

AAEYC News

The Austin Association for the Education of Young Children
825 East 53rd 1/2 St.
Austin, TX 78751

Letter from the President by Sue Gartner

Dear Members and Friends of Austin AEYC,

What an exciting Fall for Austin AEYC with the Texas AEYC Conference coming to our own Austin Convention Center. We hope that you all felt inspired and supported as you returned to work. It was very rewarding for AAEYC to provide scholarships for local providers to attend our state conference. For some this was their first state conference.

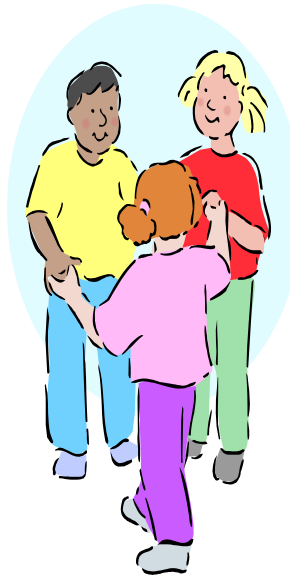
Your Austin AEYC Board is currently planning Spring events. Check the calendar provided in the newsletter and join us as we celebrate our professional achievements at our Awards Reception on Friday April 7th during the Week of the Young Child. Plan to at-

tend the Spring Conference scheduled for May 6th. Both events will move to new locations, so visit our website at www.austinaeyc.org for details.

If you liked the scholarships to TAEYC, you will be happy to hear that we are offering providers an opportunity to apply for free admission to our Spring Conference. Selma Andrewartha will be accepting applications from anyone willing to complete an environmental checklist and make improvements to their learning environments. This is something you do any way, so apply soon for a scholarship to this Austin training and networking opportunity.

Last, but not least, if you would like to enrich your

professional life, we are calling for nominations for new board members. So call or email for more information if you are interested in serving on our board. A very special thank you to each of you for all you are doing to "Build better futures for all children". -Sue Gartner



Winter 2006

Special Point of Interest

AAEYC members - If you are attending any of the following events, consider volunteering an hour of your time to staff the AAEYC information and publications table. We are looking for members to share their positive experiences in the organization with participants at these events.

- Director's Symposium - Thursday-Saturday, March 24 in Round Rock
- Celebration of Families - Saturday, April 1
- AAEYC Conference - Saturday, May 6

Please contact P.D. Jolley (pdjolley@austin.rr.com or 512.447.8973 to volunteer

AAEYC Educational Grant

The Austin Association of the Education of Young Children will award up to five grants to individuals currently employed in the field of Child Development or Early Childhood Education who wish to take a college level course in these fields. Preference is given to members of AAEYC. If you would like to become a member, please call Sue Gartner, 223-5202, or

go online to www.naeyc.org/membership.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Employment in the fields of Child Development or Early Childhood Education for the past six months (caregiver, teacher, social worker, center director, ect.)
2. Plan to enroll in Child Development/Early Childhood Education related course(s) next semester
3. Sign a grant award agreement upon receipt of award, and provide evidence of enrollment and completion of course

To apply for this grant send a completed application with two letters of reference on or before March 1, 2006 to:

AAEYC Awards 2006

Family Connections Resource Center

825 E. 53 1/2 St., Ste. E 10
Austin, TX 78751

Attn: Ginny Braden

AISD Plans to Open Three Pre-K Centers by Jackie Taylor and Jeff Fulwiler

The Austin Independent School District (AISD) has announced a plan to create as many as ten pre-k centers in the next few years and would like to establish at least three such centers for the 2006-07 school year. One proposed center would be located in the north and would accommodate up to 500 children from Wooldridge, McBee, Cook and Walnut Creek Elementary School catchment areas. Another pre-k center would be set up in the south (Becker) that would accommodate about 125 children, and another is being discussed for east

Austin (Oak Springs). AISD has indicated that it presently has no plans to extend eligibility of pre-k programs beyond the current statutory guidelines (essentially, 4-year olds that meet low-income guidelines, have limited English proficiency, or have special needs). If approved, this plan could have a significant impact on the child care programs in the surrounding areas.



The United Way of Austin presented a white paper to the Austin I.S.D. highlighting the strengths of

Success By 6 program and their support of the Texas Early Education Model (TEEM) implementing a mixed delivery model of services. It outlined the components of a “gold standard” high-quality pre-k program, including well-educated teachers, small class sizes, research-based curriculum and focus on the whole child and family. Successful high-quality pre-k programs from other states were examined, including the variety of approaches used to adapt a mixed delivery model to local communities. The final conclusion was the immediate need to incorpo-

rate the community-based pre-k providers into the delivery model for pre-k programming and expand the TEEM approach to service delivery.

The following recommendations were made to AISD:

1. Local Pre-K programs should align with national quality standards.
2. We must be flexible in the approach and realize that “one size does not fit all.”
3. The use of Pilot programs (if considered) should be held accountable to the community.
4. Some portion of pre-k should be provided in full-day, full-care settings to meet the needs of working families.
5. There must be a collaborative approach with local child care pro-

viders in both service delivery and professional development.

6. Evaluators and specialists must be retained and have proven experience with pre-K programs.

The AAEYC board supports the recommendations made by Success



by 6 and encourages AISD to collaborate with local child care programs who agree to meet the high quality standards that can help children succeed in school.

Jackie L. Taylor

Resource and Retention Specialist
Institute for Child Care Excellence

Editor's Note: Special thanks to UT-Austin Human Development & Family Science major, Elise Angell for this issue's layout. Ms. Angell is interning at WorkSource-CCS.

Cindy Gamez

AAEYC Newsletter Editor

Call for Nominations for AAEYC Board Members by Selma Andrewartha

Austin Association for the Education of Young Children needs your help. For the year 2006-2007, we need new board members. Between now and March 15th, we would like you to search your hearts and decide about committing to an organization dedicated to you and the children of our community.

It is essential that each member of AAEYC recognize that the Board is working diligently and with considerable focus to strengthen the organization's activities and services. Just as importantly, we are monitoring our progress through our calendar of events and enhanced liaison roles. Not only do we offer and prepare for a Spring Conference, we also reach out to centers and their directors to help them with understanding the accreditation process. Furthermore, we work with other agencies in our community to promote

awareness of young children's and teacher's issues. It is the promise of the Board and certainly those of the future to determine which activities are consistent with AAEYC's mission and to continually assess their effectiveness. We encourage all members to anticipate and support professionalism at all levels of activity and engagement with the AAEYC.

The current Board is looking for new members who possess the following:

- ✦ Ability to: listen and work well with people individually and in a group.
- ✦ Willing to: prepare for and attend board and committee meetings.
- ✦ Possess: honesty, sensitivity and openness to different points of view.

If you feel that you or someone you know would be willing to commit to the AAEYC Board, please contact Selma Andrewartha at

(512) 478-5725 x 207 or look for our nomination form online at www.AustinaeYC.org.



Your Voice Counts! by Jackie Taylor

advocacy : active verbal support for a cause or position

Welcome to 2006! It's time for new year resolutions, and, since it's an election year, we have the perfect suggestion for all our compatriots in the child care industry.

Become an advocate for the children of Texas! How, you might ask, can I advocate on behalf of higher wages for myself, and for more funding to early care and education?

First: Get the phone number or email address of your state representative. To find out who represents you, go to <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us> and search by your zip code. Find out what their positions are on the issues facing the child care profession, and argue in support of your position if you don't agree.

Second: **KNOW** the issues facing our profession, our parents and our children. To receive regular updates of

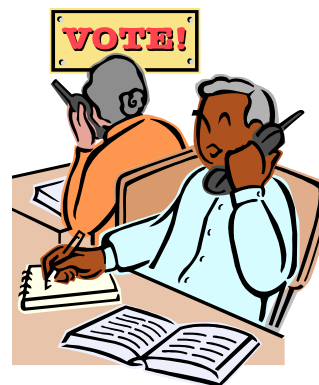
what is happening in Washington DC concerning children, log on to the Children's Defense Fund at

<http://www.childrensdefense.org> and join the "Leave No Child Behind" Movement. For update on state happenings, sign up for regular emails from the Texas Early Care and Education Coalition at www.tecec.org.

Third: Share personal stories with your representatives, illustrating your points. Share stories of your families who may be struggling to live on minimum wage. Share your own stories of trying to make ends meet. Write a letter to the editor or your local paper outlining the importance of high-quality child care. Speak to your local groups about the needs and advantages of providing that level of child care in your community.

Finally, the most important thing you must do is **VOTE !!!!** Your vote matters and your voice counts, and, when we join our voices together, the resulting roar will be clear and strong, impossible for the Capitol to ignore. To register to vote, call 1-800-252-VOTE (8683).

Funds for services that provide critical support for our nation's children are about to be slashed at the national level. If we all contacted our senators now, we could help stop these cuts. We must come together, **NOW**, to make sure our children have what they need to succeed in school and in life. It all starts when they are with us, in our care. Know your candidates, and know where they stand on the vital issues confronting child care professionals. Then, vote your conscience - and your vote **WILL** make a difference!



**The Austin Association
for the Education of
Young Children
825 East 53rd 1/2 St.
Austin, TX 78751**

Proud to be a local affiliate of
NAEYC
www.austinaeYC.org

Calendar of Events 2005-2006

2006

- 01/09 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 02/13 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 03/2-03/04 Directors' Symposium—Round Rock, TX (Wingate Hotel/
Williamson Co. Conference Center)
- 03/06 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 04/01 Celebration of Families
- 04/03 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 04/02-04/08 Week of the Young Child
- 04/07 Week of the Young Child Awards Reception
- 05/06 AAEYC Spring Conference
- 05/08 AAEYC Board Meeting
- Dates are subject to change.
- If you are interested in attending a board meeting or volunteer opportunities with the AAEYC board, please log on to our website (www.austinaeYC.org) or contact us for further information.
Sue Gartner: 223-5202 or sgartner@austin.rr.com.

