



Smart Start Update --- January 2015

www.SmartStartAlabama.org



The Alabama Partnership for Children would like to wish you and your family a healthy and happy new year!

Zero to Five Matters

~A newsletter focused on our most valuable investment~

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Don't Forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). 'A Tweet a Day for Learning and Play' provides early education tips and research, including information on our initiatives and partners. Check it out today!

Partner Focus:

A Word From Our Board Chair . . .

The Honorable Frank McGuire, District Judge, Retired



As a juvenile judge for just over 21 years, it is my opinion that two of the foremost issues of our time are the well-being of children and the strengthening of families. That belief has been confirmed even more while serving as chair of the Alabama Partnership for Children. Time and again as a judge, I witnessed in court those children whose well-being was not a priority in their dysfunctional families. Undisputed evidence, backed by studies, clearly shows that

Mark Your Calendars:

Alabama Governor's Early Childhood Education Leadership Summit
February, 19, 2015
Wynlakes Country Club
Montgomery, AL

Doing What Matters for Alabama's Children
January 27, 2015
Tuscaloosa, AL

14th Annual Alabama Autism Conference
February 27, 2015
Tuscaloosa, AL



the very early childhood years between 0-5 are critically important for mental and emotional development, as these years form the basis for the child's ability to learn and adapt for the rest of that child's life. Children, our most precious natural resource, have no lobbyists in statehouses, making advocacy from individuals and communities essential.

There are many ways for individuals to participate. Supporting our organization would be one of those ways. Attending your local county's [Children's Policy Council](#) would put you in touch with local agencies dealing with children's needs. These agencies could direct you to ways in which you could participate.

Efforts put forth promoting the well-being of children and the strengthening of families can directly affect the future of our nation. Therefore, the promotion of each should be a concern for all of us.

Initiative Focus:

Save the Date

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Bryant Conference Center
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Project LAUNCH Early Childhood Summit
Early Brain Development and Social/Emotional Health*

Featuring Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D.



Dr. Bruce Perry is the Senior Fellow of The ChildTrauma Academy, a not-for-profit organization based in Houston, TX (www.ChildTrauma.org), and adjunct professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago. He serves as the inaugural Senior Fellow of the

Berry Street Childhood Institute, an Australian based center of excellence focusing on the translation of theory into practice to improve the lives of children (www.berrystreet.org.au). Dr. Perry is the author, with Maia Szalavitz, of [The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog](#), a bestselling book based on his work with maltreated children and [Born For Love: Why Empathy is Essential and Endangered](#). Over the last thirty years, Dr. Perry has been an active teacher, clinician and researcher in children's mental health and the neurosciences holding a variety of academic positions.

Project LAUNCH* (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) is a program of the Alabama Department of Mental Health in partnership with the

Tuscaloosa, AL

**Project LAUNCH Early
Childhood Summit on
Early Brain Development and
Social/Emotional Health**
May 21, 2015
Tuscaloosa, AL

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Alabama Department of Public Health and others to ensure the healthy development for Alabama's young children. With funding through SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association), the purpose of Project LAUNCH is to promote the wellness of young children from birth to eight years by addressing the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and behavioral aspects of their development. The goal is to create a shared vision for the wellness of young children that drives the development of federal, state, territorial, tribal, and locally-based networks for the coordination of key child-serving systems and the integration of behavioral and physical health services. *The expected result is for children to be thriving in safe, supportive environments and entering school ready to learn and able to succeed.*

**More information to follow - for now, SAVE THE DATE!
May 21, 2015**

Our Mission: To work in partnership with other public and private entities to maintain an effective state and local system of resources and support that enables parents, families, and others who care for young children to ensure that they are healthy, protected, nurtured, and offered every opportunity to succeed in life.

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