



CHILDREN ... THE HEART OF THE MATTER

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Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.

An affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children



FALL 2010 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRESIDENT Dawn Mollenkopf



Fall is one of my favorite seasons. Although I miss the long days of summer, I appreciate the cooler temperatures fall brings after the searing August heat. I enjoy the blazing colors on the deciduous trees near my home and in the parks. Fall also brings the excitement of a new school year, with eager, hopeful, faces showing up the first day of class. What will this year be like? What will I learn? Will my teacher care? Whether the faces belong to infants and toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners, primary grade children, or college students, the questions are the same.

Fortunately, we have committed early childhood teachers, college instructors, administrators, and support personnel across the state that give tirelessly to help these students and their families know they care and provide hope that the year will be a good one for them. Along with these committed leaders, we also have directors, teachers, social and health agencies, community-based organizations, senators, and advocates who work to promote the early childhood field to a larger constituency and strive to improve the quality of early childhood education and care in our state. A number of policies, documents, and materials have been created over time that have helped promote awareness and improve the quality of early childhood education and care in our state.

Recently, the Nebraska Department of Education's office of early childhood has helped to promote the needs of kindergarten students by preparing a position statement; "A Kindergarten for the 21st Century" and releasing the new Early Learning Guidelines for Kindergarten for language and literacy and math. These serve as a reminder of the need for kindergarten to be academically challenging while being developmentally appropriate and that K-3 education is a part of the early childhood continuum. I would like to thank all who have contributed to these documents.

Wherever the year takes us, may we continue to support the cause of early childhood education and care for current and future generations of children and families.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Linda Zinke

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS???

I recently attended the Nature Research Symposium. By its very nature, research is about questions. One of the quotes a presenter used was, "Questions are the powerful tools for transformation," (Kevin Cashman).



Especially in this current climate, focused on doing more, doing it better, and doing it with less money, asking questions can help to focus a project.

Three of my favorite questions are these:

- What?
- So What?
- Now What?

I use these when I prepare proposals, and they are especially helpful in writing a "needs" statement. But they're also valuable on a more day-to-day scale. They are hanging on the wall in our conference room, to help us keep our focus.

- **What?** What is the issue, especially from a societal perspective? This requires seeing an issue from a broad perspective - not always so easy.
- **So What?** Why does/should society care about this issue? Again, this is a broad, long term perspective.
- **Now What?** What project, services, assistance does your organization have (or can develop) to help solve this issue?

Perhaps this series needs an additional question, one that will help us to constantly assess and re-assess the services being provided, to make sure they are the very best they can be. Maybe **What Next?**

NAEYC is evaluating their revised Accreditation process, and has asked questions about it. Be sure to provide your thoughts as they re-assess. Visit www.naeyc.org/torch, log in and contribute.

"We are one, our cause is one, and we must help each other if we are to succeed."
Frederick Douglass, 1847

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children Mission Statement

The Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc. is committed to supporting high quality care and education for young children in the state of Nebraska.

The mission of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc. is to:

- ♥ promote professional development activities
- ♥ advocate for issues relating to children and families
- ♥ serve as a resource for local affiliates and for other agencies involved in working with and for children and families
- ♥ disseminate information supportive of quality services, education, and care for children and their families
- ♥ provide networking opportunities for early childhood professionals and families throughout the state.

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**Strengthening and supporting Nebraska's
early childhood community since 1976**

NAEYC UPDATES

Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“Emotional Intelligence: A 21st Century Skill for Children & Adults.”

June 6-9, 2010 in Phoenix, Arizona

The 19th Annual National Association for the Education of Young Children Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development was held in Phoenix, AZ from June 6th – 9th. The conference opened with a goodbye from departing President Mark Ginsberg and a greeting from incoming President Jerlean Daniel.

We were all treated to a Keynote Address from Dr. T. Berry Brazelton. He spoke on *The Critical Importance of the Early Years: Investing in Infants, Young Children and their Families*. Dr. Brazelton is 92 years old, but still as dedicated and inspiring as ever.



Several pre-institute workshops were held on Saturday, prior to the conference. A team of representatives from Nebraska joined 35 other state teams for the 4th Annual State Professional Development Leadership Team Work Day.

Attending were (left to right); Carol Fichter, NDE/ECTC; Linda Zinke, NeAEYC; Eleanor Kirkland, HSSCO; Dawn Mollenkopf, UNK & NeAEYC; and Melody Hobson, NDE.

NAEYC Annual Conference

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPO 2010

November 3-6, 2010, Anaheim, CA

NAEYC Annual Conference
& Expo
November 3-6, 2010
Anaheim, CA



NAEYC is pleased to bring together in one event two of the nation's outstanding annual conferences. NAEYC and the National Black Child Development Institute are collaborating to blend the unique features of each of our annual conferences. This collaboration will provide an opportunity to share, exchange, and learn from a broad range of practitioners and advocates from across the nation.

White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity Releases its Report

Earlier this month, the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity released its report, *Solving the Problem of Childhood Obesity Within a Generation*. The report presents five priority areas: early childhood, empowering parents and caregivers, providing healthy food in schools, improving access to healthy foods in schools, and increasing physical activity.

The **early childhood recommendations** address steps to reduce children's obesity risk beginning before birth, including prenatal care, breastfeeding, and reducing screen time for very young children. Other approaches focus on children in early childhood settings, including increasing access to healthy food through the Child and Adult Care Food Program, increasing access to programs such as CCDBG and Head Start in which children receive these healthy foods, promoting healthy practices through licensing standards and Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, and encouraging physical activity. The report also highlights programs such as the Afterschool Meal Program that provide meals and snacks to children outside of the normal school day. A full report is available at www.letsmove.gov/.

In March, NAEYC provided comments to the Task Force focused on early childhood. NAEYC's comments are available at www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/policy/federal/NAEYCChildhoodObesityComments.pdf

ADVOCACY

An Early Childhood Reading List of Sorts

In a recent article by Cornelia Grumman, Executive Director of the First Five Years Fund, entitled *Literacy Begins at Birth*, she begins by writing, "Early childhood education has become the public-policy bobblehead of our time. An expanding raft of scientific and economic research underscores the need to significantly expand quality early learning in the first five years of life, particularly for at-risk children. Many key policy-makers know this. They nod. And nod. That's often all they do." The article itself, which can be found in the July issue of *The American Prospect*, is an impassioned articulation of the birth-to-five policy agenda and assessment of the Obama Administration's progress on early learning. This is one that should be added to everyone's reading list! Find it here - http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=literacy_begins_at_birth



Sarah Ann Kotchian
Public Policy Chair

As for Nebraska's progress on early learning and a recommendation to add to your favorite bookmarks, we have recently been gifted with the ability to utilize the newly created website www.advancingearlychildhood.org. Here, Becky Veak and Jen Hernandez of Nebraska Children and Families Foundation bring what happens during the early years to the forefront of public policy discussion. This website was created with the purposeful intention of helping decision makers understand early childhood issues and the benefits of investing in the first five years. Many of us at this year's annual NeAEYC Summer Planning Retreat had the pleasure of hearing Becky and Jen introduce the website and explain its rich content and many uses. For example, you can find the latest articles and research related to early childhood, watch informative videos clips, and even download information by county and legislative district to learn the numbers of at-risk children birth to 5 in your community. You can also learn more about their legislative agenda and advocacy priorities as they work to ensure public dollars are invested wisely in effective, accountable services. Take the time to browse the website and contact Becky or Jen to learn more about how you can help advance early childhood policy by supporting Nebraska's elected officials in becoming leaders in the nation around early childhood policy. In the words of Cornelia Grumman, "An agenda for early education can't wait for kindergarten-the first five years matter, too."

*"In a moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing to do.
The worst thing you can do is nothing."*

Theodore Roosevelt

WEBSITE UPDATES

The NeAEYC website continues to be a great source of information for our members and non-members. New menu items continue to be added, so be sure and check the website often. Visits are up 32% from last month. T.E.A.C.H., Professional Development, and the Calendar are still the most visited pages.



We are beginning to add more information about our Student Chapters.

We hope the new menu item "Job Postings" will be a valuable source for everyone (more info on page 6)



One of the most popular new resources available to you is **NAEYC Radio**. The program enables you to listen to brief, insightful interviews with leading experts in early childhood development right on your computer 24/7/365. Available "on demand," **NAEYC Radio** provides a fast, easy and convenient way to stay on top of the latest developments and "next" practices in the field.

Be sure to check out this cool, new resource on our web site!!! www.NebraskaAEYC.org

NeAEYC ACTIVITIES

Planning Retreat

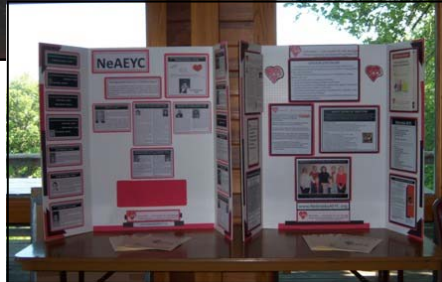
The 9th Annual Early Childhood Summer Planning Retreat was held on June 18th, 2010 at Mahoney State Park. The retreat was hosted by NeAEYC, with financial support from the Nebraska Head Start Association, and the Nebraska Head Start Collaboration Office. It was attended by 45 people from multiple associations and agencies. Overviews were presented by Linda Zinke (NeAEYC), Deb Ross (Nebraska Head Start), and Jen Hernandez and Becky Veak (Advocacy initiatives). The group divided into 4 teams:

- ♥ Advocacy & Public Awareness facilitated by Steve Wilson & Sarah Ann Kotchian,
- ♥ T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood@ NEBRASKA, facilitated by Brandee Lengel & Dawn Mollenkopf,
- ♥ Quality Initiatives, facilitated by Tracy Gordon & Cindy Jennett, and
- ♥ Chapter Activities, facilitated by Gina DeFreece & Pat Enevoldsen.

Recognition activities included the first student leadership recognition, as well as the Distinguished Service to Children Award (Distinguished Service information on next page).



Jen & Becky



Deb

Student Leadership Awards

These students represent student chapters at two community colleges and have been nominated by faculty advisors.



Ivette Pena has grown into a dynamic young leader through her active involvement in the Southeast Community College NAEYC Student Group. As an officer, Ivette took this role very seriously. She attended meetings, fundraisers, service projects and the national conference in Washington, DC. She has become an advocate for appropriate practices in her place of employment, learned effective leadership skills, and is always willing to share the importance and benefits of being involved in NAEYC with others.

As a T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship recipient, Ivette has grown in her ability to create effective learning environments for her toddlers as well as share the importance of appropriate practices with co-workers. Through her personal & professional commitment to children she aspires to continue her education following her graduation at Southeast Community College in September.

Mercedes Sanchez is a talented student and caring person. She volunteers for many different causes through the Service Learning area and through TRIO at Metropolitan Community College.

She is able to motivate others to work together, both in the classroom and in the community.

She is focused on her goals, one of which is to own her own child development center. She is also applying for membership to the AmeriCorps/Vista Program. Mercedes is a true leader!

Mercedes was unable to attend. Accepting her recognition was Beth Brewer, Metro faculty advisor.

"You cannot be a leader, and ask other people to follow you, unless you know how to follow, too."

Sam Rayburn

NeAEYC ACTIVITIES

Planning Retreat



Teams hard at work

A New Member Benefit

FREE JOB POSTINGS NOW AVAILABLE!!!

Nebraska AEYC is now providing a new benefit to NeAEYC members. We are providing a place to post job vacancies on our website. We realize that advertising for vacancies can be very expensive and hope this will become a valuable service for our members.

- ♥ The vacancies will be posted for 3 weeks at no charge for members (non-members can pay a fee of \$60.00).
- ♥ Information about the vacancies will be posted as submitted (must be converted into a pdf. file - we won't retype it.)

A very simple form is available on the website at www.NebraskaAEYC.org - click on Job Posting in the left menu. Form and information can be emailed to phoff44@hotmail.com.

Contact Linda Zinke or Pat Hoffschneider if you have any questions: lzinke@NebraskaAEYC.org or call (402) 476-2089 or 402-476-2092

ACCREDITATION

There are currently 63 Accredited Centers in Nebraska

Lincoln Public Schools at Brownell, Lincoln
Edward Zorinsky Child Dev Ctr, Omaha
CSC Child Dev Center, Chadron
Blue River Child Dev Center, Crete
Ruth Staples CDC, Lincoln
KinderCard Learning Ctr, Lincoln
KinderCare Learning Ctr, Omaha
Candlewood KinderCare Learning Ctr,
Omaha
KinderCare, Bellevue
KinderCare Learning Ctr, Lincoln
KinderCare Learning Ctr, Lincoln
Offutt Child Dev Ctr, Bellevue
Western NE Child Dev Center, Scottsbluff
Rockbrook Early Childhood Ctr, Omaha
St. John's Child Dev Center, Seward
University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha
Nuckolls County Head Start, Superior
James R. Russell CDC, Omaha
Child Saving Institute CDC, Omaha
St. Bonaventure CC Ctr, Columbus
Clay County Learning Ctr, Fairfield
Children's Respite Care Ctr, Omaha
Clay County Head Start, Clay Center
Knowledge Beginnings, Lincoln

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Preschool,
Grand Island
Westminster Preschool, Lincoln
First National Child Dev Ctr, Omaha
Lawrence Early Learning Center, Lawrence
Lillie's House Intergeneration, Bellevue
Educare Center of Omaha, Omaha
Lincoln Public Schools at McPhee, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at West Lincoln,
Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at Calvert, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at First
Presbyterian, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at Saratoga, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at Bryan, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at Holmes, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools at Arnold, Lincoln
Elgin Early Learning Ctr, Elgin
Peace Lutheran Preschool, Grand Island
Wazhinga Ti Zhing Early Childhood Ctr,
Walthill
Webster CO Early Learning Center,
Blue Hill
Head Start Child & Family Dev,
Grand Island

North Platte Comm Child Care Ctr,
North Platte
Hamilton Heights CDC, Omaha
CEDARS Northbridge ECE, Lincoln
Community Action Partnership of Mid NE,
McCook,
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Lincoln
High, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Everett,
Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Northstar,
Lincoln
Ron & Carol Cope CDC, Kearney
Franklin County Head Start, Franklin
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Roper,
Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Riley,
Lincoln
CEDARS Downtown ECE, Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Campbell,
Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Prescott,
Lincoln
Lincoln Public Schools ExCite/Belmont,
Lincoln



Review of Accreditation Processes and Criteria

NAEYC is in the midst of a formal review of the accreditation process and criteria. Input from the field is essential to the success of this project, so NAEYC is soliciting your feedback via the website.

Visit www.naeyc.org/torch and log in. Click Discussions and contribute.

The July 2010 release of the NAEYC All Criteria Document is formatted to incorporate the original language of the NAEYC Accreditation Criteria alongside applicable guidance. If you are looking for a single, printable document that includes a copy of the NAEYC Accreditation Criteria and all relevant, published information about the criteria, you will find it in the NAEYC All Criteria Document. NAEYC All Criteria Document provides clarification for the vast majority of NAEYC Accreditation Criteria and incorporates new or updated guidance for more than 150 additional criteria.

View a [sample of the NAEYC All Criteria Document](#) and access the [NAEYC All Criteria Document](#) within the TORCH Resource Library, folder 2. The 10 Standards. The TORCH Criteria Search will also incorporate updated Guidance by July 30, 2010.

NEBRASKA AEYC ACCREDITATION SUPPORT

TRACY GORDON is available to provide training, coaching and support to programs working on their accreditation process. She has been working with programs in both Omaha and Lincoln. She can provide a one-time training event, or ongoing support, scheduled together with the program. For more information, contact Tracy at tgordon@NebraskaAEYC.org or 402-476-5662.



Tracy Gordon,
Special Projects Coordinator

NAEYC SUPPORT

To ensure that all programs for young children have the opportunity to seek NAEYC Accreditation, the NAEYC Accreditation Scholarship Program subsidizes the accreditation fees associated with achieving and maintaining NAEYC Accreditation. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.naeyc.org/academy/primary/helpscholarships>.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ED SUPPORT

Nebraska Department of Education provides support for accreditation through funds for partial payment of self-study, application, candidate and annual report fees.

Contact: Linda Meyers – 402-471-2980 or
linda.meyers@nebraska.gov

RECOGNITION

2010 Distinguished Service to Children Recipients

Jessie Rasmussen

Jessie Rasmussen has spent a lifetime making the world a better place for people in general, and for children most specifically.

As a state senator she advanced early childhood and quality child care legislation. As director of the Department of Health & Human Services in Nebraska & in Iowa, Jessie provided visionary and effective leadership in bringing all of the services for children and families together in a way that could better meet children's needs.

Jessie served as the policy director at the Nebraska Children & Families Foundation. While at the foundation, Jessie was successful in working with others in the early childhood field, private foundations, & the state senators to pass legislation and a constitutional amendment that established the Early Childhood Education Endowment fund.

Jessie now serves as the Vice President of the Buffett Early Childhood Fund and the early childhood task force co-chair for Building Bright Futures. Jessie's amazing leadership style now advances state and national early childhood policy and practice efforts. Jessie stays focused on making a positive difference for young children.

Jessie is known for helping others see what changes are needed, and then letting a collaborative team define and design how it would work best in the given situation. She embodies empowerment, action and relationships in moving things forward. Jessie's commitment to the early years is embedded in a strong belief that the first five years of life are the foundation for a child's success throughout their lifetime.

The world is a better place because Jessie Rasmussen decided to make young children the passion of her work.



Steve Wilson

Steve Wilson is currently Superintendent at Logan View Public School. He earned his higher education at Nebraska colleges: Doane College, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, & University of Nebraska at Kearney.



He was Elementary Principal at Centura Public Schools for several years. He has been an active leader in true collaboration to develop the highest level of services for preschool children. While at Centura, he began working closely with the Nebraska Department of Education exploring innovative funding strategies to help schools start Pre-K programs. Centura Public Schools became the first district in Nebraska to tap the new funding streams to start a Pre-K program at Centura Elementary. The new Centura PreK program originally worked with Central Nebraska Community Services Head Start & later with Head Start Child and Family Development Program Inc. The program became recognized for providing a broad array of early learning & social support for children and families following the Head Start Performance Standards, as well as Rule 11.

Steve has served on numerous committees including President of the Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals, Secretary for the Nebraska Association for the Supervision of Curriculum Development, Federal Relations Coordinator for the Nebraska Council of School Administrators, Early Childhood Policy Study Leadership Team, and Nebraska AEYC President.

In 2001, he received the National Distinguished Principal Award.

Steve Wilson always believed it was beneficial to maximize blended resources and offer comprehensive services that Head Start requires to ALL of his school district Pre-K children in order to provide positive child outcomes.

Deb Ross Honored with the Tom Mayer Award of Excellence

This award was initiated to recognize outstanding contributions by individuals serving in the Head Start field. It is presented at the Region VII Head Start Association Leadership Conference.

The 2010 recipient of this award was **Deb Ross**. Deb has been the Executive Director/HS/ESH Director of Head Start Child and Family Development Program, Inc for over 20 years. In that capacity the program has grown from 40 children in one location to over 17 centers with 32 classrooms in six counties of central Nebraska.

Deb is also a member of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children Board of Directors.

Congratulations, Deb!!!

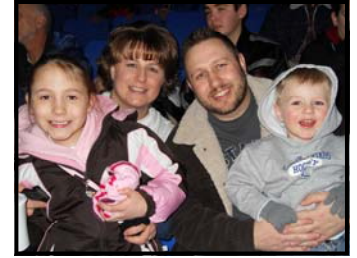


T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA



WELCOME!!

Peru State College (PSC) will now be added to the list of schools that participate on the T.E.A.C.H. program. Peru has an off campus location at Offutt in Bellevue, and will be a great addition to the T.E.A.C.H. Bachelor degree options.



Brandee Lengel,
T.E.A.C.H. Coordinator & Family

DID YOU KNOW...



The degree that T.E.A.C.H. funds at the Bachelor level is The Unified Endorsement in Early Childhood Education: Birth - 3rd Grade.

Currently, twenty T.E.A.C.H. Bachelor students are attending:

- ▼ **Chadron State College**
- ▼ **University of Nebraska at Kearney**
- ▼ **Wayne State College**

2010 Summer Planning Retreat

In June, at the Nebraska AEYC Planning Retreat, goals from 2009 were revisited and new strategies were identified, and a few new goals were added for 2010.

2009 Continuation Goals

- ▼ Continue to Recruit New Students
- ▼ Continue to Provide Information to Program Directors

2010 Goals

- ▼ Identify a plan to gather information on the early childhood workforce
- ▼ Identify a plan to encourage students to advocate for early childhood
- ▼ Identify a plan to celebrate the 100th graduate from T.E.A.C.H. Nebraska

*A big **THANK YOU** to the members of the T.E.A.C.H. Team for all of your hard work and wonderful ideas. We couldn't do it without you!*

Student Spotlight– Cari Callan

Cari Callan has been a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipient for the past four years. She has completed a total of 31 credits. She is currently working on her Bachelor's Degree at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Cari has been a Family Child Care Provider in Axtell, Nebraska since September 2001.

Cari Says:

"I graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney with a B.S. degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance. I was employed in the finance industry for five years before having my daughter. After my daughter was born, I wanted a way to stay home with her so I started my own daycare. My love for children grew and I realized that this was my true calling. Children are so innocent and lovable that I knew I wanted to become a teacher."

"T.E.A.C.H. has helped me be able to reach that goal without having to quit my job and helped us financially so that my student loans didn't get any bigger than they already were. The T.E.A.C.H. program is such a wonderful program. I boast about it to all of my family members who ask me just how I am able to go to school on top of working full-time and taking care of my family. I tell them about this great program and how without it I wouldn't be able to get the classes I need to be able to go out there and teach. TEACH has made all my goals and dreams reality. "

"I have been married to my husband Darin for 13 years. We have two children; Caitlin, 10, and Emma, 5. My family loves to travel and see different places. When I am not studying I like to instruct the children's choir at church, teach Sunday school and coach my daughter's softball team. My children are my hobbies, and I love to just spend time with them."



"Learning is not attained by chance. It must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."

Abigail Adams

OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS SPOTLIGHT

JAMES R. RUSSELL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Omaha, NE 68178

Program Administrator: Connie Shonka



This facility is located near the campus of Creighton University in Omaha, placing it in a unique position to be visited by a great number of people.

It is licensed and accredited by NAEYC. The teachers hold a sacred respect for the child, and this serves as the foundation for the care routines and curriculum.

The center provides services to infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.



**Certified
Nature
Explore
Classroom**



Connie Shonka is retiring this summer. Connie has been the Director of this site, which is accredited by NAEYC, for several years.

In addition, she has served on several boards and committees, including the Child & Family Development Corporation (Omaha Head Start), Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA Advisory Committee.

She has been a strong advocacy for quality in early care and education in Nebraska.

We'll miss you, Connie!

"There is nothing, I think, more unfortunate than to have soft, chubby, fat-looking children who go to watch their school play basketball every Saturday and regard that as their week's exercise."

John F. Kennedy in address at U.S. Children's Bureau

OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS SPOTLIGHT

Webster County Early Learning Center @ Blue Hill

Blue Hill, Nebraska at the Blue Hill Elementary School
Program Supervisor: Sally Hansen
Classroom Teacher: Paula Southworth



The Webster County Early Learning Center @ Blue Hill is one of the Nebraska Early Childhood Education Grant Programs. In partnership with Blue Hill Public Schools, Head Start and Educational Service Unit #9 the program is available to all three and four-year olds in the community. The program is located at the Blue Hill Elementary School, making the Nature Explore Classroom available to elementary students.



In the Outdoor Classroom children are encouraged to explore and interact with nature as they participate in activities at each of the work areas. Natural elements are incorporated to engage all of the children's senses including: a butterfly garden, strawberry patch, and sensory herb garden.



Local volunteers and civic clubs such as the Boy Scouts and Future Farmers of America (FFA), have been instrumental in the development of the classroom. The Webster County Early Learning Center @ Blue Hill will apply for the Nature Explore Classroom certification this fall.



"Human nature is just about the only nature some people experience."

Abigail Charleson



CONGRATULATIONS TO PENNY GILDEA!!!

Penny Gildea will be serving as the Director of Early Childhood Educational Network Services for Building Bright Futures. Building Bright Futures is a comprehensive public-private partnership that seeks to improve academic performance, raise graduation rates, and increase civic and community responsibility in the Omaha Metropolitan area of Douglas and Sarpy counties.



Prior to this position, Penny has served for several years as a Professional Development Coordinator at the Early Childhood Training Center.



QUALITY ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

Woods Charitable Fund Quality Enhancement Project

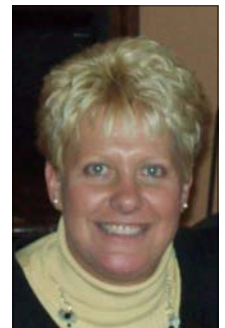
This project was completed May 31, 2010. Through the project we provided services to 12 early childhood classrooms in a low income area of Lincoln. Four classrooms serve Infants/Toddlers, and the remaining serve preschoolers. Each received a pre and post Environment Ratings Scale, supplies, training as needed and frequent coaching and support.

Results from ITERS:

- ♥ The average improvement between the pre and post ITERS was 32.1 points, a huge change.
- ♥ The category with the greatest change was personal care routines.

Results from ECERS:

- ♥ The average improvement between the pre and post ECERS was 15.1 points.
- ♥ The category with the greatest change was Language and Reasoning.



*Tracy Gordon,
Special Projects
Coordinator*

***We sincerely thank the Woods Foundation
for their support of high quality in early childhood programs.***



ARRA—AMERICAN RECOVERY & REINVESTMENT ACT FUNDS

There is a strong possibility NeAEYC will receive some of the ARRA funds in the near future. For NeAEYC, these funds will be used for:

- ♥ Quality Enhancement Projects for both centers and family child care providers,
- ♥ Additional support for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA to increase the number of scholars, and
- ♥ Support for Accredited programs to help them remain accredited.

If/when we receive these funds, they will need to be spent pretty quickly, so we'll be distributing information through the website and emails. Watch for more to come.

*"If you give me a fish you have fed me for a day.
If you teach me to fish then you have fed me until the river is contaminated or the shoreline seized for development.
But if you teach me to organize, then when whatever the challenge, I can join together with my peers and we will fashion our own solution."*

From the Barefoot Guide to Organizations and Social Change

AFFILIATE AND CHAPTER INFORMATION

Student Activities—Southeast Community College Student Group

Ivette Pena was recognized as a Student Leader at the NeAEYC Summer Retreat. Ivette is a former officer of the SCC Student Chapter and will be graduating from SCC in September. Ivette is employed at Academic Advantage in Lincoln.

The student chapter will also be holding a Make & Take Workshop in early August featuring three children's books. Student participants will be able to create either flannel board or magnetic board pieces to correspond with a children's book.

A couple of members will be volunteering at the 2010 Special Olympic National Games to be held in Lincoln July 18-24th.

The group will be hosting two Parent Date Night fundraisers to be held at the SCC Child Development Center in August and September to allow parents a night out and to assist in deferring costs of attending the national conference in November.



*Crystal Kozak
SCC Student
Chapter Advisor*

Northeast Chapter of Nebraska AEYC

NeAFCC's 22nd Annual Early Childhood Conference Norfolk Life Long Learning Center, August 7 Keynote presenter: Tom Copeland

Tom Copeland is the nation's leading trainer, author and advocate on business issues for family child care providers. He is a licensed attorney and consultant with the National Family Child Care Association. He has helped thousands of providers and tax preparers understand complete business and tax issues since 1981. In 2004, he was named Advocate of the Year. He has represented numerous providers in IRS audits and has won five US Tax Court cases.



*Susan Strahm,
ESU #1 Coordinator*

Keynote and breakout topics:

- ♥ Mastering Record Keeping and Tax Preparation
- ♥ Coming to Terms: Contracts and Policies with Parents
- ♥ Reducing Your Risks: Legal and Insurance Issues
- ♥ Marketing your Child Care Business
- ♥ Show Me the Money! Child Care Grants and T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships
- ♥ Managing Your Finances

Member Discounts will be provided for this Conference and also for the Infant Mental Health Conference to be held in Norfolk, Ne on October 9th - Contact Susan Strahm: sstrahm@esu1.org or (402) 287-2061

Kearney Chapter of Nebraska AEYC

The Kearney Chapter of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children has the following events scheduled until the end of the year.

Our main membership drive will be on Monday, October 18 from 7:00-8:15 p.m. at the Kearney Family YMCA with presenter, Scott Murrish speaking on "Making Positive Memories". Members are at no cost, non-members are \$5.00 which will be reimbursed if a membership is purchased.

In-service training "Safe With You" by Lisa Fulmer will be held Monday, November 15 at UNK from 6:00-10:00 p.m. Members are at no cost and non-members are \$5.00.

The Kearney Chapter Officers meet monthly at Perkins, 12:00-1:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. **The Kearney Area Child Care Center Directors meet at Perkins, 1:00-2:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month.** Topics are current issues each month.

Contact: Karen Decker (308) 440-2418.



*Karen Decker,
Kearney
Chapter*

For more information on joining the KAAEYC, please contact Judith Riddle, Chapter President, at (308) 234-1883 or Sue Klein, Chapter Sec/Treas at (308) 237-9622. The chapter will pay ½ of the membership fee.

AFFILIATE AND CHAPTER INFORMATION

Omaha AEYC

Omaha AEYC Goals (adopted by the Omaha AEYC Board, July 2010)

- ♥ Advocate for best practices in the early childhood field
- ♥ Increase membership and recognize professionalism & quality in the early childhood field
- ♥ Increase the quality of care in early childhood programs
- ♥ Develop a strong online presence



Omaha AEYC Networking Night

Playtime Schooltime and Omaha AEYC invite you to an early childhood open house on Tuesday, August 31st, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at Playtime School Supply Store, 5310 N 99th St. (99th & Fort), Omaha, NE. Come for an evening of networking, bargain shopping, great giveaways, refreshments and FUN! Omaha AEYC members receive 15% off purchases or orders (Not a member? You can join that night!); non-members receive 5%. RSVP by August 26th to OmahaAEYC@yahoo.com or call (402) 541-4718.

Omaha AEYC NAEYC Accreditation Discussion Forums

Thursday, September 9th, 6:30 to 8:30 pm (dinner provided) or Friday, September 10th, 12:30 to 2:00 pm (lunch provided) ESU #3 Sarpy Washington Room - 6949 S 110th St. (110th & Harrison) Omaha, NE - NO COST - RSVP by August 31.

Just as NAEYC Accreditation requires programs to engage in continuous quality, continuous improvement is also expected of the accreditation system itself. NAEYC's current improvement efforts include a review of the accreditation process and related criteria. The main goals of the review are:

1. To create statements of best practice by - (a) reaffirming the 10 Program Standards, (b) capturing cutting-edge knowledge from research and practice, and making any needed adjustment to the process, and
2. To identify measurable characteristics, which include - (a) designing and testing assessment tools on a smaller subset of measurable characteristics, (b) creating transparent assessment tools and reports.

The feedback collected as part of these discussion forums will inform the revisions to be considered by the NAEYC Council for Accreditation for recommendation and approval by the NAEYC Governing Board.

To participate, please RSVP **no later than August 31** to OmahaAEYC@yahoo.com or (402) 541-4718.



Jen Haggart
OAEYC President

PARTICIPATION ON COMMITTEES AND TEAMS

- ♥ Building Bright Futures
- ♥ Call of Action Task Force
- ♥ Central Community College Advisory Team
- ♥ Community Services Initiative/EC team
- ♥ Community Services Leadership Team
- ♥ Early Childhood Public Policy Team
- ♥ EC Interagency Coordinating Council
- ♥ Environment Ratings Scale Team
- ♥ Human Services Federation
- ♥ Kids Count Data Team
- ♥ Lincoln Public School Consumer Advisory Team
- ♥ Metro Community College Advisory Team

- ♥ Munroe Meyer Institute Advisory Team
- ♥ Nebraska Head Start Association
- ♥ Nebraska Nature Action Collaborative
- ♥ Nonprofit Association of the Midlands
- ♥ P-16 Committee and Goals 2 & 4
- ♥ Region VII Board of Directors
- ♥ Regional Training Project, Lincoln
- ♥ Regional Training Project, Omaha
- ♥ Southeast Community College Advisory Team
- ♥ Together for Kids and Families
- ♥ United Way School Readiness Team, Omaha
- ♥ United Way Team, Lincoln

NEWBORN HEARING AID LOANER BANK

Nebraska AEYC has again renewed the contract to serve as the fiscal agent for the Hearing Aid Loaner Bank.

This project provides hearing aids and supplies for young children with genetic hearing disorders. The hearing aids and supplies are funded through donations from manufacturers and private individuals.



MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members - 1st and 2nd Quarter 2010

Melanie Becker
Brittnee Benjamin
Katherine Bonilla
Tara Brannen
Tracy Braswell
Monica Brown
Glenda Cornillie
Gloria Culbertson
Elizabeth Edens
Kayla Engel
Julie Feldman
Jenny Flemming
Jaci Foged
Tiffany Foote

Jessica Miller
Kirsten Minert
Wendi Nalty
Lynn Olson
Patti Pagel
Suzy Parsons
Lisa Poppe
Janet Potter
Amy Richards
Darlene Rockenbach
Angela Rosenthal
Suzanne Schneider
Mary Schulenberg
Danielle Schwab

Theresa Gerlach
Deb Hein
Christina Higgins
Linda Hirth
Jennifer Horvatic
Ann Hudson
Kris Jenkins
Candace Kastrup
Stephanni Kratochvil
Joni Kruntorad
Keri LaPointe
Selena Lewis
Jenika Long
Melissa Masters

Kaye Scully
Sarah Smith
Jennifer Snyder
Cindy Sorensen
Jenifer Stephan-Alberts
Marsha Stier
Kay Storck
Lucretia Streit
Tara Toyvar
Mollie Von Kampen
Kimberly Weeks
Lourdes Wilbur
Kirby Wilson
Arlene Wimes
Jamie Woods

Attention Members!!

Help us increase our Nebraska AEYC membership.
For each "NEW" member you recruit, (up to 3 per year) NeAEYC will send you a coupon for \$10.00 off of your next renewal.

All you need to do is have the "NEW" member that you recruit fill out the application, write your name at the bottom of the application as the "referred by person", enclose a check and mail to:

Nebraska AEYC, 650 J St., Ste. 23, Lincoln, NE 68508

When you receive your renewal reminder, just attach your coupon to your membership renewal form, your renewal fee minus \$10.00, and mail it to our office. NeAEYC will attach a check for \$10.00, and we will mail it to the National Office!



Membership Benefits

National AEYC

Website: www.NAEYC.org
Week of the Young Child activities—national
2 Annual National Conferences
Children's Champions, advocacy activities
Young Children Journal & professional resources
Early childhood national leadership
Professional Liability Insurance option

Nebraska AEYC

Website: www.NebraskaAEYC.org
Week of the Young Child activities—state and local
Local conference support
Legislative breakfast, advocacy activities
Quarterly newsletter
Early childhood state & local leadership
Annual Early Childhood Planning retreat
Chapter development & support

Are You A Facebook Member?

If you are a Facebook Member, do a search for Nebraska AEYC and join the Nebraska group!
There is also a NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) group!
Join both for interesting discussions, links, etc.
To Join: Just go to www.facebook.com - for instructions.



CONFERENCES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- ♥ August 7, 2010: **22nd Annual Early Childhood Conference, NECC**, Norfolk, NE. For more info: sstrahm@esu1.org
- ♥ August 21-24, 2010: **ASAE Conference**, Los Angeles, CA. For more info: www.ASAE.org
- ♥ September 28-30, 2010: **ERS Training**, Kearney. Contact penny.gildea@nebraska.gov
- ♥ October 9, 2010: **Plum Creek Literacy Conference**, Seward. Contact Vikki Gremel at PlumCreek@cune.edu
- ♥ October 9, 2010: **Infant Mental Health Conference**, Norfolk. Contact Susan Strahm at sstrahm@esu1.org
- ♥ October 14-17, 2010: **Nature Action Forum**, Nebraska City, NE. Contact: info@worldforumfoundation.org
- ♥ October 19-21, 2010: **ERS Training**, Lincoln. Contact penny.gildea@nebraska.gov
- ♥ November 3-6, 2010: **NAEYC Annual Conference**, Anaheim, CA. For more info: www.NAEYC.org
- ♥ November 7-9, 2010: **Parents as Teachers National Conference**, St. Louis, MO. Contact PAT-reg@smart-reg.com
- ♥ November 18-19, 2010: **Nebraska Head Start Association Conference**, Grand Island. Contact Cheryl Denner at cdenner@bvca.net.
- ♥ November 30, Dec 1-2, 2010: **ERS Training**, Omaha. Contact penny.gildea@nebraska.gov
- ♥ April 2, 2011: **Early Childhood Conference**, Peru. Contact Cara Small at csmall@esu6.org
- ♥ May 16, 2011: **Early Development Network Annual Conference**, Kearney. Contact penny.gildea@nebraska.gov
- ♥ June 12-15, 2011: **NAEYC Professional Development Institute**, Providence Rhode Island. Contact naeyc.org

To Donate

Visit the website (To Donate), and you can donate to NeAEYC and some of the projects, including T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, Nature Explore™, Newborn Hearing Aid Loaner Bank, and Student groups. You can donate with a credit card - we'll send you a letter for your taxes.

Need Some Help?

NeAEYC staff can serve as:

- ♥ Environment Ratings Scale (ERS) evaluators
 - ♥ CLASS assessors
 - ♥ Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Advisors
 - ♥ West Ed Trainer
 - ♥ Accreditation coach
 - ♥ Safe With You trainer
 - ♥ Early childhood trainer
 - ♥ Nature Explore™ consultants
- Information on this process and costs is available on the website.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

Studies of quality early childhood care and education programs indicate the best programs are those where staff are well educated and turnover is low.

T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) is designed to provide scholarship funds for those working with young children. The scholarships address three key issues facing those in the early care and education field: the educational level of the staff, high turnover rates, and low wages.

Scholarship Program

The scholarship provides:

80% of tuition & book costs, a travel stipend, \$350 bonus, partial reimbursement for release time or the cost of substitute care.

Qualified applicants must:

Work in a licensed child care facility or otherwise qualifying program, working directly with children or supervising those working with children; work at least 30 hours a week; and earn less than \$15.00 per hour. **additional criteria may apply*

Associate and Bachelor degree scholarships available.

For more information on T.E.A.C.H.

Contact: **Brandee Lengel, T.E.A.C.H. Coordinator**
(402) 476-5658 or toll free 877-656-2005
teach@NebraskaAEYC.org

The Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children newsletter is published four times yearly - Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. NeAEYC supports developmentally appropriate practices for the care and education of young children. It also promotes inclusiveness, cultural awareness, and gender equity.

Send articles, information, comments, suggestions, affiliate reports, and address changes to:

Pat Hoffschneider, Office Manager
650 J St, Suite 23, Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: 402-476-2092

Fax: 402-476-5665

e-mail: phoff@NebraskaAEYC.org



Visit our website: www.NebraskaAEYC.org

Childhood Obesity

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over the past three decades, the childhood obesity rate has more than doubled for preschool children ages 2-5 years and adolescents ages 12-19 years, and tripled for children ages 6-11 years. Obese children are much more likely to become obese adults.

Childhood obesity occurs when there are too many calories consumed for the amount of calories expended. The obese child is well above the normal weight for age and height—at least 20 percent higher than a healthy weight for a child of that height, or a body fat percentage above 25 percent in boys or above 32 percent in girls.

Childcare settings can provide a large proportion of a child's food intake so knowing about foods to serve, physical activities to encourage movement, and learning opportunities about food and exercise can play an important part in building health young bodies and healthy habits.

Causes of Childhood Obesity

Experts believe childhood obesity results from both genetic and environmental factors. Obesity tends to run in families; a child with an obese parent, brother, or sister is more likely to become obese.

However, genetics alone does not cause obesity. As children grow, they normally add fat cells to their body. Scientists believe that children who eat more food than they burn up can accumulate too many fat cells. The child's "fat bank" continues to grow; and if this is not reversed, they will become obese.

Today's eating habits have shifted from healthier choices to a much greater reliance on fast food, processed foods, and sugary drinks. These foods tend to be high in fat and/or calories and low in nutrients. Busy parents often lack time to prepare meals using fresh and unprocessed ingredients. They may look to convenient, pre-packaged meals which often are high in calories, fat, sodium, preservatives, and portion size.

Lack of adequate daily exercise is another strong factor in the rise of childhood obesity. All children age 2 years and older should participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise on most or all days of the week. Yet, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) estimates that the average child spends at least five hours a day engaged in viewing "screen media."

The AAP recommends that children under the age of 2 years watch no TV at all and that screen time should be limited to no more than 1-2 hours of *quality programming* a day for children 2 years and older. Why? Research shows that the more TV children watch, the more likely they will consume high-calorie, low-nutrient foods.

Implications for Childcare Providers

The childcare setting can strongly influence early experiences with food choices and exercise. Here are some specific steps that childcare providers can take to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity.

Healthy Eating Experiences

- Provide healthy meals and snacks that meet the requirements of USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- For children age 2 years and older, plan meals to follow the U.S. Dietary Guidelines. Include vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Provide meals, snacks, and beverages as suggested by a nutrition consultant or as required by licensing.
- Limit foods high in sugar and fat without being overly restrictive. Fat should not be restricted in the diets of children younger than 2 years of age. Children age 2-5 years should eat smaller amounts of fat so that by the age of 5, their diet contains no more than 30 percent of total calories from fat. Use low-fat or skim milk after age 2 years.
- Include nutrition and feeding policies in the orientation for new staff. Regularly review these policies with all staff and parents. Include a policy about foods brought from home in the parent guidebook.
- Encourage children to assist staff in developing a menu that includes a selection of nutritious foods.
- Make mealtimes a pleasant and social experience so children can learn appropriate eating patterns, mealtime behavior, and communication skills.

Promote Physical Activity

- Provide safe play equipment (either permanent or portable) on playgrounds.
- Provide daily outdoor or alternative indoor activities during bad weather to encourage large motor muscle activities—jumping, dancing, marching, kicking a ball, running, swimming, riding a tricycle, hula-hoops, treasure hunts, nature walks, etc.
- Encourage parents to plan physical activities with their children on weekends or holidays. Provide parents with lists of fun, active indoor and outdoor games appropriate for the young child.

Teach Healthy Eating Habits

- Provide daily nutrition-related activities and learning experiences that promote healthy eating as something to be enjoyed.
- Plan a field trip to a locally grown farmers market. Make the trip educational by challenging children to identify fruits and vegetables by color, shape, and smell.
- Provide parents with information on healthy nutrition and eating habits. Post a healthy meal or snack "recipe of the month," or invite parents to bring a healthy dish and share a healthy meal.
- Provide staff with ongoing nutrition and food service training. All staff should know the basic principles of child nutrition and physical activity.
- Teach staff and children about food labels and food marketing.
- Be mindful of modeling appropriate behaviors, such as enjoying a variety of foods, being willing to taste new foods, and enjoying physical activity. Avoid eating or drinking anything in front of the children that they are not allowed to have.

Elaine Abrams, RN, CHES, MPH

Certified Health Educator and Community Health Coordinator, Nursing & Home Care, Norwalk, CT

http://www.healthychild.net/NutritionAction.php?article_id=528