

Our Mission: To promote, support and advocate excellence in child care programs throughout the Heart of Texas.

Special points of interest:

- Touchpoints Training
- ITERS & ECERS Project
- Focus Groups
- New Board President

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Pam McPeak Commitment to Quality Award

Thirteen years ago a group of child care directors were led by an incredible individual who saw the importance of networking and supporting each other as they worked in child care. Pam McPeak and her husband Tom were in the trenches trying to make a go of the Child Care Business. Pam took the lead and challenge in developing the McLennan County Child Care Association in 1996. In 2000, the name was changed to Smart Start Child Care Association. The Association has been sustained through grants, training fees, collaborations with Workforce Solutions Child Care Services,

TWC Local Match funds, local foundations and membership donations. The "Commitment to Quality Award" was created to honor a director each year who is committed to raising the quality of care and provide the best possible learning environment. To inaugurate

this annual award, this year was presented to Pam McPeak at the annual Provider Banquet in December for her outstanding contribution to the Association. Each year, a director will be selected who shows commitment to raising the quality of care in her honor.

Criteria to qualify for this award will include: TRS Provider, educational levels of lead teachers, participation in professional development opportunities, mentoring program, and use of ITERS & ECERS Environmental Rating Scales and Best Practices.



Congratulations Pam and Thank you for your Vision!

DIRECTOR FOCUS GROUPS

Director Focus Groups will begin in February for anyone who is interested in meeting once a month with their colleagues to discuss topics that are important in the development and support of their programs. Each group will set their own meeting schedule, length of the meeting, and place to convene. The purpose is to create networking cells within

the early childhood field in our community that support and advocate excellence in early childhood programs. The focus groups are open to licensed group home or center directors that will commit to one session each month for eight months. Groups will be limited to ten.

More information will be available in the February calendar

mail out. Please contact the Smart Start office to host or be involved in the Focus Group program. Lunch will be provided and a certificate of completion will be awarded to those attending.

ITERS & ECERS PROJECT

BEST PRACTICE

Four Centers participated in the pilot project using the ITERS & ECERS Environmental Rating Scales. Each center was evaluated and given ideas for improvement to raise their baseline scores. All four centers moved their scores at least two levels in areas that needed improvement. Directors and mentors worked together to decide how needed changes could be accomplished in a cost effect manor. Each center received \$1500 towards the purchase of equipment to make the improvements through Heart of Texas Workforce Solutions Child Care Services. After the

changes were made in the evaluated classrooms, caregivers and directors noticed remarkable improvements in the climate of the classroom, flow of activity in centers, satisfaction of parents, and increased professional attitude from all staff. One director mentioned that the process that took place in one classroom was contagious and caused a ripple effect throughout the center. Another ITERS & ECERS training will be held on February 26 & 27 for directors, assistant directors, and staff who have received a CDA and have at least two years of experience in the field of Early Child hood. Joan Moreita, from Kaplan Company will be joining us for this two day

event that will include a visit to at least one center, lunch, and a comprehensive study of the use, purpose, and application of the Environmental Rating Scales. The training will be limited to 50 participants, two from each center at a cost of \$40 per person. Register early to reserve your spot for training. Scholarships to reduce the cost are available upon request through Child Care Services. Contact Tamara Carter @ 254-296-5367. Special

Thanks to Waco Foundation for providing the funds for this trainer and opportunity to improve our programs.



The Touchpoints

- Prenatal- The Ideal Baby
- Newborn- The Real Baby
- 3 Week- The Energy Sink
- 6-8 Weeks- The Rewarding Baby
- 4 month- Looking Outward
- 7 Month- Up at Night
- 9 Month- The Pointer
- 12 Month- The Walker
- 15 Month- The Clinger
- 18 Month- Rebel With a Cause
- 2 Year- Getting to "No!"
- 3 Year- "Why?"

TOUCHPOINTS FOR WACO

After two years of meetings, planning sessions, and fund raising, the Touchpoints Coalition produced the Individual Level Training (ILT) for community partners interested in developing a Touchpoints Center in Waco. The Partners included: McLennan Community College, EOAC Early Headstart, Avance' Waco, Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center, HOT Region MHMR-Klaris Center, Smart Start Child Care Association, Baylor University Family and Consumer Science Dept., Waco Foundation, Talitha Koum, Workforce Solutions Board, Little People's Learning

Center, and individuals: Pam McPeak; Dr. Elizabeth Turnage; Dr. Keith Warren; Pamela Markum; Kathy Talbert; Barbara Crosby; Joyce Nuner; Tyler Horner; Pam Briggs; Emily Stottlemyre; Paula Eades; and Janie Hilliard. The training was conducted November 10-12, 2008 and led by an Outstanding Touchpoints team that included the State Touchpoints coordinator, Mindy May who has become our dearest friend as we have traveled this journey into the Brazelton Touchpoints Training System and Dr. Brazelton's approach with parents of children zero-to three

years of age. The sessions lasted eight hours for each day of training and included many hands-on- opportunities to use the Touchpoints methods. The next step is to send three of these who have attended the ILT to the week long training in Boston in June, in order to have trainers in our area that can work with the community. Donations to support this project can be sent to the Smart Start Office designated for Touch Points Boston or you may contact Joyce Nuner at 254-710-6263.

AFFILIATE BENEFITS



In December of 2009, the Smart Start Membership voted to adopt the revised by-laws and to allow directors to become affiliates of the Association. Affiliate benefits include: on-line directory @ www.smartstart-waco.org.; Kaplan Early Learning Company discount @ 17%; CD

Hartnett food distributor-10%; Oak Farms Dairy-11%. Participation in scholarship program; Reduced training fees at comprehensive levels

The Smart Start office is also working on an agreement with Lake Shore Learning materials for a discount on their catalog

merchandise. To be eligible, must be licensed group home or center within Bosque, McLennan, Falls, Hill, Limestone, or Freestone counties. Download form and mail in to become an affiliate or contact Kathy Talbert @ 254-296-5274.

Cultural Arts Festival–Caterpillar Project

The Waco Cultural Arts Festival (CAF) Coordinator, Doreen Ravenscroft and the Smart Start Projects Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, money, and energy to a wonderful festival in 2009. The “children’s zone” was highly successful due to the dedication and efforts of so many providers and volunteers. 800 books were distributed through the Heart of Texas Workforce Solution Board and countless creative moments were captured in the minds of

young children and their families over the two day event. The collaboration with CAF and Smart Start also included McLennan Community College Art Department. Under the direction of Mike Maguire, the students fashioned a marvelous caterpillar sculpture for children to paint during the event. It is hoped, that the caterpillar will do some visiting this year with a literacy project that will include

books, storytelling, and hands –on learning for young children in child care settings throughout the community. The caterpillar was chosen as a model to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Eric Carl’s, *“The Very Hungry Caterpillar.”* Mark your calendar for this year’s event to be held in Indian Springs Park on September 18 and 19.



2009 at a Glance

Membership—45 Members

19 Training Sessions with a total number of 57 training hours provided to 915 teachers/directors

272 Certifications in CPR & First Aid

80 Scholarship Awards provided through Smart Start Local Match Funds and Child Care Services Collaboration to

McLennan Community College

Added Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS) and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS) and the Revised Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) book as a quality tools to providers.

Collaborated with Touchpoints Coalition, McLennan Community College,

Workforce Solutions Child Care Services, Piper Center for Child and Family Studies at Baylor University, Region 12 Education Service Center, Kaplan Company and Heart of Texas Workforce Center and Waco Cultural Arts Festival.

Generous program and professional support was attained from Waco Foundation.

“Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, and skillful execution. It represents the wise choice of many alternatives!”

-Will Foster

Board Retreat

The annual board of Directors Retreat is scheduled for January 23rd from 8:30-2:30 at the Workforce Center. Mathew Wright, Attorney and Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations for Scott & White Health Science

Center, will be conducting a two hour training session on board responsibilities and commitments. The remainder of time will be dedicated to program development and planning. All board members are reminded to

bring their board notebooks in order to update material for the coming year. Lunch will be provided.





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Welcome....



The Smart Start Board would like to welcome Daniel Sedillo as incoming President of the Association. His work with Kids and Company began in 2006 and he took the director position at the Edna site in August of 2008. Daniel was born and raised in Waco, Texas and graduated from Connally ISD in 1982. He received his Associates of

Arts Degree in 2007. He and his wife Toni have three beautiful daughters; Racquel who is a sophomore at Texas State, Priscilla who is a freshman at Texas A&M, and Deseray, who is a graduate of Tarleton State University.

2010 Board

Directors

President: Danny Sedillo, Kids & Company- Edna
Vice President: Pam McPeak, Little People's Learning Center
Secretary: Pattie Herbert, Infants 1-2-3
Treasurer: Rose McKown, Columbus Avenue Child Development Center
Jane Schornack, Miss Jane's Pre-school

Community Members

Rick Allen, Rapoport Academy
Tamara Carter, Child Care Services
Sonia Jones, EOAC Headstart
Joyce Nuner, Baylor Family & Consumer Science
Jerry Dyer, Dyer Paint Contracting
Carol Jo Mize, Vice Principle- University High School