



# Judy Center Partnerships

Maryland State Department of Education

## Newsletter

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### Judy Center Partnerships Work To Keep Up With Demand for Expanded Services

On a typical afternoon at the Judy Center, located at Robert Moton Elementary School in Carroll County, Susan Mitchell, Judy Center Coordinator, has just had a conversation with a family childcare provider searching for learning opportunities to prepare the children in her care for a successful start to school. Ms. Mitchell recently presented school readiness materials to the Carroll County Family Child Care Association, represented by care givers from all over the county. According to Ms. Mitchell, "many of the providers remarked that they would love to have a Judy Center housed in their local elementary school to assist with resources and questions." The Judy Center staff answers questions about behavioral issues and concerns, assists with referrals and the sharing of their resource library materials, until other schools in Carroll County establish communication

with the local child care resource and referral agency and early childhood programs in their communities. On many occasions, parents of young children will contact the Judy Center requesting to utilize the resource library, to attend summer programming and weekly play groups. Families from outside the Robert Moton district are invited to attend only if space permits. "It is seldom that we have extra space for any families outside of our area," said Ms. Mitchell. This comes as no surprise, as Judy Centers have experienced a 15% increase in the number of children served statewide.

As services at Judy Centers have increased, families living in other school attendance areas are asking for such services. Nancy Lazo, Service Coordinator at the Montgomery County, Gaithersburg Judy Center, states

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### Successful Linkages II Gets Underway

On March 2, 2004, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Maryland Head Start Association and the Maryland State Department of Education as a part of the Successful Linkages I initiative. Much has been accomplished since the signing of this MOU. Many local school systems and local Head Start programs jointly developed or revised their agreements, and provided copies to the MSDE Head

Start Collaboration office. Building on the accomplishments of Successful Linkages I, an agreement between the Maryland Head Start Association, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Head Start Bureau Region III, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Region XII, and the Maryland State Department of Education/Division of Special Education/Early

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Judy Hoyer

dedicated her life to improving the lives of young children and their families. Her legacy continues because of the work of the twenty four Maryland Judy Centers that strive to promote school readiness through the development and expansion of collaborative approaches to the delivery of high quality, comprehensive, full-day, full-year early child care and education programs and family support services.

## Successful Linkages II Regional Meeting Set To Begin

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Intervention Services was formalized with a MOU as of April 15, 2004. The intent of this agreement is to improve outcomes for young children, particularly young children at-risk for and with identified disabilities, through enhanced community interagency partnerships. In Successful Linkages I, representatives from local school systems and Head Start programs met to develop a framework for addressing areas of common interest and concern, and to initiate or continue joint planning efforts to ensure that all young children enter school ready to learn and succeed. Successful Linkages II will provide an opportunity for local early childhood program community representatives to develop, revise or update local interagency agreements, focusing on the provision of services in natural and inclusive community-based settings to young children with disabilities, ages birth through four, and their families. Localities will be encouraged to develop agreements regarding children with disabilities that are in congruence with the broader school readiness agreements. Representatives from local Infants and Toddlers

Programs; Early Head Start, local school system Pre-school Special Education services; local school system Pre-K and K programs; local Head Start programs; and other community-based early intervention/early childhood and family services providers are invited to attend one of five regional meetings.

The first of these meetings will take place on February 22nd for South/Central Maryland (Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's and St. Mary's counties) The second meeting will take place on March 9th for Baltimore City. The third meeting will be held for Western Maryland (Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington counties) on March 31st. The fourth meeting will take place on April 4th for the North East region (Baltimore, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil and Hartford counties), and the final meeting will be held on April 8th, for the Eastern shore region (Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester counties) For further information regarding Successful Linkages II, contact Linda Zang, Head Start State Collaborative Office at MSDE, lzang@msde.state.md.us.

## Judy Center Partnerships Working to Meet Increasing Demands

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"families from outside of our catchment area contact me regularly because someone (a flyer, friend, relative, co-worker) referred them to me." Almost 80% of these families are looking for early childhood services at child care programs. The Judy Center is unable to help with the great need for a number of reasons. The Judy Center childcare program and family childcare providers are currently full. Parents who qualify for Purchase of Care Vouchers have been placed on a waiting list, and they are unable to access childcare when they are unable to pay childcare fees. Many of the families that Ms. Lazo counsils do not qualify for Purchase of Care Vouchers for one reason or another. Though they would like to accommodate all children and families with the services provided through their Judy Center Partnership, Ms. Lazo says, "it is impossible for us to serve all of the families that call us with childcare needs. We try our best to give them solid referrals knowing there is not much we can do." Judy Centers continue to look for ways to work with all Regional Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and child care providers to increase capacity, support and funding opportunities in an effort to accommodate the

ever increasing demands. According to Cheryl DeAtley, Coordinator of Charles County's two Judy Centers located at Dr. Mudd and Eva Turner Elementary Schools, "we field several calls a month from parents in our other five Title I schools located within three miles of our existing Judy Centers." Parents who have heard about the services, the family support, and activities would like to be able to take part in Judy Center activities. "It is very frustrating and disheartening to turn down those who have legitimate needs, especially when they may live just across the street from a family who is lucky enough to be living in an area zoned for the Dr. Mudd or Eva Turner school district." said Ms. DeAtley.

At the Talbot County Judy Center in Easton, Maryland, principals from other elementary schools have observed the positive impact of the Judy Center services at Easton Elementary School and expressed interest in providing those services at their schools as well. "The principals see the scores and readiness levels of the children in our Judy Center school sky rocket, yet they continue to struggle with addressing the lack of readiness skills of the children in their schools," said Mary Adkins, Coordinator of the Judy Center in Easton.

## Congressman Hoyer Pays Visit to Prince George's County Judy Center

On a recent visit to the Judy Hoyer Family Learning Center in Adelphi, MD, Congressman Steny Hoyer took the opportunity to talk with a group of young mothers who were in attendance at the Family Support Center. The group of Northwestern High School teen parents meet once a month at the Family Support Center, with Mrs. Bette Savoy, Adolescent Parent Program Coordinator, to discuss topics such as *Positive Discipline, Child Development, Positive Communication Skills, and Taking Care of Yourself*. On this morning the teen moms were attending one of two one hour sessions entitled: *Boosting Self Esteem in Children: Part I "Who Am I?" and Part II "Enhancing Your Child's Self-Worth*.

The Family Support Center's close proximity to Northwestern High School and the pre-existing partnership with the Prince George's County Resource Center has made this project successful for the past eight years. The project is funded through a quality enhancement grant from the Department of Human Resources for At-Risk families. While attending parenting sessions at the Family Support Center, teen parents may also utilize the licensed on-site daycare center in conjunction with a satellite location at the University Christian Church. Congressman Hoyer talked with the teen parents about the importance of continuing their education while learning about good parenting skills. He encouraged them to remain in school so that they would set a good example for the children. Congressman

Hoyer's visit to the Judy Center in Adelphi was in part to be interviewed for the production of an informational video about Judy Centers being produced by the Judy P. Hoyer Foundation, Inc. After his interview, Mr. Hoyer visited the main lobby of Cool Springs Elementary School where commemorative plaques and pictures of the late Judy Hoyer are on display. Congressman Hoyer also met with Judy Center staff members, Rise' Gaines, Carol Reber and Rosa Maldonaldo to discuss recent staff changes and improvements at the Judy Center.



*Congressman Steny Hoyer meets with a group of teen moms from Northwestern High Schools Teen Mothers Support Group during a recent visit to the Judy Center in Prince George's County.*

## Partnerships With Child Care Resource Centers Provide Training Opportunities

Judy Center Partnerships with local Child Care Resource Centers have provided opportunities for family child care providers to receive support, Maryland Model for School Readiness training, and credit hours toward Credentialing. The Southern Maryland Child Care Resource Center, working with the tri-county region of Calvert, Saint Mary's and Charles counties, have provided monthly training meetings for family providers on important topics like *Communicating With Parents, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, and Family Childcare Contracts and Policies*. The Calvert County Judy Center, in collaboration with Southern Maryland Child Care Resource Center and the Child Care Ad-

ministration will once again sponsor a regional Child Care Conference on March 19th, at Patuxent High School. Building on the success of last year's conference that provided training for 97 participants, this year's conference entitled "Collaborating for School Readiness II - Countdown to Kindergarten" will also feature OUNCE training for teen moms from the Patuxent High School Even Start program. "The really wonderful part is that this is truly a collaborative effort between teacher's, area child care professionals, Southern Maryland Child Care Resource Center staff and the Child Care Administration, said Karen Jordan, Calvert County Judy Center Coordinator. For more information about the March 19th School Readiness conference contact Ms. Karen Jordan at 410-535-7836.

"The most crucial responsibility of any community is the protection, education and mentoring of its children."  
Judith P. Hoyer



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**MSDE EARLY LEARNING OFFICE WEBSITE**

[WWW.MDK12.ORG/INSTRUCTION/ENSURE/READINESS/INDEX.HTML](http://WWW.MDK12.ORG/INSTRUCTION/ENSURE/READINESS/INDEX.HTML)

**FIND LOCAL JUDY CENTERS AT:**  
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## Make A Difference Day Celebration with First Book

The Charles County Judy Centers, located at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, and Eva Turner Elementary Schools, are the recipients of a First Book National Book Bank grant. This grant allows for every Judy Center child to take home a free book every month for their personal home library. In celebration of "Make A Difference Day," First Book treated Mrs. Jones' Kindergarten class at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School to a special book party. Ms. Vedia P. Gray, Chairperson of the First Book Charles County Advisory Board, read Fox In Socks by Dr. Seuss with a very enthusiastic group of young readers who gave her a lot of help with the tongue twisting rhymes. Refreshments were served and each child received a copy of the book and a special Dr. Seuss hat to take home.



First Book hosts a party for Mrs. Jones' Kindergarten class at Dr. Mudd. Pictured with the children are Mrs. Donna Jones, teacher; Mr. Robert Opiekun, Principal; Ms. Vedia Gray, First Book Chairperson; Ms. Beverlie Ludy, Judy Center staff; and Mrs. Mary Whetzel, Instructional Assistant.