

2006 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING CALENDAR

BACKGROUND

Capacity building supports communities in fostering, leading, and managing a community change process on behalf of young children. The capacity building approach supports communities in addressing the four Discovery objectives as well as the core initiative principles of collaboration, parent leadership and community engagement. The aim is to assist in the development of community capacities to:

- Create and sustain a community-wide agenda to improve early school success
- Collect, share and utilize data
- Cultivate and engage parents
- Organize and mobilize diverse constituencies for strategic purposes
- Apply knowledge of child development to practice and policy decisions
- Leverage resources
- Manage and lead a community change process

2006 OVERVIEW

The 2006 capacity-building theme is *maintaining the momentum*. At the mid-point of the initiative, the goal will be to ensure that communities have the core elements in place to achieve short-term outcomes, amplify community voice across geographic boundaries, and sustain over time their community vision for young children. Efforts in 2006 will focus on broadening and deepening community understanding and application of key concepts introduced in 2005: (a) parent engagement and leadership; (b) community organizing and mobilization; and (c) economic and racial equity.

In 2006, a significant portion of the Memorial Fund's efforts will be devoted to building an infrastructure for the 50th community and statewide policy advocacy. The Memorial Fund has convened a working group of the Early Care Alliance, Connecticut Parent Power and Discovery communities to develop a statewide poll on early care and education, the results of which can be used to mobilize for local and statewide action.

CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORTS

Communities can access capacity-building supports in any of the three ways described below:

- A. Cross-site Convening** – These are opportunities for communities to come together and explore a variety of topics and issues, network and expand their leadership capacity as members of Discovery cohorts, in regional groupings and by role (e.g. coordinators, collaborative agents). Each opportunity has a different focus, targets a different audience, and allows communities to engage diverse constituencies in the work of Discovery.
- B. On-Site Technical Assistance** – These are opportunities for the collaborative to receive targeted support in the local application of the Discovery values and strategies. As needed, communities can request on-site technical assistance in the areas of strategic planning and communications. Additionally, customized on-site support will be available based on a review of the 2006 action plans and individual requests. We will also endeavor to connect community requests with the skills and expertise of statewide entities.
- C. Training and Skill Building Institutes** – These are multi-session “how-to” opportunities for a limited number of communities. A set of criteria for self-selection, including the commitment to attend all sessions, will be the basis for participation. The two topics identified for 2006 are community organizing and kindergarten transition.

CROSS-SITE CONVENING OPPORTUNITIES

The following section provides descriptions of cross-site convening opportunities and suggestions for possible participants, along with the 2006 Calendar of Events.

ORIENTATION SESSION	
<i>Purpose</i>	To reinforce the core values and outcomes of the Discovery initiative, provide an overview of the 2006 capacity building opportunities and answer questions about local implementation.
<i>Audience</i>	Collaborative members, leadership and staff
COHORT MEETINGS	
<i>Purpose</i>	To build the leadership capacity of Discovery staff and collaborative chairs based on their readiness to lead and manage systemic change processes and apply the core values of Discovery to local efforts. Participants will share promising practices around a specific topic, group problem solve common issues, and build connections with statewide organizations.
<i>Audience</i>	Collaborative leadership and staff
REGIONAL LEARNING CIRCLES	
<i>Purpose</i>	To provide an opportunity for communities in geographic proximity to network, engage more people in the work of Discovery, and build regional relationships around common issues.
<i>Audience</i>	Collaborative members, parents, interested citizens, community partners and organizations
TOPICAL SESSIONS	
<i>Purpose</i>	To increase general understanding of a specific topic or strategy
<i>Audience</i>	Collaborative or Committee members with responsibility for local application
PEER EXCHANGES	
<i>Purpose</i>	To explore issues relative to a specific Discovery role (e.g. Collaborative agent)
<i>Audience</i>	Individuals with the designated roles and responsibilities
STONE SOUP CONFERENCE	
<i>Purpose</i>	To provide a learning/networking forum for communities and state/regional partners
<i>Audience</i>	Broad cross-section of community partners, collaborative members, statewide organizations and community/statewide stakeholders
TRAINING AND SKILL BUILDING INSTITUTES	
<i>Purpose</i>	To provide in-depth “how-to” training to a limited number of communities positioned to use the skills and knowledge in the areas of community organizing and kindergarten transition. Sessions will begin in March based on the availability of national/state experts.
<i>Audience</i>	Communities that choose to participate based on the specific criteria for each institute