



SUPPORT FOR EARLY LEARNING & FAMILIES

January 2011

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

2011... it's hard to believe we have already rung in a year. I like the idea of a new year because there is so much hope and opportunity before us. We must seize that hope and opportunity in 2011 so that all children in Clark County thrive!

Each year, we face challenges; however, this year, we are faced with a tough economy, state budget deficits and unemployment confronting organizations and families in our community. Honestly, this year is slated to be one of the most challenging years the early learning community has ever faced. With challenges, come opportunities to expand our thinking and to work together to make sure that children in our community thrive. Every day, represents an opportunity for children to grow and learn. They can't wait until programs and services are adequately funded and budgets are balanced for children to make their way toward kindergarten and first and second grades. Children need us now! This is an opportunity for us as a community to strengthen our commitment

to partnership and collaboration because our children depend on us to provide safe, nurturing experiences so they will thrive and Clark County children will be successful in school and throughout their lives.

I ask that you join us in working together on behalf of children and families in Clark County. We are committed to our partners and we are committed to not only the 6,000 babies that will be born in this county in 2011, but the toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children as well. What are you prepared to do to ensure that 2011 will be remembered as the year our community created a movement to truly value and invest in children? I look forward to working alongside you this year.

**Debbie Ham**  
Director of SELF

## DID YOU KNOW?

For every dollar invested in early childhood programs, \$7 is ultimately returned according to a landmark study in Chicago. This is an important message to get out to our community.

The RAND Corporation published this research regarding the investment in early childhood education. Take a look at this study and see what investors are saying about early childhood education.

[http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_briefs/RB9352/index1.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9352/index1.html)

A recent local infant toddler report submitted to the Department of Early Learning summarized several areas of concern pertaining to young children. One key finding was the wide gap between the actual number of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services and the number in need of such services. 10% of children in Clark County between the ages of 0-2 would be eligible for services based on data, but only 2% are being served at this time. We saw this same trend in Child Protective Services' referrals, foster care placement and early intervention eligibility data. Such findings will affect the future of these children and our community. Young children are greatly underrepresented.

## LAP TIME

It takes 1,000 hours of "lap time" for young children to have the readiness skills in place to learn to read (National Institute for Children's Health and Development).

*"Lap time" means one-on-one interaction between a parent or caregiver and a child where meaningful language interactions take place. Types of lap-time activities include: talking, singing, rhyming, chanting, and, of course, reading.*

If we begin at birth, children who receive a half hour a day of lap time will have the developmental skills they need to read when they come to kindergarten.

If we wait until they are two to three years old, it will take an hour a day of lap time to prepare children with the readiness skills they need to read.

If we wait until they are four years old, it will take two hours a day of lap time to prepare children with the readiness skills they need to read.

If we wait until children are five years old and entering kindergarten, it will take three hours a day of lap time to catch these children up with their peers in order to be ready to read.

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT - Children's Home Society

Children's Home Society of WA (CHSW) is one of the oldest and largest non-profits in Washington State. In Southwest Washington, CHSW provides family support, early learning, child and family counseling, and adoption services. CHSW supports families in the community in a variety of ways - from the grandparent who needs support raising their grandchild, the new dad wanting to build his skills, or the family that needs emergency food. Programs include support groups for parents, grandparents and youth; parent education and parent coaching; early learning groups (Play & Learn); basic needs support - Kinship Caregiver Support Fund and the East County Family Resource Center; and home visiting services using the Parents As Teachers program.

Every family is unique; services are created to meet individual family needs. For example, a grandmother contacted CHSW in need of support. CHSW

was able to access emergency funds to purchase a bed and clothing for the granddaughter that came to live with her with nothing. Over time, CHSW provided the grandmother with one-on-one support as well as recommending the Parents Again support group. As the granddaughter got a little older, the grandmother needed parenting support and child and family counseling. Then as the child's mother became active in her recovery, CHSW was able to provide parent education and home visiting to the mother as she regained custody of her daughter.

Services are accessed by calling CHSW to identify programs that will support families in their individual development. More information can be found online at [www.childrenshomesociety.org](http://www.childrenshomesociety.org) or by calling (360) 695-1325 or the East County Family Resource Center at (360) 835-7802.

## UPDATES FROM EARLY LEARNING

### STARS CREDITS AVAILABLE

(Family Childcare, Preschool and Primary Teacher)

Focused learning and discussion on early childhood and school readiness topics with activities for reflecting, sharing and collaborating.

**Feb. 17 "Developing the Young Mathematician"**

**March 17 "Developing the Young Scientist"**

**April 20 "Managing Challenging Behaviors"**

**May 19 "Smooth Transitions - Ready for School"**

**Time: 7 - 9 p.m.**

**Location: Endeavour Elementary - Media Center**

Please RSVP to Gaelynn Mills - (360) 604-3940 | [Gaelynn.mills@evergreenps.org](mailto:Gaelynn.mills@evergreenps.org)

### WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATES ON EARLY LEARNING

If you would like to receive weekly legislative updates provided by United Ways of Washington, please see the information below. Click here to read the update.

### SUBSCRIPTION INFO

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### INTERESTED IN READING THE SELF 2011 STRATEGIC PLAN?

You will find the link at the bottom of the page on our website or go directly by clicking <http://selfwa.org/about.php>