



Investing in Oak Park's Future:

A Strategic Plan for the Partnership for Human Development

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sponsored by:



Collaboration
for Early Childhood
Care & Education

Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education

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The Collaboration is a public/private partnership in Oak Park which seeks to assure that all children have access to high quality care and education from birth through their entry into Kindergarten. The Collaboration is the sponsor of the Partnership for Human Development (PHD).

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Investing in Oak Park's Future: A Strategic Plan for the Partnership for Human Development

The Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education has developed a strategic plan to create a coordinated, high-quality system of early childhood services that will support all parents of young children and make meaningful progress in narrowing the achievement gap among them as they enter kindergarten. This plan is built upon the existing resources in the community, and is designed to make maximum use of potential sources of state and foundation funding. The plan will become Oak Park's *Partnership for Human Development*.



Background

The Partnership for Human Development is a strategic initiative of the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education (the Collaboration), a public-private partnership whose participants include all local jurisdictions—the village, park district, township, elementary and high school districts, and library—as well as Concordia University, Triton College, preschools, child care centers and home providers. Since its inception in 2001, the Collaboration has initiated a substantial number of programs designed to further the goal of assuring that all children in Oak Park have high quality early childhood experiences. These efforts have significantly strengthened the quality of services in several early childhood programs. In addition, the Collaboration has established a common vision and culture of collaboration among preschools, child care centers, and other organizations that serve families and their young children in Oak Park.

The Collaboration recognized in 2007, however, that its efforts must expand to achieve its goal of a well coordinated early childhood system capable of preparing every child to be ready to succeed and eager to learn when entering kindergarten. Therefore, it secured funding from the Village of Oak Park and Oak Park River Forest High School District 200 to complete a comprehensive strategic planning process. A Steering Committee including parents, representatives from the Village, Elementary and High School Districts, and other community leaders met from May through December of 2008 to guide the development of a roadmap for creating an effective early childhood system. A team of consultants was engaged to lead the process of assessing needs and existing resources, investigating possible structures and strategies, identifying potential funding sources, and developing measurable benchmarks for success.

This report contains the Strategic Plan developed by the Collaboration for the Partnership for Human Development.

Oak Park – Committed to Equal Opportunity

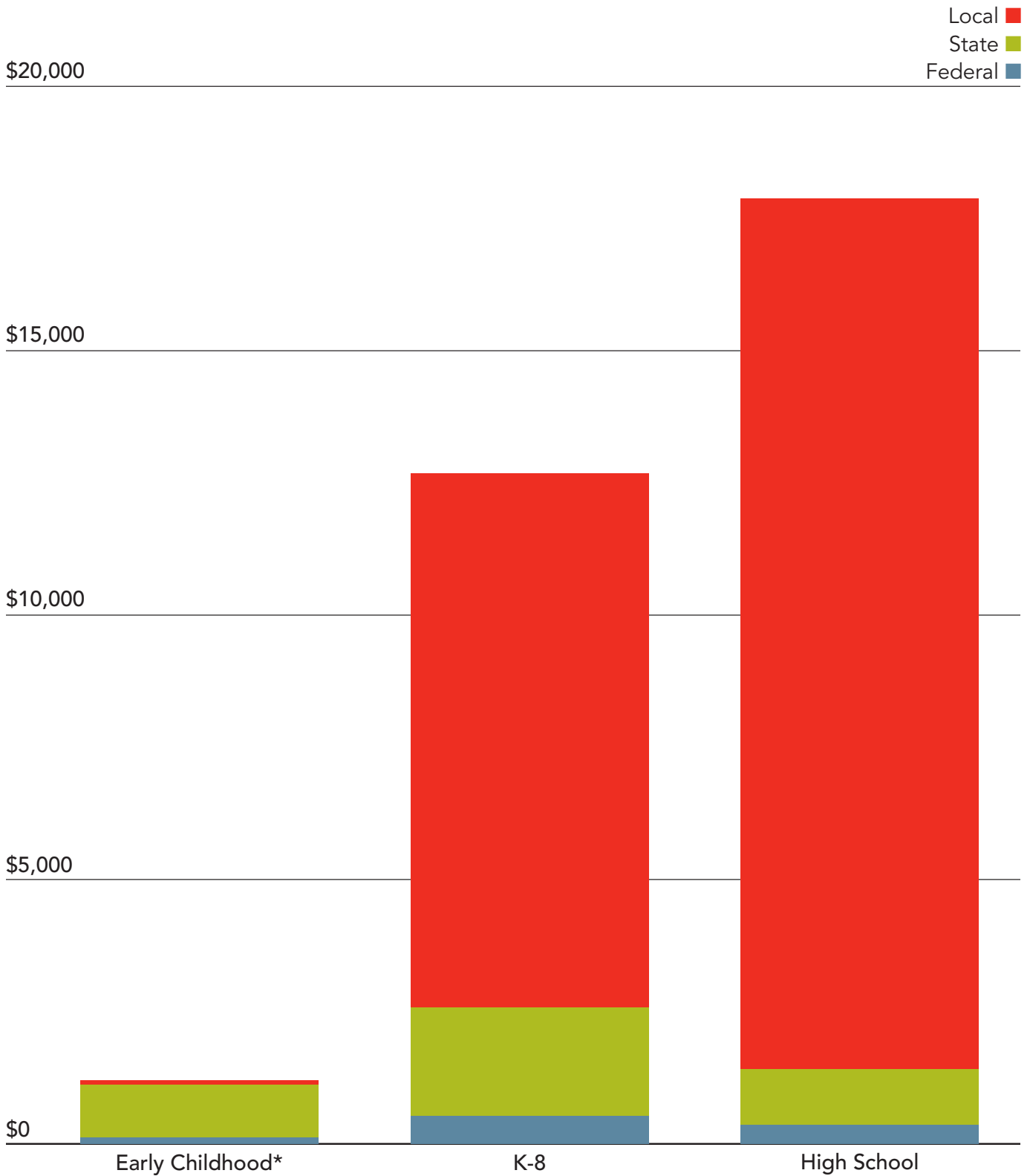
Oak Park is an inner-ring suburb of Chicago, originally settled in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The village grew rapidly in the early 1900's, and reached a population of over 60,000 in the 1930s. During the 1960s and 70s Oak Park became a model integrated community, explicitly embracing the diversity of its residents. The community prides itself on striving to provide every resident with an equal opportunity for success, especially its children.

“Two-thirds of the achievement gap is already evident when children begin kindergarten.”

Despite this commitment, Oak Park continues to struggle with a stubborn achievement gap between students from more and less advantaged backgrounds. For the 2007-08 school year, children eligible for free or reduced price lunch were 2.5 to 5 times more likely to fail to meet state standards on the ISAT or PSAE exams than children who were not¹. While significant energy and resources have been devoted to narrowing the achievement gap in elementary, middle, and high school, far less attention and resources have been devoted to addressing this issue at its origins – in the early childhood years (see graph).

¹ Source: 2007-08 District Report Cards accessed at www.isbe.net

Annual Public Education Expenditure Per Child in Oak Park



*Includes federal Head Start, state Preschool for All, state Child Care Assistance, and local support for the Collaboration for Early Childhood

Oak Park's Youngest Children – By the Numbers

Approximately 4,100 children age five and under live in Oak Park², an increase of 13 percent since 2000. Seven hundred children are born each year in Oak Park, including approximately 60 who are born at low birthweight. Young children in Oak Park are somewhat more likely to be Caucasian (approximately 75%) and less likely to be African-American (approximately 19%) than are the general population of the village. Eighty to ninety infants each year are born to families with incomes low enough to qualify for All Kids Health Insurance Level 1 (Medicaid).

In each grade level, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 serves roughly 550 children. Ninety children in each grade level are from families whose incomes are low enough to qualify for free or reduced price lunch. In recent years, approximately 75 students each year have failed to meet state standards in reading and/or math in third grade.

Taken as a whole, the demographic and school data suggest that there are approximately 650 children in Oak Park under age five who are at risk for poor performance once they enter Kindergarten.

This includes approximately 450 (or 90 children at each age level) who are at risk as a result of being from low income families. There are also approximately 200 young children³ (or 40 per age level) who may be at risk for other reasons, such as children's special needs or difficult family situations, who are in need of intervention and education services. *To put this total of 650 at risk children in perspective, this represents a greater population than that of Oak Park's largest elementary school, or of any single grade cohort in the elementary system. It equals roughly 20% of the student population of Oak Park River Forest High School.*

Services Available in Oak Park

Early Childhood Education and Care

There are eighteen full-day child care centers in Oak Park, including one that is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Together these eighteen centers have a combined capacity of approximately 850 children birth through age five⁴. There are also approximately 40 licensed family child care homes in Oak Park, which together can serve approximately 320 children. The total capacity for formal child care (center or licensed home) is 15 percent lower than the estimated demand of approximately 1,400 "slots."⁵ The largest gap in service is in care for children under age two, as few centers serve children this young.

There are thirteen part-day private preschools in Oak Park, including four that are accredited by NAEYC. Together these preschools serve almost 850 children.

The Head Start program in Oak Park serves 68 children ages three to five, about half of whom live in Oak Park. The state-funded District 97 Pre-K Partnership (PKP) program at Longfellow School recently expanded to serve 120 children. Two full-day programs, the Oak Park-River Forest Day Nursery and ABC Toon Town, offer Preschool for All services to 76 children. Preschool For All is a state-funded program for children age 3-5 that gives priority admission to those who are deemed to be "at-risk" for academic failure.

² Source: American FactFinder at www.census.gov, 2005-2007 American Community Survey

³ Estimate based on national statistic of 5% of preschool age children having disabilities, from U.S. Department of Education. (2001). *To Assure the Free Appropriate Public Education of All Children with Disabilities: Twenty-third Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

⁴ Source: DCFS and Child Care Resource & Referral data from 2004

⁵ Estimate of demand prepared by IFF using the methodology described in their report *Moving Towards a System*. See <http://www.iff.org/content.cfm/statewideneedsassess> for further information.

Parent Education and Support

Parentesis offers support for parents of young children in both its drop-in center and its parenting groups. Parentesis provides group services to approximately 10-15 teen parents and 20 single parents in an average month, as well providing intensive, short-term home-based counseling and parent education to approximately 100 families per year. The need for intensive, longer-term services to at-risk families with very young children continues to grow and far exceeds Parentesis' current capacity.

The Existing Landscape – Voices from the Community

Any successful structure for early childhood must take into consideration the unique characteristics of a community. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of the existing systems of support in Oak Park, intensive qualitative research was conducted. The goal was to understand Oak Park's existing resources and to determine any gaps in service.

A total of 30 one-on-one interviews were conducted with a variety of stakeholders. These included:

- For-profit and nonprofit day care providers
- Licensed home care providers
- Parents
- Health, mental health and social service agencies
- Recreational services
- Local government

Overall, early childhood care and education is seen as important by parents, service providers and community leaders in Oak Park. There is general consensus that Oak Park provides a rich variety of activities and supports for families with young children. However, affordability and the fact that many programs are offered during the work day prevent many families from accessing them. In addition, there is no single, centralized source which provides families with information about these programs.

Key findings from the interviews are:

- Parents
- *Regardless of income, many parents feel isolated and experience a high level of stress when trying to find adequate child care.* Almost all rely upon word of mouth as a primary means for locating appropriate child care services.
 - Income is a powerful determinant of the quality early childhood experience. Those with higher incomes and flexibility to their schedules have access to a wider range of support and activities.
 - Many families rely upon a patchwork of child care solutions. These can include family members, baby sitting pools, park district programs and nanny care. A number have been creative in finding part time and/or at-home working arrangements.
 - *While child care is a significant expense for any young family, this cost burden is especially difficult for lower income families.* The lowest income families can receive state assistance which allows them to send their children to child care. However given the required co-payments, this still places a very large burden on the family. Most have little or no safety net if emergencies occur.
 - *Perhaps the greatest hardship is on those families earning just above the income cut off for assistance. Having to shoulder the entire cost of child care essentially prices these families out of the formal child care market.*

Child Care Providers

- The vast majority of centers in Oak Park are individual entities. Very few have more than one location. None of the large child care chains are located in the community.
- *The majority of for-profit centers provide full day childcare. They also tend to have a larger percentage of families receiving assistance.*
- Many of the directors and owners of these centers express a sense of isolation. The Collaboration for Early Childhood provides needed resources but all felt they could use more support. Some noted an interest in pooling resources and sharing of best practices with other centers.
- New centers, in particular, could benefit from support: training on best practices; recruiting staff and securing resources; networking opportunities. Mentoring would be welcomed by some.
- *A universal concern voiced by all providers is in finding and holding quality staff.* Poor pay and long hours were often cited as reasons for this. However, lack of management training was also stated as a reason for staff turnover.

Social Service Agencies

- One of the challenges facing many agencies that provide social services to young families is creating awareness especially among those families with the greatest need. Activities such as advertising, the distribution of flyers, and participation in community fairs are utilized but many felt that more outreach is needed.
- Some were interested in partnering more closely with other agencies. One suggestion was the possibility of obtaining permissions for file sharing between agencies.
- The Village Health Department provides important outreach and quality-control services to the community. The Village nurse contacts and provides services and instruction to all pregnant moms who have applied for public aid up until their children reach 1 year old. In addition the Village Health Department inspects all of Oak Park's childcare centers and licensed home care providers.

A Vision for Oak Park's Young Children

The Collaboration for Early Childhood Care & Education espouses the vision that *all Oak Park children will arrive at Kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed and eager to learn*. Specifically, it envisions a community in which:

- Every child has access to high-quality early childhood education and care
- All parents of young children have the information and support they need in their role as their child's first and most important teacher
- The "most-at-risk" children and their families receive the intensive services they need to ensure school readiness and healthy development

Achieving this vision will require that a solid system of early childhood services be developed in Oak Park. Currently, while there are many services available to families, there is no coherent system that supports and ensures the quality of these services or that ensures that every family has the information and resources needed to access these services. This Strategic Plan for the Partnership for Human Development is focused on creating this much-needed system.



COORDINATED, HIGH QUALITY SYSTEM
Mechanism to find all Children
System of referrals & follow-up
Professional development for quality services

CHILDREN & PARENTS GET NEEDED SERVICES
Parent information & support
High quality early care & education

ALL CHILDREN READY TO SUCCEED

Overview of Proposed System

Creating a system that ensures that very young children and parents in Oak Park get the services they need will require a high degree of collaboration – no one organization or governmental agency can achieve this alone. Fortunately, Oak Park has a very solid history of cooperation among early childhood providers, school districts, the township and village governments, the library and the park district, and many concerned citizens upon which to build. The continued involvement and commitment of all of these parties will be essential for the Partnership for Human Development's success.

Heretofore, the work of the Collaboration has been done primarily by volunteers with the assistance of a few part-time consultants. While the volunteers' continued participation is critical, there is a need to create a more formal network with dedicated staff focused on the early childhood system. A four-task-force structure for the Partnership is proposed, each with specific responsibilities and anticipated results. This structure and the recommended strategies have been chosen to maximize Oak Park's ability to leverage resources both within the community and from other public and private sources. The four task forces, their charges, and the recommended initial tasks for each task force are detailed in the pages that follow.



I. Developmental Screening and Referral System Task Force

The Developmental Screening and Referral System Committee would include early care and education providers, health care providers, District 97 Early Childhood Special Education staff, Early Intervention providers, and parents of young children. The Committee would be staffed by a full-time Early Childhood Network Coordinator who would be responsible for maintaining the involvement of all stakeholders in the system and for overseeing the implementation of the system. This role is analogous to the role of Network Coordinator in the All Our Kids (AOK) Networks (see “Learning from Other Communities” box p.12).

The Task Force’s charge will be to:

- Ensure all children birth to five receive periodic developmental screening
- Ensure all children who need assessment and services receive them
- Ensure accurate, up-to-date inventory of services is maintained

Key tasks for the Task Force in the next two to three years include:

- Develop consensus on the screening approach for reaching all children
One approach might be a two-stage system, with parents/caregivers completing questionnaire-based screening (e.g., Ages and Stages Questionnaire) on every child, and Early Intervention Providers/School District completing in-person screening on those with identified concerns
- Provide screening tool and training to all early childhood providers and to interested health care providers
- Develop other outreach strategies to reach all children (in collaboration with Parent Engagement and Support Committee and Physicians’ Network)
- Study the transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education to determine the extent to which children fall through cracks in services
- Convene a workgroup of providers to develop a common referral form and procedure
- Roll out the new form/procedure to wide range of service providers—early childhood and care programs, health care providers, social service providers, faith communities, West Suburban Day Care Association, etc.
- Disseminate widely, the procedure for referrals to Early Intervention and District 97 Early Childhood Special Education
- Develop mechanism for Early Intervention and District 97 to provide feedback on every referral
- Create indicators to track service receipt

II. Parent Information and Support Task Force

The Parent Information and Support Task Force will include early care and education providers, health providers, and other community programs that work with parents of young children. The Task Force will be staffed by the same full-time Early Childhood Network Coordinator as the Developmental Screening and Referral Task Force, and would also have a full-time Database Administrator/Administrative Assistant.

The Task Force's charge will be to:

- Ensure every parent has information about child development and services available in the community
- Ensure that every at-risk family is offered intensive parent education services
- Ensure all parents have opportunities to participate in some kind of parent group or network

Key tasks for the Task Force in the next two to three years include:

- Design and implement a voluntary database of Oak Park parents with appropriate security features
- Develop all necessary release forms
- Review available materials for parent education and develop locally customized versions
- Work with Collaboration partners to determine the best approach for delivering parenting information within their settings
- Update early childhood resource directory regularly
- Develop website with online directory
- Continue to apply for Prevention Initiative funding and/or Healthy Families funding to expand intensive parenting education and support services
- Develop recruitment materials for programs and distribute widely
- Develop mini-grant program and support materials for preschools, churches, library, etc to sponsor parent groups

“The Collaboration espouses the vision that all Oak Park children will arrive at kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed and eager to learn.”

III. Professional Development Task Force

The Professional Development Task Force will include early childhood professionals, representatives from Child Care Resource & Referral Provider Services, and local college early childhood faculty. It will be staffed by a part-time Professional Development Coordinator. As the Task Force's work expands, part-time Program Mentors may also be contracted with to work with individual centers seeking to strengthen the quality of their programs.

The Task Force's charge will be to:

- Increase participation in professional development activities by early care and education teachers and family child care providers
- Ensure involvement of Oak Park early care and education programs in statewide quality enhancement initiatives like Great START, the Quality Rating System, and Gateways To Opportunity.

Key tasks for the Task Force in the next two to three years include:

- Develop consensus around goals for professional development through Director's Roundtable of early childhood providers
- Initiate Owner's Roundtable of early childhood providers and develop consensus in that group around the goals
- Create strong partnership between Collaboration and YWCA Provider Services to ensure access to and participation in trainings offered by Child Resource and Referral system and to expand availability of training in Oak Park
- Develop strong partnership between Collaboration and YWCA Provider Services to facilitate use of/engagement in existing state systems for professional development and quality enhancement
- Continue annual Symposium
- Continue partnership with Triton College to make early childhood education classes accessible to local staff
- Offer management training to centers to help them implement good business and personnel management practices that could help lessen turnover and stabilize programs
- Recruit business partners to provide incentives for providers for participating in training
- Develop mechanism to pay up front for coursework that will be reimbursed through the Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program
- Create dedicated staff position to work with centers around engaging in Quality Rating System, Great START and Gateways to Opportunity
- Consider creating increased licensing standards for Oak Park centers that would be enforced by the Village Health Department

Learning From Other Communities

Cicero's All Our Kids (AOK) Early Childhood Network: Nearby Cicero has one of the original AOK Networks funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services. The Network is a community-based collaboration that is committed to developing a high-quality, well-coordinated, easily-accessible system of care that will promote positive growth and development for children 0-5 and their families. The overall goal of the AOK Network is to ensure that all children under the age of five years and their families have the opportunity to receive the services they need – from prenatal care to well-baby checkups to parenting education to specialized services, such as speech therapy, physical therapy or home visits. The Cicero AOK Network will be a great resource to the Partnership for Human Development as it implements its Parent Information and Support services and its Developmental Screening and Referral System. The Coordinator of the Cicero AOK is a regular participant in the Collaboration and has offered her assistance and support.

Decatur's Baby Talk: Nine workgroup members travelled to Decatur, Illinois in August to learn about that community's highly successful Baby Talk initiative. For almost 20 years, Baby Talk has partnered with hospitals, obstetric and pediatric clinics, WIC and other health and education providers to reach all families with young children, especially the most vulnerable families in the community. Their strategy is to go where parents and young children already are, particularly clinic waiting rooms, and to provide a consistent message about how parents can effectively support their young children's development. The following are best practices that the workgroup felt should be included into our programs for Oak Park.

- Seek out families where they already are rather than requiring them to find us.
- Communicate a consistent message at every point of contact, when providing early childhood education.
- Provide multiple opportunities for families to hear that message.
- Work to nurture and strengthen the relationship between family and existing service providers in the community.

IV. Preschool for All/Head Start Coordinating Task Force

The Preschool for All/Head Start Coordinating Task Force will be led by Oak Park Elementary District 97, and will include representatives from the District's Pre-K and Early Childhood Special Education programs, Head Start, full-day programs with state-funded Preschool for All, and representatives from private area preschools. It will be staffed by a Preschool Coordinator who will be responsible for direct recruitment of at-risk children, coordination among programs, and provision of technical assistance to preschool programs for continuous quality improvement.

The Task Force's charge will be to:

- Ensure that all at-risk children in Oak Park attend preschool (part-day or enriched full-day program)
- Ensure that all publicly funded preschool programs (part-day and full-day) in Oak Park provide the educational experience needed for children to arrive at Kindergarten ready to succeed

Key tasks for the Task Force in the next two to three years include:

- Develop cross-program recruitment committee to coordinate outreach and recruitment of children and families
- Develop common set of recruitment materials describing available options
- Identify low-income children through multiple means—elementary school surveys to find siblings, WIC, Health Dept, "word of mouth campaign" by current preschool parents, Children's Clinic (Infant Welfare Society), Oak Leyden, etc.
- Implement an incentive system for (at-risk) parents to "stay in touch" and remain part of the database through their child's third year so the Partnership does not lose touch with them
- Develop a collaboration with service providers in Austin and other surrounding communities so that they notify Oak Park when a family moves from their community into Oak Park
- Coordinate recruitment among programs and implement a tracking system to ensure that hard-to-reach families are engaged in services
- Implement regular committee meetings to identify and address common barriers to participation—consider conducting a study of non-participating families to identify barriers
- Initiate collaborative curriculum planning among Preschool For All and Head Start providers, led by District 97
- Implement a common assessment instrument
- Build on community-generated expectations for incoming Kindergartners
- Create and facilitate a shared learning community focused on instructional improvement—elementary school district and Head Start provide access to one another's staff for professional development
- Provide technical assistance to community-based Preschool For All providers

Required resources and potential funding sources

Existing resources

The community of Oak Park already invests a significant amount of resources in early childhood. Most of this is in the form of parent fees and tuition for privately operated preschool and child care programs. State and federal funds support preschool for over 200 children, and state Child Care Assistance supports early care and education for approximately 400 young children each month. The various public jurisdictions invest a modest amount in the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education. Finally, countless hours of volunteer time (including over 4,000 hours per year from Collaboration members) are devoted to creating quality early care and education services in the community.

The state of Illinois also funds several professional development programs, including Gateways to Opportunity (a scholarship program for teachers seeking a degree in early childhood education) and Great START (a program that supplements teachers' wages based on tenure and education level). Most recently, the state has launched the Quality Rating System, which offers opportunities for child care programs to enhance quality and receive additional funds. All of these resources are under-utilized by local programs, partly because they may appear daunting to access and maintain.

In order to maximize the impact of these currently invested resources, and to fulfill Oak Park's promise of providing equal opportunity to all of its children, strategic investment of additional resources is needed. Primarily, these resources are needed to support staff positions that allow professionals to devote full attention to the coordination and maximum utilization of programs and services in the community. In order to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and youngest children and families, new resources also need to be devoted to expanding intensive parent education and support services.

New resources needed

The Partnership for Human Development recommends the following investments in the early childhood system in Oak Park:

- Funding for a full-time Early Childhood Network Coordinator and full-time Database Administrator/Administrative Assistant, as well as associated costs for their office space, database maintenance costs, and mailing and printing costs for the Parent Information system. Total annual costs: approximately \$150,000, plus start up costs of approximately \$25,000 for database design.
- Funding for intensive parent education and support services for an additional 70-75 families with at-risk infants and toddlers each year. The Collaboration and Parenthesis will continue to apply for funding for these services through the ISBE Early Childhood Block Grant's highly competitive Prevention Initiative application process, and are investigating other potential sources of state funding. Total annual cost: approximately \$300,000.
- Funding for a part-time Preschool Coordinator who would be housed at Oak Park Elementary District 97, and associated costs for recruiting parents to participate in preschool programs and for tracking children's progress in these programs. Total annual costs: approximately \$40,000.
- Funding for a part-time Professional Development Coordinator who could be an independent contractor or housed in an existing community agency. Total annual cost: approximately \$20,000.
- Funding for intensive mentoring for programs seeking to achieve a higher level in the Quality Rating System, including funding for intensive on-site consultation and for needed program enhancements, such as additional curriculum materials and equipment. Cost per center: approximately \$25,000 per center.

Investing in Young Children Has the Highest Returns

Investing in children and their families during the birth to five year period has the greatest potential for long-term returns in children's academic success, avoidance of problem behavior, and ultimate contributions to the workforce and society.

Two-thirds of the achievement gap is already evident when children walk through the door on their first day of Kindergarten¹. This gap develops as a result of the markedly different early learning experiences that children have in more and less advantaged homes, particularly in the amount and variety of language interactions that very young children have with their adult caregivers². Indeed, research has shown that by age three, a child of professionals has had about 25 million more words addressed to him than has a child of a parent on welfare, or about three times as much experience in early language use³. The effects of these early experiences are long-lasting and profound. Longitudinal research has shown that early language and learning experiences account for as much as 60 percent of the variance in children's performance on measures of vocabulary and reading skills in third grade⁴.

An explosion of knowledge in the early childhood field over the past few decades has produced a clear prescription for narrowing this early “opportunity gap.” It requires developing a coherent, community-based system of early childhood services that provides the most at-risk families early and intensive coaching and support, on-going support for parents' involvement in their children's education, and high quality preschool for at least two years before kindergarten⁵.

Research has shown that intensive home visiting programs focused on parenting skill development significantly reduce child abuse and neglect. High quality center-based programs for children birth through age five can have significant and lasting impacts on language and literacy development, particularly when they include a strong parent involvement component. Today's research-based early childhood programs lay a firm foundation for children's success in school and later life. Indeed, Nobel Laureate James Heckman has demonstrated that “early interventions targeted toward disadvantaged children have much higher returns than later interventions such as reduced pupil-teacher ratios, public job training, convict rehabilitation programs, tuition subsidies, or expenditure on police.”⁶

1 U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *America's Kindergartners*, NCEs 2000-070, by Kristin Denton, Elvira Germino-Hausken. Project Officer, Jerry West, Washington, DC: 2000.

2 Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, Board on Children, Youth, and Families, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Shonkoff, Jack P. and Deborah A. Phillips, Editors. National Academy Press, Washington, DC.

3 Hart, B. & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

4 Ibid

5 Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, op. cit.

6 Heckman, J. (2006). Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children. *Science*, 312, p. 1902

Benchmarks for Success

The Partnership for Human Development has developed specific benchmarks for the Oak Park early childhood system. These have been chosen because they are both measurable and relevant to the overall goal of preparing all children for success in school and later life.

Child Outcomes:

Every child arrives at Kindergarten healthy, safe, ready to succeed and eager to learn

By 2010, 80% of all children identified through screening as needing further assessment and/or services receive them

By 2012, 90% of all children identified through screening as needing further assessment and/or services receive them

By Spring of 2011, 80% of children in Oak Park Preschool for All and Head Start programs demonstrate age-appropriate proficiency in each domain of development in accordance with the Illinois Early Learning Standards

By 2014, 90% of children in Oak Park Preschool for All and Head Start programs demonstrate age-appropriate proficiency in each domain of development in accordance with the Illinois Early Learning Standards



Service Delivery**Outcomes:**

Parents and children receive the early childhood care and education and parenting education and support services they need

By 2010-11, 80% of kindergarten students with Free or Reduced Price Lunch assistance have history of participation in Preschool For All / Head Start (PFA/HS) or a program meeting the Quality Rating System Level 3 or 4 criteria

By 2012-13, 95% of kindergarten students with Free or Reduced-Lunch (FRPL) have history of participation in PFA/HS or a program meeting the Quality Rating System Level 3 or 4 criteria

By 2010, 90% of teen parents and of families receiving All Kids Level 1 health insurance for their child under age 3 receive referral to intensive parent education program

By 2010, 20% of referred parents are enrolled in intensive parent education program

By 2012, 50% of referred parents are enrolled in intensive parent education program

By 2011-12, 70% of kindergarten/1st grade students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have documentation of receiving services in early childhood (if they lived in Oak Park in early childhood)

By 2013-14, 80% of kindergarten/1st grade students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have documentation of receiving services in early childhood

System Outcomes:

Oak Park has a high quality, coordinated early childhood system

By 2010, 50% of all families with children under age five (including 80% of All Kids Level 1 participants) are included in the voluntary database and receive developmental information and an early childhood resource directory

By 2012, 75% of all families with children under age five (including 90% of All Kids Level 1 participants) are included in the voluntary database and receive developmental information and an early childhood resource directory

By 2010, 75% of teachers and child care providers have more than the DCFS-mandated 15 documented hours of continuing professional development each year

By 2012, 90% of teachers and child care providers have more than the DCFS-mandated 15 documented hours of continuing professional development each year

By 2010, 50% of teachers and directors in Oak Park early childhood programs will have above minimum DCFS educational requirements for their role

By 2012, 75% of teachers and directors in Oak Park early childhood programs will have above minimum DCFS educational requirements for their role

By 2010, 50% of eligible centers in Oak Park will be engaged in the Quality Rating System (QRS) process

By 2012, 50% of eligible centers will have advanced at least 1 level in the QRS and/or have achieved Level 3 rating

Next Steps

Work has already begun on forming the identified committees for the Partnership for Human Development. Important next steps in the coming months include:

- Identifying funding for the Early Childhood Network Coordinator and Database Administrator/Administrative Assistant.
- Linking Oak Park's emerging Early Childhood Network with the All Our Kids Networks' statewide collaboration of similar networks.
- Identifying funding for the Preschool Coordinator.
- Establishing a coordinated system of recruitment for Head Start, District 97 Pre-K, and Preschool for All in child care centers
- Linking the Preschool Coordinating Committee to state-level efforts to coordinate Head Start, Preschool for All, and child care.
- Applying for state funding for intensive parenting education and support services from the Illinois Department of Human Services and/or the Illinois State Board of Education
- Seeking grant funding for the Professional Development Coordinator
- Seeking grant funding for intensive program mentorship for child care centers interested in engaging in the Quality Rating System and raising their center's rating level

The Collaboration is launching the Partnership for Human Development at an opportune time – there is tremendous national and state attention on the importance of early education and care, both in government and in the private sector. By coming together as a community and committing to a comprehensive and cohesive strategy, Oak Park will be well-poised to take maximum advantage of potential new resources to address the needs of its youngest citizens and their families. Investing today in the development of infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children will produce significant and lasting returns for the well-being and achievement of Oak Park's children for decades to come.

“An investment of \$135 per child under age five will establish a well-coordinated, effective system of early care and education in Oak Park.”

The Collaboration is Well-Positioned to Implement PHD

The Collaboration is a unique, voluntary public/private partnership whose participants include all Oak Park jurisdictions – the village, park district, township, elementary and high school districts, the library – as well as Concordia University, Triton College, preschools, childcare centers and home providers. Through in-kind and direct financial support, the jurisdictions have affirmed the vital role high quality early learning and care experiences play in assuring the success of every child, and have committed their agencies to work with early care and education providers to weave a web of support for all parents of young children.

Since its inception eight years ago, the Collaboration has initiated a substantial number of programs designed to raise the profile and level of training of early childhood staff and offer a continuum of services to all families with children birth to five. Inspired by the Collaborations's model, Senator Don Harmon originated the legislation that established the Illinois Early Learning Council, which coordinates state-level early childhood efforts and developed the Preschool for All program.



Glossary

This quick reference identifies the roles various organizations play in the field of early care and education in Illinois, and defines many terms as they are used in this report.

All Our Kids (AOK) Early Childhood Networks

Local networks funded by Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) or Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to develop a high-quality, well-coordinated, easily-accessible system of care that will promote positive growth and development for children 0-5 and their families

All Kids Level 1 Participants

The All Kids program provides health insurance to children in Illinois. Level 1 Participants receive free coverage based on their family income.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

IDHS program that subsidizes child care for low-income working families

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)

IDHS-funded system for providing child care referrals to parents and training to child care providers

Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS)

State agency with primary mission of protecting children from abuse and neglect; responsible for licensing child care centers and family day care homes

Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG)

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) mechanism for funding Preschool for All, Parental Training, and Prevention Initiative programs

Early Childhood Care and Education

For this report, Early Childhood Care and Education refers to the system of programs that support children's early learning needs and includes full-day, full-year child care programs, preschool programs, and Head Start

Early Intervention

Federally funded and administered by IDHS, Early Intervention provides evaluation and direct services in sixteen areas for children birth to age three with developmental delays or disabilities

Full-Day, Full Year Child Care

Child care that is available throughout normal business hours and is open all year long

Gateways to Opportunity

Statewide system to support workforce development for the early care and education field. Supported by IDHS and foundation funding. See www.ilgateways.com

Great START

Wage supplement program that rewards eligible early care and education practitioners for receiving higher education and for remaining at their current place of employment. See www.inccrra.org

Head Start

US Department of Health and Human Services-funded program for children in poverty; provides education, health, nutrition and social services to eligible children ages three through kindergarten entry and their families

Home Child Care Provider

A child care provider who cares for children in a private home. Licensed home child care providers follow the regulations of DCFS and may care for only a limited number of children

Licensed child care

Care provided by a center or home that has been licensed by DCFS

License-exempt care

Care provided by a center or home that is legally exempt from DCFS licensure; Licensed-exempt home providers are typically relatives or close family friends who care for no more than three children

NAEYC Accreditation

National, voluntary accreditation system to set professional standards for early childhood education programs

Quality rating system

IDHS initiative that awards increased reimbursement rates to child care providers who meet quality benchmarks

Preschool for All

In 2006 the Illinois Preschool for All Program was created, expanding eligibility for state-funded preschool to all children. Programs that serve primarily at-risk populations receive priority in funding. Administered through ISBE ECBG

Prevention Initiative

ISBE funding through the ECBG that provides for intensive, research-based intervention with at-risk children birth to age three and their families

Slots

Number of spaces available, or, the number of children a program or center can accommodate at full capacity

Subsidy

Child Care Assistance for low-income working families

A unique, voluntary public/private partnership, the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education leverages local assets including: Oak Park's village government, park district, township, library, elementary school and high school districts; as well as Triton College, Concordia University, preschools, child care centers, home providers, health and social service agencies to assure that all Oak Park children will arrive at Kindergarten safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed.



Collaboration
for Early Childhood
Care & Education