
Sustaining Systems Change

Webcast
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1:00-2:30pm Eastern

Moderator:
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An Overview of Sustainability

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Sustainability refers to actions taken with the goal of ensuring that initiatives or system changes will persist over time, even if funding sources change

Important Aspects of Sustainability

- Securing financing is a key part of ensuring sustainability but sustainability involves other things
- You need to work on creating a political and cultural environment that fosters sustainability
- You need to work on creating resources and services that people need and are willing to speak up about
- You need to ensure that system change becomes entrenched deeply enough that it survives personnel change

Important Aspects of Sustainability (continued)

- You need to amass evidence that the changes you made are having positive effects on children and families
- You need to be willing to make changes or adjustments in what you are doing in response to evidence, new opportunities and new threats



History

1999 - Bank of America and United Way of America Success By 6 supports mobilization of Oklahoma communities.

2000 – Governor’s Task Force on Early Childhood Education convenes.

2001 – OKDHS partners by funding community mobilization efforts.

2003 – Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act passes.

2003 – First Lady Kim Henry visits communities.

2004 – Four new communities added.

2005 & 2006 – Awarded \$2 million appropriation.



Smart Start Oklahoma Network

- Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness
- Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Foundation
- 16 Smart Start Oklahoma Communities
- Staff



Shared Vision

All Oklahoma children will be safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed by the time they enter school.



Oklahoma Challenges

- In Oklahoma, 38% of births are to unmarried mothers.
- Almost ¼ of births annually in the state are to mothers with fewer than 12 years of education.
- Almost ½ of all children birth to 5 live in low-income families.
- In Oklahoma, 54% of children birth to 5 live in homes where both parents or a single head of household work outside the home.



The Partnership

- 29-Member Governor Appointed Board
 - 13 State Agency Directors
 - 16 Private Sector Representatives
- Mission is to lead Oklahoma in coordinating an early childhood system focused on strengthening families and school readiness for all children.



Strategies

- Public Engagement
- Public Policy
- Resource Development
- Community Mobilization



Community Mobilization

People closest to a situation are best equipped and most highly motivated to identify and define problems, then pursue effective remedies.



Smart Start Oklahoma Communities

- Have assessed local needs.
- Have developed a plan.
- Are raising public awareness.
- Are building relationships.
- Are collaborating to better serve children





Statewide Products

- Public Engagement
- *As They Grow* Parent Guide
- Raising A Reader
- Kindergarten Survey



Goals

Outcome 1: A statewide comprehensive and coordinated system of early childhood services meets the needs of families with young children.

- Increased public awareness of the importance of the early years
- Families are well-informed and supported in their role as parents.
- Public policies support young children and their families.
- The structure necessary to support the system is in place at both the state and community levels.
- Communities respond to the needs of children and families.
- Evaluation is integrated into all aspects of the system and drives public policy and funding decisions.



Outcome 2: Families nurture, teach and provide for their young children.

Outcome 3: Children will be born healthy and remain healthy.

Outcome 4: Families with young children are able to find and afford high-quality early care and education programs if needed.





Successes

- Business Champions
- State agency support
- Local advocacy
- Relationships with media representatives
- Growing community capacity
- Growing donor support



Challenges

- Public/private logistics
- Conservative climate
- Measuring outcomes
- Ensuring diversity and parent involvement
- Leadership development



smart start oklahoma

www.smartstartok.org

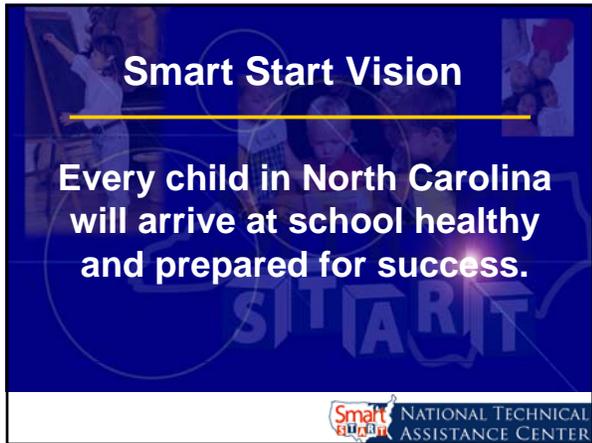




Smart Start Assuring Long-Term Sustainability

July 12, 2006

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Smart Start Vision

Every child in North Carolina
will arrive at school healthy
and prepared for success.

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Current Status

- Thirteen years since inception
- State-level nonprofit
- 80 local nonprofits
- FY 2006 - \$191 million appropriation
- Additional funds for subsidy, More at Four, early intervention, etc.
- Comprehensive approach

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Early Keys to Sustainability

- All Children
- Local Flexibility/Decision-making
- Statewide
- Public/Private Partnership
- Business Advocates
- Accountability

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How are we showing results?

- Outputs
- Statewide evaluation
- Local program evaluation
- PBIS

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Key Successes

- Children arriving at school at higher level of readiness
- 83% of children in licensed child care are in 3 star or higher
- 80% of child care teachers have college level education
- High immunization rates
- Greater support to families

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Advocacy

- Grassroots Advocacy
- Tuesdays for Tots and At Home
- Keep the Promise Day
- E-Advocacy
- Corporate Champions for Children

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Key Messages

- For All Children
- The Foundation for a Sound Basic Education
- Where NC's Economic Success Begins
- 200,000 NC Children Are Left Behind Before They Even Start

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NC Poll Numbers

- 81% favor expanding Smart Start
- 71% favor expansion to \$300 million
- 67% support expanding early education now vs waiting until K-12
- 59% of all voters more likely to support a legislator who is pro-early childhood

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Challenges

- State budget deficits
- Competition for funding
- Inequity of funding among local partnerships
- How to get to full funding
- Maintaining momentum at the community level

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Lessons Learned

- Begin with a vision – comprehensive
- A champion is critical.
- Give yourself time to plan unless opportunity knocks first.
- Build fiscal and program accountability into the design.
- Build local infrastructure.

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Lessons Learned

- Never underestimate how political a program can be.
- An advocacy plan is key to long-term success.
- Build parents and business into legislative strategy.

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Lessons Learned

- Find ways to build/fund local entities sooner rather than later.
- Secure early donations from business.
- Build a diverse coalition.
- Think broadly.

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Visit the website -
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