

Early Childhood News

An Electronic Publication for Early Childhood Professionals in North Carolina

August 2006

The North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development was established in 1993 to define and advocate for a statewide, comprehensive professional development system.

Members of the Institute have worked to ensure that supportive, accessible and individually appropriate education is available to the child care workforce in NC

The overriding premise is that teacher education should be linked to compensation to ensure high quality early childhood services for children and families.

Institute members are volunteers from child care programs as well as agencies and institutions that provide support to the child care workforce.

Work groups include:

- Compensation & Education
- Leadership & Mentoring
- Professional Development Infrastructure Coordination
- Regulations and Standards
- Public Awareness

Congratulations!

NC Early Childhood Associate Degree Programs to Earn NAEYC Accreditation

Three North Carolina community colleges are among the first cohort of colleges to be accredited using the Early Childhood Associate Degree Program standards by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Davidson County Community College (DCCC), Mitchell Community College (MCC), and Sandhills Community College (SCC) were included in the first group of five programs to be accredited. The programs were recognized in early June at a Professional Development Conference sponsored by NAEYC in San Antonio, Texas.

These five programs were part of the first cohort of sixty programs in six states that field tested the system materials in 2004 and 2005. Field testing concluded with the first Peer Review site visits and Commission decisions in spring 2006. The states that participated in addition to NC included Arkansas, Illinois (the City Colleges of Chicago), Maryland, Massachusetts, and South Carolina.

The faculty of the three NC colleges who were accredited are all extremely proud of this accomplishment. The groups, led by Judy Zimmerman at DCCC, Dede Dunst at MCC, and Ronda Hawkins at SCC, went through an intensive self-study and closely examined what they teach, why they teach it, and how they know that the students have learned.

The NAEYC early childhood associate degree accreditation system sets a standard of excellence for early childhood programs that prepare teachers at the associate degree level. The process of submission includes a self-study report, a site visit conducted by a peer review team, and an accreditation decision made by a national committee of early childhood professionals.

The NAEYC associate degree standards are based on recent research in early childhood development and learning. The performance-based accreditation standards describe the skills and knowledge of a well-prepared graduate of the associate degree program. Accreditation criteria describe the program's unique context and provide a framework for meeting the standards.



The North Carolina Institute
For Early Childhood
Professional Development

Website Updates

Check out the Institute's website this month. A new section on Leadership and Mentoring has been added. Click the Leadership and Mentoring navigation button.

Visit each section to learn about all the resources.

- The First Step to Leadership - Personal Engagement
- Emerging Leaders
- Advanced Qualities for Early Childhood Education Leadership
- Components in Early Childhood Leadership Systems
- Leadership & Mentorship in Early Childhood Education
- Leadership Courses in Early Childhood Education in North Carolina
- Links for other resources

www.ncchildcare.org

Visit the website of the NC Division of Child Development to view the final revisions to the Star-Rated License.
www.ncchildcare.net

NAEYC is also involved in the accreditation of baccalaureate, master and doctoral early childhood teacher education programs through its affiliation with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The associate degree standards are aligned with the baccalaureate and graduate standards in early childhood teacher education.

At least four additional programs have submitted their self-study to NAEYC and will receive site visits beginning in September 2006. These include Forsyth Technical Community College, Gaston College, Guilford Technical Community College, and Vance-Granville Community College. During the on-site visit members of the peer review team interview students, faculty, advisory committee members, employers in the community, and additional college personnel. A total of twenty community colleges from the North Carolina Community College System are preparing to earn NAEYC accreditation.

According to Dunst at Mitchell Community College, "The self-study made us work on competencies in each of the courses and develop a conceptual framework to go along with our philosophy and mission as a department and as a college. We aligned all of the competencies with NAEYC standards and enhanced our rubrics and aligned those with the standards and the supportive skills. . . . We held more than the usual two-a-year advisory council meetings and many more adjunct faculty meetings, and communicated more with the Institutional Effectiveness Department and student services offices."

Dunst added that information that was collected also helped them identify the programs strengths and weaknesses. "It made me reflect on the direction to go after we got accredited . . . in comparing things to other colleges across the nation – we really do wonderful things in education for our students with what we have."

For additional information about the accreditation program, contact Peggy S. Teague at the NCCCS office (919-807-7122) or teaguep@nccommunitycolleges.edu or go to the NAEYC website at www.naeyc.org.

Leadership Tips

If you are a good teacher you may have some of the skills to be a good leader!
The first step is personal engagement.

Have you ever joined a club or group?

Did you ever write a letter to the editor about an issue that moved you?

Are you a member of a professional organization?

These are the first steps to becoming engaged. First you must begin to feel comfortable becoming involved in things that matter to you. Then you can consider moving into leadership roles. For some it comes more naturally. For others, it takes time to feel comfortable. The first step is becoming personally engaged.

To become engaged, you must consider how to assert yourself. Be bold and step forward to join a professional organization (NCAEYC or NCECA for example), or start by joining the PTA,

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Infant/Toddler Care Certificate

In response to a need expressed by infant and toddler caregivers and the Licensing Section of the NC Division of Child Development, the NC Community College System approved a new program standard, the Infant/Toddler Care Certificate. Colleges across the state are being encouraged to apply to offer this credential and 23 of them have already been approved.

The Infant/Toddler Care Certificate requires 16 credits of college coursework and includes the following courses:

EDU 119 Introduction to Early Childhood Education (or EDU 111 and 112)
 EDU 144 Child Development I (or PSY 244)
 EDU 131 Child, Family, and Community
 EDU 153 Health, Safety, and Nutrition
 EDU 234 Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

The colleges listed below are approved to offer this curriculum:

- Asheville-Buncombe Technical CC
- Bladen Community College
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Brunswick Community College
- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute
- Catawba Valley Community College
- Central Carolina Community College
- Cleveland Community College
- Coastal Carolina Community College
- Craven Community College
- Davidson County Community College
- Durham Technical Community College
- Gaston College
- Johnston Community College
- Mitchell Community College
- Montgomery Community College
- Piedmont Community College
- Richmond Community College
- Rockingham Community College
- Rowan-Cabarrus Community College
- South Piedmont Community College
- Wayne Community College
- Western Piedmont Community College
- Wilson Technical Community College

For more information, contact Peggy Teague at teaguep@nccommunitycolleges.edu.

Leadership Tips, cont'd.

a church group or take part in a neighborhood activity. This is the very first step toward becoming an advocate. Being an advocate means becoming active with a particular issue of interest. Advocates act on behalf of themselves or on behalf of someone else. As an advocate you can work to raise awareness about the many issues affecting children, families and child care programs across our state. Some of the actions you may want to take as an advocate:

- Inform others about the issue and your concerns
- Talk with other professionals to gather information about the issue
- Read about the pros and cons of the issue
- Write a letter or call your legislator expressing your opinion
- Attend a rally with fellow advocates to demonstrate support to legislators

Think about how your voice and your interests can make a difference and create a plan to become personally engaged in the early education field.

To learn more, log into www.ncchildcare.org and click on Leadership and Mentoring.