

**State of Wyoming**



**Department of Workforce Services**

## **WY Quality Counts! Program**

### **Annual Report FY07**

**Joan K. Evans, Director**

**October 1, 2007**

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October 1, 2007

Enclosed is the FY07 Annual Report for the WY Quality Counts! Program. The information contained in this report is for the first quarter, FY08, as there were no direct services during FY07.

The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) has been actively working to implement the WY Quality Counts! Program enacted during the 2007 General Session as HB95 and 96. The WY Quality Counts! Program is focused on providing awareness and training with the purpose of increasing the quality of child care in Wyoming, while demonstrating WY Quality Counts! for children, parents and our economic future.

In addition to the educational services directed toward child care providers within the State, the WY Quality Counts! Program is tasked with developing a parental education and public awareness campaign aimed at promoting the importance of parental and family involvement in quality of early childhood development. To this end, the WY Quality Counts! Program continually works to provide information for parents so that they may fulfill their role as their child's first and most important teacher.

This report describes in detail the accomplishments of the WY Quality Counts! Program to date as well as ongoing activities. We are excited to welcome this program to our growing lineup of services.

Thank you for your support and commitment to quality child care in the State of Wyoming!

Sincerely,

Joan K. Evans



# WY QUALITY COUNTS!

AWARENESS & TRAINING FOR QUALITY CHILD CARE

ANNUAL REPORT – FY 2007  
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

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## SECTION ONE – HISTORY OF ACTIVITIES

### Budget Session 2006 through General Session 2007

**2006 Budget Session** – HB 92 was enacted and included authorization for the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to promulgate rules and regulations for the purpose of implementing the Quality Child Care Program [Title 14, Chapter 4, Article 2 of Wyoming Statutes]. This legislation: 1) Provided for a quality child care rating system within DWS, 2) Provided criteria for the rating of child care facilities, 3) Provided incentives for professional development of child care facility staff, 4) Created a Legislative Oversight Committee, 5) Identified required reports, 6) Granted rule making authority, 7) Provided for a grievance board, 8) Provided appropriations, 9) Provided for a taskforce, and 10) Provided for an effective date.

**April 28, 2006** – DWS staff met with the Quality Child Care Legislative Oversight Committee. During the meeting, the Oversight Committee provided guidance and expressed concerns. Public comment was also taken during the meeting.

**April to July 2006** – DWS staff met numerous times with the Quality Child Care Taskforce and an Advisory Workgroup. Both groups made recommendations to DWS regarding the development of a quality child care system. The Advisory Workgroup was particularly focused on providing DWS with specific recommendations and details regarding the content of the criteria that would be used to rate child care facilities.

**July 28, 2006** – DWS met with the Oversight Committee to present a project update report. The report made recommendations and requested guidance from the Committee.

**September 2006** – A baseline assessment of the overall quality of Wyoming's child care facilities was completed. The assessment revealed the following: 1) Overall, Wyoming child care facilities provided safe, clean and healthy care for children; 2) The remaining scores were low to moderate, with family child care homes and centers obtaining better outcomes than child care centers; and 3) The high performance scores in health and safety provided an excellent foundation for all other practices in early childhood care and education; however, training and strategies were needed to address the remaining issues of quality. The "learning environment" had the lowest scores across all types of child care facilities. The full report is posted at: <http://wyqualitycounts.org/providers/forms/>

**October 15, 2006** – A Community Child Care Availability Assessment was completed in order to determine Wyoming's child care capacity. The study indicated that statewide, child care capacity demand in 2006 was between 21,515 and 35,827. Using the midpoint of the demand, the unmet need for 2006 was estimated to be 8,612. In 2016, the statewide child care capacity demand is anticipated to be between 28,190 and 48,619. Using the midpoint of the demand, the anticipated unmet need for 2016 is anticipated to be 15,031. The state and county reports may be found at: <http://www.wyqualitycounts.org/providers/forms>

**October 2006** – DWS conducted two meetings for professional child care organizations and twenty-four county "town hall" meetings across the state to provide public awareness and education regarding the program recommendations and to gather input from interested citizens. Over 621 Wyoming citizens attended the meetings. Four surveys were provided to attendees, and the results of the surveys, including comments, were included in the November 1, 2006 report to the Oversight Committee.

**November 1, 2006** – A report incorporating input from the Oversight Committee and the public was presented to the Oversight Committee. The following information and recommendations were included:

- A summary of the baseline Quality Child Care Assessment and six program recommendations to improve the quality of child care. The recommended services included: 1) Business management services, 2) Quality

- enhancement grants, 3) Early childhood scholarships for families, 4) Technical assistance, 5) Professional development grants, and 6) Quality assessment.
- Recommendations for a Quality Rating Scale included four levels, with level one meeting licensing requirements and level five representing best practices in the following four quality indicators: 1) Family partnerships and community involvement, 2) Staff qualifications and education, 3) Learning environment, and 4) Staff to child ratios.
- A summary of the Community Child Care Availability Assessment and four program recommendations to increase the capacity of child care: 1) A business ready community grant and loan program for community owned facilities and/or infrastructure for child care businesses, 2) A community facility grant and loan program for child care business infrastructure, 3) Capacity enhancement grants, and 4) A loan program.
- A summary of public input.
- Program recommendations for system supports to include: 1) Parental education and public awareness services, 2) Uniform reporting, outcome measurements and data infrastructure, and 3) A grievance board.
- Budget projections.

#### Legislative Session 2007

House Bills 95 and 96 were passed to amend Title 14, Chapter 4, Article 2 of Wyoming Statutes and to provide the respective appropriation. This action resulted in DWS administering the following services: 1) Educational development grants (Educational Development Scholarships and Continuing Education Grants), 2) Business management services, 3) Technical assistance (Quality Trainings for the Learning Environment), 4) Parental education, 5) Public awareness, and 6) Data outcome system.

#### **SECTION TWO – SUMMARY OF SERVICES**

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIPS: provides funding for child care providers to pursue formal education in obtaining certificates and degrees.

CONTINUING EDUCATION GRANTS: provides funding for child care providers to obtain short-term continuing education.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TRAINING: assists child care business owners with training to increase their business skills by learning about entrepreneur tactics and launching, managing, maintaining and growing a child care business.

QUALITY TRAINING FOR THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: provides training on enhancing the learning environment for children.

PARENTAL EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS: provides funding for services that:

- Promote knowledge regarding the quality child care system;
- Promote an understanding of the benefits that accrue to children, families and communities from quality child care programs;
- Promote the advantages of parents personally providing care for their own children whenever possible;
- Promote parent involvement in their child's development and provide information and activities to parents or caretakers to promote early childhood learning and development at home;
- Emphasize the importance of parental responsibility and the involvement of the family in quality early childhood development; and
- Inform parents about choices available in childcare programs and how to choose an appropriate child caring facility.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING SERVICES: the funding for these activities was transferred to the Substance Abuse Division of the Wyoming Department of Health.

### SECTION THREE – PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING THE SYSTEM UNDER THIS ARTICLE

The following items provide a timeline for the implementation of the quality child care legislation (HB95 and 96) which were made effective on March 1, 2007.

**April 18, 2007** – An RFP was released for a contractor to provide quality child care technical assistance. DWS hired Children and Nutritional Services, Inc. (CNS) and Nutrition and Child Development, Inc. (NCD) to design, develop and deliver statewide, regional trainings to child care providers. As a result of the baseline quality assessment, the focus of training for the first year will be improving the learning environment.

**April 24, 2007** – DWS hired Rick Imbrogno as the WY Quality Counts! Program Manager.

**May 3, 2007** – DWS met with the Wyoming Community College Vice-Presidents to provide a brief overview of the program and to obtain input.

**May 7, 2007** – DWS met with the Governor’s Early Childhood Development Council; a presentation and an opportunity for input was provided.

**May 12, 2007** – DWS participated in “Provider Appreciation Recognition Day” at the Old West Museum in Cheyenne.

**June 20, 2007** – An RFP was released for a contractor to provide business management services. DWS hired Align Organizational Development, Inc. to design, develop and deliver regional trainings.

**July 1-15, 2007** – DWS developed a database to collect all program-related data. This database was designed to gather relevant data outcomes and includes custom reporting capabilities.

**July 15-21, 2007** – Seven staff members from CNS, seven staff members from NCD and Rick Imbrogno attended a course entitled “The Art of Facilitation” in Atlanta, GA. The course provided attendees with the content and custom-designed curriculum for the trainings offered by CNS and NCD.

**July 15, 2007** – DWS coordinated with each of the Wyoming Community Colleges and the University of Wyoming’s Financial Aid Directors to develop a payment process for tuition, books and fees related to the educational development program.

**July 27, 2007** – A blueprint was designed to communicate program guidelines and to obtain input from stakeholders prior to the initiation of the rulemaking process.

**July 27, 2007** – Educational Development Program satisfaction surveys were made available on the web site.

**August 6, 2007** – Emergency rules were promulgated.

**August 6, 2007** – DWS began accepting applications for Educational Development Scholarships and Continuing Education Grants.

**August 22, 2007** – Proposed regular rules were filed. The official public comment period was designated as August 22, 2007 through October 5, 2007.

**September 4, 2007** – A request for a public hearing was received from the Wyoming Early Childhood Association; the hearing has been scheduled for October 8, 2007 via videoconference from fourteen locations throughout the state.

**September 26, 2007** – An RFP was released for a contractor to write parental education and public awareness content for the web site.

**September 27, 2007** – A brochure encouraging participation in the trainings for improving the learning environment was mailed to all licensed child care providers. The brochure provided information regarding the content of the training as well as the regional schedule.

#### Works in Progress

The following projects are in progress:

- Complete rulemaking process for the Educational Development Program;
- Ongoing development of media activities;
- Design of online applications for the educational development program;
- Hire a contractor to write content for the parental education and public awareness sections of the web site;
- Initiate delivery of child care business training services; and
- Schedule visits to child care providers throughout the state in order to provide information, receive input and encourage participation in services.

## SECTION FOUR – PARTICIPATING CHILD CARE FACILITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

### Educational Development Program

The following charts illustrate participation across county and type of child care program for both Educational Development Scholarships and Continuing Education Grants. Please review the legend below for additional information.

Between July 1 and September 30, 2007, 35 individuals enrolled in the Educational Development Scholarship Program – 4 from family child care homes, 7 from family child care centers and 24 from child care centers.

	Educational Development Scholarships Total									Total Participants	Type of Program		
	CDA	AA	AS	AAS	BA	BS	Post Grad	Rem. Ed.	Appre- ntice		FCCH	FCCC	CCC
Albany	9	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	11
Big Horn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Campbell	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Carbon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Crook	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fremont	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	1	3	1
Goshen	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	1
Laramie	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	6	0	3	3
Natrona	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1
Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	1
Sheridan	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Uinta	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Total	13	9	0	2	3	0	2	0	6	35	4	7	24

Between July 1 and September 30, 2007, 21 licensed child care businesses (representing 48 individuals) enrolled in the Continuing Education Grants Program – 2 from family child care homes, 5 from family child care centers and 14 from child care centers.

	Continuing Education Grants	Type of Program			Participants	Children Impacted
		FCCH	FCCC	CCC		
Albany	1	0	0	1	1	155
Big Horn	1	1	0	0	1	10
Campbell	3	0	0	3	9	101
Fremont	2	0	0	2	4	40
Goshen	1	0	1	0	4	15
Johnson	1	0	0	1	3	28
Laramie	2	0	1	1	5	139
Natrona	2	0	2	0	1	15
Park	6	1	1	4	11	123
Sheridan	2	0	0	2	9	222
Total	21	2	5	14	48	848

<b>Legend for "Type of Program" Categories in each chart.</b>	
Family Child Care Home (FCCH)	Provide care for 3 – 10 children in own home without additional staff
Family Child Care Center (FCCC)	Provide care for a maximum of 15 children in home or another building in which you do not reside with one additional staff when more than 10 children are present.
Child Care Center (CCC)	Provide care for 16 or more children with adequate staff to meet the staff to child ratio requirements.
For more information, visit: <a href="http://dfswapps.state.wy.us/DFSDivEC/Providers/ProvidersPCC.asp">http://dfswapps.state.wy.us/DFSDivEC/Providers/ProvidersPCC.asp</a>	

The following chart demonstrates the expenditures in each category.

CDA	Apprenticeship	College AA, AS, AAS, BA, BS, Post	Grants
\$13,291	\$11,321	\$7,140	\$23,936
Total = \$55,688			

Average Costs	
Scholarships Per Participating Individual	Grants Per Participating Program
\$907	\$1,140

If the 16 individuals who are enrolled in college complete their degree plans, the estimated total costs is projected at \$88,159 at an average of \$5,510 per person.

Both the CDA and apprenticeship scholarship funding are based on a cumulative total of the entire cost of the coursework and certificate completion.

### **Quality Trainings for the Learning Environment**

CNS and NCD provided the first scheduled training at the WECA Conference on September 22, 2007. Fourteen additional regional trainings are scheduled. The following chart documents the number of participants by county who attended the first training.

	Participants By County
Big Horn	6
Campbell	7
Converse	1
Fremont	5
Natrona	7
Park	12
Sweetwater	1
Teton	1
Unknown	2
Total	42

### **Business Management Services**

These regional trainings will begin in January 2008.

## **SECTION FIVE – IMPACT OF SERVICES ON CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

Between July 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007, the total number of individuals enrolled in the Educational Development Scholarship Program was 35. Potentially, 911 child care slots are impacted by this program.

Between July 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007, the total number of child care programs with individuals enrolled in the Continuing Education Grant Program was 21. Potentially, 848 child care slots are impacted by this program.

DWS will continue to gather data on the impact of this program on children, families and communities.

## SECTION SIX – PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

**April 12, 2007** – An RFP was released for a contractor to provide marketing services. DWS hired Ball Advertising Group to assist in designing and marketing the program.

**April 30, 2007** – Mechanism to provide electronic input to DWS was launched.

**July 20, 2007** – The WY Quality Counts! Program name and branding were officially established.

**July 23, 2007** – A program invitation was developed and mailed to all licensed Wyoming child care providers. The purpose of this invitation was to provide basic information regarding the program and to encourage participation in the services.

**July 27, 2007** – The WY Quality Counts! web site, <http://www.wyqualitycounts.org>, went live.

**July 27, 2007** – DWS began measuring visitor traffic information on the web site.

**July 27, 2007** – A letter of support from Wyoming's First Lady, Nancy Freudenthal, was posted on the web site.

**August 2, 2007** – DWS released press announcements regarding the availability of educational development grants.

**August 4, 2007** – DWS provided a booth and presentation at Stand and Celebrate 2007 in Casper.

**September 6, 2007** – DWS provided information regarding the WY Quality Counts! Program at the Wyoming Economic Development Association conference.

**September 6, 2007** – Marketing materials were provided for inclusion in licensing packets for child care providers.

**September 21-22, 2007** – DWS provided a booth and presentation at the Wyoming Early Childhood Association (WECA) conference in Casper.

**September 27, 2007** – DWS provided information regarding WY Quality Counts! at the Wyoming Business Council's IDEA Expo in Casper.

## SECTION SEVEN – COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

### Early Childhood Working Group (ECWG)

**April 23, 2007** – An invitation was sent to representatives involved in early child development to attend a meeting to: 1) Ensure collaboration and cooperation, 2) Avoid duplication of services, and 3) Provide a venue to communicate and disseminate information.

**May 22, 2007** – The ECWG met and established a "community model" as the basis for discussions regarding the early childhood development system and their strategic plan. The Wyoming Department of Health agreed to fund a facilitator to conduct the meetings.

**August 10, 2007** – The ECWG reaffirmed a commitment to develop a strategic plan including Memorandums of Understanding in order to carry out the plan. Group members also agreed to the following: 1) The early childhood development system will focus on children from prenatal to 8 years, and 2) "Readiness" efforts will include, not only the child, but parents and school districts. Members also discussed the importance of a commitment to go beyond looking at the early childhood systems as they presently exist.

**September 19, 2007** – The following internal vision statement was developed: *Communities supporting the needs of Wyoming families by promoting quality early childhood development and providing opportunities to achieve success.*

The following entities were represented at the ECWG meetings:

- Child Development Services of Wyoming
- Child Care Providers
- Children & Nutrition Services
- Coalition for Wyoming Children
- Department of Family Services
- Department of Workforce Services
- Ellbogen Foundation
- Head Start
- Nutrition & Child Development
- Parents
- University of Wyoming
- Uplift
- Wyoming Business Council
- Wyoming Children's Action Alliance
- Wyoming Department of Education
- Wyoming Department of Health
- Wyoming Early Childhood Association
- Wyoming Legislature

Other Collaborative Efforts

DWS is supporting the University of Wyoming's efforts to assure the development of educational opportunities in early childhood education will articulate from one level to the next throughout the system – from coursework toward a Child Development Associate credential through an Associates degree from any Wyoming Community College to a Bachelor's degree from the University of Wyoming. DWS appreciates this effort and supports it by attending meetings and providing input, as appropriate.

**SECTION EIGHT – SYSTEM EXPENDITURES**

Between July 1, 2007 and September 30, 2007, the following funds were obligated or expended for services:

Educational Development Scholarships	31,752
Continuing Education Grants	23,936
Quality Training for the Learning Environment	61,400
Child Care Business Management Services	99,562
Parental Education and Public Awareness	500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$716,650</b>

**SECTION NINE – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM'S OPERATION**

Child Care Capacity Remains a Crucial Issue

In a time when Wyoming is experiencing a workforce shortage across all industry sectors, the lack of child care limits the State's ability to recruit new workers to Wyoming and retain the existing workforce. During the Governor's Summit on Workforce Solutions in the spring of 2007, Summit attendees divided into regional groups to discuss workforce challenges for each region. Three of the five regions identified child care as a significant workforce issue. Information for the regions may be found at: <http://www.wyowdc.org/summit/2007/meetings.aspx>

Exempt Child Care Providers

Because of wording in the current legislation, legally exempt facilities were excluded from participation in WY Quality Counts! services. Legally exempt facilities, including programs operated by government entities, make up 17% of all child care facilities. According to the Pedersen 2006 Child Care Needs Assessment, there are 161 exempt facilities

serving 5,107 children. While, on a community level, governmental entities are encouraged to address child care capacity issues, the legislation as it is written does not allow legally exempt child care programs to participate in services that increase quality.