News and Updates

**Feb 28** - Beyond the Sidelines: Let's Get to Work – Leadership for Equity & Excellence Forum, Phoenix, AZ

The Forum will focus on strategies for reducing achievement disparities, addressing disproportionality in special education, developing school-family partnerships, strengthening district and school leadership, and more. Go to [http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/ea/conference/overview](http://www.equityallianceatasu.org/ea/conference/overview) for details.

**Mar 1, 2011**

Excellence Forum, Phoenix, AZ

**May 16-18, 2011**

Eleventh National Early Childhood Inclusion Institute

Join colleagues from across the US in Chapel Hill, NC for sessions on the methods, models, and materials that can promote opportunities for each child to fully participate. Beth Harry will be the keynote speaker. Go to [http://www.nectac.org/~meetings/inclusionmtg2011/](http://www.nectac.org/~meetings/inclusionmtg2011/) for details.

Content Resources

**Culture and Learning**

Ensuring "the development of the child . . . to the maximum extent possible" is part of every child’s rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. But to what extent is development a cultural process that varies between societies, or a natural process that is the same for all children? This edition of *Early Childhood in Focus* poses and addresses policy questions surrounding the place of culture in early childhood programs, such as, “How far can traditional child rearing practices be respected, while at the same time ensuring children’s rights are protected?” and “How can providers ensure that young children have opportunities to play, as well as work and study, even where local cultural norms do not view play as beneficial?” Methods and models for promoting development and learning while respecting cultural diversities are described. Download the document at [http://www.bernardvanleer.org/Culture-and-learning?pubnr=1222&download=1](http://www.bernardvanleer.org/Culture-and-learning?pubnr=1222&download=1).

**DEC Position Statement on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity**

The Council for Exceptional Children’s Division for Early Childhood (DEC) recently released a position statement on cultural and linguistic diversity entitled *Responsiveness to ALL Children, Families, and Professionals: Integrating Cultural and Linguistic Diversity into Policy and Practice*. The position statement describes seven characteristics of responsive early childhood programs that honor the values and practices of families being served as well as of people providing the services. The position statement and an executive summary are available at [http://www.dec-sped.org/Professionals/Position_Statements_and_Concept_Papers](http://www.dec-sped.org/Professionals/Position_Statements_and_Concept_Papers)
How Applicable is the Literature on Literacy Interventions for Ethnically Diverse Young Children?
Patricia Holliday Manz and her colleagues have recently completed a study that examines how applicable the current evidence-based literature surrounding family emergent literacy interventions is to preschool-age children and families from diverse ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. Their two-pronged review revealed that studies tended to either omit key information about participants (e.g., ethnicity, socio-economic status) or lack diverse samples (e.g., Latino children, children whose first language is other than English), making it difficult to generalize the growing body of literature to more diverse populations. Recommendations for enhancing the literate base are provided. Go to http://www.childcareresearch.org/childcare/resources/19617 and click on Original Source in the call out box to the right.

Do Black and Hispanic Children Benefit More from Preschool? Understanding Differences in Preschool Effects Across Racial Groups
Using the nationally representative Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort data set, author Daphna Bassok found that 4-year old children who were 130% below the poverty line, but attend preschool have higher literacy scores than children in parental care, regardless of their racial/ethnic background. And, among the non-poor, for Black and Hispanic children from Spanish speaking families, the returns on attending preschool were larger. Overall, the findings suggest that preschool is especially beneficial to poor children, and that poor and non-poor Black and Hispanic children benefit from preschool. The study suggests that universal preschool is beneficial because it will provide learning supports for poor children and also middle-class children, who benefit as well. Go to http://www.childcareresearch.org/childcare/resources/19817 and click on Original Source in the call out box to the right.

Creating Schools That Support Success for ELL - Lessons Learned
What can district leaders do to create schools that support success for English language learners? Some recommendations are contained in Lessons Learned, one of a series of briefs that share evidence-based advice in key improvement areas. These lessons come from Education Northwest’s research, development, and technical assistance activities conducted over more than four decades on the frontlines of transforming teaching and learning. http://educationnorthwest.org/webfm_send/1039

Language (Policy) Matters!
Public education has a vital role in ensuring that this and subsequent generations are successful in a global, multilingual economy. This What Matters brief examines how teachers, students, parents, and communities in our nation’s schools can create rich opportunities for students to learn. The brief includes information and resources about: school policies and practices that support language access; research on best practices for students who are dual language learners; and strategies teachers can use to support students who are dual language learners. http://www.niusileadscape.org/lc/Survey?record_number=1349&download_url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.niusileadscape.org%2Fdocs%2FFINAL_PRODUCTS%2FLearningCarousel%2FLanguage-Policy-Matters.pdf (NOTE: You will need to answer 3 quick questions to access the document).
Instructional Resources

Free Webinars on Supporting Dual Language Learners

Early Childhood Investigations is a free ongoing professional development series that is delivered online and produced by Engagement Strategies, LLC. The presentations explore critical topics to offer new ideas and insights to early childhood professionals, especially administrators. Two upcoming webinars that may be of interest are:

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Building a Multicultural, Multilingual Community in Your Early Childhood Program</td>
<td>Karen Nemeth</td>
<td>April 27, 2011 2PM EDT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple Languages in ECE: Tips and Activities for Today’s Multilingual Classrooms and Homes</td>
<td>Ana Lomba</td>
<td>March 9, 2011 2 PM EDT</td>
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For details, go to [http://www.earlychildhoodwebinars.org/presentations/](http://www.earlychildhoodwebinars.org/presentations/)

A National Catastrophe

A new study from the Council of the Great City Schools attempts to pull together much of the disparate research on African-American male achievement. Black males continue to perform lower than their peers on almost every indicator, and to date there has been no concerted national focus on the education and social outcomes of black males specifically. The report examines six areas regarding black males: readiness to learn; achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); achievement on the NAEP in selected urban school districts; college and career preparedness; school experience; and postsecondary experience. The report cites disturbing statistics, such as that black boys drop out of high school at approximately twice the rate of white boys, their SAT scores are on average 104 points lower, and they represented five percent of college students in 2008. On the NAEP in 2009, black boys lagged behind Latinos of both genders, and fell behind white boys by at least 30 points, a gap equal to three academic grades. [http://www.cgcs.org/publications/achievement.aspx](http://www.cgcs.org/publications/achievement.aspx)

Application: Ask students/participants/staff members to read this report. To highlight possible strategies for addressing the findings in this report, divide the group into three smaller groups. To the first group, pose the question: If you were the principal of an elementary school that serves a significant number of black children, what would you do? To the second group, pose the question: If you were the superintendent of an urban school district serving a significant number of black children, what would you do? To the third group, pose the question: If you were the Secretary of Education, what would you do? Give each group time to brainstorm and then present their responses. Discuss the ways in which strategies are needed at local, district, state, and national levels.

- Find additional resources and measures related to diversity, and previous Care Packages, at the Crosswalks website [http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/crosswalks/](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/crosswalks/)
- To learn more about resources, measures, and professional development related to increasing the emphasis on diversity in preservice coursework, practica, and program practices, please contact Camille Catlett at (919) 966-6635 or camille.catlett@unc.edu.