

DSS

Serving Children and Families

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July 5, 2010

Ms. Audrey M. Yowell, PhD, MSSS
Health Resources and Services Administration
Maternal and Child Health Bureau
5600 Fishers Lane
18A-39
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Ms. Yowell:

The South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office, in conjunction with the South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Advisory Committee, is looking forward to an expansion of the nurse home visitation model in our state led by the South Carolina Children's Trust. For the past decade, Head Start has participated in Safe Kids, Stand for Children, and South Carolina Prevent Child Abuse. The aforementioned, now under the umbrella of the South Carolina Children's Trust, is an example of how collaboration can and does succeed.

As discussed, the designation of the Children's Trust as the Early Childhood Home Visiting program primary applicant provides opportunity for the strengthening of services already provided by way of Early Head Start/Healthy Start partnerships. The anticipated grant further enhances the recently agreed inclusion of Head Start grantees and Community Action grantees in the Children's Trust widely distributed *South Carolina Resource Guide*. Note that all South Carolina grantees serving children 3-5 are sponsored by Community Action Agencies.

In addition, each Head Start/Early Head Start grantee employs a health coordinator. These coordinators are a part of a statewide network guided by a state level advisory committee. The home visiting program grant opportunity can provide specific infant mortality focused work and assist in better linking to medical homes as noted in the Early Childhood Comprehensive Services Project plan and research. Community Health Centers have begun some of this work and can be a local base.

As we move forward, please know that we have already begun to share needed data with the Maternal Child Health Division of the South Carolina Department Health and Environmental Control as they guide us through the needs assessment phase of this grant.

Again, we look forward to this process. Head Start, a comprehensive school readiness program, engenders family support and involvement. We are pleased to move forward with a partner that is already moving in that direction.

Sincerely,

Mary Lynne Diggs

Mary Lynne Diggs, Director
South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office

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