



TO: Vermont Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Directors  
FR: Karyn Carstensen, VACCRRRA; Sadie Fischesser, Windham Child Care Association;  
Dave Connors, Lamoille Family Center; Barbara Saunders, Mary Johnson Children's Center;  
Michelle Fay, Umbrella; Kelly Ault, Kids Are Priority One Coalition  
SUBJ: VACCRRRA/Kids Are Priority One Coalition partnership for the Coalition's Child  
Care Subsidy Campaign  
DATE: June 27, 2008

---

Below is a proposal for a partnership between VACCRRRA and the Kids Are Priority One Coalition through its *Parents Rising* initiative. The following process has been informed by efforts during the 2008 legislative session (see appendix on collaborative history) and a training call between Referral and Subsidy Counselors of the California-based Parent Voices and Vermont Directors, Referral and Subsidy Specialists (see attached summary of call).

#### **Parent Organizer Support/Specialist Outreach**

- The Parent Organizer develops relationships with Specialists, meets with them by phone or in person to discuss their needs for engaging parents.
- The Parent Organizer provides *Parents Rising* tools to Specialists, including postcards, website, toolbox, trainings, Child Care Subsidy brochure and campaign activities.
- Specialists participate in Parent Voices trainings to strengthen skills in identifying and engaging parents interested in campaign activities.
- Through conversations, Specialists identify interested parents and tells them about *Parents Rising*. If they are interested in being involved, the Specialist either asks the parents if they can share their name and contact information with the Parent Organizer; or, mails the *Parents Rising* postcard and/or the Child Care Subsidy brochure to the parent and encourages them to contact the Parent Organizer.
- After the Specialist emails or calls the Parent Organizer with contact information, the Parent Organizer calls the parent to talk about their interests, offers an opportunity to weigh in and adds them to the *Parents Rising* email list.
- Parent Organizer supports parent meetings and parent-led campaign activities.
- The Parent Organizers communicates with the Specialist about how the parent they referred is participating in the campaign.

#### **Specialist & Parent Leaders Training**

- Summary of Parent Voices 6/24 training is circulated to Specialists.
- Parent Voices is available to respond by phone or email to follow up questions and for troubleshooting the summer of 2008.
- A second Parent Voices training can be arranged for the fall of 2008.
- A phone training between *Parents Rising* and Parent Voices parent leaders can be arranged for fall of 2008.
- Parents can participate in the fall Building Bright Futures and Coalition's Statehouse Open House for Parents and Providers, featuring political education and advocacy skills workshops.

## **Tools**

- *Parents Rising* postcard is available for distribution to parents (see attached - re-designed color and new black and white option available in July).
- Specialists can direct parents to sign up for *Parents Rising* activities online or learn about activities on the Parent Organizing page of the Coalition's website ([http://www.kidsarepriorityone.org/revamp08/parent\\_organizing.html](http://www.kidsarepriorityone.org/revamp08/parent_organizing.html) - temporary address until launched mid-July).
- Parents and Specialists can join the *Parents Rising* email list for regular campaign updates, event information and calls-to-action (see attached sample alert).
- The revised-monthly *Parents Rising* Toolbox details activities and ways to get involved (see attached).
- Specialists can distribute the Coalition's Child Care Subsidy campaign brochure (being drafted and available mid-July).

## **Campaign Activities**

- Parents can share their story online on the Coalition website, in a written letter to their legislator or by submitting a letter to the editor. The Parent Organizer can assist with any of these, including providing the Coalition's media toolkit.
- 
- Parents can sign and mail a postcard to the Governor urging increased investment in the Child Care Subsidy Program (to be available this fall).
- Parents can participate in one of the Coalition's campaign events, such as, the fall Statehouse Open House (mid-Sept) or the Virtual Strike (Oct 14-18).
- Parents can call or email their legislator when action on a legislative proposal is needed (during 2009 legislative session)
- Parents can meet by region to design additional campaign activities (such as poster campaigns, or provider outreach strategies).

## **Tracking and Evaluation**

- The Parent Organizer uses the *Parents Rising* database to track participating Specialists and parents, including contact information, interests in the issue, stories, how parents are active in the campaign and correspondence notes. This information will be shared with the Specialists regularly.
- Evaluation tools will be developed by *Parents Rising* and Specialists to determine what is working and what is not, specifically, how parents are responding to materials and outreach. Examples of tools:
  - Survey button added to the web submission form on the *Parents Rising* page, asking how a parent heard about *Parents Rising*.
  - Specialists code postcards sent to parents, so if returned to Parent Organizer, can be noted in database.
  - If parent contacts the Parent Organizer, she can ask them how they heard about *Parents Rising* and track response in database.
  - If Specialist contacts Parent Organizer with referral information, she will track in database.
  - Parent Organizer will contact each Specialist quarterly about what is working and what is not working, track in database and revise support accordingly.

**Next Steps:**

1. Finalize and present partnership process to Directors to decide how their agencies will participate.
2. Parent Organizer meets individually with Directors/Referral and Subsidy Specialists to outline how Specialists and the Parent Organizer can work together.
3. Determine needs, such as Parent Organizer and Specialist staff time and campaign materials. Identify and pursue joint (VACCRRRA and Kids Are Priority One Coalition) funding opportunities.

## **APPENDIX: History of collaboration activity**

- *October 2007:* The Kids Are Priority One Coalition launched a multi-year campaign to bring child care subsidy eligibility guidelines up to current levels for federal poverty and state median income, bring subsidy rates up to the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile; and, adjust both rates and eligibility guidelines annually to keep pace with inflation.
- *November:* Kim Friedman attended VACCRRRA Directors' meeting to discuss campaign She followed up by drafting a letter for Directors to share with subsidy specialists.
- *December & January:* VACCRRRA endorsed the Coalition's campaign and expressed support for partnering on the Coalition's *Parent Rising* initiative. The Coalition's Organizing Director met with Child Care Resources (CCR) to discuss a possible pilot parent organizing effort.
- *February:* A joint mailing including the Coalition's *Parents Rising* postcards was mailed to Directors. The Coalition's Parent Organizer met with CCR referral and subsidy specialists to review ideas for working together. Subsidy specialists mailed postcards to subsidy clients as well as parents whom were determined not eligible. Subsidy specialists also included flyers on *Parents Rising* activities in referral packets.
- *March:* CCR&R staff attended Early Childhood Day at the Legislature and heard a keynote address from Mary Ignatius of Parent Voices describing the effectiveness of parent organizing in increasing their state's state medium income for child care subsidies; Subsidy specialists forwarded names of parents interested in *Parents Rising* to the Coalition's Parent Organizer and to be contacted and added to newly-launched parent email list. The Parent Organizer updated [www.kidsarepriorityone.org/parentsrising.html](http://www.kidsarepriorityone.org/parentsrising.html) at the beginning of each month with calls-to-action on the Child Care Tuition Assistance Program.
- *April – May:* The Coalition's Parent Organizer communicated by email and phone to referred parents about opportunities to weigh in on the legislative budget process around an increase to the Child Care Tuition Assistance Program.
- 

**Kids Are Priority One Coalition Contact: Kelly Ault, Parent Organizer: 802-272-0795; [kault1@earthlink.net](mailto:kault1@earthlink.net)**