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The AWARE

Early Head Start Expansion!!

Concerted Services, Inc. (CSI) Child Development Services announces the award of an expansion grant to serve an additional 100 infants, toddlers and pregnant teens in the Early Head Start Program. Ophelia Gaines, Executive Director, reports that this increase will bring an estimate 1.3 million dollars to the six counties of Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Coffee, Pierce, and Ware.

The Early Head Start (EHS) program was launched in 1995 to provide comprehensive child and family development services for low-income infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families. EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency. Funding was received from the Office of Head Start with (American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) monies. As in the past with expansion, the EHS program will continue to maintain high quality services, while evolving programmatically to meet the needs of a diverse population of children and families.

"This grant will be fully operational in March of 2010," explained Bonnie Gaskins, CDS Director. "We received official notification in December and had four of the slots filled the first week of January at the A.V. Early Head Start Center. However, between getting the other buildings ready, hiring and training staff, ordering classroom and playground furniture and material, and recruitment for the slots, our staff has been putting in extra hours." More than twenty-eight (28) new jobs will be created with this expansion grant monies.

"We are excited that we were awarded this grant and can serve additional children and teen mothers," stated Mrs. Gaskins. "We have been partnering with the school systems, Babies Can't Wait program, and Family Connections Coordinators to ensure that everything is on task. We could not have gotten this grant without the communities support."

For more information about the Early Head Start Expansion, please contact the Head Start office at (912) 285-6083.

Mission Statements

Concerted Services, Inc. Mission:

To empower people to become self-sufficient by instilling hope through advocacy, partnerships, and services that promote economic and family stability.

CSI Child Development Services Mission:

to provide a quality teaching and learning environment to meet the developmental needs of all children to ensure future educational success.

Word of the Month:

Expansion

Process of growth.

Candler Become Licensed

Concerted Services Child Development Services is proud to announce that the Candler County Head Start Center became licensed as a child care learning center. Licensed through Child Care Services section of Bright From the Start Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), the center went through the voluntary process. "I am very proud of the staff at the center," noted Child Care Director, Bonnie Gaskins. "They work very hard as a team each and every day."

Delia Newell served as the licensing consultant for DECAL and ensured that the center was in compliance with all state requirements. "Our Head Start program always goes the extra mile when it comes to quality," noted Ophelia Gaines, Executive Director for CSI. "I congratulate the staff for their outstanding work." Staff at the center are Lead Teacher: Katherine Hunter; Tina Bird, Cynthia Bird, Maggie Frazier, LaSonya McMillen, Amy Simmons and Gail Aldrich.

Staff from Candler County are congratulated for becoming licensed.



Above members of the Self-Assessment team meet and attend training. Below Bonnie Gaskins, Director, speaks to the group about the importance of the self assessment process.



"Don't just live the length of your life, live the width of it as well.

-- Diane Ackerman

Self Assessment

Performance Standard: 1304.51(i)(1) *At least once each program year, with the consultation and participation of the policy groups and, as appropriate, other community members, grantee agencies must conduct a self assessment of their effectiveness and progress in meeting program goals and objective and in implementing Federal regulations.*

Self Assessment teams consist of members from the Policy Council, Governing Board, as well as parents, community volunteers and staff. A summary of the findings will be presented to both Policy Council and Governing Board.

There are six teams reviewing the following components: (1) Education and Early Childhood Development Services; (2) Health and Nutrition; (3) Family, Community Services and ERSEA; (4) Safe Environments and Transportation; (5) Fiscal Management and Program Design and Management; and (6) Disability and Mental Health Services.

Team members included: Deborah Horton, Mary Fogle, Mary Cobb, Barbara Sams, Minnie Dotson, Wayne Crawford, Vernell Greene, Sue Brown, Lavelle Morrison, Trini Williams, Phyllis Perry, Lenera Taylor, Barbara Miller, Mamie Gordon, Juanita Willis, Sylvia Guess, Taska Knox, Patricia Mills, Jerrell Litman, Vian Glosson, Jason Lefevre, Angela Carr, Belinda Reynolds, Jessica Crews, Rosemary street, Anita Young, Joyce Mooney, Donald Griffin, Letta Cox, Andrea Jackson, Kimberly Zipperer, Glenn Cox, Charlie Dial, Pam Ingram, Kathy Jones, Randy Cox, Serge Strickland, Arlene Howard, Suzanne Manning, Carol Clarke, Jackie Woodard, Betty Thornton, Shanna Hall, Rev. James Joyce, Deborah Polczer, Shemeeka Griggs, Sabra Roberts, Betty Bennett, Stacie Sheys and Elgin Stalvey.



Read To A Child Program

“The tradition continues,” reports Ethel Blair. “Members of Leadership Waycross Alumni volunteer annually at the Ware County Head Start/Pre-K Center to support the Head Start “Read To A Child Program.” They spend time visiting the classrooms, reading interactive books to the children and had the children singing! As an added treat, several of the members of the Leadership Waycross Class of 2010 also chose to volunteer as part of their extracurricular activities.

Above Paul Smith, Assistant Manager for Ware County, made friends with Shunteria Williams and Anthony Williams. Below Dr. Rhonda Williams takes time out of her busy medical practice to read. “I love to do this every year,” noted Dr. Williams.

Participating were Dave Callaway, Carol Clarke, Letta Cox, Larry Gattis, Doris Germano, Derek Harrison, Taylor Hereford, Sharon Komanecky, Kelly Linton, Raphel Maddox, Marion Solomon-Gaines, Regina Morgan, Paul Smith, Pam Taylor, Dr. Glyn Thomas, Matt Thompson, Chenille White and Dr. Rhonda Williams. “The children enjoyed the visit,” noted Ethel Blair, Center Coordinator. “All the children asked their volunteers to stay and read a second or third book. We are looking for the alumni members to visit the center again soon!”



Johnny Mitcham chose the book, “Hop On Pop” to read. “I read this to my little girl,” he said.

Welcome Early Head Start Expansion Staff

CSI Child Development Services welcomes the following staff to the new Early Head Start Expansion Program:

Atkinson County: Audrey Browning and Leanna Crosby. Bacon County: Melissa Russell and LaSonia Mitchell. Brantley County: Gina Hulett, Jena Smith and Marlene Stone. Coffee County: April Key, Tiwana Herring, Tamela Cothorn, Amanda McSwain, Jana Tanner and Britney Winters. Pierce County: Melissa Brewer and Rhonda Ritchie. Ware County: Vickie Cain, Camie Dyal, Amber Edwards, James Eyles, Donna King, Megan Miller-Ivey, Tiffany Neloms, Lynne Vickers, Kayla Whitley, Shanna Johnson, Kylie Musgrove and Crystal Tucker.

Staff have been attending intensive training modules including: Orientation; Infectious Disease; Injury Control; Child Abuse and Neglect; E-Lap; Ages and Stages; CPR; Pediatric First Aid; SIDS; and Classroom Supervision. Staff also spent time job shadowing in current Early Head Start classrooms and have worked on lesson plans.

All new and current Early Head Start staff attended a one day DECAL approved conference, “Best Practices for Infants and Toddlers.” Noted infant and toddler specialist, Dr. Amy Hood, spoke about the philosophy and history of Early Head Start and the important role child care provides for infants and toddlers. CSI Child Development Service was especially pleased to open the conference to other Head Start programs in the state.



Above new Early Head Start Expansion Staff pose for a picture. Below Dr. Amy Hood, is thanked for her presentation at the conference.



A Visit From The Mayor

The children from the Charlton County Head Start Center recently enjoyed a visit from Folkston Mayor, William Staeger. Mayor Staeger volunteered at the center and read several books to the children. Jacqueline Winn, Lead Teacher, would like to thank Mayor Staeger for taking time out of his busy schedule to visit with the children.



Mayor Staeger enjoyed reading to the children.

The Head Start program incorporates visits from community leaders into their curriculum.



Courtney Spradley and Kyler Murphy are just adorable as the President and First Lady.

President's Day

Mrs. Mary McQueen, Special Educator and Ms. Luann Knox, Speech Pathologist from the Charlton County Board of Education helped the children celebrate President's Day in a big way. They brought along some cardboard cutouts for the children to pose in. Children were able to talk about what it would be like to be the President. Could these Head Start children be a future President?

Recruitment Roundups

Family Advocate staff have been busy with recruitment for the 2010-2011 program year. Recently all the sites participated in "Recruitment Roundups." Parents that attended received information on transitioning into the program. The kits included the book "Clifford's First Day of School" and a DVD from Pull-Ups entitled "I'm A Big Kid Now."

Remember that recruitment is the responsibility of ALL staff.



Jennifer Hamilton completes an application for her daughter, Ontaria Campbell, with family advocate Killeen Gonzalez to attend Head Start.

"It is today we must create the world of the future."

--- Eleanor Roosevelt

Grandparents Rock!

CSI Child Development Services is proud that we will be offering another Lunch and Learn Grand.Net training sessions. Beginning in March, grandparents from Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Pierce and Ware counties will be able to participate in the Lunch and Learn sessions. Informational meetings were held in these counties. “Goodies for Grands,” events enabled the grandparents to receive valuable information on the program. In addition, the talented Head Start children at the centers performed several songs in honor of the grandparents.



Grandparents from the Pierce County Head Start Center pose for a picture after the “Goodies for Grands event/



Pictured are: (l-r in the back): Marilyn Bennett (teacher), sorority members: Helen Walker, Mary Reese, Elizabeth Sampson and Center coordinator, Ethel Blair with Head Start children.

Thanks Delta Sigma Theta

The Waycross Alumnus Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority recently made a generous donation of books to the Ware County Head Start/Pre-K Center. “We were so honored that the sorority alumni thought of us for this donation,” stated Ethel Blair, Center Coordinator. The books have been added to the classroom libraries and the children are already enjoying them.

“Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors, and the most patient of teachers.”

Charles W. Eliot, (U.S. Educator)

Ronald's Reading Rangers

Brantley and Charlton County Head Start Centers participated in the Ronald's Reading Rangers Program. Held at the Nahunta Primary School, Ronald was able to talk to the children about the importance of reading and how much fun the library can be. Ronald read several books and even did a magic trick or two. Special thanks to Ms. Evon Griffin, Principal of the Nahunta Elementary School, She allowed the program to be at their school for this event. A special treat was being able to invite the Pre-K children to join Head Start for the program. At the end of the presentation all the children took an oath to be a “Ronald's Reading Ranger” and have someone read to them every day.

The program was held in conjunction with the Reading is Fundamental book distribution. The entire event was sponsored by Mark Boozer of the McDonald's in Brunswick.





Chaquina Wesley from Pierce County Head Start feels "snow." "It's cold and wet!" she said. Below children from Ware County celebrated "Warm Your Heart With A RIF Book."



Reading Is Fundamental

Centers have been participating in the second RIF book distribution of the 2009-2010 program year. Centers continue to plan innovative and fun activities for the children. This year's book distribution had themes including winter, Valentine's Day and music. Keep up the great work!



Kara Youngblood and Cedric Reynolds from Appling County create pictures of their faces. The center took a 'Freedom March' during the celebration.

At the Circus

Staff are great at planning special activities around their weekly themes. At the Jeff Davis County Head Start Center they went the extra mile when their theme was the circus. Parents were encouraged to have their children dress up for the circus. The center had lots of special activities for the children to participate in - they even made clowns.



Fernando Vega and Danielle Wood enjoyed dressing up as part of the circus.



Frederick Williams, parent from Coffee County Head Start, makes his prediction.

Super Bowl Prediction

Many of the centers participated in their own Super Bowl activities. Staff and children dressed in team colors as parents voted for their pick at who would win the big game. Centers report that the parents had a great time being a part of the event and children enjoyed helping to count the ballots. Coffee County reports that the Saints won their poll - wonder what they knew?



Concerted Services, Inc.
A Part of your Community at the
Heart of your Community

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