Teachers in after-school childcare programs are asked to be multitalented. They need to have good rapport with children, manage their classroom, and plan curricula. They also have to be on top of safety and health matters and conform to requirements of accrediting agencies like NAEYC and the state licensing agency. It is also important for them to understand how children develop physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively, as well as have the skills to deal with special needs children. And, beyond that, they must adapt their own teaching style and beliefs to the philosophy of the particular program in which they work. Wow, quite a list of skills! Any childcare director knows that not all incoming teachers will have this full range of skills upon hire, especially in a field that typically offers relatively low wages, part-time work, and limited benefits. Moreover, new issues, knowledge, or educational approaches arise all the time. They require that even your best, most experienced teachers expand their skills. For instance, you might enroll a child with problematic behaviors for the first time, or you might have to transfer a teacher over to a kindergarten-age class from a class of 4th and...
Professional Development from Front.
5th graders in order to fill a vacancy.

In the face of these realities, it is essential to have a strong program of professional development. Such a program should focus both on general training geared to the philosophy of your program, the age of the children being served, and specific training in relation to existing conditions. Our school-age child care program is built on the premise that children each have their own interests, desires, and needs. To be successful, therefore, we need to employ professional development that cultivates teachers who are able to function in a program focused on children making choices. At the same time, teachers need specific skills to operate in the setting in which they are placed. The Community House operates a Fleet Training Center that offers computer training among other components.

Accordingly, our teachers need to be familiar with computers and know what it is to be proficient at the various ages in our multi-age settings.

To achieve the development of teachers in these regards—and in a cost-effective manner, of course—requires a range of professional development tools, both internal to the agency and external. Extensive orientation into the philosophy and goals of the program, the requirements of licensing and accrediting agencies, health and safety rules and procedures, documentation and progress report requirements, and so on, must occur up front and throughout the program year.

One technique that we have found particularly helpful is having teachers themselves assume responsibility for training on particular topics. For example, two of our teachers recently did a presentation on different storytelling techniques for their peers. This approach invested them in the learning process, made it more fun for their colleagues, and enabled us to accentuate the techniques we’d like to see other staff adopt.

Another useful technique is incorporating interactive learning games that help teachers analyze their own learning style, be it auditory, visual, or kinesthetic. Examining their own styles can help teachers to understand their own learning style and be more conscious of the learning styles of the children in their class.

Teaming less experienced teachers with those with more experience works well, as does sending teachers to other sites within our multi-site program to observe a teacher who has a specific skill we want to encourage or build. One of our teachers is gifted at discussing difficult issues with parents—child’s behavior, late payments, etc.—in a firm, yet non-confrontational manner; we often pair other teachers with her so they can learn from her.

We have found that mixing training sessions led by our own administrators and teachers with sessions led by outside resources is a useful and cost-effective approach. Public school nurses have provided valuable state-approved courses on food allergies, and vendors of educational materials often provide great seminars free of charge. In addition, joining membership associations like the CT School-Age Child Care Alliance can provide access to very interesting speakers, including directors and teachers in other programs.

In addition to conducting training on site, it is important to facilitate teachers continuing their education at local educational institutions, such as community colleges and universities. At the Community House, we provide scholarships so that teachers can take up to three credits a year free of charge. Also, we direct them to tuition grants such as those offered by the CT Early Childhood Education Council and CT Charts A-Course.

And don’t forget the director! Taking part in directors’ round tables, attending conferences, and confering with educational consultants can provide new ideas, confirm existing theories, and generally refresh and reinvigorate administrators. (Editor’s note: Be sure to look in the summer edition of All Children Considered for information on the new CT Director Credential for administrators of child care programs.)

Finally, the importance of realistic, current job descriptions and regular, formal staff evaluations in promoting professional development cannot be overstated. Only by continually examining the skill levels of your teaching staff, especially in relation to the current needs of your program or children, can one develop individual development plans that lead teachers to develop the skills your program needs, while expanding their own talents.
The world of caring for young children is changing dramatically as we learn what really makes a difference for young children and families. Now more than ever before, we know that the children of Connecticut depend on caregivers who are informed about the development of children and are trained to provide appropriate care at each stage in a young child's life. Yet, it is often difficult for caregivers to know where and when training is being offered or what kind of training is being offered. Currently, training is provided by a number of state agencies and not-for-profit organizations concerned about children, but there is no registry or accessible way for people to obtain information about training.

For these reasons, the Training Resource Academy of the Child Health and Development Institute has funded a pilot project to the CT State Library that builds on the existing GreatKidsCT website (www.greatkidsct.org) to create a publicly-accessible Training Calendar that will track health and childcare training throughout Connecticut. Working with a small group of organizations and state agencies that currently offer training to staff, parents and other caregivers, we have created the infrastructure for a state-wide clearinghouse that will permit anyone to know at a glance what training is being offered and by which agency or organization.

The idea for such a site has several advantages. First, we begin to have a picture of what kinds of training are being offered anywhere along the "Continuum of Professional Development," which moves from Informal Activities on the left to Formal Programs on the right, which are accompanied by certificates and degree components.

The Continuum describes settings in which professional development occurs. Generally, activities on the left are entry level and require less time and money. On the right, they are more involved and require a greater long-term commitment.

**Connecticut State Agency Update**

**Department of Social Services (DSS)**

Denise Merrill, Director
Child Health and Development Institute
Training Resource Academy

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and organizations charged with providing training can begin to respond accordingly. Second, because the care community is much larger than just those workers who are employed by an agency, we may, as a state, begin to find a way to extend training to all of the people who care for children. Third, the several state agencies responsible for some aspect of the health and welfare of children may be encouraged—indeed, may find it cost-effective—to coordinate their training programs to expand coverage while avoiding duplication.

Finally, locating the Training Calendar on the GreatKidsCT website brings parents and other caregivers, as well as childcare professionals, to a source of information about children that brings together the fragments and pieces that constitute childcare in Connecticut.

## Budget Cuts Result in Merging of CHIL and HUSKY Infolines

**Tanya Barrett, Director**

**HUSKY Infoline**

**A**

fter sustaining significant budget cuts over the last year, the Children’s Health Infoline (CHIL) was downsized and merged with HUSKY Infoline, effective August 1, 2002. HUSKY Infoline is a program of United Way of Connecticut, located in Rocky Hill. United Way of Connecticut is the state association for the 24 local United Ways and manages all Infoline programs, including 2-1-1 Infoline, the statewide 24-hour information and referral service.

The Connecticut General Assembly established the Children’s Health Council/Children’s Health Project in 1995 to ensure that children received the care they were entitled to under Medicaid “Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment” (EPSDT) regulations. In order to have a statewide, toll-free telephone response point for the Children’s Health Project, CHIL was established in 1996. Care Coordinators answered questions and intervened when barriers to health care access arose within the state’s Medicaid managed care system.

HUSKY Infoline, a specialized unit of 211 Infoline, was created in the spring of 1998 to provide information on the HUSKY (Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth—and some parents, too) program and to assist families in obtaining the coverage. Care Coordinators educate callers on the HUSKY application process, eligibility requirements, and the benefit package. They intervene if families experience difficulties in the application/enrollment process.

The two programs discussed above now function as one and are simply known as HUSKY Infoline. The combined staff has been cross-trained so that all are able to handle both general HUSKY information and referral calls, which was formerly the HUSKY Infoline function, and provide access to care case coordination, which was formerly the Children’s Health Infoline function. Care Coordinators educate callers on the HUSKY program (application process, eligibility requirements, benefit package, Medicaid managed care, and EPSDT). In addition, Coordinators mail HUSKY application/brochures, and provide advocacy for families experiencing difficulty in obtaining HUSKY coverage or healthcare services.

Tanya Barrett, HUSKY Infoline Director, said the service quality of each program has not been affected by this reorganization. “We are still serving the same population of people and still providing the same services,” said Barrett.

HUSKY Infoline can be accessed by dialing 1-877-CT-HUSKY. Callers to this line have the option of pressing #1 to connect with a HUSKY Infoline Care Coordinator for information on the

Continued on page 8.

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FACTS**

Did you know that during the state fiscal year 2001-2002:

- A monthly average of 28,175 children received financial assistance from the Care 4 Kids program?
- 500 family day care providers, and 5,000 kin and kin care providers, received targeted technical assistance and educational resources?
- 6,000 preschool children participated in the School Readiness Program, and another 4,225 children attended care in state-funded day care center programs?
- 5,027 early caregivers participated in statewide training offered through the Training Program in Child Development, a partnership between the CT Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Child Health and Development Institute?
- Connecticut Charts-A-Course Training Support Fund scholarships benefited 1,356 individuals. Of them, 386 achieved a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential?

You may learn more about these and other child care related topics in the DSS Status of Child Care in Connecticut annual report. The report may be viewed or printed by accessing www.dss.state.ct.us/ccare/ccare. If you have any questions on the information presented, please call the DSS Child Care Team at 1(800) 811-6141 and press #6.
Charting a Course to Professionalism Through the CDA Credential
Darlene C. Ragozzine, Executive Director Connecticut Charts-A-Course
495 Blake Street New Haven, CT 06515 (800) 832-7784 www.ctcharts-a-course.org

One day you find yourself working with young children as a teacher, assistant teacher or aide in a child care center, or as a family child care provider taking care of children in your home, or a relative caring for an infant or toddler. You have no formal training for what you do but it feels good. You like being a special person in training for what you do but it feels infant or toddler. You have no formal training in a child care center, or as a family child care provider. But you want to know more about the lives of children. You find it rewarding to make you better at what you do. You begin to read about the

What is a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential?

The Child Development Associate (CDA) is a national entry-level credential focusing on the skills of early care and education professionals. It is granted by the Council for Professional Recognition (The Council), headquartered in Washington, D.C. This national credentialing program is designed to provide child care staff, home visitors, and family child care providers with a training and assessment system that will result in acquiring the CDA credential. It represents a national effort to promote quality by credentialing qualified care-givers who work with children from birth through age five.

Choosing to apply for a CDA may seem like a big commitment because it calls for training, work experience, and the development of a resource file, among other requirements. But it is well worth it because it will give you the opportunity to become a professional and earn a nationally recognized Credential in early care and education.

In CDA training, you will:
• Obtain training that is relevant to your work with young children.
• Gain input and feedback about your skills from other professionals who will support you during the process.
• Improve your knowledge and skills over a period of time, which will result in benefits for the children and families that you serve.
• Feel more qualified to teach young children.

What are the requirements for a (CDA) credential?

To obtain a CDA credential you must meet the following requirements:
• Be 18 years of age or older
• Hold a high school diploma or a GED
• Have 480 hours of experience working with children within the past five years
• Have 120 hours of formal child care education within the past five years
• Complete a professional resource file
• Complete a parent opinion questionnaire
• Complete the CDA assessment observation instrument
• Receive an oral interview
• Receive a written assessment

Are scholarships available for pursuing a CDA credential?

Yes. If you are a child care provider currently providing care and who earn an income working directly with young children and are income eligible, then you may qualify to apply for scholarship assistance from Connecticut Charts-A-Course toward:
• First Aid training
• CDA 120 hours of credit-based training
• CDA assessment fee (cap. cost $325)
• CDA advisor fee (cap. cost $125)

For more information or to apply for scholarship, please call Connecticut Charts-A-Course at (800) 832-7784 or (203) 397-4013. (All scholarships from Connecticut Charts-A-Course are awarded based upon current grant priorities as established by each grant funder and the availability of funds. Scholarship funds cannot be guaranteed.)

What are some routes that I can take to acquire the training for a CDA credential?

You can choose from the following three routes to gain the training necessary for the CDA. They all cover the education requirement of 120 hours of training in the 13 specific areas, but they are different in their approaches to obtaining this training.

1. Community Colleges: There are a number of community colleges that offer the CDA Community College Preparation Program. These programs are credit-based and allow you to acquire the training content necessary for a CDA credential while also taking 4 college level courses. Upon successful completion of the courses, you will have 12 credits in early childhood education that articulate into the colleges’ early childhood education associate’s degree program. You may then make an application to the Council for Professional Recognition and complete the remaining requirements for the CDA credential process.

2. Training Program in Child Development: You may enroll in the Training Program in Child Development (Connecticut Charts-A-Course module training offered through Wheeler Clinic) and complete the 4 modules of training content necessary for a CDA credential. Once you successfully complete the four modules of training you will have the training necessary to make an application to the Council for Professional Recognition and complete the remaining requirements for the credentialing process. If you wish to gain college credit for this training you will need to take a two-part assessment test administered by Charter Oak College, which if successfully passed, will convert the module training into 6 college credits in early childhood education/child development.

3. CDA Approved Training Agency: Field-based CDA training is conducted by agencies such as Head Start and Boards of Education, which have been approved by the Council. They will assist you in acquiring the training requirement through direct instruction. Once you have gained the necessary training you can complete the same process as in the other two routes described above.

sprin 2003 • All Children Considered 5
Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald, Early Childhood Intervention CT Department of Children and Families

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership is a new statewide initiative funded by Connecticut’s Strategic Investment Board/Department of Children and Families’ Early Intervention Unit, and managed by Advanced Behavioral Health. Currently eleven Early Childhood Consultants in CT offer Early Childhood Educators relationship-based consultation services. These services focus upon the healthy social and emotional development of children birth to five and can vary from brief phone consultations to center-based consultations to child-specific consultations.

Another focus of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership provides CT Charts-A-Course Training Approval Board (TAB) trainings and workshops to promote professional development of child care staff and educators on the social and emotional development of children. These trainings and workshops will focus on issues relevant to working with children and their families and will be offered throughout the state within the coming year.

Early Childhood Consultants are trained and have expertise in issues such as attachment; maternal depression; physical, sexual, and emotional abuse issues; family dynamics; challenging behaviors; and environmental issues.

The mission of professional development is to prepare and support childcare providers, educators and after-school providers to help all children achieve to high standards of learning and development. High Quality Professional Development has the following characteristics:

- Focuses on providers and teachers as central to development and learning, yet includes all other members of school and community;
- Reflects best available research and practice in teaching, learning, and leadership; enables providers and teachers to develop further knowledge and expertise in issues, interventions and strategies relevant to the social and emotional well-being of children;
- Is planned collaboratively by those who will participate in and facilitate that development;
- Is driven by a coherent long-term plan;
- Is evaluated ultimately on the basis of its impact on provider and teacher effectiveness and student development and learning; and this assessment guides subsequent professional development efforts.

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership project, an exciting initiative, aims to integrate and expand services to enhance the ability of early care and after-school providers to work with children and their families to promote healthy relationships and quality care.

For more information, contact:
Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald, MARYANN.DAYTON-FITZGERALD@po.state.ct.us
Elizabeth Bicio, Advanced Behavioral Health, Ebicio@abhct.com

部门公共健康 (DPH)

Executive Director
Child Day Care Licensing

 threw local child care centers and group day care homes require that the operator maintain a staff adequate for the number, ages, and developmental needs of the children to be accommodated. All staff members are required to have the personal qualities necessary to care for and work with children, relate to adults, and relate to parents. (Public Health Code [PHC], sec. 19a-79-4a.)

Any person, sixteen years of age or older, who
works at a child day care center or group day care home more than twelve times per year, including alternate staff and volunteers, is considered to be "employed." They must be fingerprinted and have a background check completed. They are also required to have a medical statement on file, completed within twelve months before the date of employment for new staff and updated every twenty-four months for current staff. Upon employment, a written report of a negative tuberculosis test completed within twelve months prior to the date of employment must also be on file.

Documentation of continuing education for each full time or part time staff person who cares for children is required. According to the regulations (PHC, sec. 19a-79-4a[12]), continuing education means attendance at classes, seminars, workshops, conferences or forums that improve one's knowledge, skills, and abilities. Staff meetings that are designed to address a specific educational component may be used toward meeting this requirement. Continuing education for program staff is required for 1% of the total annual hours worked and may include early childhood education and child development, licensing and regulations, health issues, nutrition, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), social services, and child abuse laws (PHC, sec. 19a-79-4a[g]). This is a great opportunity for programs to involve their education, health, social services, dental, and dietitian consultants in developing their plan for continuing education.

A designated head teacher must be on site for 60% of the time the child day care center is in operation on a weekly basis. Head teachers must be approved by the Department of Public Health (DPH) and must meet the qualifications detailed in PHC, section 19a-79-4a(d) or PHC, section 19a-79-11(f).

A second program person, who works under the supervision of the head teacher, must be at least eighteen years of age, have a high school diploma, an equivalency certificate or at least 540 hours of documented experience working with unrelated children of the same ages to be served in the child day care center or group day care home. At all times, there must be at least two staff, eighteen years of age or older, on the premises when one or more children are in attendance, including at opening and closing times. These staff must be available to care for the children. Additional program staff must be on site in sufficient numbers to provide care of children during all hours of operation in keeping with group size and ratio requirements.

It is important to remember that licensing establishes the minimum standards for program operation. Programs are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements by encouraging staff to seek professional development opportunities to strengthen their skills in the field of early care and education and related disciplines. Having a well-trained staff is an excellent way to avoid regulatory violations.

The Department of Public Health, Child Day Care Licensing Unit, offers technical assistance on regulatory issues. For more information about obtaining technical assistance, please call the Child Day Care Licensing HELP DESK at (800) 282-6063, (800) 439-0437, or (860) 509-8045. We are here to help! ◆

Coming Events: Professional Development

(See http://www.greatkidsct.org for more events.)

**April:** Connecticut Charts-A-Course (CCAC) Training Workshops for Early Care and Education Providers. Call 1(888) 793-3500 for information.

**Tuesday, April 29, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM:** Accreditation Facilitation Project-Free Workshop: All Accredited But Not All Alike! Explore options for meeting NAECY criteria that will promote your creative thinking! See how other programs have improved their compliance with criteria that address language and literacy, private space, and noise reduction. Contact Carol Annette-Watson at 1(800) 236-2714.

**Friday, May 2, 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM:** The Emerging Role of Consultants in Early Care and Education. The Child Development Faculty Institute’s Seminar Series – Session Two: A panel presentation will be given by program directors and child care consultants who are successfully using the consultancy model. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss future directions for consultants and the resources needed for higher education to strengthen this essential component of quality child care and early childhood career development. The seminar series is free of charge. To register, e-mail Mary Beth Corcoran at mbmcor@aol.com. If you don’t have access to e-mail, call (860) 664-9095. Location: Storrs.

**Saturday, May 17, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM:** Early Childhood Career and Resource Fair. Child Care Infoline will host this event in collaboration with the CT Department of Public Health. The event, to be hosted by Three Rivers Community College in Norwich, is geared toward individuals interested in early care and education as a career as well as individuals currently working in the early childhood field.

Attendees will have the opportunity to gather information on nutrition, first aid certification, administration of medication, taxes and insurance, educational materials and fingerprinting. In addition, agencies, such as United Way of CT/Child Care Infoline, CT Department of Public Health, and others, will be present to answer questions. Participants will have the opportunity to review job postings submitted by area child care centers.

There is no cost to attend this event. For more information, contact the Child Care Infoline at 1(800) 505-1000.◆
Where can I, as a child care provider, find out more about training opportunities and get scholarship aid?

There are a few agencies that offer scholarships to child care providers to participate in training. 2-1-1 Child Care Infoline has information on what agencies are currently offering these scholarships. 2-1-1 Child Care Infoline also maintains a statewide training calendar of upcoming training opportunities offered throughout the state. In some cases, training is offered free of charge or for a nominal fee. To find out more information on scholarship options, please call 2-1-1 Child Care Infoline at 2-1-1 or 1(800) 505-1000. You can obtain training information by calling Child Care 2-1-1 directly or by visiting our website at www.infoline.org.

When a parent calls 2-1-1 Child Care Infoline for a child care program, what are some things they ask for?

2-1-1 Child Care Infoline receives approximately 35,000 calls per year. The majority of these calls are from parents seeking child care programs. Our childcare counselors gather information on the callers’ needs and preferences and then conduct a search for potential programs. Random referrals that fit the callers’ criteria will be given at that time. Child Care Infoline is available Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM. Spanish-speaking staff and TDD access is available.

Common criteria parents request include basic requirements such as

Correction (Winter 2003 edition):

Licensure Correction: In the “Child Care Info line” section on page 8, the question was asked, “I am currently an informal care provider. I am considering becoming licensed. What steps do I have to take?” The answer given was “Everyone over 18 years of age in the household will also need to undergo a criminal background screening, including fingerprinting.” The correct age is 16.

The correct answer is: “Everyone over 16 years of age in the household will also need to undergo a criminal background check including fingerprinting at both the state and FBI level.” In addition, all household members including children under the age of sixteen need to go on the DCF release of records for the DCF background check.

Budget Cuts from page 4.

HUSKY program or receive an application in the mail. Callers who wish to apply for HUSKY by telephone can press #2 to connect to a HUSKY Customer Service Representative. In addition, callers, who are already members of the HUSKY program and need help obtaining healthcare services, now have the option of pressing #3, to speak with a HUSKY Infoline Care Coordinator. HUSKY Infoline is open Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 8 PM, and Saturday 10 AM to 2 PM.

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM
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