



CHILD CARE

Spring 2009

News

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President's Message *by Jerry Cook, SCCCA President*



The year 2009 has already geared up to be an interesting year. Much work needs to be done

and it appears we will have the involvement of many folks who want to ensure protection for all our children, whether in licensed centers or "other" facilities. Rules are important for any business. Centers without clearly defined guidelines are likely to have deficiencies for healthy environments. We do not resist rules and regulations; we insist; however, that all child care providers should be compelled to adhere to the same level of rules and regulations. It is called "leveling the playing field." It is about the children, their health, safety and welfare!

Solidarity within our membership for guidance and camaraderie is important. Knowledge is powerful and numbers impressive. These are difficult times, all the more reason for unity in our cause to protect the children from illegitimate and careless environments. As parents lose their jobs, the children will leave us for unlicensed caregivers. That can't be helped; what can be helped is providing quality for those who are left and keeping the business afloat.

That is a tough task many of us will have before us this year.

The 2009 annual conference was a resounding success, thanks to Cindy Walton-McCawley, Vicki Hoover and Karen Boyce. These ladies really excelled in their undertaking to produce the most successful conference in our Association's history. Cindy even took it a giant step forward and detailed a step by step guide for others to use in pulling together future conferences. WOW! A special thanks to all of you!

The legislative dinner on February 11th was also very successful. Thanks to Hope for her enthusiastic efforts in pulling this together in a short period of time. The House was running a late session, and we were concerned that attendance would be low. But, to our pleasant surprise, we had extraordinary attendance. Good job, Hope!

The legislative luncheon on February 25th was a big success too. Lots of SCCCA volunteers contributed to making this luncheon a very good one, and the attendance of so many of the directors and teachers of various member centers was a plus, proving we have solidarity! Thanks to all of you. **(Con't p. 3)**

Legislative Update

Spring 2009

Jeffrey N. Thordahl and Hope Lanier

Let me start where I usually finish – an appeal for you to engage your local House and Senate member. I know how a combination of events has made staying in business and caring for and educating your children a serious challenge. I am willing to bet almost everyone reading this has seen a drop in enrollment - perhaps even a significant drop. At the top of the list as to reasons for the drop is the proliferation of 3 and 4 year old programs in public schools for any and all children regardless of whether they are at-risk. Of course the Pre-K public programs are cruelly funded by the local property taxes you pay on your center going directly to the local school district – adding insult to injury, rubbing salt in a wound – comes to mind. In addition, the poor economy has resulted in the loss of jobs, so that many children who were in your centers are now at home. Finally, there is the unfortunate un-level playing field with the at-home based facilities with less than 6 children who may be more affordable but come with almost no state regulation. In sum, your 5-year olds left in mass years ago when 5K programs became universal in public schools, now the 4 year olds are leaving in droves to public schools, many 3's are moving to public settings and there is word that there are public schools starting programs beginning at 6 weeks old across the state. Added to your challenge is the inconsistent application of the licensing regulations on your centers by some of the DSS licensing inspectors. As you know any “violations” are posted on the DSS website for inquiring parents to see. Meanwhile many of the 4K programs in public schools and all of the at-home programs are NOT inspected by DSS at all. Therefore, there is not a listing of violations for them on the website. While they appear perfect, we can appear careless until you have had a chance to appeal the “violation” and have it listed only as “resolved”.

I know how much all of this pains you when you know better than I do how successful



you are in caring for and educating the children in your programs. To see them leave for public schools where they are the “little kids” and attend at-home settings where they are not covered by stringent regulation is hard to watch. So now is the time more than ever to reach out to your local officials and invite them to your center and simply tell your story. Show off your facility!

Back in Columbia we are trying to stem the tide of trouble for you. Perhaps the item of greatest importance is the attempt to delay the last reduction in the level of child/staff ratios. As you know there has been a 3-year-phase-in of reduced ratios. The 0-1 and 1-2 year old ratio reached the lowest level two years ago. However, there is a pending reduction of one more child in the 2-3, 3-4, 4-5 and 5+ year olds coming up this year. The loss of one child from each of these groups could be devastating during this economically trying time. The next increase in the minimum wage to \$7.25 takes effect July 24, 2009 just as the reduced ratios are scheduled to come into effect as well which creates a double hit for you. Therefore, we are making a serious effort to delay the implantation of the final ratio reduction for a year and revisit it a year from now. Keep in mind the 0-2 year olds are unaffected. Also keep in mind that compared to North Carolina our ratios are already lower than theirs are in the 2's and above and the same in the 0-2. Some people continue to believe that somehow South Carolina is lax in the ratio requirements but that simply is not true.

Con't to page 3

Con't from page 2 -- A proviso in the House-passed budget did accommodate a delay but we are working on clarifying it in the Senate budget so that the delay only applies to the upcoming reduction. The intent is for the ratios to remain as they are today for another year.

Another area of progress is the introduction of legislation that would require a minimum sentence of jail time when a child is seriously hurt in a child care setting. This was in response to the horrific situation in a Columbia area at-home setting where a child was seriously hurt. The bill would also require at-home providers of child care to take at least 2 hours of child care training approved by DSS. While this pales in comparison to the 15 and 20 hour requirements of licensed child care workers and directors it begins to bring greater accountability and safety into the at-home setting.

Finally, you should be aware that the Licensing Regulations are being reviewed right now by the Child Care Advisory Board. At some point in the near future there will be a period of public comment. In the meantime, if you have any particular concern about any of the licensing provisions, please contact one of the SCCCA board members so they can bring it to the Advisory Board's attention.

The lobbying team at MG&C Consulting is working hard on your behalf. You can assist us tremendously by reaching out to your local elected officials and sharing with them your difficult times. In addition if you have any ideas or special concerns please let us know.

Con't from page 1 -- There is lots of "child care" activity on the hill this year. Jeff, Hope, Kimberly and Billy are monitoring this activity comprehensively and will keep all of us abreast of critical maneuvers our lawmakers may attempt. There is just too much going on for me to cover in this message. It would take too much space.....be sure to visit the legislative link on the SCCCA website for updates. It is important that you do this so you can keep your legislator informed of your opinions as we go down this road of affects and changes.

Our Executive Director, Karen Boyce, continues to update our website regularly. If you have suggestions or items of interest you would like published, let Karen know. She will be happy to accommodate you. Again, thanks Karen for a super job on designing and managing this professional website. Your obsession for saving the buck has paid off again! Folks, access the website at www.southcarolinachildcareassociation.com and give us feedback please.

I will close by saying your Association is at work for you in Columbia. Be proud that you are a member and consequently a vital part of changing the future of the environmental health, welfare and education of the children in South Carolina. We expect positive change; and we will have positive change, but only with your support! Thank you!

Welcome to our newest members

Foothills Child Development Center

Twylane E. Rogers

Sallie M. Zeigler

Mildred Briggs

The Kiddie Academy

Kingdom Kids II & Full Gospel Christian Academy

SC Child Care Association's 2009 Annual Conference
was a HUGE success!

Conference Notes
By
Cindy Walton-McCawley

SCCCA's 21st Annual Conference provided participants with a choice of 25 training topics from 27 presenters and up to 6.25 hours of training. Presenters came from South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. The conference was one of the largest SCCCA has had in many years. Its success was due in no small part to the contributions of 90 people who gave of their time to help with registration, evaluations, equipment, hospitality and vendor committees. Under the guidance of Carolyn Watt, (Small World) registration for the 444 participants went very smoothly. The morning coffee and muffins during registration gave participants an opportunity to mingle with vendors and other participants. Vicki Hoover (Sunshine House) is to be commended for her excellent choice of Chik-Fil-A who served lunch quickly and efficiently. Laurie Woods (Hobbit Hill) did a super job ensuring that the room proctors disseminated conference stickers and evaluations. The Advocates for Better Care provided a door prize consisting of an ERS assessment and technical assistance for a classroom valued at \$1,000.00 and a \$1,000.00 grant to purchase materials to help the classroom meet the plan of action they develop based on the ERS assessment. Sunshine House was the lucky winner.

Numerous attendees shared that they benefitted from the information they learned throughout the day. While space prohibits sharing all of the comments, following are a few of the comments received from each highlighted class.

From What are the Environment Rating Scales and How Can They Help You?

- "The Environmental Rating Scales provide a realistic assessment that meets the needs of all children and ensures safety, nurturing and stimulation."

- "I learned that we must take time to read to the children and communicate more verbally so they can develop language and communication skills."
- "I learned how to expand on activities using teachable moments."

From Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:

- "I learned how to conduct a minimal interview and recognize different types of injuries."
- "I learned that I am a mandated reporter."

From The Serious Business of Play:

- "If I keep structured and fun and stay on the kid's level, I can make a difference!"
- "I learned how to incorporate movement into activities."

From Director's Orientation and Emergency Preparedness:

- "Emergency template very useful!"
- "I learned to make sure children/teacher file is completely updated; make sure emergency plan is in order at the facility."

From SAC Stands for Stimulating and Active Curriculum with School age Care Programs:

- "I have learned new ways of integrating academic standards into after school programs."
- "Be positive – you teach through your actions as well as words."

From What's Ahead Legislatively,

- "The importance of calling/talking to our legislators."
- "Never knew so much was going on in the state house on our behalf." (Con't to page 5)



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Con't from page 4 -- From The ABC Standards for Teachers of Children Ages 3-5

- "I really understand now what to expect from ABC."
- "Use open-ended questions."

From SC Early Learning Math Standards for 3 – 5 Year Olds

- "The importance of using manipulatives for hands on experiences."
- "Fun ways of using blocks and shapes to teach math."

From Developing Student Portfolios Using Work Sampling

- "Communication with students is key. Make students a part of the process."
- "Look at yourself and dig in to find a way to reach the child. Students will learn and want to learn."

From Connecting Literacy to Your Preschool Program

- "Literacy is very important in our toddlers' lives. Creating a literacy rich environment is essential."
- "Use props while reading."

From Parenting Solutions:

- "One idea I learned during the presentation is not to use too many words during a power struggle."
- "Learned new ways to handle and prevent biting in the classroom."

As you can read, attendees really benefited from the training sessions they attended.

--Cindy Walton-McCawley

Meet your Board of Directors

In the Spring 2009 issue you will meet two of your Board members. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Jerry Cook, President of the SCCCA and Vicki Hoover.



Vicki Hoover joined the SC Child Care Association this year. She is the mother of three daughters and “granny” to four lovely grandchildren. Sofia, her youngest granddaughter,

stays with her husband, Eric, several days a week as her mom is working and going to school to be a paramedic. Vicki has been in childcare for over 35 years. She has done it all! She has cooked, taught, been a director and regional director for three different providers. Her favorite things are coming home to the quietness of her home. She loves to read, get out and enjoy the country, and her animals. She and Eric have eight cats and one dog. She attended Greenville Technical College last semester working on her grooming and small animal care certification. Vicki and Eric live in Tigerville off Highway 11 in Northern Greenville County.

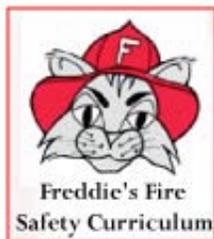
Jerry Cook has been President of the SC Child Care Association since 2007. He comes to the Association with a very diverse background. He was in the US Military from



1953 until 1957 and then enjoyed a banking career for 11 years. He has also worked in the field of TV, Radio and “retired” from Interstate Commerce. He was then involved with appraisals and real estate investments until 1994. From 1994 until his “retirement” in 2006, he worked with DHEC in the Bureau of Air Quality. In 1987, he opened the Gaston PreSchool Centers, LLC where he and his wife, Madge, love on children every day. He has many civic interests that include: Sertoma of America, Jaycees, Delta Nu Alpha and the Masonic Lodge 382. His special interests are local government, Sunday School and the SC Child Care Association. His hobbies include political history, ancient history, family genealogy, and carpentry. He and his wife, Madge, live in Gaston.



Spring is here!!



South Carolina State Fire Marshal's Office Provides more than Fire Inspections

Hearing the words, "State Fire Marshal," may bring about visions of fire and life safety inspections, but inspection services is just one of the programmatic areas that this office utilizes to fulfill its mission to make South Carolina a safer place to live, work and play. The Public Fire Education and Data Management Section within the State Fire Marshal's Office strives to help accomplish this mission through educating every man, woman and child in fire and life safety. One program that may be of particular interest to the South Carolina Child Care Association is the "Freddie" Fire Safety Curriculum.

The "Freddie" program is a comprehensive fire safety curriculum developed to teach children in pre-school through fifth grades important fire prevention and survival skills. The series consists of three curricula, one for pre-school through first grades, one for second and third grades, another for fourth and fifth grades, and comes complete with teacher lesson plans and student activity books. Participating students are learning positive fire safety behaviors that will extend into adulthood. Fire safety behaviors learned through the "Freddie" curriculum have already been attributed to saving lives. Not only do these lessons benefit children and their family now, but behaviors learned at an early age will ultimately have a favorable long-range impact on the fire problem in South Carolina. Since the inception of the "Freddie" curriculum during the 1993-94 school year, fire deaths in children

under the age of ten have dropped to single-digit numbers annually, which is a significant decrease from the 30 to 40 first deaths experienced in this age group prior to its implementation. All teacher and student materials for pre-school through grade five are housed on our website and are available for downloading at: <http://www.llr.state.sc.us/FMARSHAL/SCFIRS/index.asp?file=freddie/main.htm>.

John Reich, South Carolina State Fire Marshall, acknowledges the importance of educating children about fire prevention and survival, but suggests that all citizens be more cognizant of fire safety. "Every home should have a comprehensive fire safety plan that includes: having working smoke alarms, developing and practicing a home emergency escape plan, and installing a residential fire sprinkler system. The combination of fire sprinklers and smoke alarms increase your chances of surviving a fire to 82 percent. Fire sprinkler systems are designed to put the fire out before it can become a threat and is a relatively inexpensive way to provide an even greater safety environment for you and your family," adds Mr. Reich.

For more information concerning fire and life safety education, contact Sondra Senn, at (803) 896-9865 or email to senns@llr.sc.gov.

State Advisory Committee on the Regulation of Childcare Facilities needs qualified people to fill slots...

As many of you know, the terms for most of the members of the State Advisory Committee on the Regulation of Childcare Facilities have expired. This committee has a tremendous impact on licensed and regulated child care facilities and really needs members who are well versed in regulations as well as day to day operations of child care facilities. If you would be interested in serving on this committee, please follow these five steps:

Step One: Write a letter addressed to Governor Mark Sanford in which you explain that you are requesting to be appointed to the committee. In your letter, you should explain how your appointment to the committee would benefit the committee.

Step Two: You need to include your resume with your letter to

Governor Sanford.

Step Three: Send the letter and your resume to the following address: Ms. Lorri King, Governor's Office, Post Office Box 12267, Columbia, SC 29211

Step Four: If you are nominated to the committee, you will receive notification and you will also receive an application for the Board, Commissions and Committees which you will need to complete. It will require you to provide additional information about yourself for the Ethics Commission.

Step Five: You will be notified of your appointment.



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