Assuring School Readiness is CSC's, Community's Goal

School Readiness Scores 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>ESI-K Ready Now</th>
<th>DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency</th>
<th>DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>60% (Above Average)</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dade</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>42% (Above Average)</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duval</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>55% (Above Average)</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>48% (Above Average)</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>48% (Above Average)</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>55% (Above Average)</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinellas</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>48% (Above Average)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>48% (Above Average)</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESI-K Scale = Read Now, Getting Ready and Not Ready Yet
DIBELS = Above Average, Low Risk, Moderate Risk and High Risk
Source: Florida Department of Education, Florida School Readiness Uniform Screening System: State Report of District Results, Early Screening Inventory-Kindergarten (ESI-K) and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) instruments; www.firn.edu/doe/sas/srushome.htm.

Assuring that children are physically, emotionally, and intellectually ready to enter the formal school system is the goal of much of the work of the Children's Services Council and its community partners. CSC funds maternal and child health services, parenting, and early care and education programs aimed at helping our youngest children reach their full potential. Much of these efforts have been in conjunction with the Early Learning Coalition, the School District, Head Start, the Picower Foundation, Palm Beach Community College, Family Central, and child care providers.

One of the key measures of the skill levels of our young children is the School Readiness Uniform Screening System (SRUSS). Since school year 1996-97, SRUSS has been used to assess the basic readiness skills of children entering kindergarten. The components of the SRUSS have changed over the years, but it has consistently included looking at a child's physical, emotional, and pre-academic readiness.

In 2004, 83% of Palm Beach County's 11,508 kindergarteners were "ready now" for school, according to the Early Screening Inventory-Kindergarten (ESI-K) recently released by the Florida Department of Education. Palm Beach County's percentage has remained consistent for the past two years and is in line with the state's which is approximately 84%. However, Palm Beach County's 2004 "ready now" ESI-K score is the lowest compared to six other urban counties examined. The scores for these six counties are 84% in Duval and Orange counties; 85% Dade; 86% in Hillsborough; 87 in Pinellas and 88% in Broward County. Consistent with the state, Palm Beach County had 12% of its kindergarteners who were "getting ready" and 5% "not ready yet."

Palm Beach County schools had varying rates of children "ready now" for kindergarten with scores ranging from 50% at Highland Elementary to 98% at Jupiter Farms Elementary. Conversely, elementary schools also showed a range of kindergartners "not ready" from 0 (Palm Beach Gardens Elementary) to 22% "not ready" (Highland Elementary).

Another instrument used to measure School Readiness is the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). For purposes of the SRUSS, two of the DIBELS measures were used: letter naming fluency and initial sounds fluency. In 2004 Palm Beach County fared better on DIBELS with 55% of children scoring “above average” on the letter naming portion and 43% scoring “above average” on initial sound fluency. This was better than the state’s and most of the six urban counties’ scores.

Kindergarteners are identified at “high risk” in letter naming fluency if, when presented with a page of letters in random order, they are not able to name a letter or can only name one letter in a minute. In 2004, 16% of Palm Beach County's kindergarteners were identified as “high risk,” while statewide 20% of kindergarteners were at “high risk. One-fifth (21%) of Palm Beach County's kindergarteners were at “high risk” in the area of initial sound fluency.”. For the initial sound fluency measure, children are shown pictures of objects and asked to identify the picture that begins with the sounds the examiner presents. The county’s “high risk” score was similar to the state’s (20%) at “high risk.”

Individual schools in Palm Beach County showed as many as 42% (Highland Elementary) of kindergarteners were at “high risk” in the letter naming fluency and 58% (Lake Park Elementary) at “high risk” for initial sounds fluency.

Research has demonstrated that quality early care and education can bring significant and positive long-term outcomes for children. One of the first indicators of positive outcomes is children being able to meet the challenges of kindergarten. The implementation of universal voluntary prekindergarten in August of 2005 provides an opportunity for the Early Learning Coalition, School District and private prekindergarten providers to improve our school readiness scores. In addition, Children's Services Council will continue to work with our community partners to improve access to quality early care and education to improve school readiness.
The bus acquisition is a result of collaboration of CSC, Palm Tran CONNEC-
TION, the Palm Beach County Board of
County Commissioners, and United Way
of Palm Beach County, and a $500,000
grant from the Florida Department of
Transportation. Palm Tran CONNEC-
TION led a request for proposals that
utilized the $500,000 from FDOT and
matching funds from CSC, Palm Beach
County Commission, and United Way
to purchase the vehicles for commu-
nity-based agencies that serve special
needs populations, including low-income
families.

The programs that received the new
vehicles include:

- For The Children
- Forest Park Beacon Center (Housing
  Partnership)
- Northmore Beacon Center (Children’s
  Home Society)
- Northwood Family Resource Center
  (Children’s Home Society)
- Pioneer Park Beacon Center (Housing
  Partnership)
- Planned Parenthood
- Strive Toward Excellence
- West Riviera Beach Beacon Center
  (Housing Partnership)
- YMCA of the Palm Beaches
- Barton’s Boosters/Wayne Barton
  Study Center
- Jewish Residential and Family Service
- Mae Volen Senior Center
- Seagull Industries for the Disabled

The success of the project was
because of the diligence of Lou Ferri,
Planner II with Palm Tran CONNEC-
TION; Vince Bonvento, Assistant County
Administrator; Elizabeth Jennings, Direc-
tor of Community Impact for United Way
of Palm Beach County, and Randy Palo,
Director of the Resource Development
Initiative for CSC.

Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County

Dori Bowman
Chair
Ronald V. Alvarez Dr. Art Johnson Jeff Koons Tom Lynch Theodore Simpkins Gaetana D. Ebbole

Kathy Adams
Vice Chair

Red Macon
Secretary

Gaetana D. Ebbole
Chief Executive Officer

The Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County is an independent special district of local government authorized by Florida statute in 1986 and given taxing
authority by referendum in 1986 and 2000. CSC is authorized to levy up to one dollar per $1,000 of taxable property value. Its purpose is to plan, develop, fund
and evaluate programs for children and to address public policy issues relating to children in Palm Beach County.

The mission of CSC is to enhance the lives of children and their families of Palm Beach County and to enable them to attain their full potential by providing a unified
context within which children’s needs can be identified and resolved by all members of the community.

Children’s Services Council of PBC, 1919 North Flagler Drive, West Palm Beach, FL 33407
Phone: (561) 655-1010 or (800) 331-1462 Fax: (561) 835-1956 www.cscpbc.org

Written & Edited by Marlene Passell Design & Layout by Joanne Napoli
If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact Judith Brauer, Grants Specialist with the Resource Development Initiative of Palm Beach County, at (561) 655-1010, ext. 2171, or by e-mail at judith.brauer@cscpbc.org.

Video Firm Offers ‘Blockbuster’ Grant Opportunities

**Deadline:** None. Requests are reviewed monthly.  
**Eligibility:** Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status  
**Geographic Focus:** Nationwide  
**Funding Range:** Varies

Blockbuster considers requests from non-profit organizations that meet one or more of the following requirements:

- Project has film/video industry focus.
- Project impacts children/families.
- Project supports a particular Blockbuster business objective (i.e., diversity or employment).
- Project has clearly defined and measurable goals.

Blockbuster does not donate to the following causes, events or activities:

- Religious organizations
- Sporting events
- Political parties, candidates or issues, and fraternal orders
- Endowment or capital campaigns (building funds)
- Requests for funding or scholarships for individuals
- Independent film or video productions

Requests that are local in scope should be forwarded to Blockbuster, Inc., 6600 Old Winter Garden Rd., Orlando, FL 32835-1218.

For more information go to www.blockbuster.com (click on “About Blockbuster” then “Community Relations”).

Hollywood Video Looking For ‘Stars’

**Deadline:** None. Allow four to six weeks for a response.  
**Eligibility:** Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status dedicated to children and families.  
**Geographic Focus:** Nationwide  
**Funding Range:** Up to five free rental certificates per year. (Hollywood Video does not make cash donations.)

Hollywood Video suggests some creative uses for free rental certificates including: rewarding volunteers or using them as auction items.

Hollywood Video has separate programs for K-12 schools. Through the Spotlighting Students program each K-12 school is eligible to receive 100 Shooting Star Achievement Awards. These awards may be redeemed at any Hollywood Video for a free rental of any new release, DVD, Game, or Hollywood Film Library® movie. Teachers and coaches may use the Spotlight on Students coupons to encourage and reward their students. The Spotlighting Teachers program allows faculty to receive Education Coupons redeemable for Hollywood Film Library® titles, which can be used as instructional aids in the classroom.

Website: www.hollywood-video.com/company/community_spotlight_local.aspx

Tip: The fastest way to get a response is to apply online using the donation request form at the company’s website. Be sure to include detailed information on how the five free rentals will be used.

Data Resources

Have you ever needed data quickly on the community your program serves? Here is a quick way to get demographic, housing, and other statistics for a specific place, whether it is a city, the county, or a zip code.

- Go to the Census 2000 website: www.census.gov.
- Click on American Fact Finder on the left side.
- In the box under “Get a Fact Sheet for your community...” type in the place (city, county, zip code) that you want data for. You may then get a list of choices, so choose the one you are looking for.

You should get a Profile of your target community with a list of many demographic statistics, including social, economic and

Continued on page 4
Data Resources (continued from page 3)

housing characteristics. For each indicator, you will get the total number, the percentage and the U.S. percentage.

• Click on the word Map and you will get an interactive map of your target community with the statistical indicator you chose displayed. You can resize the map and change certain aspects of it. On your Profile list, you can also click on the word Brief and you will get a thorough explanation of that statistical indicator.

Even though the Census data is now five years old (and getting older every day), it is still the most comprehensive set of data for population statistics available. It’s also still the standard demographic data used in most grant applications, and most funders understand that it is usually the best available.

The amount of information available on the Census website is sometimes staggering. But if you use data frequently, it’s worth surfing the site to become familiar with what is available and how best to access it. What is described above is just one quick way to get information. The Census Bureau has much more data, and many different ways to access it through its website. Happy surfing!

Education, Arts, Minorities Federated's Focus

Deadline: None.
Eligibility: Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)3 status
Geographic Focus: Nationwide, in the operating areas of stores such as Macy’s and Bloomingdale’s
Funding Range: Varies

Giving focuses on education, arts and culture, women’s issues (including breast cancer, ovarian/cervical cancers and domestic violence), HIV/AIDS, and programs that assist youth or minorities.

Organizations that currently receive United Way funds are not eligible to receive funding from the Federated Foundation. This foundation does not fund: fraternal organizations, event or program sponsorships, staff salaries, or umbrella organizations.

Trustees meet quarterly. Applications approved in the January – June timeframe are generally funded between August and September; applications approved within the July – December cycle will receive awards between February and March.

Federated Department Stores also operates an employee volunteer program called “Partners In Time.” Volunteer projects are primarily chosen by employees at the local level. Contact local store managers for more information.

For more information visit: www.federated-fds.com/community or contact the foundation at: Federated Department Stores Foundation, 7 W. Seventh Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202, 513-579-7000.
The latest in the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County's series of data-filled reports on issues affecting our children is set to be released in July. The State of the Child in Palm Beach County 2005 features demographics on school-age children including where they live, who they are, who they live with, and their physical and emotional health.

The chapters include Demographics, Safe and Nurturing Homes, Healthy Bodies/Minds and Choices, and School Success.

There are areas to celebrate such as the increase in the number of children adopted, the decrease in the number of children abused and the decline in the number of children who are delinquent. In the schools, we can celebrate the reduction in the number of incidents of crime and violence, the increase in graduation rates and FCAT scores and a decrease in suspensions.

The report points to challenges for the community partnerships to work on together, such as increasing pregnant teens' access to prenatal care, decrease the number of low birth weight babies born to teens, increase the education regarding asthma and obesity problems among children and increase the mental health services available in school and within the community.

The report and executive summary will be distributed throughout the county and will be available on CSC's website: www.cscpbc.org when printing is completed in late July.

Almanac, Early Care Guide Near Completion

The third edition of the Palm Beach County Family Almanac is in the final stages of development and will be published and distributed by mid August. Also under way with release scheduled in August is the Early Care and Education Guide. The Children's Services Council is a major partner in production of both of these publications because of their value to the community as needed and welcome resources.

The Almanac is a compilation of resources for people of all ages with listings of public and nonprofit agencies providing services in Palm Beach County. Emergency phone numbers and articles regarding a number of safety issues and available resources are also included. The major change in this year's edition is that all the same information will be provided in Spanish and English. A listing of organizations which have staff that can speak and understand Creole will be included again this year as well. This is created as a service to the community by CSC, Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Family Central, Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, Health Care District of Palm Beach County, Palm Healthcare Foundation Central, Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County, and WPBF Channel 25 and the Palm Beach Post.

The Early Care Guide will again include all child care centers and family day care homes, information on ages, hours and other pertinent information such as addresses and phone numbers. Articles deal with issues relating to young children, such as what to look for in seeking quality in child care. This publication is a partnership among CSC, the Early Learning Coalition and Family Central.

A listing of locations throughout the county where these publications will be available will be published in the August issue of this newsletter.

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2005 State of the Child Focuses on School-Age Children

Interventions, Early Hearing Loss Detection and Intervention grant project.

Bringing sound to the ear is also bringing information to the brain, research reports. Although hearing aids do not restore normal hearing, they provide substantial benefit in allowing children to access speech and sounds around them, which in turn, encourage brain development and learning.

Research has indicated that when parents and caregivers of children with hearing loss communicate with them effectively before the age of six months, it is possible for children to develop language ability that is within the normal range by age 3 years. Only early amplification, can children with residual hearing reach these developmental listening, verbal language, and speech goals.

Sometimes after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss, there is a delay before hearing aids can be purchased. The hearing aid bank can provide immediate help.

The Children's Hearing Help Fund Hearing Aid Loan Bank for Infants and Toddlers was made possible by collaboration between the Sertoma Speech and Hearing Foundation of Florida (727-834-5479) and the Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services, Bureau of Early Interventions, Early Hearing Loss Detection

A new program has been developed in Florida to provide hearing aids to our youngest children. The Children's Hearing Help Fund Hearing Aid Loan Bank, or 4200 for further information.

Hearing Aids Help Hearing Impaired Babies

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How Would You Like to Receive Future Newsletters?

The Children’s Services Council would like to know if you would find it more helpful to receive this newsletter by mail or electronically through email. Please indicate your preference below and include any updated information, including email address.

Name:________________________________________________________________________________
Organization:__________________________________________________________________________
Address:______________________________________________________________________________
Phone:_______________________

☐ I would like to continue receiving the newsletter by mail.

☐ I no longer wish to receive the newsletter

☐ I would prefer receiving the newsletter electronically by email.

Email Address:_____________________________

Please send responses to Joanne Napoli at Children’s Services Council, 1919 N. Flagler Drive, West Palm Beach, FL 33407 or fax to Joanne at 835-1956.