

# QCCC Report Card

The Bucks County Quality Child Care Coalition  
Bucks County LEARN Team

April 2012



## Encouraging Kindergarten Registration

Transitioning to Kindergarten is a critical time in a child's life. Effective transition, including ongoing family engagement, has been shown to improve children's future educational outcomes. Spring registration is important to help districts plan and to implement the transition process for children. "The transition to kindergarten is a process that starts in preschool and continues through the early months of kindergarten," according to Pianta and Kraft-Sayre.

The QCCC/Learn Team continues to support transition efforts throughout the county, including early spring kindergarten registration. Resources are shared with families through our county library system and other events, including Kindergarten Here I Come and Kindergarten Here I Am which can be ordered from [fulfill@wavelinedirect.com](mailto:fulfill@wavelinedirect.com). Learning is Everywhere is available in both English and Spanish through Pat Miller ([pmiiller@earthlink.net](mailto:pmiiller@earthlink.net)).

Additional materials are also available on line including the [pdesas.org/ocdel](http://pdesas.org/ocdel) website. A chart with registration information for all 13 schools districts is found on our website, [www.bucksqccc.org](http://www.bucksqccc.org). The overall goal of QCCC is to enhance community relationships to support the success of young children. Studies find that kindergartners with a positive learning approach (defined by persistence, emotional regulation, attentiveness, organization, and flexibility) made more progress in mathematics and reading through the 5th grade (Developmental Psychology, September 2010). Several Bucks school districts that are tracking the effects of quality early childhood education find similar results. Champion effective transition and spring registration – our children will benefit!

**Annual  
Breakfast  
Features  
OCDEL  
Leader Dr.  
Barbara  
Minzenberg**

Dr. Barbara Minzenberg will be visiting Bucks County to discuss the importance of investing in quality early childhood education for Pennsylvania's future at the Annual Bucks AEYC Breakfast on Friday, April 13 at Spring Mill Country Club in Ivyland. Dr. Minzenberg, the Deputy Secretary for the PA Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), will discuss the budget proposal of Governor Tom Corbett and beyond. In addition to our speaker, early childhood educators, policy makers, parents, and community leaders will celebrate the Bucks Month of the Young Child and the tenth anniversary of Keystone STARS. To make a reservation, contact Jamie Wister at [justchildren4@aol.com](mailto:justchildren4@aol.com).

### IMPORTANT DATES

**April 2012: Bucks County's Month of the Young Child**

**Friday, April 13: Annual BCAEYC Breakfast**

**April 22-28: NAEYC's Week of the Young Child**

**May 1: Early Childhood Action Day, Harrisburg**

### Did You Know?

*\*Over a third of Bucks County children under the age of five are living in economically at-risk families*

*\*1,416 children of working parents receive child care subsidy that enables their parents to remain employed*

*\*Over 4,000 Bucks County children under the age of 5 received Early Intervention services last year*

*\*65% of Bucks County's licensed child care programs participate in Keystone STARS*

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## Bucks County's Early Childhood Education Profile: Helping children reach their promise through quality early education

Quality early learning and child development play a major role in a child's future success in school and in life. Pennsylvania's early childhood initiatives play a major role in providing our families with access to reliable, quality early learning opportunities. Listed below are the ways in which these programs touch Bucks County.

There are 36,528 children under age five living in Bucks County. Of those:

33% live in economically at-risk families, who earn up to 300% of federal poverty level (equivalent to \$34,058 for a family of four)

7% are born to mothers who have less than a high school degree

16% of 3rd graders in local school districts scored below proficient on PSSA in Reading in 2010

Quality early education can bridge the achievement gap before it begins.

Research has also shown that at-risk children who receive quality early education can catch up to their peers in cognitive and social emotional development before they reach kindergarten, so that they are ready to succeed when they enter school. All of these efforts help ensure that our community's children enter school ready to learn and to succeed! More investment is needed in quality early education if Pennsylvania is to secure a brighter future for its children, families and communities. PA Pre-K Counts provides high-quality pre-Kindergarten to 182 three and four year-olds in Bucks, and is focused on children at risk of academic failure. Keystone STARS is proven to improve the quality of child care based on an independent study and offers parents a tool to gauge the quality of the programs they choose. Child care and Head Start programs earn a STAR 1 to STAR 4 level based on quality standards for teacher qualifications, learning environment and program management. 65% of Bucks County's regulated child care programs participate in Keystone STARS.



Some significant Bucks County facts:

- The poverty rate in Bucks County increased 75% between 2009 and 2010.
- Bucks County has the fourth largest homeless population in the state of Pennsylvania, with 60% of these individuals being children. There are homeless children in every school district in the county. And the number of homeless students has increased 14%.
- Significant pockets of poverty exist throughout Bucks County, as is demonstrated by local school district data. There are many children on free/reduced lunch programs in Bristol Borough (70%), Bristol Township (52%), Morrisville (53%), Bensalem (40%), Centennial (20%), and Quakertown (26%).
- There are a total of 52 Title I elementary schools in the county. Each of the 13 districts includes at least one and up to nine Title I schools.
- More than 1,300 children county-wide ages birth to four are enrolled in CHIP. 9,600 are enrolled in Medical Assistance and CHIP Insurance Programs combined, representing nearly 25% of children ages birth to four in Bucks County in 2010.
- Bucks County's foreign-born population has grown 63% in the past ten years, creating language and cultural barriers that were previously non-existent. Concentrations of foreign language communities have been identified in the Bensalem, Bristol Borough, Bristol Township and Centennial school districts, with 50 different languages and dialects spoken by children and families in school districts throughout Bucks County.



The benefits of early education extend throughout communities in better school performance and lower special education and remediation costs. As these children become adults, communities benefit from a more highly skilled workforce and lower public costs for public assistance, crime control and lost taxes.

**Make a smart investment in Pennsylvania's future: support Pennsylvania's early childhood initiatives.**

## Get Involved in QCCC and the Bucks County LEARN Team

Some people wonder what being part of the LEARN Team involves. Early learning supporters – parents, directors, teachers, advocates, school district personnel and others from higher education and a variety of agencies serving young children and families – are welcome to become involved in our team. Our **Local Education and Resource Network** group meets every other month at Holy Family University. Some members focus on transition activities as part of “Tender Bridges” which meets quarterly at the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Others are involved in a variety of family engagement activities such as our Month of the Young Child events (see insert). Some participants plan professional development events to support Keystone STARS and quality early education throughout the year. Many of our events occur during October’s PA’s Promise for Children Month or April’s Month of the Young Child. If you would like to take an active role in our LEARN Team, e-mail Coordinator Pat Miiller (pmiiller@earthlink.net) with your name, contact information, and how you would like to be involved. Also contact Pat if you are looking for resources for families of young children or have a suggestion to promote family engagement.



In 2012, Pennsylvania celebrates 10 years of improving quality early learning through Keystone STARS.

To recognize and celebrate the 10th anniversary of Keystone STARS, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), PA Key, Regional Keys and LEARN teams have coordinated the **2012 Keystone STARS Shining Stars Recognition**. The initiative is designed to locally recognize children and families who have benefitted from participating in a Keystone STARS program. Families and teachers have nominated children who participated in Keystone STARS programs, explaining how quality early education has helped the child reach their promise. Each nominee’s story will be published on the PA’s Promise website. Visit [www.papromiseforchildren.com](http://www.papromiseforchildren.com) during April for a complete list of nominees and their stories.

## Governor Corbett’s Proposed Budget for FY 2012-2013



On February 7, the Governor released his proposed budget for 2012-2013. You can review the budget documents and PowerPoint presentation at [www.budget.state.pa.us](http://www.budget.state.pa.us).

The budget maintains Governor Corbett’s commitment to balance the budget by keeping spending in line with available revenues and not raising taxes. The total state budget proposal for 2012-2013 is \$27.14 billion, a decrease of more than \$20 million, or .1 percent, from 2011-2012.

Under the Governor’s proposed budget, OCDEL would serve:

- Additional children in Early Intervention (0-5)
- The same number of children in Keystone STARS, PA Pre-K Counts, and Nurse-Family Partnership
- Slightly fewer children in Child Care Works

The impact on Head Start Supplemental will not be clear until the competitive re-bidding process is complete. Advocates urge increased investments to maintain funding at 2011-2012 levels to support Pennsylvania’s short and long-term economic recovery. They also focus on the fact that early education is a comprehensive system and should not pit individual programs against one another.



# Quality Child Care Coalition of Bucks County

*Broadening and Bettering Early Care  
& Education in Bucks County*

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705 North Shady Retreat Road  
Doylestown, PA 18901  
1-800-770-4822 extension 2952

United Way of Bucks County  
413 Hood Boulevard  
Fairless Hills, PA 19030  
Fax 215-949-0373

Local Education and Resource Network



A Key Partnership for Early Learning

Bucks County QCCC  
c/o BCIU #22  
705 North Shady Retreat Road  
Doylestown, PA 18901

## *QCCC Board of Directors*

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