



BUILD Pre-Conference Meeting and Breakout Sessions at the National Smart Start Conference May 2 - 5, 2016

- Pre-Meeting Reading:**
- **One Family's Story: What Early Childhood Systems Can Offer** - Case Study developed by Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative (see attached)
 - **A Lonely Road** – Article by Chico Harlan, published in The Washington Post on December 28, 2015
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/business/2015/12/28/deep-south-4/>

Systems Building in Action – What does it look like?

This full-day preconference will target both community and state level leaders in examining and discussing strategies for aligning and integrating all components of an early childhood system to create conditions that ensure the well-being, growth and development of children and families. The format for the plenary and breakout sessions will be informed by a case study that will incorporate scenarios around children, their family, the community, and different aspects of the state and community systems that impact them. For children, the scenarios will focus on both an infant or toddler and a preschool-aged child.

8:30 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions** – Gerry Cobb, BUILD Initiative
Location: Victoria A (3rd floor)

Table Introductions - Share your name, what you do, what state you're from and what makes you passionate about this work.

9:00 a.m. **Communities of Opportunity: Integrating Early Childhood Systems to Prevent Adversity and Promote Wellbeing** This opening plenary session will launch the meeting with a review of the impact of early life adversities on the health and developmental trajectory over the life course. Strategies will be suggested to build community capacity using collective impact strategies to promote family protective factors, develop resilience of children who have faced adversity and prevent future adversities.

Speaker: Renee Boynton-Jarrett, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Boston University School of Medicine

9:45 a.m.

Early Childhood System Realities through the Life of a Family: Case Study Overview

How often do you meet a family and realize that what they feel is important and essential is out of the scope of our roles and responsibilities? We are all well-meaning as we work to create a system that is for all children and families. A system that crosses the sectors of early learning, health, and family, that that meets the various requirements of funding streams, and that meets our vision for what children and families need for well-being growth and development. But do we truly know what families want or need and what their realities are? Is the system set up to meet those needs and realities? Walk through the life of one family via a case study that documents their life, concerns, hopes and needs. Does our current system meet their needs? What do we need to do differently and who do we need to partner with to make it happen?

Speaker: Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative

Small and Large Group Discussions

10:30 a.m.

Small Group (What if?) Scenarios: The case study depicts one version of a family but there are so many unique scenarios that a family could face. In our effort to serve all families we often don't designate human capital or resources to meet the needs of families who have cultural, linguistic or racial differences. Each small group will receive one "what if" scenario and will be asked to think about how the "what if" scenario changes the discussion of the case study and what the family may need or want from the system. As you participate in the meeting for the remainder of the day, please consider:

1. What facts in the case study would be impacted by the specific "what if" scenario you just received? How does it make the family's situation different? What becomes more complicated?
2. How does the current system respond to the family's specific realities? In the current system, how will the family be supported and how will they not? What are the most challenging issues for this family within the existing system?
3. As the day goes on, talk with your colleagues and speakers about potential solutions to better support this family and what needs to change in the current systems to more effectively support their success.

11:00 a.m.

Break

11:15 a.m.

Breakout Sessions – As you attend your chosen breakout session, think about the family and your "what if" scenario. What can you learn from this breakout session that will assist you in creating a stronger system to support the needs of this family?

Each session will highlight one or more effective practices or innovations with the speakers incorporating elements of the case study to reflect on how this approach could more effectively support the family described in the case study. The discussion during this session should connect back to the case study and the various "what if" scenarios as the group explores solutions in creating a more effective early childhood system to meet the needs of families like this one.

- **Health Equity:** Participate in a discussion with key experts around the country about what are the key health disparities we see in our communities, the barriers we face, and how we can have both community and state-level responses across sectors to increase health equity. Using obesity as a discussion starter, how do our systems of health and early childhood support children and their families? What is required of the early childhood system to reduce obesity? What do we know about what works?

Speakers: Renee Boynton-Jarrett, Boston University School of Medicine; Lonias Gilmore, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; Carey McCann and Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative

Location: Augusta
- **Workforce Development:** What is needed to strengthen the workforce in all communities and to assure a workforce that is reflective of and responsive to the children and families you are serving? Community and state leaders will share the innovative approaches they have taken as well as innovations for the future.

Speakers: Harriet Dichter, BUILD Initiative; Kara Lenhardt, North Carolina Partnership for Children; Edith Locke, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center; Pilar Torres, Fathum, Inc.

Location: Pebble Beach
- **Local Level System Coordination:** Who is thinking about all these possible realities and assuring the system is set up to meet the needs of families? While the state can support local level system coordination with policy changes and resources, it is community leaders who must design their local level system to respond to the needs of families like the one described in our case study. Hear from community leaders as to the coordination and collaboration approaches they have taken to build a community-wide early childhood system that supports the needs of young children and families.

Speakers: Gerry Cobb, BUILD Initiative; Janice Moenster, Greater East St. Louis Innovation Zone; Susan Nixon, Chowan-Perquimans Smart Start Partnership; Eric Santiago, Arizona First Things First

Location: Victoria A
- **The Role of Community Assessment and 2Gen to Ensure Equity:** A well done community assessment can provide information on the status of the community and neighborhood and help local programs and practitioners take a step back to re-consider the type of services they are providing and who is best served by their service and delivery model. In this session, we will discuss the importance of using data to design and implement components of an early childhood community system that are equitable and utilize a two-generation approach - considering the outcomes of the child and parent together - in order to ensure that the whole family is educationally and economically successful.

Speaker: Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, National Alliance for Hispanic Families

Location: Tidewater

12:30 p.m. Box lunch in Victoria A for all meeting participants.

- 1:30 p.m. **Plenary Discussion – Family Voices in a Systems Approach** – Families with young children will share their experience, their hopes and needs, how they currently interact with various aspects of the early childhood system and what they would like to see in the current system that can better support the needs of families. Audience members will be asked to share their own stories – as a family member with young children or their work with families in their community.
Speakers: Ayana Knox-Potts, Michigan Parent; Christina Walker, North Carolina Parent; Gerry Cobb, BUILD Initiative (Moderator)
Location: Victoria A
- 2:15 p.m. **Return to the Scenarios/Proposed Strategies and Solutions**
Participants return to their small groups from the morning to discuss what you learned from the breakout discussions and what solutions you would propose to designing the system to meet the needs of the case study family and your specific “what if” scenario. Each small group will be asked to propose several system changes to respond to your “what if” scenario and post it at different points around the room depending upon your proposed policy, program or practices in early learning, family support and health.
Facilitator: Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative
- 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:15 p.m. **Systems Building in Action – What does it look like?** Audience members and discussion leaders will share their observations from the morning discussions and the proposed small group strategies/solutions. Participants will respond to their comments and share their own Ah Ha moments and observations as part of the discussion.
Speakers: Deb Stahl, BUILD Initiative (Moderator)
- 4:00 p.m. Adjourn

BUILD Sessions at the National Smart Start Conference

Tuesday, May 3, 2016

- 8:30 a.m. **Child Health & Early Learning: Exploring Shared Interests while Addressing Inequities**
In this session, we will discuss health equity; where states can expand the work at the intersection of early learning and health; and better understand current efforts to advance the health and well-being of young children in your state. We will share the findings from our recent interviews with state early childhood leaders, health associations, and health experts to provide a jumping off point for the conversation about how state systems can come together to promote a culture of health and well-being in ways that address and reduce disparities so that all children and families can thrive.
Speakers: Lonias Gilmore, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services;

8:30 a.m. **Pursuing Continuous Quality Improvement? Moving from Collaborative Structures to Collaboration Processes**

When we define our work as “collaborative in nature” are we simply stating that we asked for input, ran a focus group, did a survey or asked for key partners to join a committee? The process of authentic collaboration is based on open, honest and trusting relationships between and within partnering organizations, is non-hierarchical, supports broad and inclusive networks and involves meaningful and respected engagement at all levels of the field. This session will explore the challenges and assets of process collaboration and will offer strategies to create a new generation of authentic community partnerships to support improvements within early childhood systems.

Speakers: Laura Johns, National Center on Child Care Quality Assurance; Debi Mathias, BUILD Initiative

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

8:30 a.m. **Incorporating Family Voice:** As state leaders, we don’t directly touch families. Our efforts touch the “touchers” who have the direct contact with families. Our goal is to structure policies, practices and institutions that best support caregivers and families. This session will share voices from families. Through this session, we will consider how to keep parent and caregiver voice current and discuss who we listen to, how we sort multiple voices, how we keep our approach to incorporating family voice authentic and intentional, and consider when to shift the system to respond to different voices. What works and what gets in the way in this effort?

Speakers: Sherri Killins Stewart, BUILD Initiative

Location: Auditorium II

3:30 p.m. **Turning Challenges into Opportunities for Systems Integration and Alignment**

This interactive discussion will focus on challenges and opportunities in systems building at the state and local level. The panelists will share their own stories as systems building leaders at the state and local level and how they turned challenges into opportunities. Participants will be asked to share their own experiences and current challenges will be brainstormed for potential solutions. The session will particularly focus on how to think strategically around solutions to racial disparities and explore the potential for collaboration across sectors to advance a comprehensive, whole child approach.

Speakers: Miriam Calderon, former member of the Obama Administration
Sherri Killins Stewart, former Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
Karen Ponder, former President, North Carolina Partnership for Children
Henrietta Zalkind, Executive Director, Down East Partnership for Children
Gerry Cobb, State Services Director, BUILD Initiative (Moderator)

Thursday, May 5, 2016

8:30 a.m. **Advancing Issues of Language and Culture in QRIS: Beyond Standards to Measurement and Professional Development** One in three children under six is a dual language learner (DLL) in the U.S, and in North Carolina the share of young DLLs has

more than doubled since 1990. Young DLLs require an intentionality of practice that is developmentally appropriate for their age and experience, but also that is specific to their cultural and language characteristics. In this session, panelists will address how to observe and measure linguistically and culturally diverse practices in QRIS as well as how to tailor professional development to assist educators to effectively serve young DLLs.

Speakers: Miriam Calderon, Bainum Foundation; Veronica Fernandez, University of Miami; Alexandra Figueras-Daniel, National Institute for Early Education Research

10:30 a.m. What are we Learning about System Building through the QRIS Framework?

States are innovating and creating around early learning systems at lightning speed. By the time of the conference a number of studies will be out from the RTT-ELC states and others which will inform the system building. What are we learning? How are the state theories of change matching up with the financing and standards? How are states addressing and creating a conversation about equity and diversity in their system building? What are we seeing in states as they move from addressing structural quality of programs and compliance to helping programs improve teaching and learning to improve school readiness and close the achievement gap? States are moving to change the culture from one of compliance to continuous quality improvement and the role of practitioners, communities, technical assistance and families is being re-explored. This session aims to discuss the 'state of the art' of system development and embrace the challenges and questions that arise in this important work. There will be numerous resources shared such as the QRIS compendium, the QRIS - BUILD e-book chapter and other recent publications.

Speakers: Debi Mathias, BUILD Initiative