/Child Welfare Services Initiative and provide lessons learned and in-depth information about these projects.

Briefing on the Early Head Start/Child Welfare Services Initiative for ACF.

James Bell Associates. April 12, 2006.

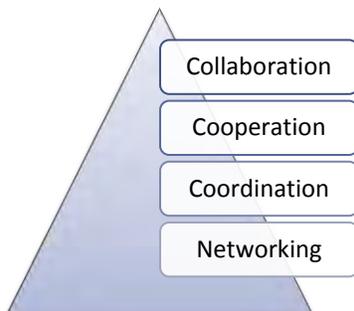
<http://www.jbassoc.com/reports/documents/slides%20acyf%20briefing%20ehs.pdf>

Early Head Start/Child Welfare Services Initiative Final Synthesis Report Volume I. Prepared by: James Bell Associates. April 2009.

http://www.jbassoc.com/reports/documents/ehs%20final%20report%20volume%20i%2004_22_09.pdf

Volume II - Compendium of Grantee-Specific Findings.

http://www.jbassoc.com/reports/documents/ehs%20final%20synthesis%20report%20volume%20ii%2009_22_09.pdf



PAPERS/ARTICLES:

The following papers and articles have been developed by organizations external to the Federal government and include valuable information about exploring and implementing meaningful partnerships across early childhood and child welfare systems.

Collaborative Partnerships between Early Care & Education and Child Welfare: Supporting Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families Through Risk to Resilience. Office of Child Care- National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative at ZERO TO THREE. August 2011. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/ta/pubs/nitcci/ChildWelfareECEBrief.pdf>

A Call to Action On Behalf of Maltreated Infants and Toddlers. American Humane Association, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, and ZERO TO THREE. 2011. <http://www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/federal-policy/childwelfareweb.pdf>

An Assessment of Services Partnerships Affecting Younger Children. Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood. October 2009. <http://www.qic-ec.org/documents/research-and-findings/research-commissioned-papers/An-Assessment-of-Services-Partnerships-Affecting-Younger-Children.pdf>

Allied for better outcomes: child welfare and early childhood. Center on the Study of Social Policy. August 2010.

<http://www.cssp.org/publications/strengthening-families/allied-for-better-outcomes-child-welfare-and-early-childhood-august-20101.pdf>

Child Care Bulletin Building Partnerships for Children and Families, Issue 35. Winter 2009. http://209.41.164.79/resources/Child_Care_Bulletin_Issue_35.pdf

Protecting the Youngest: The Role of Early Care and Education in Preventing and Responding to Child Maltreatment. National Conference of State Legislators. 2007.

<http://www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/protectingyoung.pdf>

Supporting Infants and Toddlers in the Child Welfare System: The Hope of Early Head Start, Technical Assistance Paper #9. Early Head Start National Resource Center. 2005.

<http://www.ehsnrc.org/PDFfiles/TA9.pdf>

TIP SHEET:

This tip sheet has been developed by the Early Childhood-Child Welfare Partnership as a practical resource to be used by multiple audiences; including policymakers, program administrators, and services providers. Additional tip sheets will be posted soon.

Policies and programs that promote educational access, stability, and success for vulnerable children and families <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/ec-cw-tipsheet.pdf>

WEBSITES:

These websites contain additional information about various agencies and their technical assistance products; including ways to build partnerships.

Child Welfare Information Gateway

Collaboration between Child Welfare and Early Childhood Systems

http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/service_array/earlychildhood/collaboration_ec.cfm

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC)

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov>

Office of Child Care

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/>

Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood

<http://www.qic-ec.org/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD-CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP:

ECCWPartnership@pal-tech.com