

Montgomery County
Early Childhood & Education
(ECE)
Initiative

Ready Set *Soar* 

Montgomery County
Board of County Commissioners
October 13, 2009

Why was ReadySetSoar launched?



To build Montgomery County's Early Childhood Education (ECE) infrastructure so that...

Every child in Montgomery County begins Kindergarten ready to *soar*.

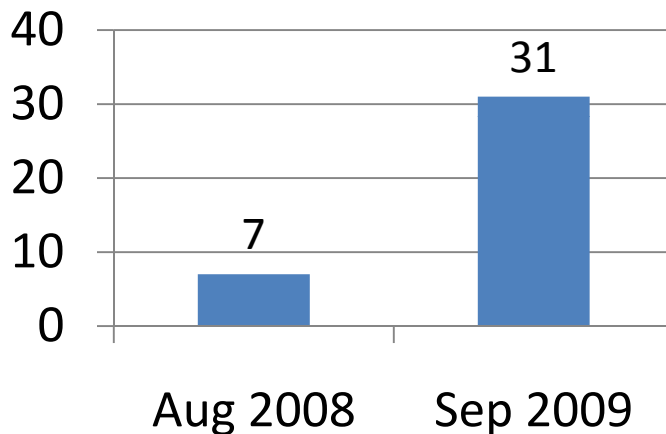
“From the flight deck”

ReadySetSoar is reaching cruising altitude, and the Montgomery County ECE community has seen gains in the goal areas:

- 1) Higher quality in early childhood settings
- 2) Stronger connections and infrastructure
- 3) Increased Advocacy
- 4) Heightened community awareness

Progress: Higher Quality

Star Rated Centers in
Montgomery County



4x as many Star Rated
centers in 1 year!

- Grew from 775 children capacity in Star Rated Centers to 3,069 children Sept 2009
- Grew from 3% to 14% centers Star Rated

ReadySetSoar Partnerships are impacting Higher Quality



Partnership Created Big Impact

- 1/3 of centers (70) received one-on-one assistance to help toward higher quality
- Funding from County increased 4C's ability to reach providers by 60% this year
- 8 of 11 Focus Sites awarded Star Ratings (25% of the total Star Rated Centers in County)
- Proactive outreach to blanket community in Step Up Awareness and engagement

ReadySetSoar Partnerships are impacting Higher Quality



Partnership Builds on 4C Success

- New Mentor Group model
- 4 Directors from the Focus Sites are Mentors in new Mentor Groups (13 mentors total)
- 30 centers to earn Star Rating by June 2010 – estimated \$300,000 in Quality Achievement Awards from State, plus an additional revenue stream on subsidized

ReadySetSoar is impacting Higher Quality by helping to explore programs

- Brought SPARK to Dayton, 75 people participated
- Conducted inventory of programs serving parents and children birth to age 5
- Supporting CNI Team exploring possible pilots
- Visited Ready School pilot in Troy
- Piloting KRA-L Awareness session this fall with key partner



Progress: Advocacy Wins



- 2008 Market Rate Survey was used, which saved our county by moving to Category F for payments
- Definition of how providers are paid for subsidized care stayed same (full-time and part-time hours)
- Step Up Award and 5-10-15% bump in subsidized rates

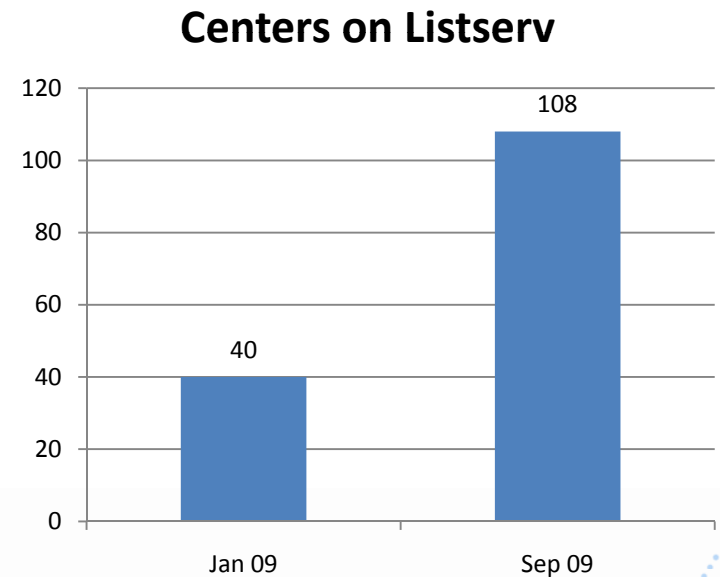
ReadySetSoar's support of statewide advocacy contributed to wins...




- Facilitated Early Learning Initiative (ELI) collaboration between providers, MCDJFS, Commissioners
- Created Survey that was used statewide to influence legislators in final decisions
- More proactive and involved advocacy efforts in our region – providers & parents engaged (TV Spots, letters to the editor, calls to legislators)

Progress: Stronger Connections & Infrastructure

- Full-time Director
- Advisory Cabinet meeting monthly to guide initiatives
- 3 Subcommittees
- 250% increase in Listserv participation



How ReadySetSoar has contributed to Stronger Connections & Infrastructure...

- Supported listserv by expanding reach to double the number of providers
- Building new strategic partnerships such as Awards Luncheon with DAYC 
- Identifying school districts to partner with to understand Kindergarten transition

Progress: Community Awareness

- **Parents** – second annual **VOYAGE ON THE PARKWAY** in October to reach 1,500 preschool children
- **Communication Plan** in initial stages
- **Pediatrician** dialogue starting
- **Business & Media** connections building

Next leg of the flight

1. **Continue Step Up to Quality momentum** – grow to 75 Star Rated centers by end of 2010
2. **Develop Advocacy Relationships** – voice heard in new Center for Early Childhood
3. **Define Kindergarten Readiness** – common understanding with stakeholders & identified goals
4. **Support Potential Initiatives** – such as pilots with CNI, SPARK, Ready Schools, Harlem Children Zone
5. **Solidify Infrastructure** with right stakeholders
6. **Launch Communication Plan**
7. **Solidify funding** for new initiatives

Thank you...

To Montgomery County  leadership for investing so children are ready to take off and soar in kindergarten and beyond.

