

Early Care and Education Consortium Newsletter



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You [the early childhood workforce] are all economic development professionals. That should be on your card, in addition to whatever else is on your business card."

*-Lee Fisher, Lt. Governor of Ohio
Remarks made at the PAES National*

Issue 10

August 8, 2008

Greetings!

The Early Care and Education Consortium would like to welcome two new members: the Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies, a non-profit association comprised of over 600 early education and school age centers, and [Teaching Strategies, Inc.](#), an early childhood education publishing company focusing on children birth through age five.

ECEC is a voice for providers. Tell your friends and colleagues they can receive this newsletter too! Go to our website: www.ececonsortium.org.

New on Our Website!

ECEC Launches New Issue Pages

The Early Care and Education Consortium launched new web pages focusing on our four key issue areas: prekindergarten, child care subsidy, quality rating systems, and supporting the early childhood workforce. The pages provide background on the issues, updates, and links to handy relevant news and reports. To explore the new content, visit our "Issue in Focus" page at <http://www.ececonsortium.org/focus.php>.

Tell Us Your Story!

Being an advocate for child care and early education programs is about letting policy-makers know what is truly going on in states and communities through data, reports and facts. It's also about sharing [your real stories](#) about child care: stories from teachers, center directors, and more. As the Early Care and Education Consortium works with legislatures and partners, your stories will help us to ensure good policies are put in place for

*Economic Forum on
Early Childhood
Investment
in Washington, DC,
July 9, 2008*

Quick Links

[Center for the Child
Care Workforce](#)

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programs, families and children.

In the Classroom: Online Learning

As pressure grows to increase standards for early childhood educators, administrators and teaching staff have begun looking to distance learning to improve their education and job opportunities. Distance learning, the delivering of instruction using electronic communications, offers more flexibility and easier access than a traditional classroom setting, especially for those who work long hours and have many responsibilities outside of their work duties.

But where do you even begin the search to find the best program for your needs? What really is available? What setting would you gain the most from? Your employer may have some suggestions or a program or arrangement of their own. And the Center for the Child Care Workforce provides a good overview of the range of programs available. It examined 73 early childhood distance learning programs, including two- and four-year colleges and universities, online colleges, for-profit companies, nonprofit organizations, and multi-site education and care providers. Not every good program is included, but the report is a helpful start. To view the findings, as well as what strategies programs can utilize to help staff make the most of these opportunities, visit http://www.ccw.org/pubs/EC_E_Learning.pdf.

Federal Update

Child and Adult Care Food Program Changes?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), created in 1968 to provide support for healthy meals and snacks served in child care centers and family child care homes, will be up for reauthorization in 2009. In preparation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is holding "listening sessions" across the country to get feedback and proposed recommendations for improving the current program.

The Early Care and Education Consortium and its members are participating in these sessions. To read ECEC's testimony on the CACFP authorization, visit our website at <http://www.ececonsortium.org/federal.php>. For more information on current federal policies and the funding process for FY09, please go to www.ececonsortium.org/

CACFP now serves more than two million children in child care settings each day. ECEC member centers serve at least 107,000 children, five percent of that total, in over 1,330 child care centers. This is just the beginning of the process to make sure

CACFP is the best it can be when the program is renewed next year.

What do you think? Does your center participate in CACFP? Tell us about your experience [here](#). Your stories will help us as we work together as advocates for the program.

Child Care an Economic Issue

The Joint Economic Committee, composed of members from both the House of Representatives and the Senate, convened a hearing on July 23 to examine the impact of rising household costs and stagnant wages on American families in today's uncertain economic climate. Witnesses at the July 23 hearing repeatedly mentioned the rising costs of child care and the increased difficulty families are having in paying for child care on their own when faced with increased costs for other goods and services.

To read testimony from the hearing, [visit](#) the Joint Economic Committee's website.

State Developments

With many states facing tight election races in the fall, and others feeling the effects of the slowing economy, several officials have announced listening tours this summer aimed at hearing constituent concerns. Education is on the forefront of several sessions, including:

Ohio

Governor Ted Strickland's "Conversation on Education", a series of nine regional meetings will continue through September. The Governor stresses the need for a seamless transition from pre-k to elementary school. Governor Strickland kept early childhood programs off the table when the state looked to tighten its belt, and he needs to hear from you about your experiences at the program level. Early childhood educators and those who have direct experience in education are strongly encouraged to attend as the Governor will be discussing education reforms as laid out in his last state of the state address. To learn more about the series, including schedules, visit www.conversationoneducation.org.

Kentucky

Governor Steve Beshears launched his 13-city "Beshear About Kentucky" tour to talk to Kentuckians directly about his goals for the state, specifically concerning education, health care, and economic development. The administration will use the information collected from the meetings to set goals for the state and determine the best approach to achieve these goals. Earlier this year, Kentucky cut deeply into its funding for young

children. This tour is a great time to tell them what this will mean for your centers. To find the meeting nearest you, visit <http://www.governor.ky.gov/townhall.htm>.

Step Up for Kids on September 16!

Every Child Matters, a non-profit, non-partisan organization working to make children, youth, and families a national priority, is hosting a nationwide "Step Up for Kids Day" on September 16. Events will bring together early childhood teachers and directors, volunteers, parents and children on the steps of all 50 state capitol buildings in the hopes of drawing public attention to issues affecting America's children, including early care and education, with the goal of making new investments in children a priority in the 2008 elections. The event will kick-off nationwide in Washington, DC with remarks by famed pediatrician, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton.

Interested in participating in "Step Up for Kids Day"? Find your local event [here](#).

New Resources and Events

Recommended Reading:

NACCRRRA Releases an Update on Child Care Costs

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies has recently released a 2008 update to their report, *Parents and the High Cost of Child Care*. It finds that while the price of high-quality child care is rising as providers struggle with higher costs and increasing expectations, increased state and federal funding in child care could help make access to such programs more of a reality. Click [here](#) to read about your state.

First Focus Releases its 2008 Children's Budget *Children's Budget 2008* provides an in-depth guide to all federal spending on children's programs over the last five years. The report notes that in those five years, funding for children's education and child welfare has declined by double digit numbers, making it all the more vital to make children one of our nation's top priorities. The report is available [here](#).

Events:

Working Forum on Multi-Site Early Childhood Organizations

October 22-24, 2008 in Lihue, Hawaii

The Early Care and Education Consortium, in conjunction with

the World Forum on Early Care and Education, is co-hosting the "Growing with Integrity: Working Forum on Managing Performance in Multi-Site Early Childhood Organizations."

The Forum is expected to bring more than 200 leaders from early childhood organizations together to share ideas on how to grow an organization with integrity. Topics that will be addressed include sustaining quality, workforce development, maintaining organizational culture in changing times, and consistently meeting customer needs and expectations.

Click [here](#) to find out more information on the Working Forum, including how to register.

National Black Child Development Institute's 2008 Annual Conference

October 25-28, 2008 in Atlanta, Georgia

The 2008 Annual Conference will provide over 150 seminars, forums and workshops led by renowned experts on child development issues, centered on the theme "Our Future: Children in a Global Village."

For more information, visit www.nbcdi.org/ac.

National Association for the Education of Young Children's Annual Conference

November 5-8, 2008 in Dallas, Texas

Look for ECEC's session "Child Care Centers Operating State-Funded Prekindergarten Programs: Challenges and Opportunities."

Questions? Concerns?

Contact us with your or feedback or suggestions.

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