



Early Childhood Forum

More than 180 stakeholders attended the Nov. 17 community forum, “Early Childhood: The Foundation of Our Region’s Future.” The forum featured showing of the public television documentary *The Raising of America*, a keynote address by Michael Scully of PNC Financial Services, and a panel discussion. Media coverage included a story in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and an interview on St. Louis Public Radio. The forum advanced dialogue on the importance of making early childhood development a priority for regional investment. Vision for Children at Risk, the St. Louis Regional Early Childhood Council, the Nine Network of Public Media, American Graduate and PNC sponsored the event.



“Stepping Up for Kids” Awards

Friends of the St. Louis Family & Community Partnership joined to celebrate the outstanding contributions of resource families and agency staff serving children in foster and adoptive care at the second annual “Stepping Up for Kids” awards luncheon. A total of 280 guests attended the luncheon. Tim Decker of the Missouri Children’s Division was guest speaker and Debbie Monterrey of KMOX Radio was the emcee. Thanks to the many sponsors who helped make the event a great success.



Coordinating Legislative Efforts

Vision for Children at Risk provides staff support for the Missouri Children’s Leadership Council, a coalition of nearly 50 organizations from across the state. The MOCLC unifies the voices of children’s agencies and concerned individuals in a common legislative agenda. Supported by an advocate in the Capitol, the MOCLC has helped achieve many successes for children in policies and funding over the past two years. Legislative results were presented at a June forum (above).

Vision for Children at Risk works to build community action to improve the well-being of children who face socio-economic disadvantage by:

- **Informing:** Providing data on key indicators of child well-being by geography; disseminating knowledge on issues and trends in child well-being.
- **Driving action:** Building collaborative initiatives engaging over 400 child-serving agencies, government, business and the community to address critical needs of children.
- **Advocating:** Promoting funding and policies that help advance child well-being, through business and civic outreach as well as legislative advocacy.



Child Abuse Prevention Month

The St. Louis Family & Community Partnership promoted strong families during April Child Abuse Prevention Month, through display of yard signs throughout the community, left, and a Family Resource and Fun Fair, below. Partnership workgroups also provide Strengthening Families training, monitor data on the child welfare system, coordinate training for foster/adoptive workers and families, and more.



Promoting Young Child Health and Wellness

Project LAUNCH is active in the 63106 and 63107 ZIP codes under a five-year federal grant to the State of Missouri with Vision for Children at Risk as the organizational base. Above left, an educator reads to children attending the second annual Children's Mental Health Day Family Resource Fair in May. Above, awards were presented to community members for their support of Project LAUNCH. Many parents are serving in the Parent Café program. In addition, home visitation workers benefited from a training seminar on motivational interviewing, left.



Recognition

- VCR Director **Rich Patton** received the Child Advocate Award from the Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth and Families during the annual Child Advocacy Day.
- Project LAUNCH family engagement specialist **Sam Blue** was appointed to the national FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council for the U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Community Based Child Abuse Prevention program.

In Brief

- The **St. Louis Regional Early Childhood Council** is serving as the early childhood action team for the Ready by 21 St. Louis collective impact initiative
- VCR Director **Rich Patton** gave presentations to the Ferguson Commission on St. Louis-area socioeconomic disparities in child well-being, and the importance of early childhood development to the community.