



Early Care and Education Consortium Newsletter

March 28, 2008

Issue 6

Greetings!

The Early Care and Education Consortium is a voice for providers. Tell your friends and colleagues they can receive this newsletter too! Go to our website: www.ececonsortium.org. This month's newsletter includes an update on the federal front, a quick look at budget news in the states, and the role of advocates for child care. Be sure to also look through the section of new resources and events.

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"You're the experts – you work with children and policies daily throughout the country." Helen Blank, about child care providers.

ECEC Working for Providers on Capitol Hill: Testimony Before Congressional Committee

Executive Director Eric Karolak testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor on "Investing in Early Education: Paths to Improving Children's Success," on January 23. In holding the hearing, the first in five years, this key House committee signaled a renewed interest in early childhood education and recognized the importance of providers in its decision-making. Karolak emphasized that there are multiple pathways to achieving outcomes for children, but investment needs to occur early. He also advised policymakers on the role of community-based providers and the qualifications of the early childhood workforce.

Providing expert testimony is one of many ways ECEC is the voice for child care providers.

View the [archived hearing](#) and read the [written testimony](#) online.

Federal Funding Update: Child Care Funding Heading in the Right Direction?

Earlier this month, ECEC and partner organizations asked you and thousands of center staff, family child care providers, parents, and child advocates across the country to "march forth" on March 4th in support of increased federal funding for child care and Head Start. It looks like Congress is getting the message!

The Senate and House of Representatives each passed a Budget Resolution, which is not binding, but sets a tone and provides a guide for the Appropriations Committees. There is good news this year!

- The Senate Budget Resolution includes an increase of **\$406 million over current discretionary funding levels for the Child Care & Development Block Grant** and an increase of \$5.4 billion above the President's request for the Department of Education.
- The House Budget Resolution provides \$85.3 billion in discretionary funding for education, training, employment and social services. Early care and education programs fall in this broad category, although the resolution doesn't mention child care.

What happens next? As with any legislation, the House and Senate have to come together to work out the differences between the budget documents and come up with one version so that the appropriations process can continue. ECEC and partners will keep you informed about opportunities to share your stories and participate in action to make child care a federal priority.

State Fiscal Stress Jeopardizes Centers

States across the country are facing budget shortfalls, meaning fewer new initiatives and more calls for program cuts or fiscal restraint. According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\)](#), 21 states face combined deficits of at least \$37 billion for FY 2009, and 17 states have made or proposed cuts to programs. As you well know, child care is often a target for these cuts. In several states, preK funding increases have been scaled back as well.

In California, the Governor called for 10% across the board cuts to try to remedy the \$16 billion budget gap. Several cuts directly impact children in child care. According to the [California Budget Project](#), changes to the CalWORKs program will mean 200,000 fewer children will have access to child care; \$198.9 million would be cut from child development program funding, impacting over [18,000 children](#); and \$59.6 million would be cut from after-school programs.

In Ohio, the alliance of organizations ECEC brought together is preparing for a campaign to address state funding. ECEC is sponsoring regional advocacy training meetings throughout the state in April, through a grant to the Ohio Association of Child Care Providers (OACCP). More information about the training is available on the [OACCP website](#).

In the face of a \$1.2 billion shortfall, Virginia lawmakers scaled back the Governor's \$50 million proposed preK expansion, appropriating \$22 million in additional money. ECEC organized a delegation of center-based providers to meet with budget conferees to support subsidy funding increases and to press for changes to the Virginia Preschool Initiative that would open the program to a more public-private mixed delivery model. Lawmakers agreed to boost child care subsidies through a \$12 million transfer of federal monies - good news for the 2,600 additional families this will help access child care - but enacted few of the policy changes necessary to allow more quality community-based child care centers to deliver preK.

ECEC monitors developments in the states throughout the year. Be sure to check www.ececonsortium.org for updates.

Two New Staff Join ECEC

The Early Care and Education Consortium welcomes two new staff members this month:

Mary Beth Salomone is ECEC Policy Director, responsible for developing and advancing the

Consortium's policy agenda at the state and federal level. Ms. Salomone brings nearly 10 years experience in government affairs and early education public policy, including managing advocacy campaigns, "Day on the Hill" efforts for member groups, and e-Advocacy activities. Ms. Salomone is a graduate of American University and was most recently employed as Senior Policy Manager at NACCRRA.

Jennifer McGuire is Program Associate, responsible for the management of the ECEC Office in Washington, DC and for maintaining the ECEC website, tracking legislation, and researching and developing policy materials. Ms. McGuire is a 2005 graduate of Goucher College and joins us from NAEYC's Office of Policy and Public Affairs.

With Mary Beth and Jennifer on board, ECEC has assembled a top notch team to work for child care and early education providers in states and on Capitol Hill.

Resources and Events

Recommended Reading:

The State of Preschool 2007- State Preschool Yearbook from the National Institute for Early Education Research is now available.

[Read your state's profile or order a free copy online.](#)

Save the Dates:

[Provider Appreciation Day](#) is May 9, 2008!

Pennsylvania Early Childhood Lobby Day is May 13, 2008 in Harrisburg, PA.

ECEC and the National Women's Law Center will co-host the second in a series of conference calls on state-funded preK in child care centers. Join us on May 22, 2008 at 2:00 PM Eastern Time for a discussion of workforce issues. Details will follow.

Conferences:

[2008 TEACH Early Childhood National Conference](#)

April 15-16, 2008

Hear Chip Donohue's keynote address on blending high-tech and high-touch approaches to strengthening the early childhood workforce.

[2008 National Smart Start Conference](#)

May 6-9, 2008

Look for our special 3-hour session on publicly-funded preK in child care centers.

[NAEYC's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development](#)

June 8-11, 2008

Questions? Concerns?

Contact us with your or feedback or suggestions.

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