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Professional Development Initiative Update

Thanks to funding provided by the Cooper Foundation, the Professional Development Initiative Project enhanced the professional training of four early childhood teachers and improved the care and education of numerous children in four Waco child care centers.



The participating teachers have completed their CDA coursework and will soon be submitting their application for their CDA accreditation.

Now in the final phase of the project, the teachers are waiting for new furnishings and materials to arrive to further enhance the learning environments for the children in their classrooms.

Scholarship and Training Update

Since January, 40 scholarships have been awarded to child care center staff studying early education and child development at McLennan Community College and Hill College. These scholarships are funded through a partnership with the Heart of Texas Workforce Board. Scholarship recipients typically work forty hours a week and attend classes in the evening. It takes diligence and personal sacrifice to keep up the pace.

In addition 113 child care staff have attended Smart Start's bimonthly CPR and First Aid training certification training.

Finally, 148 child care staff have attended Smart Start trainings on such topics as SIDS, shaken baby syndrome, infant brain development, curriculum development, and sign language to meet and/or exceed the licensing requirements for training.

Early childhood teachers and their directors work hand in hand to meet the needs of children all across our region. Smart Start commends the hard work and sacrifices made to help families and enrich the lives of children!

Membership Benefits

The Smart Start Lending Library is available to all member centers and includes videos that can be used for staff training, activity books to offer suggestions for lesson planning, prop boxes, books, and toys. These materials may be checked out for one month at a time. We ask that toys be sanitized before they are returned. We invite you to visit the Workforce Center Playroom to see our library.

In addition to the lending library, the laminator is available for use. The library is available by appointment Monday-Friday from noon to 4 p.m. Please call a day in advance to make an appointment.

Other membership benefits include monthly training opportunities. Discounts are available through CD Harnett food

distributor, Kaplan, and Draft Pay. After one year of membership providers have the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors.

By far the greatest benefit of membership in Smart Start is the opportunity to meet and work with other directors. Knowing and growing with other directors strengthens the child care profession resulting in better care and education for young children.

Director's Training August 26

As a follow up to the very successful Director's Symposium in February, the Heart of Texas Workforce Board, Child Care Services, and Smart Start are thrilled to bring directors another incredible management training opportunity.

Dr. Bill Crawford Ph.D., our keynote speaker, will share his unique philosophy for success that can be applied to leadership, communication, motivating ourselves and others, productivity, training and keeping good employees. He is the author of several books, is featured in two PBS specials, and is certain to motivate and inspire you.

Gina Day, TEA, will also present on School Readiness Integration. If your school district is receiving Pre-K Expansion dollars you need to know about the new requirements to partner with child care centers and Head Start in the 07'-08' school year. Sign up for this training and the CIRCLE training so you will be ready to participate in the integration plans.

School districts must have a plan in place by **September 1, 2006** so call your school district today to ask about their plan.

CIRCLE Training

BEST TRAINING OF THE YEAR!

Smart Start has contracted with The University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston to send two trainers from their *Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education* ("CIRCLE") for two days of teacher training. The training will be September 15 and 16, 2006 at the HOT Workforce Center located at 1416 S. New Road.

CIRCLE offers face to face training by certified trainers. The training is based on the most recent scientific research and meets the needs of adult learners. The training is interactive and provide fun hands on activities. Upon return to classrooms, participants have a deeper understanding of early literacy development and a wealth of ideas for implementation.

This training is vital to the integration of community based child care centers with local school districts to meet school readiness requirements for all pre-K children by the 07'-08' school year.

The cost for sixteen hours of training is \$80.00. Each participant will receive a **free** training manual and a classroom enhancement package worth over \$100.00.

Scholarships for this training are available upon request and will be awarded according to need. The deadline for scholarship applications is August 30. Applications may be picked up or call 296-5274 for one to be faxed to you. Registration is limited to the first 70 participants.

Board Positions

The nominating committee, chaired by Jan Robbins, Board President, will be seeking to fill positions for 2007. If you have been a member in good standing for one year, you are eligible to serve on the board. Board members meet by-monthly to make decisions for the association. Without board members, there can be no association.

Please consider serving on the Smart Start Board. Talk with current or former board members to understand what is expected, or call the Smart Start office for more information.

By-Law Change August Membership Meeting

In December of 2004, the Board approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee to allow a community member with interest and knowledge of the child care field to serve as president of Smart Start. Currently, the position of president is reserved for child care center directors only. According to our by-laws, this change requires a membership vote.

On August 16 all members are requested to attend the regularly scheduled meeting to hear more about this recommendation and to cast their vote on this issue.

Melba Bunch, from Region 12 Service Center will be the quest speaker. She will be speaking on the importance of CIRCLE Training and the Texas Early Education Model project. The meeting will take place at 11:30 in room 100 at the HOT Workforce Center. Lunch will be provided \$6.00 per person or feel free to bring your own lunch.

Announcing the



Gerri Carey Scholarship Fund

Gerri was a leader and visionary in her work to improve the lives of young children in group care. She worked diligently and tirelessly as the head of the Child Development Department at MCC. May brought her quiet departure into retirement. Just like she wanted!

Smart Start would like to convey our deep appreciation for her many years of service and dedication to our child care community. She served as a board member of Smart Start for many years. Countless providers have benefited from her knowledge and leadership in the child care industry. Ms. Carey, you will be missed!

A scholarship fund has been set up through the MCC Foundation office in honor of Ms. Carey. If you would like to show your appreciation and continue her legacy, you can do so by contributing to this fund. For more information please call Mr. Harry Harelik at 299-8606.

2006

Smart Start Board of Directors

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Treasurer—Mary Needler, CPA, Waco.
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Louise Gillum—Living Word Christian Day Care
Pattie Herbert—Miss Pattie's Little Place
David Litke, Waco-McLennan Public Health District
Smantha Ramsey—First United Methodist, Clifton

Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
August 12	CPR & First Aid Training	6:00-9:30 p.m.	HOT Workforce Center
August 16	Membership Meeting/Melba Bunch	11:30 am-1:30 pm	HOT Workforce Center
August 16	Scholarship Registration	4:30-6:30 pm	MCC CSC Building
August 22	CPR & First Aid Training	6:00-9:30 pm	HOT Workforce Center
August 26	Director's Training w/Bill Crawford	8:00 am-2:00 pm	HOT Workforce Center

If you have an event you would like mentioned in our newsletter, please call the Smart Start office.

Smart Start Child Care Association
1416 S. New Road
Waco, TX 76711
(254) 296-5472
smartstart01@hotworkforce.com
www.smartstart-waco.org