

VECCS Strategic Planning Meeting Summary **April 26-27, 2005**

The VECCS strategic planning meeting was a two day meeting held at the Garden Hall of Richmond's Maymont Park. The overall purpose of the meeting was to bring together the five individual plans that the workgroups had been working on for the last eight months and see how to best integrate them into one complete plan. The goal of the meeting was to gain the commitment of all partners to advance the goal of developing a comprehensive early childhood system. The group consisted of 50 participants from local and state agencies in Virginia. Approximately 10% of the group included new participants who had not been a part of the process prior to the meeting in April. The two days consisted of several small group sessions and a few larger group sessions. The smaller sessions included both the original workgroup participants and several new participants. In the smaller sessions the groups had a variety of specific tasks such as: 1) reviewing the individual workgroup plans and providing feedback 2) considering how the individual plans fit together to create an overall plan while specifically focusing on common themes, cross-system issues and areas for collaboration 3) Critically analyzing the overall plan to see where gaps may still exist 4) Considering how participants could best contribute to the plan and 5) Establishing what resources and investments individuals and agencies could commit to the implementation of the plan. In the larger group session the group focused on cross-cutting themes, integration and implementation of the plan.

The four broad overarching goals which emerged from the two-day strategic meeting were:

Access - All children 0-5 and their families have timely access to high quality appropriate early childhood services.

- Children have access to a variety of services including, but not limited to: preventive care, early intervention, medical home, health insurance, behavioral health and social-emotional screening and intervention services, early care and education and parent education.
- The supply of providers is sufficient to meet the needs of children and their families in a timely manner.
- Prevention efforts, such as screening and early intervention, are a priority.
- The services provided are based on a definition of quality, best practices, and evidence-based methodologies.
- Barriers to accessing services (cultural appropriateness, affordability, geographic location) are addressed and minimized.

Infrastructure/Systems of Care - State and community infrastructures promote successful early childhood systems of care.

- There is adequate funding to promote early care and education, family support programs, behavioral health and social-emotional development, parent education, and a medical home.
- Businesses and legislators commit support by developing and implementing family friendly policies and benefits.
- The system of care infrastructure that is between state and local agencies and organizations minimizes navigation barriers for providers and families.
- Utilization rates for families for systems of care increase as a result of improved community and state networks of providers and family support organizations.

Communication and Administration - Policymakers, providers, businesses, faith-based workers, and families are educated about the importance of early and timely access to early childhood systems of care in developing ready children and families for school.

- Marketing messages communicate positive stigma-free messages about an integrated early childhood system of care.
- Funding streams are aligned to support efforts to integrate systems of care and services.
- The system of care that is created is based on a definition of quality, best practices, and evidence-based methodologies.

System Integration - An early childhood system is built that is integrated at the local and state level, is family driven, and impacts the development, organization, funding, delivery, and evaluation of services.

- Systems of delivery are coordinated to create a seamless and user-friendly application process.
- System integration includes effective planning, policy development, and service delivery.
- System integration reflects input from multiple agencies, partners, and family representatives.

Special Interest Areas

Several special interest areas emerged from the April 2005 planning meeting. These will be addressed through the development of concrete methods that will be used to align funding streams, program resources, and policies, in order to produce, support, and evaluate effective system integration.

- Funding
- Data Integration
- Administrative Oversight
- Advocacy

Next Steps

The VECCS team will begin to transition for implementation from July-September 2005. The project is scheduled to begin implementation in January 2006.

The transition period will include:

- Finalizing the integration of the five work group plans into a single integrated state plan
- Appointing a transition team to help shape the new workgroups and governance structure and recruit leaders for the workgroups
- Establishing an administrative oversight group
- Obtaining commitments for implementing components of the plan
- Continuing to increase the base of support for the project by sustaining the existing members and collaborating with new partners
- Reviewing the final strategic plan and plan for implementation in a one day offsite meeting to be held in early October 2005