

## **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)**

**September 2003**

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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](http://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](mailto:ccw@v2.listbox.com).)

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

### **THIS MONTH:**

#### **Making the Connection**

- Sign the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund Family Initiative Principles

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- Overtime Vote Defeated in the Senate
- NEA Outlines Plan for Pre-K

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- Cigarette Tax Money to provide \$100M to California Preschools
- Early Care and Education Lab Instructors Join Ohio Faculty Union
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- A New Report Reveals that Federal Tax Cuts will harm Pre-K Education
- New Research Shows Preschoolers Do Best When Their Teacher Has a College Degree
- Unionization in Early Care and Education

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- 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.*

The NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund (NOWLDEF) has recently launched a six-year campaign, *Family Initiative: Better Child Care, Preschool and Afterschool*, designed to educate, engage and mobilize a broad range of allies to support a major public investment in quality child care, preschool and afterschool. The Family Initiative includes several principles outlining quality care for children and their families through increased resources for providers and parents, and investments in education, equitable compensation and career development opportunities for the early care and education workforce.

NOWLDEF is asking for people from all walks of life to sign on to the Family Initiative's Principles to demonstrate to decision makers that there is a strong voice for public investment in our children.

You can read about the principles, learn more about the initiative, and sign on to the Family Initiative by visiting [www.familyinitiative.org](http://www.familyinitiative.org). To sign on go to <http://ga3.org/familyinitiative/join.tcl> or email NOWLDEF at [jvalenti@nowldef.org](mailto:jvalenti@nowldef.org)

## **FEDERAL NEWS**

### Head Start Reauthorization Moves to the Senate

Shortly, after the close vote by the House on Head Start Reauthorization in July, Senate Democrats introduced their version of a Head Start Bill. Their plan would promote better coordination of Head Start with state pre-K programs by creating advisory councils within each state, but would leave programs under local control. Under the House plan, eight states would have full control of the Head Start program.

Like the House bill, the Senate plan would raise the requirements of teachers. In three years, all Head Start teachers must attain an associates degree or be enrolled in a program leading to such a degree. Within eight years, all teachers must attain a bachelor's degree; the House bill requires that in the next five years, one-half of the teachers should have attained a bachelor's degrees. Unlike the House bill which allocates no additional funding to support teacher training requirements, the Senate bill provides a financial incentive of \$3 billion over five years to promote the requirements.

As Head Start continues through the reauthorization process, CCW/AFTEF is committed to ensuring that quality measures are maintained, including comprehensive services and adequate funding to ensure that programs can hire and retain well-qualified and compensated teaching staff, are maintained. We are hopeful that the final version of the bill will uphold the federal government's long-standing commitment to high program standards for improving children's development and learning.

A vote by the Senate is expected this fall. To read the Democratic proposal visit <http://thomas.loc.gov> and look up bill number S.1483.

### Overtime Vote Defeated in the Senate

In a 59-45 vote by the Senate on September 10, 2003, the plan introduced by the President and passed by the House, to change the classifications of those eligible for overtime pay was defeated.

This defeat is a huge accomplishment for the Senate, organized labor and other advocates who stood up against these efforts that would have prevented thousands

of workers, including those in the early care and education field, from attaining overtime pay.

The measure now moves to House and Senate negotiations. The President has threatened a veto.

For more information visit: <http://harkin.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=211058>

#### NEA Outlines Plan for Pre-K

During its annual meeting in July, the National Education Association (NEA) adopted an early childhood education policy that supports quality, full-day kindergarten programs and universal pre-kindergarten in order to, "boost student achievement and help children throughout their school careers."

The policy was developed by a special committee after a year-long study of kindergarten and pre-kindergarten practices. The plan determines that full-day kindergarten would be mandatory and that jurisdiction would fall on the states. The universal preschool program would be supported by federal and local funds and would be highly encouraged but not mandatory for 3- and 4-year olds.

For more information visit [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)

#### **STATE NEWS**

##### Cigarette Tax Money to provide \$100M to California Preschools

This summer, a unanimous decision was made by the First 5 California Commission which distributes the money collected from the Proposition 10 cigarette tax, to allot \$100 million toward preschool programs across the state.

The \$100 million is seen by the commission as a "down payment" for statewide preschool programs and as an attempt to correct the shortage in government funding for early care and education programs.

The money will be appropriated over the next five to seven years and is expected to serve close to 3.5 million California children under the age of five.

In 1998, the chairman of the First 5 Commission, actor/director Rob Reiner, sponsored Proposition 10 which imposed a 50-cent tax on cigarettes with proceeds going toward infant and early care and education programs.

##### Early Care and Education Lab Instructors Join Ohio Faculty Union

On a September 3, 2003 election, staff at Owens Community College in Ohio voted to "opt-in" to the existing faculty and counselor unit represented by the Owens Faculty Association/OFT-AFT. Three votes were held, one which included early care and education teachers who work directly with children in the school's Child Care Center and lab instructors who work with college students preparing to become early care and education teachers.

Members described the need to be included in the union was to gain fair and equal treatment campus-wide as well as the courtesy of professional respect. One member described her reason for wanting to be a part of the union was her belief that, "children deserve respect, dignity and value, and so do the college educated professionals who care for and educate them."

For more information contact Shelley Kertesz by email at [skertesz@owens.edu](mailto:skertesz@owens.edu)

### Advocates in California Take a Stand and Make a Difference

In July, early care and education providers, parents and advocates gathered for a series of events in Sacramento and the Bay Area to bring attention to the issue of the California budget crisis, which threatened funds for early care and education programs and forced several centers to close down. The budget crisis caused several programs operating under state contracts from the California Department of Education to come up with other ways to keep their programs running when public funds ran out, including taking out personal business loans, credit lines and home equity loans.

The events brought a great deal of media attention, including interviews by local news stations and front-page coverage in the Sacramento Bee, which is widely read by California elected officials and their staff. In response, the Governor held a press conference the following week at a child care center (which was unfortunately overshadowed by the results of the recall bid that occurred on the same day). In addition, the State Treasurer released more funding for child care programs.

These events are a true testament that advocacy brings results.

### **RESOURCES**

#### A New Report Reveals that Federal Tax Cuts will harm Pre-K Education

This summer, The Every Child Matters Education Fund released a report, "Will Federal Tax Cuts Harm America's Children?" The report found many devastating truths about how federal tax cuts are leaving millions of American children behind. The report found that as a result of the federal tax cuts, inadequate funds mean that some prekindergarten education programs do not have enough qualified teachers, cannot adequately prepare children to learn, and can cost families more than tuition at public universities.

For a copy of the report, visit [www.everychildmatters.org](http://www.everychildmatters.org).

#### Research Shows Preschoolers Do Best When Their Teacher Has a College Degree

Over the summer, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) released a policy brief that reveals that preschoolers perform better socially and educationally when their teachers have a college degree. Students and teachers from various settings were observed.

"Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications," can be found at: <http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/2.pdf>.

#### Unionization in Early Care and Education

A recent study released this summer by Child Care Connection entitled, *The Union Advantage in Child Care: How Unionization Can Help Recruitment and Retention* reveals how unionization of child care workers in Canada has impacted the field. The paper shows links between unionization and quality child care including better recruitment and retention of staff.

For a copy of the report go to:

<http://www.childcarecanada.org/research/complete/CCAACUnion.html>

**PEOPLE & PLACES**

Marci Young, CCW/AFTEF Deputy Director and Dori Travieso, CCW/AFTEF Senior Associate, had the pleasure of visiting with this year's class of Head Start Fellows. The Head Start Fellows program is coordinated by the Council for Professional Recognition.

Marci Young, CCW/AFTEF Deputy Director attended the ACF/HHS State Child Care Administrators Meeting: Supporting an Early Learning Framework where she learned about developments in child care systems and received more information on the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative.

Marci Young joined AFT president Sandra Feldman in Chicago, where President Feldman gave a "Back-to-School" national address to local business and labor leaders highlighting early childhood education. President Feldman highlighted early childhood education issues in her speech, particularly the importance of well-qualified and compensated early childhood professionals.

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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.