



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)**

November 2005

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**Rights, Raises, Respect will be on vacation for December.
Have a joyous and safe holiday season!**



MAKING THE CONNECTION - ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

Mark Your Calendar – NAEYC Conference, Dec. 7-10, 2005

The annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) will be held in Washington, D.C., Dec. 7-10. CCW/AFTEF knows how important it is for early childhood educators to connect with one another at this conference. If you are planning to attend, we hope you will check out sessions, exhibits and activities of particular interest to our network of committed and active advocates. A few highlights:

- Once again, CCW/AFTEF is producing our popular workshop guide to the NAEYC conference sessions. This is a useful tool that highlights the workshops directly related to early childhood workforce issues, including recruitment and retention, financing and leadership development, policy changes and new research about workforce initiatives. The guide will be sent by e-mail the week before the conference and will be posted on our Web site at www.ccw.org. It also will be available on the AFT's First Class Teachers site, www.firstclassteachers.org.
- The AFT is hosting a musical concert and presentation by award-winning folk singer and songwriter John McCutcheon on Friday, Dec. 9, from 10-11 a.m. "Developing Children's Social Conscience Through Music" will offer a stimulating and engaging venue to link the daily experiences of working with young children to social justice activism of adults. John McCutcheon will be available to sign his CDs directly after the concert at the AFT's booth (#1840) in the exhibit hall.
- The Worthy Wage Caucus Interest Forum will meet on Thursday, Dec. 8, from 5:30-7 p.m. in the convention center, room 146A. Earlier this year, CCW/AFTEF director Marci Young accepted the caucus co-chair position along with Debbie Lebo from Maryland and Terri Roston from Colorado. We are planning an interactive meeting that includes time for networking as well as generating ideas and strategies for members to engage in grass-roots activism and advocacy through the interest forum structure. Please join us!

POLICY

New York State Considers New Early Childhood Policy Statement

The Board of Regents in New York will be considering adopting a new policy statement, "Early Education for Student Achievement in a Global Community," after a nearly yearlong revision process. The plan includes significant changes that would require legislative support and funding, including:

- Expansion of the state voluntary prekindergarten to all children beginning at age 3;
- Full-day, mandatory kindergarten for all children;



- Standards-based programs staffed by highly qualified people (birth to grade 2 certification or grades 1-6 certification); and
- An environment that coordinates comprehensive services and provides information and support to families.

If the plan is approved in December, after a period of public comment, a four-year implementation time frame is expected that would require development of a funding mechanism.

"We are extremely pleased to see that the state of New York recognizes high-quality early childhood education as a critical component of children's development and growth," says CCW/AFTEF director Marci Young. "We hope this plan will include the sufficient investment to expand services to children in a way that both ensures that teaching staff are adequately educated and trained, and that they receive the appropriate compensation they deserve."

For more information on the proposal, visit
<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/earlychild/global/cover.htm>

LEGISLATION

Federal Spending Plan Leaves Early Childhood Services and Jobs In Jeopardy

Head Start and other critical early childhood programs could be hard hit with cuts in services to children and jobs for workers. A plan unveiled last month by the leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives proposes a 2 percent across-the-board cut in federal spending.

A recent survey by the National Head Start Association (NHSA) found that this reduction in spending will result in more and more programs downsizing both services and staffing. NHSA board chairman Ron Herndon, who also is director of the Albina Head Start program in Portland, Ore., says, "These cuts would be horrific, quite literally balancing the budget on the backs of the poorest and most at-risk kids in this nation. However, the reality is that chronically inadequate funding for Head Start already is forcing programs to alter and, in some cases, kill services and teacher positions that otherwise would make a real difference in the lives of Head Start children. Ironically, the funds continue to be slashed at the very point where demands are being placed on Head Start programs to hire more teachers with degrees."

As programs entered the current school year, according to the survey, 30 percent reported laying off teachers, 70 percent had furloughed nonteacher staff members, 30 percent reduced or eliminated health insurance coverage, 65 percent cut transportation services, 47 percent reduced training, 12 percent trimmed services for children with disabilities, and 39 percent reported cutting operating hours per day and/or the length of the year.



AFT's First Class Teachers and CCW will continue to monitor developments in Head Start funding. To make your voice heard, take action at the First Class Teachers Web site, www.firstclassteachers.org.

RESEARCH & RESOURCES

Economic Benefits of Early Childhood Programs in West Virginia

Researchers from Marshall University report that early child development (ECD) programs are having significant economic benefits for West Virginia. "The Economic Impact of Early Childhood Development Programs in West Virginia" calls on the state to recognize ECD programs as a major tool for economic development. In addition, it compares salaries and benefits to teachers and administrators in ECD programs to those in comparable occupations, and acknowledges that attracting and retaining highly skilled workers is a problem that needs to be addressed. Still, the report concludes that "the payoff for investing in early childhood development programs is probably higher than for any other economic development expenditure." For a copy of the report, visit www.marshall.edu/cber.

2 New Research Studies on Impact of Child Care

Two new studies offer more information on the impact of different child care arrangements for children through elementary school.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's Study of Early Child Care tracked the same children through early elementary school and found that they have higher math and reading scores by third grade. Of some concern is a finding of poorer work habits and social skills than children not in formal child care programs. For a copy of the report, visit www.nichd.nih.gov/od/secc/index.htm.

"The Influence of Preschool Centers on Children's Development Nationwide: How Much is Too Much?" reports that children, especially poor children, in center-based programs demonstrate considerable cognitive gains, including development of language and math skills. Again, there appears to be a slower pace for social development among these children as compared with those who are not in center-based programs. For a copy of the report, visit http://pace.berkeley.edu/pace_stanford_berkeley.html.

Experts and researchers both recognize this as an opportunity to more fully define how high-quality early childhood education is implemented. Certainly, pre-service and in-service education and training of teaching staff are areas of interest. As always, part of the discussion will need to include issues of preparation alongside adequate provisions for recruitment and retention of more qualified staff. For more information on staffing issues, visit CCW's Web site, www.ccw.org.

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 Educational Foundation (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.