



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert

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CONSTRUCTING CONNECTIONS PROJECT TACKLES LA COUNTY'S CHILD CARE SPACE SHORTAGE

January 2008 Collaborative Partners Meeting Invites Business Community

LOS ANGELES –Nidia Jurado already jumped through several hoops to get one step closer to her dream of operating a child care center. A successful home child caregiver with a current waitlist of more than a hundred children, Jurado experiences several hurdles in trying to expand her small business into a larger-capacity center.

Fortunately, Constructing Connections Los Angeles was able to provide much appreciated assistance.

“Developing child care centers in Los Angeles County can be especially daunting,” said Pam Schmidt, Directing Attorney of Public Counsel’s Early Care & Education Law Project, which administers Constructing Connections Los Angeles. “The purpose of this Project is to streamline that process of developing and financing a child care center, by bringing together collaborative partners with that goal.”

Constructing Connections Los Angeles is reaching out to the business and financial community in particular to assist and train child care operators. On January 15, 2008, a Collaborative Partners Meeting will take place at Public Counsel’s offices located at 610 South Ardmore Avenue. All interested professionals are invited to attend this meeting which starts at 10 a.m.

“The contribution of business professionals is crucial to the success of Constructing Connections,” said Schmidt. Business, financial, real estate and marketing professionals, among others, can make a difference in the lives of children and their working families by providing much needed practical assistance and support to quality child care operators, she said. Making future child care operators business-savvy will not only accelerate start-ups but also boost sustainability and growth along the road, she said.

Shortage of quality affordable child care space in Los Angeles County is well-documented. A recent study by the Advancement Project, concentrating particularly on 4-year olds, revealed that one in five 4-year old lacks access to a preschool-suitable space in Los Angeles County. The shortage of child care

space for children birth through five is deemed even more critical in urban cores and low-income areas, and especially for children not having English as their first language.

About Public Counsel and the Early Care & Education Law Project

Public Counsel is the largest public interest *pro bono* law office in the world. Founded in 1970, Public Counsel is dedicated to advancing equal justice under law by delivering free legal and social services to the most vulnerable members of our community. Last year, with the help of more than 3,600 volunteer lawyers, law students, social workers and others, Public Counsel provided more than \$63 million worth of free legal services to over 26,500 people.

The Early Care & Education Law Project, one of Public Counsel's seven programs, was created in 1986 to respond to the critical shortage of quality affordable child care spaces in LA County. The Early Care & Education Law Project administers the ABCD Constructing Connections Project.

About the ABCD Constructing Connections Project

ABCD Constructing Connections, a program of the Low Income Investment Fund with major funding from First 5 California, is an innovative program that actively encourages the child care and community development sectors to work together to support and streamline the process of financing and constructing child care facilities in California.