



SAEYC NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2008 Edition

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Message From Your President

It's hard to believe that Election Day 2008 has come and gone! What's even more difficult to believe is that we have all experienced history in the making. Regardless of who you voted for, you can tell your grandchildren or great grandchildren, that you experienced "the Election of 2008". Perhaps you have the front page of your local newspaper dated November 5, 2008, perhaps you have a campaign button, bumper sticker, or yard sign supporting your candidate of choice - whatever you have, keep it as a reminder of this historic event!

As we move forward with a new President at the helm, I can't help but hope that we pull-together as a country and stand behind Barack Obama as he works for all of us. As I watched his acceptance speech late on the night of November 4th, I couldn't help but feel hope for a better tomorrow for all of us as I saw the faces in the crowd - young and old, Caucasian, African-American, Asian, and Hispanic, men and women of all sizes, shapes and colors; a true representation of our country.

As our new President takes office, we cannot forget that we need to "hold him to his word" - to support early childhood education. We must continue to be the voices for the profession and for the children that we serve. I can't help but be reminded again of the importance of an old African saying: "*It takes a village to raise a child*" - in this case, the biggest village of all - the United States.

Pat Gridley

Scholarship Assistance Help

The NAEYC offers needs-based scholarships to assist programs with the accreditation process. To learn more about the scholarships, visit the NAEYC website at: www.naeyc.org/academy. On that page click "Information for Programs" (left side column); then click "Fees". At the bottom of the "Accreditation Fee Structure" box click "Needs-Based Scholarship" to obtain scholarship info and application process.

For an update on Accreditation and information about TORCH see page 2 of this newsletter.



Reminder that SAEYC also offers scholarship money to members pursuing a degree in early care and education. You must submit an application by December 31st for spring 2009 or by July 31st for fall 2009.

For information and an application go to our website at: www.saeyc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Utica Conference**Date:** February 28, 2009 (Saturday)**Location:** Mohawk Valley Community College**Registration:** 8:30 am**Lunch:** 12:00 pm**4 Workshop Sessions:** Topics TBA**Cost:** SAEYC Members - Free (membership # required)
Student & Non-Member fees TBA

Make sure your membership is current so you can take advantage of this FREE membership benefit to attend our Early Childhood Education Conference. Training topics are always on target. Be looking for your flyer and enroll early.



PAST EVENT UPDATES

If you missed our Stone Soup Supper on September 23rd or our Growing Together Conference on October 19th here are some highlights.

Stone Soup Supper had approximately 60 attendees. The food was the rave. Members expressed their appreciation for being able to take advantage of this enjoyable event for FREE.

Growing Together Conference held on October 19th was another FREE membership benefit training. We had approximately 80 attendees in which 24 members took advantage of attending for FREE. Everyone expressed how great this conference was.



OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

Child Care Center Management Training

The New York State Child Care Coordinating Council offers management training for Directors of Child Care Centers. They also offer a "New Director's Institute" designed specifically for new Directors. The workshops and institutes are available in various locations throughout the State and are available at no charge.

Visit their website at: www.nyscccc.org for a complete schedule for the balance of 2008. The 2009 schedule will be available in March 2009.

Accreditation Update

September 16th marked the two year anniversary of the revised system of NAEYC Accreditation for Early Childhood Programs. During those first two years the Academy asked for feedback from programs applying under the new system. There have been some revisions which will make it much easier for those of you now considering applying. As a Director who was one of the first to go through the new process, I am thrilled that the Academy listened to our comments and concerns. The process is now more streamlined, and the self study kit has been updated to reflect the changes.

In an effort to support quality improvement through NAEYC Accreditation the Academy has just announced the launch of their TORCH (The Online Resource Center Headquarters) site. The development of this site was in response to requests for the ability to more easily access all of the information about NAEYC Accreditation.

TORCH includes resources for early childhood programs in all steps of the accreditation process. On this site you can:

- Search for criteria, FAQ's and additional resources by keyword
- View a calendar of important NAEYC due dates and chart your own due dates on a personalized calendar
- Access valuable NAEYC resources and links to other helpful websites
- Submit questions directly to the NAEYC Academy Information Center

For more information about this site visit: www.naeyc.org/selfstudy/.

You can access TORCH by the following:

1. Go to <http://lms.naeyc.org/iCohere/torch>.
2. Enter Login ID: naeyc; Password: naeyc.
3. Click the triangle beside the password box to see "Welcome to TORCH" and the NAEYC Accreditation logo. Click the triangle button to continue.
4. Enter your new individual Login ID. Click the triangle button to continue.
5. Select your time zone using the drop-down box. Click the triangle button to continue.
6. Change your password. Click the triangle button to continue.
7. Enter your profile information. Click the triangle button to submit.

Use your new Login ID and password next time you log in.

Children and Play

When I tour visitors at Jowonio, I am often struck by the fact that each classroom has a unique look; this “personality” of the room is expressed in its materials and furniture and how they are arranged, in addition to the force of the human beings who populate it. The early childhood environment, as those working in Reggio Emilia programs say, is the “third teacher”. Environments, both indoor and outdoor, have a significant impact on the quality of life for children and adults; they convey messages that express welcome, warmth, inclusion, beauty, permission to be actively involved. A classroom can be an accumulation of hard surfaces, primary colors, plastic and commercial images; or it can offer soft spaces, the language of children’s expressive work and the shades and textures of nature. Space can be boring or it can beckon a child to appreciate, create, imagine, explore, ask questions, and solve problems.

Transforming how we think of children’s places can be an exciting process, starting with reflection about our values and how we want our children and families to experience their time with us. There are two books that I have found inspirational in the process of rethinking both our indoor and outdoor environments. *Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments* by Deb Curtis and Margie Carter (Redleaf Press) walks us through the process of identifying our vision and then, through hundreds of beautiful photographs from child care settings across the country, gives us ideas about ways to organize and enrich our space and create inviting activities, without shopping through early childhood catalogs. This book has so many ideas and resources included, that I would want it to be available to every teacher. Curtis and Carter also have a CD presentation (using PowerPoint) entitled *A Study of Early Childhood Program Environments*, which can also be purchased through Redleaf Press. It is a study guide to identify concepts about transforming your setting and has many beautiful images as well.

The second book that should be available to early childhood staff is *Natural Playscapes: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for the Soul* by Rusty Keeler (Exchange Press). Rusty is from the Ithaca area and his career has involved creating outdoor playspaces for children around the world. His work is part of the movement to develop natural “playscapes”, rather than a world of fixed metal and plastic structures so much a part of the playgrounds of our day. Recent studies show the importance for children of access to the natural world (see Richard Louv’s book *Last Child in the Woods*); we need to provide opportunities for

sensory experiences (look, touch, smell, listen) and motor activities (to hike, run, climb, dig). Natural playscapes let us learn about seasons, the animals and plants in our neighborhood, and the ways we can become caretakers of our world. The photographs in this book are incredible; they immediately got me thinking about ways to change and add to our outdoor space ... whether creating hideouts, setting up musical “soundscapes”, planting a butterfly garden, expanding a sand area and the “loose parts” that go with it; making a stage for outdoor including the community-build process to involve many in the planning, funding and implementing of a natural playscape at your site. You can check out Rusty Keeler’s website at: www.earthplay.net to get more ideas.

Inspiration comes to us in a number of ways ... and for me, it can be visiting other programs (or even our own creative classrooms). It can be looking at books and websites that show us what others have done. These two books are joyous and can start you on a journey to rethinking your environments for children, inside and out!

Ellen Barnes, Jowonio School



Every child should have mud pies,
grasshoppers, water bugs, tadpoles,
frogs, mud turtles, elderberries, wild
strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb.

Brooks to wade, water lilies, woodchucks,
bats, bees, butterflies, animals to pet,
hay fields, pinecones, rocks to roll, sand,
snakes, huckleberries and hornets;
and any child who has been deprived of these
has been deprived of the best part of education.

- Luther Burbank



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SAEYC New Members

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Ava

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Mission Statement

The New York State and Syracuse Associations for the Education of Young Children support the development of professionals to promote quality care and education for the well-being of all young children and their families.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the SAEYC is to serve and act on the behalf of the needs and rights of young children in focusing on the provisions of educational services and resources in adults who work with and for children from birth to age 8.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Upstate Child Care Center
 for receiving notification of their
 re-accreditation through NAEYC.

They received very high scores and are proud
 to have earned this accomplishment while in
 the process of moving to their new location!

