

# Stone Soup: The Power of Collaboration and Discovery

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October 26, 2004 ~ 8:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Sheraton Four Points, Meriden, CT

## 8:45 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. **Welcome**

*Charter Oak Ballroom* David Nee, Executive Director  
William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

Janice Gruendel, Special Policy Advisor to the Governor

## 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Keynote Address: Managing and Leading Change**

*Charter Oak Ballroom* Dr. Phil Schlechty, CEO  
Schlechty Center for Leadership in School Reform

## 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Session A: Concurrent Workshops**

### *Arlington* ***Against the Odds: Building Resiliency in Children and Strengthening Protective Factors***

Learn about the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Program (DECA) tool and how it is being used in Bristol to improve the social and emotional development of young children.

*Presenters: Mary-Alice Petrucelli-Timek, Bristol School Readiness Grant Manager; Marilyn Lobaczewski, Executive Director, Bristol Preschool Child Care Center*

### *Ivoryton* ***Infusing a Health Agenda into Early Childhood Programs: The Process and the Plan***

Explore Middletown's lessons learned about how to ensure effective health practices and increased access to nutrition services, oral health, and behavioral health services in the early childhood system. Topics will include creating a collaborative table, becoming culturally competent, and implementation challenges.

*Presenters: Susan Macary, Project Planner, Middlesex Hospital Family Advocacy Program; Christine Holley, Parent Representative for "Opportunity Knocks;" Dr. Cliff O'Callahan, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, UCHC and member of the pediatric faculty, Middlesex Hospital*

### *Jericho* ***Nourishing the Grassroots***

How do you create a collaborative that involves both professionals and parents? How do you ensure your collaborative reflects the diversity of your community, both racially and economically? How do you "let go" of a grassroots group so that they are empowered to make decisions? Learn how Windsor has addressed these challenges in their Discovery collaborative.

*Presenters: Tammy Exum, Windsor Early Childhood Council Coordinator and Ceila Robbins, Coordinator of Grants and Innovative Programs, Windsor Public Schools*

**Hanover**

***Creating Parent and Teen Leaders***

Learn about Norwich’s four-tiered approach to creating parent and teen leaders that includes People Empowering People, Voices for Families, Parent Graduate Leadership Initiative, and Teen Leadership Council.

*Presenters: Sherry Filiatreault, Coordinator, Norwich Children First Initiative; Angelo Callis, Marriage and Family Therapist, Norwich Youth and Family Services; Karyn Barrows, Parent Leader*

**Danbury**

***Enhancing the Quality of Home-Based Care***

A significant percentage of young children are cared for in home-based care, yet many quality enhancement efforts focus exclusively on centers. Hear how two communities are reaching out to individuals who care for young children in their homes—both licensed providers and kith and kin providers—to support them in their ability to provide high quality early care and education.

*Presenters: Jessica Sager, Executive Director, All Our Kin; Nilda Aponte, Family Child Care Home Coordinator, All Our Kin; Tanya Michaelson, Network Coordinator, All Our Kin; Barbara Edinberg, Assistant Director, Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition; Nekita Carroll-Hall, Coordinator, Roosevelt Family Resource Center; Flora Harris, Coordinator, Ralphola Taylor/YMCA Family Resource Center*

**Fairfield B**

***Developing a User Friendly Companion Guide to the CT Preschool Curriculum Framework***

Learn about the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework and the experience of a community partnership to produce a companion guide that would help providers understand how to apply the framework in their classrooms.

*Presenter: Judith Bronson, Early Childhood Education Consultant, Education Connection*

**Guilford A**

***Managing and Leading Change***

Continue the conversation with our Keynote Speaker about how to manage and lead change at the community level.

*Presenter: Phil Schlechty, Schlechty Center for Leadership in School Reform*

**Fairfield A**

***Building Community, Supporting Change: Two Communities’ Experiences***

This panel presentation will highlight experiences in Mansfield and West Haven as they engaged their communities in Discovery and learned what issues were important to the community. Panel members will share lessons learned from their different approaches to community engagement.

*Presenters: Sandra P. Baxter, Mansfield School Readiness Coordinator; Kevin Grunwald, Director of Social Services, Town of Mansfield; Alice Torres, Coordinator, Early Childhood Services, Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES); Betty Murphy, West Haven Department of Public Health; Sandy Coleman, West Haven Housing Authority*

**10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Session A: Concurrent Workshops – continued**

***Brunswick***

***Local Strategies to Move Public Policy***

Hear how several different communities have impacted public policy at the local and/or state level, including issues such as education funding, mental health services, and voter registration. Panel members will share specific strategies that worked in their communities.

*Presenters: Christine Fahey, School Readiness Coordinator, Middletown Board of Education; Merrill Gay, Executive Director, New Britain Discovery Collaborative; Debbie Kievits, Parent Leader, CT Parent Power Delegate from Norwich; Marilyn Ondrasik, Executive Director, Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition; David Radcliff, Facilitator, Meriden Children First Initiative; Linda Kosko, Collaborative Director, Danbury Children First*

***Guilford B***

***All Children Ready for School Success: Moving From Public Goal to Public Action in CT and the US***

Learn about the national and state influences that led to the creation of Ready, Set, Grow, how it has evolved over time, and how it can serve as a vehicle to move from public goal setting to public action.

*Presenter: Janice Gruendel, Co-Founder and Co-President, Connecticut Voices for Children*

**11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Lunch and Storytelling**

***Charter Oak Ballroom***

William Graustein, Trustee, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and Catherine Conant, Storyteller

**1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Session B: Concurrent Workshops**

***Jericho***

***A Day in the Black Experience***

This interactive session will explore some of the issues, emotions, stereotypes, and realities that exist today around issues of race and class and provide strategies to create understanding and change in our communities.

*Presenter: Ellen Boynton, President, ESB~Consulting and Training Associates*

***Guilford A***

***Collaborative Building is Like Story Telling: What is Your Story?***

Participants will discuss how to create and sustain a successful collaborative, including how to run a meeting, complete a strategic planning process, and market your work. The session will highlight barriers that the Health and Learning Coalition, which includes New London, Groton, and Norwich, have experienced and ways they have worked to overcome them.

*Presenters: Margaret Holmberg, Director, Young Children and Families, LEARN; Laurel Tiesinga, Director, Community Partnerships; Catherine Russell, Director, Eastern Area Health Education Council*

**Fairfield B*****Three Degrees of Separation – Who is Sitting at Your Table?***

How can you increase the effectiveness of your Discovery group? By involving key individuals who can champion your group's work in the community and increasing the visibility of your work. Learn how New London has developed partnerships with community organizations and developed new marketing materials, and how these lessons can be applied to your community.

*Presenters: Jeanne Sigel, Marketing Consultant and Kate Griffith Potter, Educator, Mitchell College Children's Learning Center*

**Hanover*****Social and Emotional Development in Infants, Waddlers, and Toddlers***

How can you better support young children's social and emotional development in the child care setting? Discuss strategies and techniques to prevent challenging behaviors and address barriers to learning so children are best prepared to grow, learn and enter school.

*Presenters: Heather Starkey, Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), Catholic Family Services; Linda Flach, ECCP, Lower Naugatuck Valley Parent Child Resource Center; Beryl Yudkin, ECCP, Waterbury Child Guidance Clinic; Devon Rayment, ECCP, Mid-Fairfield Child Guidance Center; Anne Marie Davidson, ECCP, Wheeler Clinic*

**Ivoryton*****Marketing Strategies to Involve Busy Parents***

The Parents and Communities for Kids (PACK) Initiative has conducted market research and developed a social marketing campaign to inform parents about fun learning opportunities in the local community that are designed for participation by parents and kids together. Learn what has made this marketing effort successful and how to apply these strategies to your Discovery work.

*Presenter: Ceely Ackerman, PACK Director, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven*

**Arlington*****Mobilizing Your Community for Change***

Learn specific strategies from the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition about how to spur action in your community, including how to: create a cadre of people willing to advocate, organize large community meetings with public officials, and write reports that don't end up on a shelf.

*Presenter: Marilyn Ondrasik, Executive Director, Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition*

**Brunswick*****Learning in a Bag***

Learn about a home visiting program in Stamford that provides activities for parents to do at home with their young children. Each bag includes materials that promote literacy and skill development through fun activities and books. Participants will get to see and use materials from several of the learning bags.

*Presenters: Jennienne Peoples Burke, Health Educator, Care to Care; Linda Levy, Director, Stamford School Readiness Program; Antonia Better Wirz and Silvia Arnoso, Learning In a Bag Facilitators*

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

**Session B: Concurrent Workshops -- continued**

*Danbury*

***Using the CT Preschool Assessment for Program Improvement: A Region's Effort to Improve Learning Outcomes for Children***

The CT Preschool Assessment Framework is used to monitor children's growth and progress and to assist in targeting instruction related to specific learning outcomes. The assessment can also be used to identify certain gaps in skill development that may need a strategic approach to classroom or program improvement. This session will describe the strategies used to target specific interventions that will lead to increased outcomes for children in preschool programs.

*Presenters: Elizabeth A. Aschenbrenner, Early Childhood, EASTCONN; Lynda Fosco, Director, Goodyear Early Childhood Center, Killingly; Tammy Herrick, Head Teacher, Goodyear Early Childhood Center; Cindy Torrance, EASTCONN Head Start*

*Guilford B*

***Parent-School-Community Grant Writing Institute: A Grassroots Effort to Bring Energy and Resources to a Small Town***

Chaplin has developed a training program to increase grant writing skills among parents, educators, town officials, and other community members. The community has been energized by this training and hopes to secure additional resources as a result. Learn how the Institute was designed, how participants were recruited, and the tasks involved in implementation.

*Presenters: Ruth Freeman, Chaplin Discovery Project Coordinator; Sharyn Rusch, Parent Leader; Rusty Lanzit, Chaplin First Selectman; Judi Jordan, Consultant and Trainer*

*Fairfield A*

***Evaluation: What's Discovery Got to Do With It?***

This session will provide an overview of the planned Discovery Evaluation and will involve participants in a self-evaluation exercise for Discovery sites.

*Presenters: Sally Leiderman, President, Center for Assessment and Policy Development and Manuel Gutiérrez, Co-Director, OMG Center for Collaborative Learning*

3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

**Session C: Concurrent Workshops**

*Danbury*

***Connecting the Dots between Early Care and Education Programs, Families, and Communities: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach***

Learn about the benefits of a multidisciplinary team approach in working with preschool teachers, preschool-aged children and their families to improve the quality of care. The discussion will include information about how to replicate this model in your community, as well as some of the challenges involved in implementation.

*Presenters: Sharon Redmann, Early Childhood Specialist, ACES; Sharon Huttner, Speech and Language Pathologist, ACES; Nancy Close, Assistant Director, Yale Early Childhood Education Program and Assistant Professor, Yale Child Study Program*

***Jericho******Parent and Community Engagement in Danbury***

Hear from parents, a city official, and a school principal about the benefits of parent and community engagement, and specific engagement strategies that have worked in Danbury.

*Presenters: Eileen Byrne, Parent and Parent Leadership Training Institute Assistant, Danbury Children First; Melvette Hill, Parent and Executive Secretary, Housing Authority of the City of Danbury; Mayor Mark Boughton or his designee; Robert Rifenburg, Principal, South Street Elementary School; Linda Kosko, Collaborative Director, Danbury Children First*

***Guilford A******Developing a Feasible Plan for a New Child Care Facility***

The early steps in the facility development process are critical to the overall success of the project. Learn about best practices in early care facility design, funding sources and financing strategies, and the types of technical experts needed on a project development team.

*Presenter: David Wasch, Director, Children's Investment Partnership*

***Guilford B******Building Capacity One Boomer at a Time: Recruitment Tips and Strategies for Community Organizations***

Baby boomer retirement is upon us! This phenomenon, unlike anything in our history, has unleashed a tidal wave of talent into the world of “what’s next?” and community-based organizations stand to be the greatest beneficiaries of this incredible resource. Many boomers have a wealth of experience and expertise that they are able and willing to share with their communities, either in paid positions or as volunteers. Learn how to access, recruit, engage, and manage this tremendous resource.

*Presenter: Stephen Ristau, President, Ristau & Associates, LLC and Harry Orlick, Independent Consultant*

***Ivoryton******Family Friendly Practices in Early Childhood Programming***

How can child care programs become more family friendly? Learn specific strategies and how to use an “audit” tool to evaluate your own program for family friendliness.

*Presenter: Kristen Kennen, Early Childhood Specialist, United Way of CT/211 Infoline*

***Hanover******Community Conversations: Why, How, and Then What?***

Why hold an open community dialogue when your initiative already has clear objectives and a defined work plan? How do you get diverse participation at your conversation? What are good ways to follow up on your Community Conversation? This workshop will address these frequently asked questions and highlight the experiences of three Discovery communities who have used Community Conversations in their Discovery work.

*Presenters: Sonja Ahuja, League of Women Voters; Margaret Hiller, Bridgeport Public Education Fund; Kevin Grunwald, Mansfield Social Services; Dorsey Gude, Norwalk Education Foundation; Suzanne Ryan, Community Connections, Naugatuck*

**3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.      Session C: Concurrent Workshops -- continued**

***Arlington                      Choosing Collaboration: Two Funders, One Community Agenda for School Readiness***

Learn how two regional funders have chosen collaboration over competition in their effort to increase the resources that are available for early childhood. The workshop will also highlight the communication strategies that are being used to promote early childhood in the region.

*Presenters: Heather Calabrese, Senior Vice President, United Way of Greater New Haven and Cynthia Mariani, Director of Communications, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven*

***Fairfield A                      The State Budget Process: The How, What, and Why—and How You Can Get Involved***

Learn the basics about the state budget process and what the state budget shows about our state priorities. The session will also discuss how citizens can communicate effectively with their state legislators and influence state policy.

*Presenter: Ellen Scalettar, Senior Policy Fellow, Connecticut Voices for Children*

***Fairfield B                      DataGate: The Scandal of Inadequate Early Care and Education Data***

Learn about how to find, analyze, and present data on early childhood issues. Participants will receive a copy of the new early childhood factbook, “*Keeping Children on the Path to School Success*.”

*Presenters: Susan Wilson, Director, Early Childhood DataCONNECTIONS; Frances Duran, Policy Associate, Child Health and Development Institute*

**4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.      Closing Session (*Charter Oak Ballroom*)**