



SELF Newsletter

June 2014

THE CHILDREN CAN'T WAIT CAMPAIGN IS GAINING MOMENTUM!

[A short recap on what brought us here.](#)

In November 2013, we held the Children Can't Wait Kick Off which was a collection of over 60 partners and community leaders. This event identified the need to move our community forward to develop the next steps in advancing early learning, preparing our children for kindergarten and supporting our families. This event showed that as a community, we have the passion to advance the cause of early learning for our children.

Please be sure to read the full conference report.

Passion is important. Yet we need a sense of collective direction of what community outcomes and goals we want for our children. To provide this common agenda and vision for early learning in our community, we hosted the Children Can't Wait Conference at the end of March. We asked key participants from a variety of community sectors what they would support as a common agenda for early learning in our community. This event was momentous as there was a synergy and focus on what was discovered and shared. We now have a set of goals that we, as a community, can implement.

These outcomes are:

- 1. Establish a coordinated system:** We believe that coordinated systems best serve young children, families and communities. We are a collective voice for all entities supporting young children and families. We have agreed on the strategies, outcomes and measurements to determine the success of the collective vision.
- 2. Establish common messages:** We agree that common messages are necessary to initiate a paradigm shift.
- 3. Create sustainable and localized funding:** We believe that a local and sustainable funding stream is needed to move the vision forward.
- 4. Create universal early learning opportunities:** We are planning to provide universal learning opportunities so that every child has access to quality early learning experiences.
- 5. Expand community-based resource hubs:** We are planning to expand community-based resource hubs.
- 6. Increase naturally-occurring connections:** We are actively pursuing an increased trusted messaging delivery of early learning knowledge by using a coordinated community mentorship program and practices within naturally-occurring connection hubs.

Please be sure to read the full conference report for all the details and information gathered at the conference.

The pieces are starting to fall into place and a coordinated effort is underway to support our children. There will be numerous future ways to plug in and lend a hand to this campaign to be a champion for the children in our community. We need everyone's support.

REACHING OUT TO THE HARD-TO-REACH FAMILIES

How can we reach those 'hard to reach' families with young children in Clark County? That is the question that SELF is tackling using grant dollars that they received through the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette. In order to complete this task, SELF developed a survey for families with young children and had it translated into Spanish and Russian. These surveys have been distributed and collected in a variety of forums, the most recent being the 2014 Latino Resource Fair in Clark County.

In addition, the SELF Families Strategy Group members are completing an 1:1 interview with a parent who is Latino, Slavic, or is experiencing poverty. This information will then be compiled to help broaden the story of what families are experiencing in Clark County.

Homeless, Slavic and Latino families are being contacted to share their stories in a story harvest where early learning professionals have been invited to share the experience of hearing a family with young children's needs first hand.

The information collected from this variety of sources will then be compiled and gathered into a report to further guide the Children Can't Wait movement and SELF's direct service partners in engaging the 'hard to reach.'

PARTNER MEETING June 25, 3 to 4:30 p.m.
ESD 112, Cowlitz Room
2500 NE 65th Avenue
Vancouver, Washington 98661