

The President's Initiative on Children, Youth and Families



Final Report



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM



From the President of the University of Minnesota

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Given the changing demographics of Minnesota and the economic challenges we are now facing, I became increasingly concerned that the needs of children, youth and families are receiving the attention they need. The welfare of our children is one of society's highest moral obligations. After all, the children and youth of today will be the workers, parents, teachers, and leaders of tomorrow. Addressing the challenges they face today will have a direct impact not only on the quality of life of children, youth, and families, but on Minnesota's prosperity and quality of life in the future.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Minnesota is chartered to improve the lives of all of the state's citizens through teaching, advancing knowledge, and applying research. Today, interdisciplinary centers, departments, and faculty across the University engage in path-breaking work on very diverse subjects, and the University has become a national leader in research and scholarship on children, youth, and family issues.

When I became University president in 2002, I launched the **President's Initiative on Children, Youth, and Families**. The purpose of the initiative was to leverage the University's resources with other public and private resources and partnerships to improve the well being of the state's children, youth, and families. By bringing together researchers and educators from around the University with practitioners, policy makers, opinion leaders, parents, commissioners, legislators, business leaders, and health care professionals, the initiative created a new understanding of how to enhance outcomes for children at every developmental stage in their lives. I am confident that the work of the initiative will build on the many years of collaboration between the University and the community through the Children, Youth, and Family Consortium to reap tangible benefits for the children, their families, and the common public good, including positive returns in school readiness, parenting, children's mental health, workforce capacity, and economic development.

Finally, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to Professor Rich Weinberg and Dr. Marti Erickson, co-chairs of the President's Initiative on Children, Youth, and Families, to the members of the initiative's steering committee, and to members of the University community and beyond who contributed to the work of this extraordinary effort. With its research excellence and progressive programming, the University of Minnesota has been, and continues to be, uniquely qualified, and obligated, to provide leadership on efforts to ensure that all Minnesotans have the opportunity to realize their full potential. Our future demands nothing less.

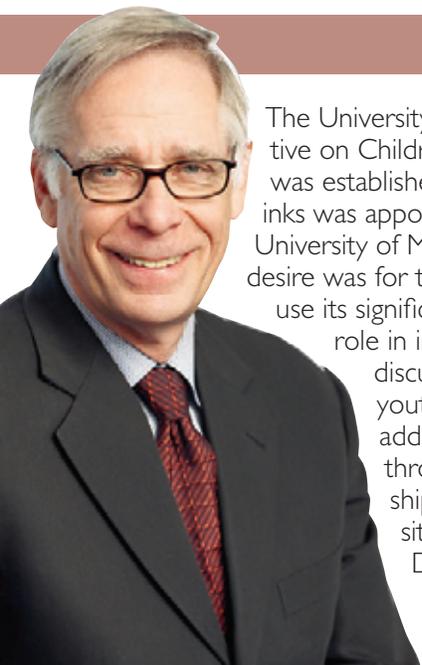
Sincerely,



Robert H. Bruininks

President

History of the President's Initiative on Children, Youth and Families



Dr. Robert Bruininks

The University of Minnesota President's Initiative on Children, Youth and Families (PICYF) was established when Dr. Robert Bruininks was appointed interim president of the University of Minnesota in the fall, 2002. His desire was for the University of Minnesota to use its significant resources to play a major role in increasing public awareness and discussion of issues facing children, youth and their families, and to address these issues and challenges through interdisciplinary partnerships with the full force of University commitment behind them.

Dr. Richard Weinberg, Institute of Child Development was appointed to chair and help shape the initiative.

Over the next several months, after Dr. Bruininks was appointed the permanent University president, seven additional presidential academic initiatives were added, making PICYF the first of eight. The others are: Arts and Humanities; Biocatalysis; Brain Function Across the Lifespan; Environment and Renewable Energy; Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives; Law and Values in Health, Environment, and the Life Sciences; and Translational Research in Human Health.

A steering committee charged with developing and directing PICYF was formed under the leadership of Dr. Weinberg, working closely with Dr. Marti Erickson, then director of the Children, Youth and Family Consortium (CYFC). CYFC was tapped to be the coordinating body for PICYF. In the fall, 2003, Dr. Erickson assumed the role of Co-Chair of PICYF with Dr. Weinberg.

The PICYF goals were developed by the Steering Committee in consultation with University and community partners. They are:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy to advance knowledge and raise public awareness of the issues and challenges facing children, youth and families.
- Engage the expertise and commitment of new and ongoing University-community partnerships to identify solutions to challenges facing children, youth and families.
- Establish new, and expand existing, areas of research and academic exploration through a rigorous interdisciplinary agenda to improve the education and quality of life of children, youth and families. Special attention will be

afforded to low-income, minority, new immigrant, at-risk, disadvantaged and disabled populations.

The first major event held under the auspices of PICYF was a Children's Summit. Titled "Starting Strong," the Summit convened University and community partners with expertise and interest in early childhood. Two more Summits followed in the next two years: "Staying Strong Through Challenge and Change," and "Smart Policies, Strong Families." The first major program initiative was the establishment of the Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health. Many other program initiatives have been a part of PICYF over the five years; a sampling of them is highlighted throughout this report.

Over its six years, PICYF funded and supported many multi-disciplinary teaching, research and outreach efforts. Some have been one time events intended to share research and facilitate discussion and action, such as the Children's Summit series. Hiring of new faculty and establishment of new academic programs contributed to the University's teaching mission. Community/University partnerships, such as the Northside Initiative, intended to contribute to the reshaping of the social, physical, and economic fabric of neighborhoods in North Minneapolis, and U Connects, a mentorship program that builds connections between "at risk" students and the University of Minnesota, supported the University's outreach mission and will continue into the future. PICYF addressed policy issues through Capitol Conversations, a series of discussions between faculty and legislators, with the intent of encouraging legislators to use research more in the policymaking process.

Bridging the "research to practice" gap was a focus of additional PICYF work and funding. The most visible example of this work is the establishment of the Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health, which began small, but has now become a major "go to" place for children's mental health. Its highly valued "Lessons From the Field" series is attracting 200 participants on campus and another 500-700 statewide each time it is offered through the use of interactive TV and webstreaming.

Funding for PICYF initiatives has come from the University of Minnesota President's office. Funding to supplement the Children's Summits was provided by the Minneapolis Foundation, and several of the PICYF-funded programs were able to leverage additional funding for their work.

Although the formal initiative is ending, many important efforts that began with support from PICYF will be sustained through the Children, Youth and Family Consortium and will continue to benefit Minnesota's children, youth and families for some time to come.

PICYF Made A Difference...



Over the course of six years, PICYF built on a long tradition of Community-University collaborations to make a significant impact related to its overall objective to improve the quality of life for children, youth, and families, as well as its three specific goals. PICYF's accomplishments include work conducted by member organizations of the

PICYF steering committee under the auspices of PICYF, work funded by PICYF, and activities of the President's Office on behalf of PICYF.

Some PICYF work was short term, hosting events or developing temporary partnerships to address one or more of its goals. PICYF activities took place in the Twin Cities campuses and communities, the Morris and Duluth campuses and communities, and the Lamberton Research and Outreach Center and nearby communities. Only a representation of these activities is listed below. It is hoped that even the short-term initiatives resulted in long term impacts for the participants and their work.

Other PICYF-initiated projects will continue over time. They are highlighted in a separate section of this report.

GOAL #1 — *Develop and implement a comprehensive communications strategy to advance knowledge and raise public awareness of the issues and challenges facing children, youth, and families.*

- PICYF sponsored three Children's Summits (early childhood, middle childhood-adolescence, and policy from a family perspective) held annually from 2003 to 2005. Each summit was attended by approximately 200 people on the Twin Cities campus, with companion events held at several sites throughout Minnesota through the use of webstreaming. The Minneapolis Foundation provided funding for the third summit on family policy.
- CYFC and the Office of Public Engagement co-sponsored a Public Engagement Forum to examine the connection between strategic positioning goals and the public engagement mission of the University. Faculty and administrators served on a panel and engaged the audience in an examination of themes that will require the alignment of public engagement and "Top Three Research University" status: promotion and tenure, diversity, and disciplinary culture. PICYF provided financial support.

- The Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) conceptualized and hosted an April, 2004 early childhood reporting workshop led by Dr. Jack Shonkoff with a focus on reframing the public dialogue about the needs of young children. The workshop was implemented by the Minnesota Journalism Center and School of Journalism and Mass Communication.
- PICYF co-sponsored and provided funding for "Building Healthy Communities for Children: The Physical and Social Environments," a conference co-sponsored by nine University departments, five presidential initiatives, and three community organizations.
- PICYF provided financial support for the Center for Early Education and Development McEvoy Lecture Series: a panel of legislators, policy analysts, and advocates to review Governor Pawlenty's statement on early childhood development; and a presentation by David Lawrence on creating a public movement in support of expanded early childhood development programs.

GOAL #2 — *Engage the expertise and commitment of new and ongoing University-community partnerships to identify solutions to challenges facing children, youth, and families.*

- PICYF provided funding for "Translating Empirical Work With High Risk Families into Preventive Intervention," a workshop hosted by the Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health and attended by University faculty/staff and community partners. Professor Dante Cicchetti presented his research related to high-risk children and parents with depressive disorders, and discussed how to translate this research into effective prevention and early intervention for children and families.
- In collaboration with leaders from Ready4K and the Federal Reserve Bank, the president hosted three workshops to engage leaders in the business community and to link investment in children, youth, and families with workforce and economic development for the state. This effort helped contribute to the development of the Minnesota School Readiness Business Advisory Council (MSRBAC, now MINBEL), which has held annual school readiness forums for business leaders across the state for the past two years.
- President Bruininks chaired the Itasca Project Task Force on Early Childhood, which formulated recommendations to the full Itasca Project. The Itasca Project has been an employer-led group of community leaders and CEOs, the governor, the mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and President Bruininks, whose mission has been to provide leadership for long-term regional development and competitiveness.

- CEED held a retreat for a small, bi-partisan group of legislators to engage in discussion about public policy ideas and how to engage a broader group of legislators in early childhood issues. PICYF provided financial support.

GOAL #3 — *Establish new, and expand existing, areas of research and academic exploration through a rigorous interdisciplinary agenda to improve the education and quality of life of children, youth, and families in children's mental health; children, youth, families and the law; early language and literacy; and obesity prevention. Special attention has been afforded to low-income, minority, new immigrant, at-risk, disadvantaged, and disabled populations.*

- PICYF provided financial support to the College of Human Ecology's collaborative on Families in Diverse Contexts, focusing initially on African American and Latino families.
- PICYF provided financial support for and CYFC participated in planning "Doing Juveniles Justice: Transforming Minnesota's System for Sustaining and Supporting Healthy Families" in March 2006. Attended by over 375 community members from around the state, the forum was designed and led by a 27-member community leadership team. It included research on juvenile justice reform by the Juvenile Justice Center and the Humphrey Institute; A Blueprint for Juvenile Justice Reform generated by the Youth Transition Funders Group; and the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- PICYF provided financial support to the TREC (Tutoring, Reading, Enabling Children) Program at the University of Minnesota Morris, a collaborative relationship between UMM students, area schools, and families in the surrounding communities.
- PICYF members engaged the chancellors and faculty on the coordinate campuses to embrace a rural focus on children, youth, and family issues, such as increasing the early language and literacy of under-served children in rural Minnesota (UMM) and pursuing the expansion of programs being developed for Native Americans (UMD).



PICYF Steering Committee Members

Darlyne Bailey, Dean and Senior Advisor to the President

College of Education & Human Development

Richard Weinberg, Co-Chair

Institute of Child Development, Center for Early Education and Development

Marti Erickson, Co-Chair

Center for Early Education and Development

Shirley Baugher,

Former Dean, College of Human Ecology

Dale Blyth

Center for 4H Youth Development

Michael Brott

Children, Youth and Family Consortium

Andrew Collins

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Paul Deputy

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John Finnegan

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Hal Grotevant

Family Social Science

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Marcie Jefferys

Formerly with the School of Social Work

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Children, Youth and Family Consortium

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Scott McConnell

Educational Psychology, Center for Early Education and Development

Cari Michaels

Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health

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Sociology

Tex Ostvig

Multicultural & Academic Affairs

Joän Patterson

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Kent Pekel

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The Steering Committee appreciates the contributions of Madge Alberts of the Children, Youth and Family Consortium to the production of this report.

PICYF Launched Theme Related Grantmaking Program



One of the initiatives begun under the auspices of PICYF is a small grantmaking program (\$3500-7500) intended to fund projects that will promote understanding of or examine ways to effectively address disparities, broadly defined, among Minnesota's children, youth and families. This program provides funds with the expectation that the incentive money will be leveraged to obtain additional resources, create impact in communities, enhance visibility of important children, youth or family issues, and build partnerships.

Two rounds of grants have been given through PICYF, administered by CYFC. They are listed below.

This grantmaking initiative will continue into the future, administered by CYFC. The thematic approach of the small grants program has been an effective way of both focusing attention to the topic and learning about existing or planned efforts related to the theme. Educational disparities will continue as CYFC's theme through the 2008-2009 academic year, after which its work will transition into a new theme area, currently under consideration.

2006-2007 GRANTS

Results of several of these grant projects below were shared by the project leaders.

- Parenting classes at the Broadway Family Medicine Clinic in North Minneapolis (Jerica Berge, Department of Family Medicine and Community Health). **Results:** Parenting Partnerships provided parenting classes, family time/dinner, child care and mentoring for 42 families in North Minneapolis through a community, clinic and University partnership. Four consecutive psychoeducational and interactive groups were facilitated for 10 weeks each, over the 2007-2008 year. Students, marriage and family therapists and family medicine residents from the U of M were involved through-

out the process. Four sets of couples, two from each group session, have been trained to mentor other parents and are actively reaching out to do so. Initial analytic trends indicate that parents and children benefited from the intervention. Project leaders found reductions in parenting stress, child problematic behaviors, and family dysfunction and increases in marital satisfaction, family communication and family connectedness. From this grant Jerica Berge was able to submit a K-12 award for an NIH career development award and received funding. She will begin June 1st 2008.

- A Latino healthy youth development summit (Carolyn Garcia, School of Nursing). **Results:** The first "Our Strength, Our Future: Working Together for Latino Adolescents and their Families in the Twin Cities" conference was held on June 19, 2007, at the Dodge Nature Center in West Saint Paul. Over 100 staff and administrators of non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, K-12 schools and government offices and agencies shared their experiences, goals, and dreams for optimizing the health of urban Latino youth. The conference was developed by a collaborative team representing non-profit, county, and educational agencies. A speaker from Chicago provided experience and a model of how positive change was effected through collaborative efforts. Further University support facilitated the creation of a listserv, recommended by conference attendees, to provide a forum for sharing announcements, job postings, and information relevant to Latino youth. It is now a very active listserv. The conference fostered collaborations leading to further funding and programming for Latino youth, specifically two University-Community collaborative research projects. A future conference is anticipated as well.
- Addressing ethnic, class and gender disparities through research-based approaches in youth soccer (Nicole La Voi, Tucker Center on Girls and Sports). **(Results:** The team is in the final stages of writing up their findings. The work provided a strong foundation to move forward in this research area, and leveraged \$7000 from The Melpomene Institute, with another grant application currently in process).
- A Minnesota college access summit (Kent Pekel, Consortium for Post-Secondary Academic Success) **(Results:** The first Minnesota College Access Summit was held on May 18, 2007, at Neighborhood House in West Saint Paul. Over 114 leaders of non-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, K-12 schools and government offices and agencies shared best practices in the operation of college access programs and heard from a national expert on helping low-income families finance higher education. The summit was jointly convened by the U of M College Readiness Consortium and the Minnesota College Access Network and received \$10,000 in additional funding from 3M. The Summit also served as the launch event for the Minnesota College Access

Network, a non-profit organization that is now an important part of Minnesota's educational architecture.)

- A statewide forum to present and apply findings from a study of child welfare issues among immigrant families in rural Minnesota (Esther Wattenberg, School of Social Work). **(Results:** "Addressing the Best Interests of Children in Immigrant and Refugee Families: Rising to the Challenge," will be held May 1, 2008. The PICYF funding leveraged an additional \$2,000 from Federal IV-E funds.)
- Delivery of mental health services via interactive video (James Boulger, Center for Rural Mental Health Studies, UMD)
- Parents and children experiencing science, designed for parents and children in grades K – 3 (Cynthia Cattell, School of Physics and Astronomy)

2007-2008 GRANTS

(These grants were funded just recently, so details on their success are not available yet.)

- Crossing Borders: Exploring the Landscape of Cross-Cultural Deliberation (Nan Skelton, Humphrey Institute's Center for Democracy and Citizenship and Jane Addams School)
- A Collaboration Initiative for Improving the Assessment and Instruction of Immigrant Youth (Martha Bigelow, Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Adam Rambow, a Ph.D. student in the program in Second Languages and Cultures)

- Summer Institute in American Indian Child Welfare (Priscilla Day, Department of Social Work American Indian Projects, University of Minnesota-Duluth)
- Perceptions of the Achievement Gap in a North Minneapolis High School: A Multi-perspective and Multi-disciplinary Approach (Suzanne Miric, College of Education and Human Development, Office of Continuing Professional Studies)
- "Advancing Interdisciplinary Research and Action on Health and Education Disparities," symposium and subsequent research (Mary Hearst, Division of Epidemiology)
- Sisters Helping Sisters: Partnering with the Hmong Community to Fight Depression (Tai Mendenhall and Bill Doherty, Family Social Science)
- Photovoice Evaluation Project for Diabetes Prevention: Teaching Anishinabe Children about Traditional Foods Using the Four Seasons Model (Linda Harris and Nancy Leland, Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center)
- Promoting Early School Success in Homeless/Highly Mobile Children (Ann Masten, Institute of Child Development)
- A Peer Reviewed Journal article on Lessons Learned from "Our Youth Finish School," a Community – University Partnership (Pamela Moore and Paul Snyder, Minnesota Youth Community Learning Initiative)
- Exploration of Evidence-based and Community Defined Children's Mental Health Interventions in Culturally Diverse Communities (Bill Allen, community mental health practitioner)



PICYF Will Continue to Make a Difference...



Considerable work begun under PICYF will continue to support the University of Minnesota's aspiration to become one of the top three public research universities. Ongoing programs clearly uphold the University's teaching, research and outreach missions, as well as the goals of public engagement and policy consultation.

TEACHING

The teaching mission at the University of Minnesota will be enhanced through new academic programs, professional development programs and new faculty that began as a part of PICYF.

Family Policy Minor

Developed by the College of Human Ecology, the Humphrey Institute of Public Policy, and the Law School, the Family Policy minor provides a multidisciplinary academic foundation in the analysis of policies for their impact on families. Students completing the Family Policy minor will be knowledgeable about major public and private policies affecting families, and will understand how these policies came to be adopted, including social, economic, and political past and current influences. Students will develop a framework in which to analyze policies for their impact on families, and an understanding of the differential impact on diverse families.

Infant Mental Health Certificate

The Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program offered through the Center for Early Education and Development prepares students and professionals to work more effectively, build capacity, and strengthen leadership to address the mental health needs of young children and their families. Infant and early childhood mental health is an emerging area of scholarship, research, and outreach that defies contemporary disciplinary boundaries and offers diverse professionals the skills needed to better support families. The 2007-2009 cohort is the first group to participate in the program. Thirty students are enrolled.

New Faculty

PICYF played a major role in supporting the recruitment of Professor Dante Cicchetti, a world-renowned expert in children's developmental psychopathology, to join the faculty of the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Cicchetti is playing a lead role in establishing a strong presence on the north side of Minneapolis working

closely with community partners such as Northpoint Health and Wellness Center.

Professional Development for Rural Professionals

The University's Southwest Research and Outreach Center in Lamberton, Minnesota has been hosting a series of interdisciplinary educational events related to early childhood as a follow-up from the first Children's Summit. Although this particular series will soon be completed, the Research and Outreach Center has identified critical staff development needs in rural southwestern Minnesota, and has established relationships with faculty on campus who are willing to help address those needs.

RESEARCH

The research mission of the University of Minnesota will be enhanced by several new research and evaluation efforts begun as a result of PICYF support.

Applied Research Collaborative on Youth Development

One of the action steps that resulted from the work of the Commission on Out of School Time (see entry in Outreach below) was the establishment of Applied Research Collaborative on Youth Development. Located within the Center for Youth Development, the Collaborative's mission is to stimulate, develop, collaborate and contribute to research and evaluation efforts addressing issues of importance to the field of out of school time. The Collaborative is shaped to enhance accountability, increase understanding and move the field of out of school time forward through public symposiums, applied research, evaluation, and networking. ARCYD is a network of researchers, evaluators and policy leaders dedicated to generating applied research that bridges research findings with policy solutions for youth.

Early Childhood Research Collaborative

The Early Childhood Research Collaborative is a unique partnership between CEED and the Federal Reserve Bank that brings together prominent researchers in a variety of disciplines at the University as well as scholars from other campuses around the country with economists at the Federal Reserve to develop and synthesize research on cost-effective investments in early childhood. ECRC



is co-directed by Arthur Reynolds, professor of child development and fellow of CEED, and Art Rolnick, Senior Vice President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Its purpose is to promote research on critical issues in early childhood development and disseminate knowledge for policy and practice, including a discussion paper series, early childhood workshops, research initiatives, and a national conference on early childhood policy. An inaugural conference on October 13, 2006, featured Nobel Laureate James Heckman from the University of Chicago, University faculty, and bank executives. Another conference was held in December 2007. The collaborative also has developed a website and commissioned a series of discussion papers focusing on early childhood education research.

Evaluation Fellows Program

CYFC convened "Evaluation Thrash" on May 4, 2006 to allow approximately 50 evaluators (campus- and community-based), program leaders, and funders to examine inter-sector disconnects and to align expectations around program evaluation. Two fundamental themes emerged: (1) the importance of building the capacity of organizations to evaluate the success of their programs, and (2) the equal importance of building the capacity of the evaluation field to strengthen the utility of evaluations within a specific field of children, youth, and family programming. The Evaluation Thrash planning group, along with additional community members, responded by developing the Evaluation Fellows Program (EFP), a year-long, experiential, cohort-based training open to community members and students. Each year a cohort of approximately 20 fellows will be selected from not-for-profit organizations, agencies, evaluation firms, funders, faith-based organizations, University programs, and others. CYFC will provide the organizational capacity to sustain the program from year to year, the Evaluation Studies Program will provide curriculum planning and a host unit will provide topical expertise. Each year the topic will change but will be aligned with CYFC's theme cycle.

Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF)

At the invitation of the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation and with initial funding from PICYF, CEED is providing core evaluation services for a new statewide initiative to demonstrate the kinds of effective early childhood services that will contribute to improving school readiness of low-income children. CEED has been funded to develop the evaluation framework and measurement model and provide technical assistance to innovative MELF-funded projects; to serve as the project officer for the evaluation of a scholarship plan, one of the MELF-funded initiatives; and to consult on policy implications of the work. The goal is to identify key features of these programs and inform the system and legislative process such that a more coherent and generative early care and education system can be created. CEED has assembled an evaluation team and advisory group and conversations have taken place with other units (e.g., Educational Psychology, Institute of Child Development, Center for Applied Research and Education Improvement, and Evaluation Studies) to insure that this opportunity will enhance the ability of the University to conduct applied research in early childhood. The work with the MELF is also deepening the University's collaborations with high-quality community-based researchers

such as Child Trends, Wilder Research, and SRI International as well as the state departments of education and human services.

OUTREACH

The outreach mission of the University of Minnesota is strengthened by several on-going University-community collaborations focusing on important issues related to children, youth and families.

Childhood Obesity Journalism Initiative

Childhood obesity is one of society's most important children's health concerns. Issues related to journalism and childhood obesity, particularly in communities of color, are being addressed by a partnership begun by two of the Presidential Initiatives, PICYF and Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives. This collaboration includes the Journalism School, The Obesity Prevention Center, the School of Public Health and CYFC. The ongoing interaction between media professionals and the academy regarding this complex children's health issue is resulting in effective reporting on childhood obesity, and ongoing relationships between University faculty and staff, and journalists.



College Readiness Consortium and Minnesota's Promise

The College Readiness Consortium was established to engage educators, school districts, state education organizations, and the business community with University faculty and staff to collaborate in addressing critical issues related to education. These collaborative efforts are aimed at improving the coherence, relevance and visibility of University PreK-12 activities, enhancing public and private PreK-12 education systems, preparing youth for higher education, closing the achievement gap for underrepresented groups, and ensuring access to post-secondary education opportunities. The most visible work of the Consortium was the partnering with CYFC and a group of Minnesota school superintendents in the development of Minnesota's Promise: World Class Schools, World Class State, a framework for moving forward with a coherent, statewide vision for education in Minnesota. (The original report was developed by the superintendents in conjunction with the Minneapolis Foundation, the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, the College Readiness Consortium, and CYFC.) The final Minnesota's Promise report, the culmination of many conversations over two years addressing critical issues affecting Minnesota's students,

contains ten essential elements of a world class educational system. Both houses of the Minnesota Legislature are seeking to pass legislation focusing on closing the achievement gap in Minnesota. Each proposal uses the "Essential Elements" from Minnesota's Promise as a framework that will help school districts ensure academic achievement for all students.

Commission on OST/Youth-Community Connections

In January 2004, President Bruininks invited a variety of experts with a shared concern about the positive development of young people during childhood and adolescence to participate in the Minnesota Commission on Out of School Time. The Commission was charged with crafting a vision and strategies needed to ensure every Minnesota youth access during non-school hours to engaging opportunities supportive of their optimal development. President Bruininks stressed that "How and where young people are spending their out-of-school time is a major concern for working families, business, communities, schools, and neighborhoods throughout Minnesota." The Commission's charge was reinforced by research findings confirming the critical role of high quality out of school time opportunities in assuring that children and youth reach adulthood ready to assume their roles as responsible community members. The Commission established a thematic course of study that extended across eighteen months and culminated in a set of recommendations and action steps for out of school time in Minnesota, creating a roadmap for revitalizing Minnesota communities as a great place to raise families. Youth Community Connections is the organization identified to move the Commission's recommendations forward and the University of Minnesota Extension Service is the fiscal host of this on-going collaborative alliance.

Five Hundred under Five

Five Hundred under Five is a research and development project being designed and led by a collaborative group of governmental and nongovernmental organizations including Hennepin County's Department of Strategic Initiatives and Community Engagement, the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, Way to Grow, Minneapolis Public Schools, and others. The overall intent of this effort is to promote school readiness for children in two areas of North Minneapolis through three inter-related efforts: (a) engaging and empowering parents and families, providing information about their child's development and resources that are available to support this development; (b) expanding and enhancing available services for these families to support the development of school readiness; and (c) gathering information and conducting research to provide information to parents and family members, child and family service programs, and policy makers regarding children's development and the factors that promote (or inhibit) that development.

U Connects

Begun in Fall of 2002 with an invitation to 50 youth from Urban Ventures to attend a football game, U Connects today has evolved into a "Kids on Campus" program that hosts schools, after school programs and mentoring organizations with the goal of "sparking the curious minds of our youth towards the value of college and higher education" by enabling youth from kindergarten through eighth grade to experience campus life in a new and creative way. The Multicultural Center for Academic



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Excellence and the Office for Equity and Diversity work with Kids on Campus to help each youth to create goals and dreams and develop confidence in themselves. Since Fall 2006, Kids on Campus has hosted nearly 2,000 youth. U Connects also partnered with the Minneapolis Mayors office and Achieve! Minneapolis to implement the Step Up program at the University. Step Up is a work readiness program that provides youth with the opportunity to work during summer months. Beginning with only seven jobs the first summer, the University's Step Up program has grown to 55-65 positions each summer, and the University has been recognized as one of the top employers in the program. In addition to working on campus, youth are given active University of Minnesota email accounts and opportunities to participate in workshops in the areas of Leadership Development and Career Explorations. Senior Vice President Robert Jones has accepted the Chair position for the 2008 Minneapolis Step Up Program and the University has committed to providing 75 jobs on campus.

Policy

The University of Minnesota's capacity to bring objective research and consultation to the policymaking process is enhanced because of efforts begun as a part of PICYF.

Family Impact Policy Initiative

Coordinated by CYFC, the goals of the Family Impact Policy Initiative are to promote a family perspective in policy development, analyze the impact public policies have on families, connect family-relevant research and policymaking, and convene dialogue among policymakers. These goals will be carried out through several means. Family Impact Seminars will connect research and state policymaking by providing state-of-the-art information in an objective, non-partisan manner. Each annual topical seminar will include forums, briefing reports, and follow-up activities designed for legislators, key agencies and staff. The Policy Work Group is made up of University members committed to children, youth and family-related policy issues. It will focus on creating a lasting structure to communicate about and coordinate policy work at the University as it relates to children, youth and families. The Initiative will also include briefing reports and consultations with policymakers on family policy related issues. Prior to and during the current (2008) legislative session, CYFC staff consulted with Sen. Patricia Torres Ray and the Achievement Gap Subcommittee regarding educational disparities, resulting in a bill moving through the legislature asking school districts to develop plans to reduce the achievement gap.

Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health



The Center for Excellence in Children's Mental Health has been one of the great success stories of PICYF and a most valuable investment by the University. Its primary goal is to bridge the gap between research and practice in the field of children's mental health, and it will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

Children's mental health had been identified as a significant area of concern for Minnesota's families. Issues related to children's mental and social-

emotional well-being recently had risen to the very top of the action agendas of local community leaders, and they came to the University looking for expertise from their land-grant University to help them address these issues. Recognizing this critical need, and knowing the resources the University could contribute to the discussion, President Bruininks announced the establishment of CECMH as a part of PICYF on May 30, 2003.

Early work in the development of CECMH included workgroups to define and prioritize the scope of the work, and the development of a steering committee chaired by Dr. Susan Hagstrum, Principal Consultant of the Bridgewater Group and the wife of University of Minnesota President Bruininks. Hagstrum provided invaluable contributions in developing the center's mission statement, its organizational identity, its operating strategies, and initial project areas.

Since its beginning, CECMH has been housed within the Children, Youth and Family Consortium (CYFC), sharing space and administrative support, but maintaining a separate identity. The CECMH staff now includes a director, associate director, associate program coordinator, two graduate research assistants, and a faculty fellow, with administrative support from CYFC.

CECMH's kickoff event was held in January, 2004. About 125 University and community leaders in children's mental health attended. During the next year, CECMH sponsored and co-sponsored several educational events with community partners, and began its "Lessons From the Field" series intended to showcase practitioners and researchers working in specific areas of children's mental health.

CECMH's work is currently centered in four major areas:

Bridging Research/Practice: Lessons From the Field has emerged as a major professional development opportunity for clinicians and practitioners statewide. The workshops are of-

fered "live" statewide via interactive television and webstreaming. In each of the last two years, four seminars were held each year, with the research presentations and responses focusing on various aspects of attachment and mental health, allowing a deeper focus on a critical issue in children's mental health. Roughly 4200 clinicians, researchers, parents, teachers, social workers and health care professionals have participated, either on campus or at the 30+ sites across the state.

Research/Outreach/Community Engagement: University faculty and staff have joined with over twenty providers of children's mental health services to culturally diverse communities to form a Cultural Providers Network. Goals of the partnership include increasing community understanding of evidence-based practices in children's mental health; adopting or adapting practices relevant to culturally diverse communities, and expanding the evidence base to include more community-based, culturally relevant strategies. The Network is currently reviewing existing children's mental health literature concerning effective engagement and intervention strategies in culturally diverse communities, and working with a national consultant to apply children's mental health evidence in culturally diverse communities.

Education/Training: Through a Technology Enhanced Learning grant CECMH staff are creating an interactive, web-based case study designed to train students in service disciplines to respond effectively to children experiencing mental illness. The case portrays a child with increasing mental health concerns, and users are prompted to move through the case, study relevant research, and respond to questions about the most effective forms of intervention. The project is designed to teach students to view the child with a developmental, ecological perspective and think about how professionals in other disciplines respond to the family. The case is currently being piloted in five graduate-level courses in departments across campus.

Community Resource: CECMH responds to specific requests from the community for research, program support, and/or partnerships. Through its listserv and database, CECMH has become known in the community as a "doorway" into the University. Community members regularly contact CECMH for information and connections at the University. Further, CECMH provides the University with an active voice in Children's Mental Health policy councils such as the Minnesota Mental Health Action Group, the Statewide Interagency Task Force on Mental Health in Juvenile Justice, the Statewide School-based Mental Health Leadership Group, and more.

CECMH is an active model of community engagement, because it intentionally brings together University researchers with clinicians and other community mental health practitioners to discuss and strategize about how research can inform the field, and what research gaps need to be filled. PICYF was the major impetus in developing this highly valued Center.

PICYF Projects Report Significant Learnings

PICYF provided money and other support to many different efforts in the University and the community as they addressed issues related to children, youth and families. Some of the work was funded directly, and some through the small grants program, using an RFP process.

Project leaders were surveyed to gather lessons they had learned from their work with PICYF funded projects. One of the most important lessons was the power of a presidential initiative in bringing new people to the table. Some of the new partnerships included:

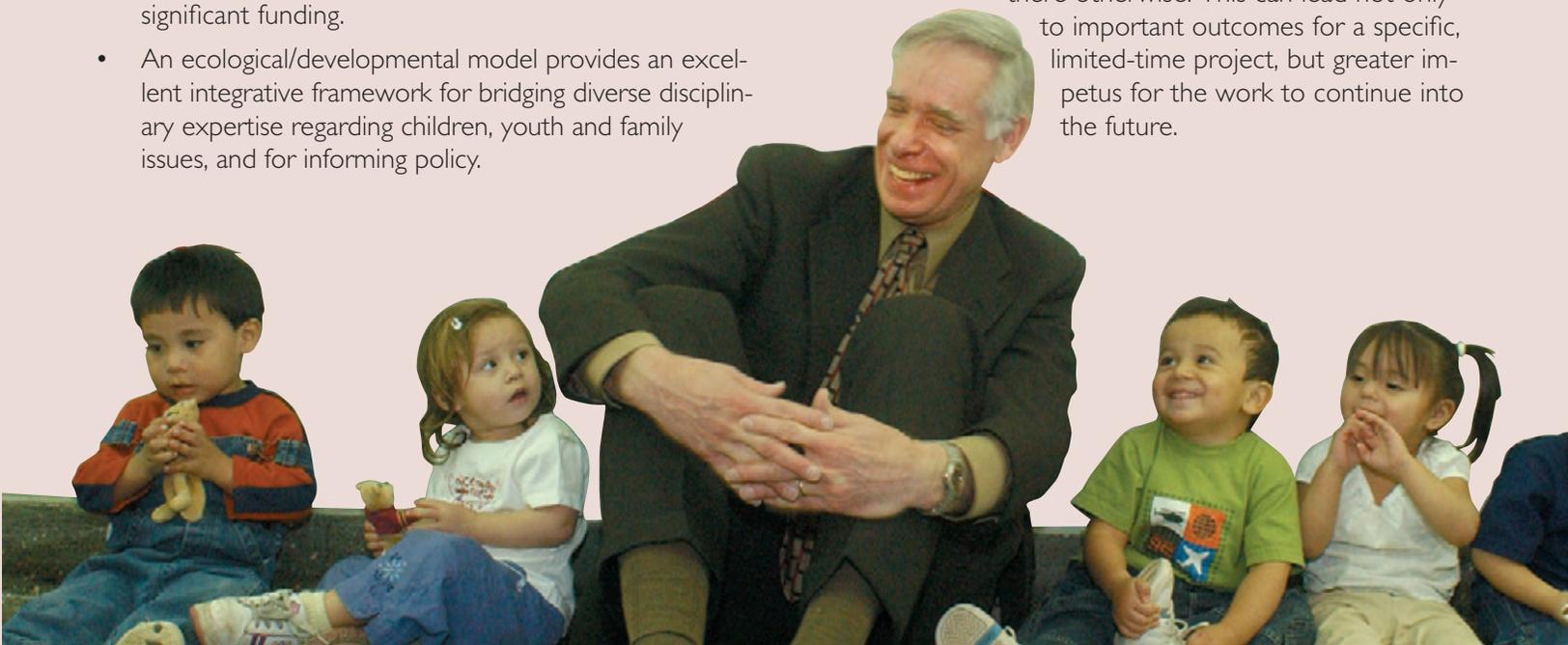
- Interdisciplinary groups of students and faculty who had not been together before.
- New partnerships and audiences statewide through the use of technology, including interactive television and webstreaming.
- Groups of judges, public defenders and others in the justice system with faculty, foundation leaders and community leaders to address juvenile justice issues.
- Researchers, practitioners, parents, policymakers and funders to address children's mental health issues.

Project leaders also reported key learnings that were helpful in evaluating and modifying their own programs, and in thinking about future work. Among them:

- A little incentive money often has the potential to leverage significant additional funding. Of the PICYF projects surveyed, over half reported additional revenue generation – over \$200,000 in total. In addition, projects that will carry forward beyond PICYF are continuing to seek funding to support their work, and some of the planned research projects may result in significant funding.
- An ecological/developmental model provides an excellent integrative framework for bridging diverse disciplinary expertise regarding children, youth and family issues, and for informing policy.

- Legislators want, and don't have enough opportunity to, meet in a neutral setting across parties and legislative houses. Legislators are also interested in the research related to children, youth and family issues and value the University's expertise.
- Bridging the gap between the end of one school year and the start of the next is critical to literacy achievement.
- Collaborative, interdisciplinary work is challenging, but rewarding.
- There is a great deal of interest in family policy issue forums, especially from community members.
- We may not all mean the same thing when we use certain language! It's important to clarify and define what we're talking about and make sure all parties have a common understanding.
- Creative thinking can help overcome obstacles that occur in doing interdisciplinary work.
- Because tenure and promotion policies generally emphasize faculty member's research and publication in refereed journals, tenure-track faculty often are challenged to find the time and energy for public engagement.
- Distance education, though costly and time consuming, is a very effective means of reaching a large and willing audience in greater Minnesota and beyond.

In summary, when funding and organizational support are provided around a topic of common concern, they give additional strength and importance that may not be there otherwise. This can lead not only to important outcomes for a specific, limited-time project, but greater impetus for the work to continue into the future.



***The University's mission,
carried out on multiple
campuses and throughout
the state, is threefold:***

RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY,

TEACHING AND LEARNING,

AND

***OUTREACH AND
PUBLIC SERVICE.***

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