



# Quarterly News and Report

Fall 2007

12200 Pecos Street Westminster, Colorado 80234

## ADAMS COUNTY IS AWARDED EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS BUILDING GRANT

The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) is a coalition of public and private agencies working to improve coordination and enhance services for young children and their families. ECPAC seeks to:

- Improve school readiness
- Enhance the quality of early care and education
- Increase availability and affordability of quality child care
- Provide stronger advocacy at the local, state and federal levels
- Position Adams County to take advantage of funding opportunities.

### Partners

Adams 12 Five Star Schools  
Adams County Head Start  
Adams County School District 14  
Adams County School District 27J  
Adams County School District 50  
Adams County Social Services  
Assets for Colorado Youth  
Children's Outreach Project  
Community Health Services  
Community Reach Center  
Child Care Innovations  
Front Range Community College  
Invest in Kids  
Little Giants Learning Center  
Mapleton Public Schools  
North Metro Community Services  
Tri-County Health Department  
17<sup>th</sup> Judicial District

The Early Childhood Councils Act (HB07-1062), a bill sponsored by Representative Judy Solano and enacted by the Colorado legislature, expanded local early childhood councils statewide. As a result, the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) is now one of 31 state-funded early childhood councils in Colorado. ECPAC, through the Adams County Foundation, was awarded \$183,226 for two years (July 2007-June 2009) from the Colorado Department of Education to use for early childhood system building. "As a result of the Early Childhood Councils Act, Adams County is now able to work more effectively with the state on building an early childhood system of care for families with young children," said Commissioner Alice J. Nichol.



The goals of the grant include:

- Hiring an individual to direct the work of ECPAC
- Strengthen the early childhood council board to ensure strong decision-making and accountability
- Completing a comprehensive community assessment
- Developing a strategic plan
- Developing a professional development plan
- Developing reporting and accountability mechanisms

In September 2007, the Adams County Community & Economic Opportunity Department promoted Elizabeth Groginsky from Head Start Administrator to Assistant Director of the Department. In addition to coordinating the work of the three divisions – Head Start, Workforce & Business and Community Development – Elizabeth will direct the work of the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County. She will work with the ECPAC partners, community stakeholders and the Colorado Department of Education to ensure strong decision-making, reporting and accountability.

For more information please contact:

Elizabeth Groginsky at 303.453.8503 or [egroginsky@co.adams.co.us](mailto:egroginsky@co.adams.co.us)



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## ECPAC SCHOOL READINESS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

School Readiness Quality Improvement funding is granted to communities through the Colorado Department of Health and Human Services to improve the quality of early childhood programs – and subsequently the school readiness of young children. ECPAC, through the Adams County Foundation was awarded \$315,000 a year from three years (July 2006-June 2009) to improve school readiness in Adams County. The ECPAC School Readiness Quality Improvement Project includes 19 early care and education facilities in Adams County (67 classrooms) that serve over 1400 young children and families. Participating agencies include family child care providers, child care centers, Head Start and three school districts.

The School Readiness Quality Improvement Project is focused upon:



- Measuring the quality of Adams County ECE facilities and tailoring individual quality improvement plans based upon identified needs
- Increasing the number of providers with college-level early childhood training
- Increasing access to early childhood mental health services in child care settings
- Increasing the involvement of families in their children's education
- Addressing the unique early education experiences of second language learners
- Collecting reliable outcome data that can be used to guide the School Readiness Project

### 2006-2007 Achievements

**Quality of Learning Environments:** ECPAC provided Qualistar ratings, quality improvement coaching and funding to improve learning environments to all School Readiness classrooms. For the first time in Adams County, one center achieved a 4-star Qualistar rating, the highest possible.

**Professional Development:** ECPAC funded college courses in early childhood education for 56 ECE professionals at School Readiness sites during 2006-2007. Also, a professional development plan was developed to address the needs of English language learners.

**Positive Child Development:** ECPAC supported implementation of the Incredible Years socio-emotional program in 25 classrooms, funding teacher training, materials and parent trainings. An early childhood mental health consultant worked with all sites to support children's healthy socio-emotional development.

**Parent and Family Engagement:** Providers received training on how to effectively engage and support the families they serve. Funding also supported parent events that included family picnics, reading carnivals and a Bring Your Parent to School day. More than 100 families participated in trainings through the Incredible Years and Assets for Colorado Youth.

For more information contact Angela Goldrick, School Readiness Coordinator, at 303.818.1818 or [angela@ecpac.org](mailto:angela@ecpac.org)



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## Recent Events

### Community Appreciation Event

On May 21, 2007 Smart Start Colorado and the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County convened a community event in Thornton to celebrate current successes and highlight the partnership between state and local communities. Colorado Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien keynoted the event, which was attended by 250 Adams County early childhood professionals and community stakeholders. The Lieutenant Governor recognized the efforts in Adams County and shared the state's vision for an early childhood system. Jodi Hardin, Smart Start Colorado Director, shared the Smart Start vision that "*all children are valued and thriving.*" Rosemarie Allen, Colorado's Child Care Director, shared how school readiness grants support the work of Smart Start Colorado. More than 115 early care and education professionals were recognized for their commitment to improving their own professional development. ECPAC also gathered feedback from the community about their priorities for an early care and education system.



Jodi Hardin, Smart Start Colorado Director, shared the Smart Start vision that "*all children are valued and thriving.*" Rosemarie Allen, Colorado's Child Care Director, shared how school readiness grants support the work of Smart Start Colorado. More than 115 early care and education professionals were recognized for their commitment to improving their own professional development. ECPAC also gathered feedback from the community about their priorities for an early care and education system.

Smart Start Colorado is a statewide alliance of early childhood partnerships working together to create a *comprehensive* system for young children birth to age eight and their families.

### Stroll Along for Children



On September 14, 2007 ECPAC and North Metro Community Services sponsored a Stroll Along for Children at E.B. Rains Park in Northglenn. The ECPAC partners provided fun and engaging events for children and families. The event was used to raise awareness with parents in the community about the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County and healthy child growth and development. More than 200 families participated in this first annual event.

*Enhancing early care and education opportunities in Adams County.*

[www.ecpac.org](http://www.ecpac.org)



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## Monthly meetings

ECPAC meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month. Meetings are open to the public, and take place from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Brighton Room at the Adams County Western Service Center, 12200 Pecos St. Westminster, CO 80234.

In 2007, ECPAC completed a facilitated strategic planning process to define our core values and establish a work plan for the coming year. Currently, ECPAC has six committees addressing the following components of early childhood systems work:

- Policy and Legislature
- Parent and Family Engagement
- Budget and Accountability
- Professional Development
- Business and Community Outreach
- Internal Communication and Visibility



## ECPAC'S CORE VALUES

Quality Care and Education  
Connections & Relationships  
Collaboration/networking  
Results Focused  
Community Ownership  
Making a Difference

*Enhancing early care and education opportunities in Adams County.*

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