

RIGHTS, RAISES, RESPECT

News and Issues for the Early Care and Education Workforce

A monthly electronic newsletter

From the Center for the Child Care Workforce,

A Project of the AFT Educational Foundation (CCW/AFTEF)

July 2003

Please feel free to send this to anyone you think would be interested in supporting our efforts. Visit our web site at www.ccw.org for the latest information on the early care and education workforce, CCW/AFTEF activities and our online order form for our publications.

(E-Newsletters you receive from CCW/AFTEF will be sent by ccw@v2.listbox.com.)

"Rights, Raises, Respect" is made possible with generous support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Please Note: There will not be an August edition of Rights, Raises, Respect. We will send any pressing information through our email listserve. Our next newsletter will be sent in September. Have a wonderful summer!

THIS MONTH:

Making the Connection

- Have you joined a professional association or advocacy group?

Federal News

- New Action on Head Start Reauthorization
- New Department of Labor Rules May Impact Early Childhood Teachers

State News

- California Legislator introduces Childcare Teacher Development Bill
- Connecticut Child Care Workers Settle on Union Contract

Resources

- 3 New Papers from The Center for the Study for Child Care Employment
- New Report on Leadership Training
- 3 New Reports on the Early Care and Education Workforce in Connecticut

People & Places

- Recent Activities of CCW/AFTEF staff & colleagues.
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Making the Connection

"Making the Connection" is a new section of our newsletter. Each month we will use this section to offer you – our network of committed activists working to improve the quality of early care and education programs and the profession – suggestions, ideas, or information from other activists about how to connect policy and research to community action, advocacy, unionizing efforts or grassroots organizing.

This month we are asking you to consider your relationship with a professional association or advocacy organization. Joining a national, state or local membership organization that includes early care and education workforce issues as a core component of its works is a critical step in building the movement to guarantee this profession the compensation, recognition and respect it deserves. If you are currently a member of an organization, we encourage you to become or remain as active as you can. If you have not yet joined, please consider exploring opportunities to join a national, state or local organization and make your voice heard. We can do together what no one of us can do alone!

For example, the Child Care Workforce Alliance (CCWA) membership program, recently launched by the AFT, is exclusively designed to meet the needs of members of the early care and education workforce. The membership program is open to early childhood teachers, directors, parents, and allies of all kinds committed to improving jobs for this workforce. The CCWA's goal is to organize and mobilize a diverse group to advocate for fair and decent employment for this profession and reliable, affordable and high-quality early care and education services for families.

For more information on CCWA, please call 1-800-238-1133 or visit:

<http://www.aft.org/ccwalliance/membership.html>

Federal News

New Action on Head Start Reauthorization

Early childhood advocates and their allies are expressing concerns about many key provisions in the House version of the Head Start bill that passed in mid-June. The legislation, which includes many of the components outlined in President Bush's proposal, may impede the capacity of Head Start programs to continue delivering high-quality services. Specifically, the bill's attempt to provide "more state flexibility" by creating a block grant to eight states has the potential to undermine the overall quality of a state's early childhood programs. In addition, while the legislation increases educational requirements for Head Start teachers in an effort to improve program quality, the proposed funding is inadequate for ensuring that staff are able to meet the new requirements and are appropriately compensated for increasing their levels of education.

The House is expected to vote on this measure before the end of July and early childhood advocates are gearing up to make sure Congress addresses their concerns. For more information, or to contact your member of Congress, call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121; to send an email to your representative, go to <http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW.html>. For a sample letter, visit the website sponsored by the National Head Start Association, www.saveheadstart.org.

New Dept. of Labor FLSA Rules May Impact Early Childhood Teachers

The U.S. Department of Labor recently proposed regulations that will change the classifications of those eligible for overtime pay. A report by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) reports that these changes will make over 8 million "white-collar" workers, including pre-K teachers, ineligible for overtime pay – a benefit they have earned for the last 65 years.

The proposed regulations include expanding the definition of employees defined as "professional," "administrative" and "executive", resulting in more employees losing eligibility for overtime pay. For example, under the regulations, all employees who

hold a "position of responsibility" or are in a job that requires a "high level of skill or training" (which is not specifically defined) will be considered "administrative" employees who are exempt from receiving overtime pay. These vague and expanded definitions would apply to a much larger number of employees, and could be particularly difficult in the early care and education field, since the classifications of work and skill level are not universally defined.

Another proposed regulation would increase the salary level of those eligible for overtime pay from \$155 to \$425 a week (\$22,100 a year). According to EPI's report, 179,000 Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers earn \$425 or more per week. The proposed rule will reach close to 194,000. While such a provision is needed, this proposed change is not indexed for inflation, and thus is likely to protect fewer and fewer individuals in coming years.

More than 62,000 letters have been sent to the Department of Labor protesting these changes. The contact information for expressing your concerns is: Elaine Chao, Secretary, Department of Labor, Office of the Secretary, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite S-2521, Washington, DC 20210, Phone: 202-693-6000, Fax: 202-693-6111.

For a copy of EPI's report, visit their website at www.epinet.org

State News

California Legislator introduces Childcare Teacher Development Bill

California Assemblywoman, Wilma Chan, recently introduced the Childcare Teacher Development Bill (Assembly Bill 422), which seeks to improve the standardization and availability of permit programs aimed at training early care and education teachers. The bill would require California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to complete a report on a pilot project regarding child development permits by July 1, 2004. The report must include recommendations outlining a system of preparation for and issuance of child development permits. The bill also calls for the CTC to adopt regulations toward implementing a statewide program of accreditation, as well as reviewing and approving training that occurs outside of a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

For more information contact Ms. Thuy Thi Nguyen of Assemblywoman Chan's office at 510-286-1670 x 14 or thuy.nguyen@asm.ca.gov.

Connecticut Child Care Workers Settle on Union Contract

In mid-June, child care workers from Local 1303-102, AFSCME, AFL-CIO of New Haven, Connecticut negotiated a union contract similar to paraprofessionals. While union leaders did not secure the salary increases they were hoping for, the four-year contract includes a raise of three percent in the first year and two percent each additional year. The small increase in salary was accepted to offset layoffs which has plagued many industries in Connecticut recently. In addition, the contract phases out their current medical plan, which is the most expensive, and allows employees a choice of three more affordable medical care programs. The contract covers child care workers including head teachers, teachers, assistant teachers, cooks/assistants and custodians. Congratulations to Local 1303-102 for giving the early care and education field a voice. For more information, contact Vanetta Lloyd, president of Local 1303-102, at 203-946-7214.

Resources

Three New Papers from The Center for the Study for Child Care Employment

The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment of the University of California at Berkeley, along with research partners at Georgetown University, recently released three papers as part of their three-year investigation, "Who Leaves? Who Stays? A Longitudinal Study of the Early Care and Education Workforce of Alameda County, California." The study is examining all sectors of the industry in one community over time, and tracing patterns and predictors of movement within and out of child care employment. The titles of the recently released papers are:

- "Change and Stability Among Publicly Subsidized License-Exempt Child Care Providers."
- "English Literacy of the Early Care and Education Workforce: A Profile and Associations with Quality of Care."
- "Child Care Workers in the Aftermath of September 11th."

All are available at the Center's website at: <http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/cscce>. A final report from the study will be available in fall 2003.

New Report on Leadership Training

The Center for Early Childhood Leadership (CECL), based in Wheeling, Illinois, recently released "Zoom: The Impact of Early Childhood Leadership Training on Role Perceptions, Job Performance, and Career Decisions." This report, funded by the McCormick Tribune Foundation and the Illinois Department of Human Services, assessed 182 individuals who participated in two different models of leadership training between 1993 and 2003. "The McCormick Fellow Leadership Training Program" is a two-year program involving 34 semester hours of graduate-level coursework and on-site technical assistance to achieve NAEYC accreditation. "Taking Charge of Change" is a more streamlined leadership training program of approximately 110 clock hours of instruction and technical assistance over 10 months. Download the paper from CECL's website at <http://www2.nl.edu/twal/Zoom.pdf>

Three New Reports on the Early Care and Education Workforce in Connecticut

The Early Childhood DataCONNECTIONS project of the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) of Connecticut recently announced three new reports on the state's early care and education workforce:

- "A Research Perspective on the Child Care Workforce in Connecticut"
- "Connecticut's Head Start Workforce"
- "Connecticut's Child Care Workforce."

The papers can be downloaded from the Resources section of CHDI's website at http://www.chdi.org/resources_download.htm

People & Places

Dori Travieso, CCW/AFTEF Senior Associate and Marcy Whitebook, former Executive Director of CCW attended NAEYC's Professional Development Conference in Portland, Oregon. Ms. Whitebook presented on CCW/AFTEF's report, "Inside the Pre-K Classroom: A Study of Staffing and Stability in State Funded Prekindergarten Programs", a research project funded by the Foundation for Child Development. Marci Young, Deputy Director, also made a presentation on that study at a meeting in Washington, DC hosted by The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation of the US Department of Health and Human Services and Child Trends.

Marci Young, Deputy Director, and Netsy Firestein from the Labor Project on Working Families co-facilitated a workshop on organizing the early care and education workforce at the AFL-CIO Work and Family Conference in Chicago.

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The Center for the Child Care Workforce (CCW) was founded in 1978 as the Child Care Employee Project and in 2002 merged with the American Federation of Teachers (AFTEF). CCW/AFTEF is a nonprofit research, education and advocacy organization committed to improving early care and education quality by upgrading the compensation, working conditions and training of early childhood professionals.