



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)

February 2008

THIS MONTH

Making the Connection—Advocacy & Outreach

- Victory for Northcoast Children's Services

In the Classroom

- How To Help Children Use Their Words, Not Their Hands

In the States

- Oregon School Employees Association unites with the American Federation of Teachers

Federal Policy & Legislation

- House Passes Higher Education Act

Research & Resources

- New Report Highlights Ways to Decrease Pre-K expulsions
- Study Examines the Role of Child Care Centers with State Funded Pre-K



MAKING THE CONNECTION—ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

Victory for Northcoast Children's Services

After months of grass-roots organizing, Northcoast Children's Services (NCS) early care and education workers won a federally-mediated election on Jan. 22, 2008, choosing to be represented by the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) in contract negotiations. CFT President Marty Hittleman welcomed the NCS workers to the union saying, "Having a union will allow these workers to have the kind of professional support and protection that they need to be effective with the children."

As a result of the National Labor Relations Board election victory, the CFT will now represent more than 240 NCS workers at roughly 30 sites, serving more than 1,000 children in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. Emphasizing that quality care and education for the children served is paramount to both the CFT and the newly-affiliated workers, Hittleman said, "This was a great organizing victory for CFT but even more so for the NCS early care and education staff and the families and children they serve." NCS is the largest Head Start and state preschool provider in Northern California with more than 30 sites in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. To read the full story, go to: <http://www.aft.org/earlychildhood/CFT.htm>

IN THE CLASSROOM

How To Help Children Use Their Words, Not Their Hands

(Excerpted from *Scholastic Early Childhood Today*, March 2007 edition)

Betsy Evans of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation has developed a highly successful conflict resolution approach designed for young children. Her approach is based on six simple mediation steps that you can use with children when they are upset, angry or agitated:

- 1. Approach children calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** A deliberate calmness and soothing voice will get children's cooperation more effectively than rushing into the situation with a raised voice. Firmly stop anyone from hurting or getting hurt.
- 2. Acknowledge children's feelings.** When you label and describe their feelings, you acknowledge their right to have these feelings and help them begin to identify them.
- 3. Gather information.** Gentle questioning about what happened will help children describe or "voice" the situation. It is important not to "grill" children, but to create the space for everyone to have a chance to speak.
- 4. Restate the problem.** In a neutral way, reflect back to children what you understand about the problem.



5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together. Listen equally to all suggestions and work together to choose one that works for everyone.

6. Be prepared to give follow-up support. As you know, children will need you to stay close at hand to be sure that their suggestions are followed. Give lots of positive praise!

For more information, visit <http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3501>

IN THE STATES

Oregon School Employees Association Unites with the American Federation of Teachers

The Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) voted overwhelmingly to join the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) becoming the largest independent union to partner with AFT. The more than 20,000-member association includes Head Start educators from Clackamas and Lane counties. Wanda Gledhill, a health assistant with a Head Start unit in Lane County, was “very impressed” with AFT at a 1999 OSEA meeting, and has supported affiliation with the union since then. Gledhill believes, “it’s really important when issues come up to that we have a group that can advocate for us.” To learn more, go to: <http://www.aft.org/news/2008/osea-vote.htm>

FEDERAL POLICY & LEGISLATION

House Passes Higher Education Act

On Feb. 7, 2008, the House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing the College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007, reauthorizing the Higher Education Act. The bill now moves to conference and then to the president’s desk. The reauthorization expands the list of service professions that can receive loan forgiveness to include early childhood educators, finally giving value to the hard work of educators in early childhood classrooms. This is a significant first step in recognizing the valuable contributions of early educators, and we will be closely watching for new developments. For more information on the bill, visit: <http://www.opencongress.org/bill/110-h4137/show>

RESEARCH & RESOURCES

New Report Highlights Ways To Decrease Pre-K Expulsions

Walter Gilliam, whose 2005 findings showed that prekindergartners are expelled at a higher rate than that of older students, returns with a new study giving early education programs tools to cut down on the number of young students being permanently removed from the classroom. The study, released by the Foundation for Child Development, recommends that teachers have regular access to mental health consultants, low student-teacher ratios with regular breaks for teachers away from students, tracking expulsion rates, and assisting troubled students get the help they



need. To read the article, visit www.edweek.org/links ; to read the study, visit: http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=636702

Study Examines the Role of Child Care Centers with State- Funded Pre-K

The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) November 2007 report describes the role of child care centers in state-funded pre-kindergarten programs. Child care centers provide many advantages in the provision of services for young children such as the ability to provide full-day services for working parents and the use of existing classrooms. The study also identifies significant barriers that continue to plague the field, however, including mechanisms to support staff in meeting higher educational standards and appropriate compensation. To view the report, visit <http://www.nwlc.org/pdf/NWLCPreKReport2007.pdf>

SOURCES & CONTRIBUTORS

Scholastic *Early Childhood Today*, Bill Cunningham, Jennifer Luciano, Sandra Weese, Earl Hadley and Marci Young. Mary Boyd, copyeditor.

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.