

RIGHTS, RAISES, RESPECT
News and Issues for the Child Care Workforce

A monthly electronic newsletter
From the Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW)
A project of the AFT Educational Foundation

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Please feel free to send this to anyone you think would be interested in supporting our efforts. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, contact us at ccw@aft.org and ask to be removed from the list. Visit our web site at www.ccw.org for the latest information on the child care workforce, CCW activities and our online order form for CCW publications. (E-Newsletters you receive from CCW will be sent by ccw@v2.listbox.com.)

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THIS Month:

- Federal Child Care Legislation
- Early-Learning Guidelines
- California Child Development Corps to Build a Teacher/Provider Voice in California Public Policy
- Child Care Teachers Picket Employer
- Arizona Panel recommends higher wages for teachers and state-funded preschool
- Educational Opportunities
 - NYS develops a School-Age Care Credential
 - Online early childhood education degree
- Recommended Reading

Federal Child Care Legislation

CCW will be actively following a number of critical child care bills that will be in need of Congressional action in 2003. They include: the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Head Start, Temporary Assistance to Needy Children (TANF), Child and Adult Care Food Program, Higher

Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Given the current recession, the drain the federal taxes cuts are causing on available U.S. Treasury funds, and the budget crisis facing 46 states, maintaining the current funding levels for these programs and trying to expand and improve them so we can truly provide quality child care to all the children who need it will be a major challenge this year. CCW will continue to track developments on these bills during the year.

Early-Learning Guidelines

The Bush Administration has just enacted a controversial, new regulation concerning standards for early child care programs. All states will be required to develop early-learning guidelines for how early childhood programs for 3-5 year olds can bring their programs into alignment with the K-12 standards the states are now having to implement. There is much disagreement about what would be age-appropriate guidelines and measures for 3-5 year olds. Yet, at least those programs receiving Title 1 money from the federal government will eventually have to demonstrate that they are complying with these "guidelines". Whether other programs will also have to comply is not yet clear. The states will have to submit their early-learning guidelines with their annual child care plan due July 1st. For more information, go to <http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=19early.h22&keywords=early%20learning%20guidelines>.

California Child Development Corps to Build a Teacher/Provider Voice in California Public Policy

Frustrated with their low compensation, declining benefits, and lack of influence over early childhood policy, California child care teachers and family child care providers have formed a network to advocate for policies on behalf of early childhood professionals. Thirty-eight teachers and family child care providers representing eleven counties in California came together for a conference in December to launch a network led by teachers and providers to increase their voice in state policymaking. The meeting was coordinated by a coalition of nonprofit organizations including: the Center for Labor Research, the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, and the Labor Project for Working Families, all of which are part of the

Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California at Berkeley; and Working for Quality Child Care, a project of United Way of the Bay Area. Funding for the meeting was provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and United Way of the Bay Area's Success by Six Initiative.

The conference focused on building participants' leadership skills, information sharing from California labor and community organizers, and identifying policy and advocacy issues for the coming year. Teachers and providers attending the meeting identified the need for improved compensation as their first campaign issue, specifically securing ongoing funding for two California compensation initiatives CARES (Compensation and Retention Enhances Stability) and the Retention Incentive Initiative (funded by State of California Assembly Bill 212). Other policy issues participants identified include universal pre-kindergarten, health care, and professional development. Members of the network would like to expand membership beyond the eleven counties. A coordinating council comprised of a representative from each county was selected by the membership to facilitate the networks' initial campaign.

For more information about the California Child Development Corps, please contact: Alice Burton, Working for Quality Child Care, United Way of the Bay Area, 415-772-7327 or by email at burthill@pacbell.net.

ACORN is also organizing child care teachers and providers as well as parents to try and stop some state legislators' recommendation to cut state-funded child care benefits sooner for working welfare recipients. The recommendation to cut the child care budget came as a result of the \$3.4 billion deficit California is facing. ACORN has been holding rallies at the state capitol. To learn more, go to <http://www.acorn.org/acorn10/otheracornwork/releases/acc.htm>.

Child Care Teachers Picket Employer

The child care teachers who work at a child care center at St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach, California, picketed the hospital after the hospital refused to give this SEIU-organized child care center a 6.5% raise. Teachers at the center currently earn an average of \$20,800. They said it is hard for them to make ends meet given the cost of living in their area. They plan to file a grievance and are trying to re-open talks with the

hospital. For more information, read "Day-care workers picket St. Mary (Karen Robes, *Long Beach Press Telegram*, December 13, 2002)

Arizona Panel recommends higher wages for teachers and state-funded preschool

The Arizona School Readiness Task Force which included representatives of business, community child care and educators recently released a report on how to improve young children's school readiness by the time they enter kindergarten. The task force made the following four recommendations:

- Improve the training opportunities and compensation for child care teachers and family child care providers;
- Expand the state's K-12 publicly funded education system to include preschool;
- Improve affordability for parents; and
- Improve the infra-structure for early childhood education delivery.

For more information, go to <http://nieer.org/news/index.php?NewsID=209>.

Educational Opportunities

NYS develops a School-Age Care Credential

New York State Office of Children and Family Services has developed a school-age credential. In order to qualify, a candidate must have either a high school diploma or GED equivalent and have worked at least 480 hours within the past three years in a NYS registered or licensed school-age program. Applicants for the credential will be evaluated to measure their competency in 14 areas. The credential is initially valid for three years and then may be renewed every five years. Some scholarships will be available to school-age child care teachers and family child care providers for specific college classes, training and the credential assessment fees through New York State's Educational Incentive Program. Designated courses include those on child development, child care regulations and identifying and preventing child abuse. Teachers and providers will be eligible for up to \$2,000. For more information courses or applications either contact PASE at 212-571-2664 or visit

<http://nyssacc.tripod.com/factsheet/credential.html>.

Online early childhood education degree

Mono Community Child Care Council provides online certificate and degree programs in early childhood education. For more information on the programs being offered, visit www.monochildcare.org.

Recommended Reading

Joan Lombardi, who served as the first Associate Commissioner for Child Care in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has just released *Time to Care: Redesigning Child Care to Promote Education, Support Families, and Build Communities*. Ms. Lombardi provides important facts and figures on the current status of child care in this country and recommends an action plan for improving the quality of child care for all children. For more information and to order, visit http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/lombardi_reg_print.html.

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The Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW) was founded in 1978 as the Child Care Employee Project. CCW is a nonprofit research, education and advocacy organization committed to improving child care quality by improving child care jobs: upgrading the compensation, working conditions and training of child care teachers and family child care providers. CCW has worked tenaciously for over 2 decades to put child care workforce issues "on the radar screen" of public and private debate at the national level. In 2002, CCW merged with the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation.