

# Doing Our Best for Young Children: A Plan for Giving All West Virginia Children a Good Start in Life<sup>1</sup>

*"When we do the best that we can, we never know  
what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another."*  
Helen Keller

*"If we did all the things we are capable of doing,  
we would literally astound ourselves."*  
Thomas A. Edison

*"We do not need magic to transform our world. We have all the power we need  
inside ourselves already. We have the power to imagine 'better'."*  
J.K. Rowling

## Plan Outline

### **I) Introduction**

- A) Purpose and scope of plan (Services + Infrastructure = System)
- B) Planning process (Executive Order, Task Force, Study Groups, research, etc.)

### **II) The Power and Potential of Early Childhood**

- A) The science of ECD (early brain development; research on effective practices/programs)
- B) The economics of ECD (return on investments – overall and for state budget)
- C) Public support for ECD (West Virginia and national, *and reference separate report on Task Force surveys, forums and stakeholder discussions*)

### **III) Imagining a Bright Future for All Children (the 10-year view)**

- A) Vision for WV's early childhood system, prenatal to five
- B) Guiding values/principles
- C) Signs of Success (indicators of our desired outcomes for young children and families)

---

<sup>1</sup> In a recent email exchange, Rachel Tompkins said "I especially like the idea of helping parents and caregivers be the best they can be rather than the frame of providing services. Same support system but might help politically." And it struck me that "the best they can be" applies to all of us in the various roles we play (parents, professionals, policymakers, citizens) related to children. -JP

**IV) How West Virginia's Youngest Children Are Faring** *(Key facts in Plan, and reference detailed sources, e.g. Kids Count, WBCBP child poverty report, ZERO TO THREE Baby Facts)*

- A) Health indicators
- B) Learning/development indicators
- C) Social and economic indicators

**V) The Current Early Childhood System**

- A) Guiding frameworks
  - 1 Early Learning Standards – Infants & toddlers and 3-5 years
  - 2 School Readiness – Ready children, ready families, ready schools, ready communities
  - 3 Strengthening Families – Parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, social and emotional competence of children
- B) Graphic and brief description of current system (services and infrastructure)
  - 1 Services
    - (a) Early care & education: Head Start, Pre-K, Birth to 3, child care, home visiting
    - (b) Prenatal, child and family health – Public health, private providers, payers
    - (c) Related services that families need, beyond those identified in Executive Order
  - 2 Infrastructure
    - (a) Coordination and governance
    - (b) Access and quality
    - (c) Workforce
    - (d) Funding
- C) What's working and what needs improvement *(Summarize in Plan, and reference separate report on assessment of current system, including service provided, families served, quality, and funding levels and sources.)*

**VI) Strategic Goals and Priorities** *(the 3-year view)*

- A) Setting priorities and weighing trade-offs (including how we're addressing controversial issues and how we chose priorities based on impact/feasibility assessment)
- B) Strategic goals and priorities
  - 1 Services
  - 2 Infrastructure
- C) Funding *(Summarize in report and reference detailed report by WVCBP)*