

Creating an Early Childhood System

Adapted from Karen Ponder, February 9, 2010 presentation to the Arizona Early Childhood Task Force



An organized, inter-related network of elements, programs and services for all children.



Why is a System Important?

- Affecting school readiness requires comprehensive approaches and involvement from all sectors: health, mental health, family support, early care and education, parents, higher education, faith communities, business, the media and many others



Why is a System Important?

- What does not work now?



Why is a System Important?

- To maximize resources including multiple funding streams with their own regulations and requirements
- To improve the performance of multiple services impacting young children and their families



Why is a System Important?

- To reduce issues (competition, duplication, even low outcome efforts) through a shared vision and agreed-upon goals and objectives
- Opportunity for policy changes and improvements
- Improve communication among partners
- Ultimately: children and families get what is needed- with efficiency of time and resources!



Characteristics of an Effective System

- Comprehensive
- Accessible for children and families
- Scalable
- Outcome focused
- Accountable



System Building Actions to Consider

- Context—successfully building a community understanding
- Components—establish effective programs and services
- Connections—create better linkages between components
- Infrastructure—create supports that enable continuous improvement
- Scope and Scale— how much, and how available really makes a system?



Roles of the System Partners

- Lead—convening and facilitating.
- Partner—co-convene, facilitate, and plan an active role in decisions and actions.
- Participant – assume a role of contributing, consulting, informing.



Lessons Learned

- An open, visible, and inclusive process is needed.
- Shared vision and mission is necessary.
- A diverse group of thinkers is important. Draw from knowledge base that already exists
- Choose strategic areas of focus for an actionable agenda, setting priorities or areas of emphasis.



Purpose of System Planning in Communities and Arizona

To improve operations and services

To maximize efforts and resources

To achieve measureable results for
Arizona's young children and their families

In order to
Improve Outcomes and
Opportunities!

