

2008 Annual Report

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.



CHILDREN... THE HEART OF THE MATTER
© 1988 NAEYC
Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.
An affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Strengthening and supporting Nebraska's early childhood community since 1976

Original art provided by children in T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA scholarship recipient classrooms

*To the members, friends and supporters of the
Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.*

*We are pleased to provide this report and
hope it will be of interest to you.*

*This past year has been a year of accomplishments and growth, as we added new projects and
continued to provide high quality in all of our programs and services.*

*We continue to direct our efforts and resources toward strengthening and supporting the early
childhood community. Early childhood is a critical piece of
Nebraska's infrastructure, and high quality early care and
education is so important for Nebraska's children, families,
communities, and the state.*



Steve Wilson, Board President



Linda Zinke, Executive Director

*If you have any questions, please contact either:
Steve Wilson, 402-654-3318, swilson@esu2.org
Linda Zinke: 402-476-2089, lzinke@NebraskaAEYC.org*

NEBRASKA AEYC

The Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc. is a state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. It began in 1976 and is organized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation which is led by a Board of Directors. Membership is open to anyone interested in supporting and promoting the mission of the organization. The membership fee includes membership in the local, state, regional, and national AEYC organizations.

**NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS JANUARY 1, 2008 - DECEMBER 31, 2008**

Executive Committee

President: Steve Wilson, Superintendent, Logan Valley Schools, Hooper
President Elect: Dawn Mollenkopf, Professor, University of Nebraska at Kearney
Secretary: Pat Enevoldsen, Instructor, Southeast Community College, Lincoln
Treasurer: Linda Sullivan, Finance Manager, Family Services, Lincoln
Public Policy Chair: Sarah Ann Lewis, Attorney, Building Bright Futures, Omaha

Members

Kim Chase, Family Child Care Provider, Papillion
Terrence Coleman, Human Resources, Pay Pal, Omaha
Don George, Director, First National Bank CDC, Omaha
Jennifer Haggart, Coordinator, ECCOA, Omaha
Kim Madsen, Professor, Chadron State College, Chadron
Melva Pavelka, Program Manager, Mid Nebraska Community Services, Kearney
Deb Ross, Director, Child & Family Development Corporation, Hastings
Sue Ellen Wall, Attorney, Wall Law Office, Lincoln
Janeen Ward, Teacher, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln
Jose Zapata, Executive Director, Central Nebraska Community Services, Loup City

STRUCTURE OF NEBRASKA AEYC

Nebraska AEYC is a state affiliate of National AEYC, the largest early childhood association in the world. NeAEYC is structured as follows:

Two local affiliate chapters:

- Lincoln AEYC: 158 members
- Omaha AEYC: 233 members

Small chapters of the Nebraska AEYC:

- Northeast Chapter of Nebraska AEYC: 18 members
- Columbus Chapter of Nebraska AEYC: 14 members
- All Nations Chapter of Nebraska AEYC: 11 members
- Kearney Chapter of Nebraska AEYC: 21 members
- Sarpy/Cass Chapter of Nebraska AEYC: 17 members
- At-large members are unaffiliated with any chapter: 55 members

PROJECTS

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA
- Accreditation Facilitation Project
- Community Services Initiative
- Infant-Toddler Initiative
- Nature Explore™ Project
- Newborn Hearing Aid Loaner Bank fiscal agent
- Quality Enhancement Pilot Project

SERVICES

- Advocacy & Public Awareness
- Annual Report
- Conferences and Conference Support
- Chapter Development and Support
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Staff Support and Training
- State website - www.NebraskaAEYC.org
- Statewide Planning Retreat
- Voice for early childhood
- Week of the Young Child Mini-grants

2008 PLANNING RETREAT

The planning retreat was again held at Mahoney State Park. This was one of the most well attended, with 42 people representing 28 organizations participating.

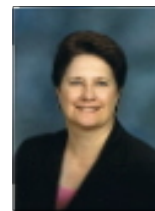
Three teams, a T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA team, an Advocacy/Public Awareness team, and a Quality Initiatives team met and developed goals, including:

- Creating a common message for public education,
- Working together to develop a legislative sequence for early childhood support,
- Exploring other T.E.A.C.H. models to meet the needs of the early childhood workforce,
- Supporting the continuing work on the Quality Ratings System.

2008 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO CHILDREN AWARD



Carol Fichter has been the director of the Early Childhood Training Center for the past 18 years. She has been a long time early childhood leader and advocate. Carol has been instrumental in the work related to early language and literacy and early childhood mental health. She played a key role in the development of Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines and the Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals.



Nancy Rosenow has been director of the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation/ First Plymouth Early Education Programs for 15 years. She is past president of NeAEYC. Nancy has been instrumental in developing the Nature Explore™ Outdoor classrooms and is always on the cutting edge of research that supports our young children in positive ways.

T.E.A.C.H. NEBRASKA STATISTICS

Ethnicity

70% Caucasian
 17% African American
 10% Hispanic
 2% Other

Employment Positions

64.5% Teachers or Teacher Aides
 24.0% Family Child Care Home Providers
 11.3% Directors

Employment Locations

52% For profit
 24% Nonprofit
 15% Head Start
 8% Faith based
 1% Public

Compensation

The average salary increase for teachers was **8%**.

Child Care Subsidy

86% of sponsoring facilities accept Child Care Subsidy.

Turnover Rates

The average turnover rate for T.E.A.C.H. NEBRASKA students is **less than 2%**.

Students Participate in 12-month Contracts

42% 1st contract
 31% 2nd contract
 12% 3rd contract
 8% 4th contract
 4% 5th contract
 2% 6th contract

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

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

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is designed to provide scholarship funds for those working with young children. Each scholarship addresses three key issues facing those in the early care and education field:

- The education level of staff
- High turnover rates
- Low salaries

Nebraska became a T.E.A.C.H. state in 2001, and began providing scholarships in 2002. During 2008, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA served 212 students in 44 counties.

Education

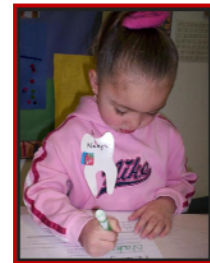
T.E.A.C.H. NEBRASKA offers scholarships for both Associate's Degrees and Bachelor's Degrees.

To help "bridge the gap" between the AAS degree and the university system, students can participate in a BA GAP Model, which allows them to continue at the community college while earning general education credits necessary to register as a junior.

- 85% of the students are participating in the Associates Degree Model
- 15% of the students are participating in Bachelor Degree Gap or Bachelor Degree Model

Students have attended:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Central Community College: | 17.0% |
| Chadron State College: | .5% |
| Metropolitan Community College: | 49.0% |
| Mid-Plains Community College: | 2.8% |
| Northeast Community College: | 2.8% |
| Southeast Community College: | 15.6% |
| University of Nebraska at Kearney: | 8.0% |
| University of Nebraska at Lincoln: | .5% |
| Wayne State College: | 1.0% |
| Western Nebraska Community College: | 2.8% |



Students have earned: **1,364 semester credits**
 (For data purposes, quarter credits are converted to semester credits)

Community College Feedback

This year we began to gather information regarding the effectiveness of T.E.A.C.H. from the Community College Early Childhood Staff. The survey results show 100% of the respondents to find the management of the project to be efficient and professional. All have received information about T.E.A.C.H. outcomes, and all share information about T.E.A.C.H. in their classes.

"We have so many scholarships. This has allowed students who would not have had the resources for college course work to get the needed education."

"I am pleased with all aspects...everything seems to run smoothly."

Student Spotlights

Anna Cain

Anna has operated her family child care home, Anna’s Angels Child Care, since the summer of 2007. Anna has been a participant in T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA for 18 months. She has completed over 34 semester credits and currently has a 4.0 GPA at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha. Anna is shown here with her sons, Nicholas and Christopher.



“The T.E.A.C.H program is very important to me. Personally, I never thought I would be able to go to college so this program has helped me to build self confidence and a pride for what I do. Professionally, I am growing as a teacher. I understand children better as far as why they do the things they do and how I should react to them. Children are only young once and I want to give them the best experiences possible to help them grow into successful adults.”



Rachel Robinson

Rachel is a para educator at Head Start Children and Family Development Program in Hastings. She has completed 6 credits and is currently working on 14 more credits at Central Community College in Hastings. Rachel has a 4.0 GPA and is a member of Phi Theta Kappa.

“If it weren't for the T.E.A.C.H. program, I wouldn't be able to go back to school to finish my degree. I think that it is very important, being a single mother, that I am able to show my daughter that if you put your mind to it, you can accomplish anything. I think this scholarship is important to help people to see that there is a way to get to where you want to be in life, and there are people who will stand behind you every step of the way and help you to achieve your goals. I just want to thank everyone at T.E.A.C.H. and Head Start for giving me the opportunity to continue my education to make a better life not only for myself and my daughter, but for the children and the families whose lives I have touched as a para and whose lives I hope to touch in the future! “

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA Advisory Committee

- Beth Brewer, Metropolitan Community College, Omaha
- Sue Jensen, Health & Human Services Regulation & Licensure, Grand Island
- Crystal Kozak, Southeast Community College, Lincoln
- Diane Lewis, Health & Human Services System, Lincoln
- Paula Thompson, Central Nebraska Community Services, Loup City
- Jeanne Webb, Central Community College, Grand Island
- Kelly Vanness, Platte Valley Early Childhood Training Coalition, Columbus
- Roxanne Vipond, Grand Island Public Schools, Grand Island

FUNDING FOR T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

Nebraska Health and Human Services System
 Nebraska Department of Education
 Lozier Foundation
 Peter Kiewit Foundation
 William and Ruth Scott Foundation
 Private donations

T.E.A.C.H. NEBRASKA SCHOLARS SAY...

“I feel better about myself and the care I give to my daycare children.”

Douglas County - Family Child Care Provider

“Having the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship has given me the means to continue my education. Without it, it would not have been possible.”

Clay County - Teacher Assistant

“College has effected myself and my family in a positive way. It has created educational goals for all of us. No matter how old, learning is fun!”

Lincoln County - Center Director - Owner

“T.E.A.C.H....has been an excellent program in every aspect. It is hard to convey how grateful I am.”

Douglas County - Teacher

“This scholarship has not only given me the means to further my education but also the support and encouragement to finish and excel.”

Cuming County - Teacher Assistant

SPONSORING PROGRAMS SAY...

“I believe that my teachers have greatly benefited from the education they have received.”

Lancaster County - Director

“T.E.A.C.H. has been a great benefit to our center!”

Douglas County - Director

PRECONFERENCE & CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Attendance

- Preconferences: 173
- Conference: 466

Tours

Nature Explore Classroom Tour
Attendance: 82

Exhibitors

22 vendors were selling items

Presenters from

USA:

- Alabama
- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Minnesota
- Nebraska
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Washington, DC

International:

- Hong Kong
- New Zealand
- Scotland
- Taiwan

Celebration of Organizations

A reception was held at the Children's Museum on Friday Evening. Lakeshore donated funds for refreshments.

2008 NeAEYC PRECONFERENCES AND CONFERENCE

Two preconferences were held on Thursday, July 24, 2008: A Kindergarten preconference in Lincoln at the Embassy Suites, and the Learning With Nature preconference in Nebraska City at the Lied Lodge. The conference was held on Friday, July 25th and Saturday, July 26th at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln.



Pam Schiller

Dr. Pam Schiller, Cypress, Texas provided two session for the Kindergarten Preconference on *Turning Research into Practice*

Quote from Conference Evaluations:

"This has been a great conference, nice choice of sessions."

International Team

An international team provided three sessions for the Learning with Nature preconference in Nebraska City:

- Using Nature to Support Learning Across the Curriculum;
- Family Involvement Activities for Helping Children Connect with Nature; and
- Creating Outdoor Spaces that Support Learning with Nature



Rob & Toni Christie

Rob and Toni Christie founded ChildSpace Early Learning Centres and the Childspace Early Childhood Institute in Wellington, New Zealand. Rob and Toni opened the conference with their keynote presentation, *For the Love of Nature: Building an Early Childhood Playground in 10 Days.*

Clare Warden

Clare Warden of Strathshire, Scotland is an educational consultant, author, and the founder of Mindstretchers, a project exploring learning in outdoor spaces in Scotland. Claire provided Saturday's keynote on *Consulting Children.*



Quotes from Conference Evaluations:

"Enjoyed hearing speakers from around the world."

"Great speakers—keynote was superb!"

ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALES/QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

ERS: The Environment Rating Scales were designed to assess process quality in an early childhood group. The setting is evaluated in the following areas:

- Space & Furnishings,
- Personal Care Routines,
- Language & Reasoning,
- Activities,
- Interaction,
- Program Structure, &
- Parents and Staff

The scales are administered by a trained, objective observer.

QEP: The goal of the QEP project is to positively impact the quality of centers and family child care homes through pre and post assessment using the Environment Rating Scale, coaching, support, training and supplies. Areas with lower scores in the pre-assessment are targeted for support. Data for Family Child Care Providers for Year 3 of this project shows the following for the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scales (FCCERS):

Total Scores: Pre-FCCERS to Post-FCCERS: 36.3% increase

Target Scores: Pre-FCCERS to Post-FCCERS: 57% increase

The areas with the lowest initial scores and greatest need for support were: Space & Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, and Activities.

NATURE EXPLORE™ PROJECTS

During 2008, one of the goals of this project has been to continue to develop a consistent process and system, based on the feedback and evaluation of the existing locations. Funding is still an issue, and classroom development occurs more in the spring and summer than in the winter.



NeAEYC continues to contact sites and gather information about challenges and successes, as well as provide training to existing and potential sites.

ADVOCACY/PUBLIC EDUCATION

During this election year, NeAEYC provided information about the state and national candidate’s websites and about how to register to vote. They encouraged the early childhood community to carefully consider the positions of the candidates and to vote.

Information was available on the website and in the newsletter. A special flyer was mailed in October with additional candidate information. Newly elected state senators were sent a letter of welcome, and we began the Children’s Art project (examples on covers). We are using these unique drawings to remind legislators to remember the children during their decision making processes.

NAEYC ACCREDITATION

Nebraska AEYC continues to provide support for programs working toward accreditation. A Special Projects Coordinator is available to visit programs to provide one on one support. This has become more important due to NAEYC restructuring, and many previously accredited centers are struggling to remain accredited.

A third retreat was held at Mahoney State Park in April, 2008. The focus of this retreat was Classroom Portfolios.

NeAEYC INFORMATION

Website Data

Average visits PER MONTH: **1,372**

Most visited pages:

- T.E.A.C.H.
- Calendar
- Professional Development

of Environment Ratings Scales completed through QEP or by NeAEYC staff during 2008:

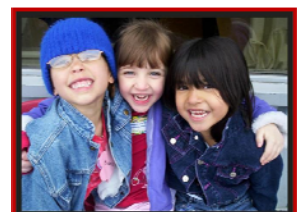
90 combined ECERS, FCCERS, & ITERS

of Accredited Centers in Nebraska:

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| 2007: | 112 |
| 2008: | 87 |
| 2/20/09: | 69 |
| 38% decrease | |

Week of the Young Child Table Tents:

3,600 table tents were distributed across Nebraska to recognize the Week of the Young Child, April 13-19, 2008. This was a partnership with the Regional Training Coalitions.





NEBRASKA AEYC STAFF

Gina DeFreece, Special Projects Coordinator: gdefreece@hotmail.com, 402-476-5672
 Connie Fishburn, Office Assistant: c-fishburn@hotmail.com, 402-476-5663
 Tracy Gordon, Special Projects Coordinator: tgordon@NebraskaAIEYC.org, 402-476-5662
 Pat Hoffschneider, Office Manager: phoff44@hotmail.com, 402-476-2092
 Cindy Jennett, Special Projects Coordinator: cindyjennett11@aol.com, 402-476-5653
 Brandee Lengel, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA Coordinator: TEACH@NebraskaAIEYC.org, 402-476-5668
 Linda Zinke, Executive Director: lzinke@NebraskaAIEYC.org, 402-476-2089

FAX: 402-476-5665



www.NebraskaAIEYC.org